

2023 Interim Newsletter October 17

Pray for Israel!

By Kathy Pelton

As you may know, Senator Pelton and I were privileged to be invited on the 2019 Public Officials Mission Trip to Israel sponsored by Jewish Colorado. What an amazing experience that was, and such an incredible blessing to have been able to go when we did! As a result of that trip, we see Israel and its inhabitants through different eyes than we did before, and we feel almost like it's a part of us (or we're a part of it). Therefore, the events of this past week have been heart-wrenching for us to listen to.

I have contacted friends from Israel throughout this last week, and they have said to me, "Kathy, you know Israel first-hand. Don't let the lies about what happened in Israel last Saturday spread. Please share with your community." I shared that with Rod and asked how he thought we could best share what we know with our community. He suggested using his newsletter, so here is my attempt to share with you what we know about the people and the current events in Israel.

Here are some facts:

1. Hamas is an evil Palestinian Islamist militant movement *BUT*
2. Not all Palestinians (or even most) are evil. There are large groups of Palestinians who work daily to make the Palestinian/Israeli relationships better.
3. Not all Muslims (or even most) are evil.
4. Hamas has been in control of the Gaza Strip since 2007, and they have made life miserable for the residents of Gaza, as well as the residents in nearby Israel, since that time.
5. The residents of the Gaza Strip live in abject poverty because of Hamas.
6. Hamas commonly uses the citizens of Gaza as human shields.
7. Hamas has showered neighboring Israel with constant bomb threats since they came to power.
8. In contrast, Israel tries very hard to protect innocent people, no matter what their nationality. They have a reputation of keeping civilians safe while their enemies purposely target civilians (their own and those of Israel).
9. Israel is used to being attacked. 85% of the population near the Gaza Strip suffers from chronic PTSD. There is a bomb shelter on every block and in every apartment in that part of the world. They have had to build an *indoor* playground so that children have a place to play where they can still get to a bomb shelter in the *15 seconds* they have from the time the sirens go off until a bomb could hit their town.
10. In spite of that, over and over again we heard the words, "but that's just life in Israel". No pity parties. No "woe is me". Just "that's just life in Israel." They're used to it.
11. What they suffered last Saturday, on not just the Shabbat, but the holiday when they celebrate receiving the Torah from God, was different. It wasn't just a missile attack. It was personal, door-to-door destruction.

(continued)

Senator Rod Pelton



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What are the lies that are being spread?

1. This is a “war” waged by Hamas on Israel. **TRUTH**: This isn’t a war. This was the slaughter of innocent people, just for the sake of slaughter. Civilians were targeted. Babies were beheaded. Women and children were raped and tortured. That’s not war.
2. This is a dispute over land/territory. **TRUTH**: This isn’t a dispute over land or territory or ethnic identity. It’s the efforts of a militant terrorist organization to annihilate a group of people from the earth. Israel hasn’t occupied Gaza since 2005; the problem for Hamas isn’t WHERE Israel exists – but THAT they exist, period. The stated goal of Hamas is the complete destruction, obliteration and eradication of Israel.
3. Israel is just as guilty in this as Hamas. **TRUTH**: Israel probably is not completely innocent, but both sides are certainly NOT equally guilty.
4. It’s not as bad as Israel is making it sound. Only some 1300 people have been killed. **TRUTH**: Per Capita, Israel losing 1300 people is the equivalent of the US having TEN 9/11 terrorist attacks. Would we sit idly by if that happened on our soil? And these attacks were even worse; they weren’t mass destruction – flying planes into buildings full of people. They were face-to-face murders, rapes, beheadings, and torture. Israel should, and will, avenge these killings.

But do you know what *else* Israel will do? They will pray for their attackers. They will continue to work to promote peace in the Middle East. In the midst of the annihilation that’s going on in their home country, the following was the Shabbat prayer uttered by Jews all over the world one week after the initial attacks:

“Compassionate God, we pray not to wipe out haters, but to banish hatred. Not to destroy sinners, but to lessen sin. Our prayers are not for a perfect world, but a better one, where parents are not bereaved by the savagery of sudden attacks or children orphaned by blades glinting in a noonday sun. Help us, dear God, to have the courage to remain strong, to stand fast. Spread your light on the dark hearts of the slayers and your comfort to the bereaved hearts of families of the slain. Let calm return to Your city Jerusalem, and to Israel, Your blessed land. We grieve with those wounded in body and spirit, pray for the fortitude of our sisters and brothers, and ask you to awaken the world to our struggle and help us bring peace.”

So please, friends, *Pray for Israel*. But also, pray for Hamas. Pray for the friends and relatives around the world of those in Israel who are suffering right now. Pray for the leaders of our country, and the other nations around the world. Pray for those in our own nation, and around the world, who are cheering for the atrocities that have just occurred. Here we are, less than a generation after the Holocaust, and we’ve just witnessed the worst mass slaughter of Jews since the Holocaust. But there is NOT universal condemnation of it. In every major western city, there are movements marching to celebrate it. What has this world come to? Pray for our world.

Sincerely,



Kathy Pelton
(Mrs. Rod Pelton)