



Ami Ortiz of Ariel, Israel

ex·po·sé

THE TERROR BOMBING OF ISRAELI MESSIANIC TEEN AMI ORTIZ

By Donna Diorio

www.israelprayer.com



Ha'aretz 11-2-09



Jerusalem Post 11-2-09



Yediot Aharonot 11-2-09

Across Israel – for those who have heard the reports – there is shock and disbelief that the terrorist attack on a 15-year old Jewish boy in Ariel in March 2008 may have been a case of Jewish terrorism. It is a hard concept for Jews to accept – a horrific act of Jew-on-Jew terrorism. Having been the victims of such acts throughout the annals of history, to believe that Jews could become exactly like their persecuting enemies is almost unthinkable to most Jews. The unthinkable is not softened by the cold insistence from some that the targeted family is “not really Jewish” because of their faith in Yeshua (Jesus).

Yaakov Teitel, an ultra-Orthodox settler, appeared for the first time in open court December 10th to stand trial for multiple murder and attempted murder charges including the Purim 2008 attack on a Messianic Jewish family which seriously wounded David and Leah Ortiz’ youngest child, Amiel.

The case places several sensitive and controversial issues in public view, from the troubling rise of a new Jewish extremism within the settlements to the appalling state of civil and religious freedom protection for Messianic Jews in Israel. It is a case that Israeli authorities might be anxious to see quietly brought to a swift end with the conviction of a deranged “lone wolf” with no greater implications unpacked.

But that is not the truth of this case, as we have learned from 21 months of following the case via weekly input from the Ortiz family.

This article seeks to shed light on why the police theory that Teitel acted without accomplices cannot be correct. It contains details recorded in the real time of the unfolding of events from March 20, 2008 to the present. If the whole story is *not* told, the trial could actually circumvent justice bringing only one perpetrator to account. That would leave his compatriots free to continue their misguided religious mission to exact ‘God’s vengeance’ on those whom they consider detestable enemies.

Donna Diorio

December 9, 2009

On the day Jack Teitel went on trial for the attempted murder of Ami Ortiz

ex·po·sé

THE TERROR BOMBING OF
ISRAELI MESSIANIC
TEEN AMI ORTIZ

1. A public exposure or a revelation,
2. A formal exposition of facts.

Part I – Purim 2008: Haman Visits Ariel

An act of religious extremism targets Israeli Jewish believers in Jesus on Purim. ‘Wicked Haman’ is finally busted in October 2009.

The day before Purim on March 20, 2008

Security cameras on the third floor entrance to the Ortiz apartment documented the terror bomb being placed for the Ortiz family to find.¹ Cameras covering the street level showed a man exiting a car that had circled the block twice, then let him out up the street from the Ortiz apartment building.² The driver of the vehicle was veiled to hide his identity, demonstrating that he was not unaware of the passenger’s murderous mission.³



After exiting the vehicle the perpetrator walked up the street, entering the Ortiz apartment building wearing a large backpack. This was another calculated effort to not draw attention in the neighborhood because a festive booby-trapped Purim basket was hidden from view inside the backpack. No one that happened to be on the street would take special notice of the man in an IDF uniform wearing a backpack. It was a common sight. More importantly, no eyewitness would later be able to give identifying details of seeing a soldier carrying a brightly colored Purim basket into the building.

Once inside the building, the terrorist removed the bomb disguised as a gift. He left the backpack behind, carrying only his deadly “gift” to the third floor. Clearly every step had been carefully planned, including the advance scouting to locate security cameras inside the building and on the street. This was a premeditated act that involved several people who took every precaution to avoid identification and apprehension.

A security camera covering the third floor stairwell captured the terrorist placing the IED (improvised explosive device) just inside a gated hallway to the Ortiz residence door.

He was painstakingly careful to guard against the cameras capturing any details of his face. With his

head lowered, wearing a cap and sunglasses, he also took the precaution of holding a white kerchief over his nose and mouth with his left hand. In his right, and presumably dominant hand, he carried the disguised bomb. The package placed where it would be clearly intended for the Ortiz family, he turned and whisked

¹ [One Year After the Terror Bomb Explosion](http://www.israelprayer.com/articles/One_Year_After_the_Bomb_Explosion.html) Interview and Story with Ami Ortiz This is the English translation of an article written by an Israeli Youth, Liel for an Israeli Messianic Youth Magazine http://www.israelprayer.com/articles/One_Year_After_the_Bomb_Explosion.html

² 11- 28-09 personal response from David & Leah Ortiz to a question

³ *The Jewish terrorist: ‘Lonely’ killer sets out to purge Israel* by Shallé McDonald, ICEJ Staffer for the Christian Jerusalem Post, Dec 2009 (ICEJ email copy)

Soon the youngest son of David and Leah Ortiz, a 15-year old who had overslept missing school that day, would open the Purim basket at the family kitchen table.

Ami's body would take the full brunt of a massive explosion meant primarily to kill his father David because he is a minister of the gospel to Jews and Arabs. It was a bomb rigged to do maximum damage to everyone in the room. The blast blew out every window in the apartment, as well as windows in cars on the street.



Ami, a few weeks before the bombing, holding his nephew.



Ami lying conscious minutes after the blast



Kitchen table where the Purim basket was opened



Doors & shelves blown off



Windows blown out, walls riddled with bolts



Cabinets pocked with the blast



Photographs show Ami just minutes after the blast and some of the damage in the immediate vicinity of the blast zone. The bomb, packed with bolts and screws was meant to kill and maim all in the room.

It would be ironic that the biblical holiday of Purim was chosen

as the day for a Jew to attempt to murder a Messianic Jewish family – that is, if the date had not been specifically chosen to make a point. In 1994 another American Jewish settler committed a shooting massacre at the Cave of the Patriarchs in Hebron. In that Purim attack, Baruch Goldstein opened fire with an automatic rifle, killing 29 and injuring 129 Muslims worshipping at a mosque on the Arab side of the religious site. He too would see himself as enacting a Maccabee-type attack on the enemies of Israel.

Based on the Book of Esther, Purim is a holiday that recalls the story of evil Haman concocting a genocidal murder plan to exterminate the Jews living in exile in ancient Persia. When Haman's depraved plan is overthrown and he is hung on the gallows on which he had intended to hang the Jew Mordechai, the "lot" (purim) of the Lord is shown to be with the Jews. The weapon that had been formed against the Jews was overthrown and a day of rejoicing is declared for Jews to celebrate through all generations by festivities and sending gifts to one another.

In modern Israel the celebration bears some resemblance to the American Halloween holiday in that everyone dresses in costumes and gives gifts of candy and other goodies to one another. One big difference is that in Purim the costumes portray the main characters of the Bible – with kings and queens wearing tiaras and capes – not ghouls and goblins.

The "mishloach manot" – the sweets basket is all part of the fun. It would not be an unusual gift to be found on the Ortiz doorstep the day before Purim. The assassin placed the basket inside the gate with a large *Happy Holiday* gift tag visibly

facing out. It was handwritten – "in Hebrew with Sabra handwriting" (meaning fluent native-Israeli Hebrew penmanship). This is significant because



Israeli authorities claim that the man arrested for the crime – Yaakov Teitel – acted alone. There are many problems with that assertion including the fact that the accused is a fairly recent immigrant from the U.S. with minimal command of verbal or written Hebrew⁴.



Israel Purim baskets

Like ultra-Orthodox extremists often express, the bomber fancied himself in the heroic role of Mordechai – not cast as the villain, evil Haman⁵. If he could peer honestly into his own heart, he would see that this was the act of an aggressor and a persecutor – not a 'defender of Jews' as he has deceived himself to believe. In a *treat* basket, he delivered a truly nightmarish Halloween *trick* instead.

This is a critical point because the mindset of those who are persecuting the Messianic Jews of Israel believe themselves to be defending Jews from "missionaries" who are "stealing the souls of Jews."⁶ Some consider the Jews who believe in Jesus to be more dangerous than Hamas terrorists.⁷

⁴11- 28-09 personal response from David & Leah Ortiz to a question

⁵Meet [Daniel Pinner: an extremist West Bank settler](#) By Chaim Levinson Haaretz 12-5-09

⁶3-6-09 Ami Update

⁷[The Evangelical-Messianic Crossover \(as if there was ever a difference\)](#) by Ellen W. Horowitz 4-29-09 Shilohmuings.blogspot.com

“God is king!”⁸ Teitel shouted during a remand hearing recently, adding that he had no doubt God approved of his actions. “It is a pleasure and an honor to serve my Lord. I do not regret it.”

As an increase of Jews coming to faith has risen over past decades, so

has the popular argument risen that they are no longer Jews. The reasoning is that because they have betrayed Judaism by coming to faith in Jesus, they are no longer Jews but now are gentiles (Christian). Those who persecute them have this common denominator: they believe that they are protecting Jews from traitors of Judaism – ex-Jews who have become Christians making them more dangerous to the soul of Judaism than Hamas.



If Teitel held any doubts that he was doing the right thing in God’s eyes by persecuting the targets he chose, the just-published book, *The King’s Torah* would remove his doubts. Written by the Rabbi of the Yitzhar settlement the book gives halachic license to kill gentiles *and even innocent children* in situations in which their presence endangers Jewish lives.¹⁰ Halachic means according to Jewish religious law – biblical, Talmudic and rabbinic.

Within the Israeli public it should be stressed that those who believe to this extreme are a religious minority, because Israel is in majority a secular state.

However, it is important to recognize that the extremist minority are much more protected by Israeli authorities than one of their favorite targets

of persecution, the Messianic Jews. Too many threats, too many incidents of harassment are not treated as serious incidents by police or the courts.¹¹ Arrests are few, but threats coupled with illegal incidents are a continuous fact of life for Israeli Jewish believers.

Most Israeli Messianics keep the proverbial stiff upper lip when it comes to the persecution and threats they often experience.

They are mindful not to stir up anti-Semitic sentiment by communicating what is going on with them in the Jewish homeland. The believers in Israel are living examples of the Sermon on the Mount, walking circumspectly regarding persecution, by turning the

other cheek and forgiving those that persecute and abuse them.

It is a fine line to walk out, especially for parents who have lived through the horror of a bomb blowing up in their son’s hands. When a parent stands in that place, the truth of the message you preach is put to the real test. It is no longer what your theology is, but what your reality with God is. In this the Ortiz family has been a sterling example.

“We don’t worship Israel. We worship the God of Israel. And in doing so,” David Ortiz continued, “we have to bless His people, through the good and the bad.”¹²

Now that the ordeal has entered the stage where evidence will be aired in a public trial, the Ortiz family must speak the truth in love, not let ‘love’ keep them from speaking the truth. There will be pressure upon them not to press for a full disclosure of the facts in this case, and some of it will even come from within the Body.

⁸Teitel as trial begins: ‘God is king’ by Ben Hartman *Jerusalem Post* 12/9/09

⁹Cool, calculated ‘Jewish terrorist’ shows no remorse in court By Chaim Levinson, Haaretz Correspondent 11-13-09

¹⁰West Bank rabbi: Jews can kill Gentiles who threaten Israel Haaretz 11-9-09

¹¹U.S. State Department 2009 International Religious Freedom Report: *Israel and the occupied territories* Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor October 26, 2009

¹²*Hope for Israel* Newsletter of Moran Rosenbilt “Blessed are the Persecuted” December 2009 Special Edition

“The Body in Israel likes to hold their cards close to themselves,” David Ortiz said in a recent interview. “They need to put it all on the table so we can all share together and strengthen one another. If we don’t engage in the simple art of communication, the enemy will defeat us. But once we lay down our cards, and we’re not controlling or afraid of being controlled, then we can go forward.”¹³

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Part II – Threats Precede Violence Hate speech, harassment and violence lay the buildup to attempted murder against targets with the Messianic community of Israel who are stalked and spied on.

Part III – The Family Grapples with the Unthinkable That is, the Ortiz family, the family of indigenous believers in Israel, and the greater family of Israeli Jews – citizens and officials.

Part IV – Meanwhile in the Real World What must we do to safeguard innocent people from those willing to commit religious terrorism? Counter terrorism experts are telling, but is anyone listening?

Part V – Israeli Justice on Trial What is at stake in the trial of Yaakov Teitel is a hidden spiritual truth. It is one of those trials of God that we often don’t recognize as from Him until after our choices are made and the test is over. In this trial, Israel is also choosing in measure her own future – “For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged.”

¹³*Hope for Israel* ibid

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Part II—Threats Precede Violence

Threats to the Ortiz family had begun months before the bombing as fliers were distributed in the streets of Ariel with photographs of David Ortiz and other Messianic believers warning:

***“Citizens of Ariel, Beware!
These people are Christian Missionaries
that masquerade as Jews
and belong to a cult called Messianic Judaism.”¹⁴***



Example of a flier circulated against a Messianic pastor's wife in Arad whose family and congregation have also been targeted by fierce, ongoing persecution.

Like other Messianic Jews throughout Israel, the Ortiz family was used to being targeted by hate speech and also used to exercising prudent caution for the sake of personal security. Several congregation facilities and other properties of believers have been fire bombed over the past decade and threatening speech has almost always preceded the violence.

Reports of the threats – especially those leveled against the leaders of the Israeli Messianic congregations – have been on the rise since around 2005 after the “Disengagement” from Gaza . The wrath and contempt built up for Israeli authorities within the religious-nationalist camps have found Messianic believers a convenient target for lashing out.

Newspapers and web sites catering to the religious-nationalists have become quite open in opposition to Israeli Messianic Jews in Israel. There is very little restraint concerning what they are allowed to say or do. Religious articles

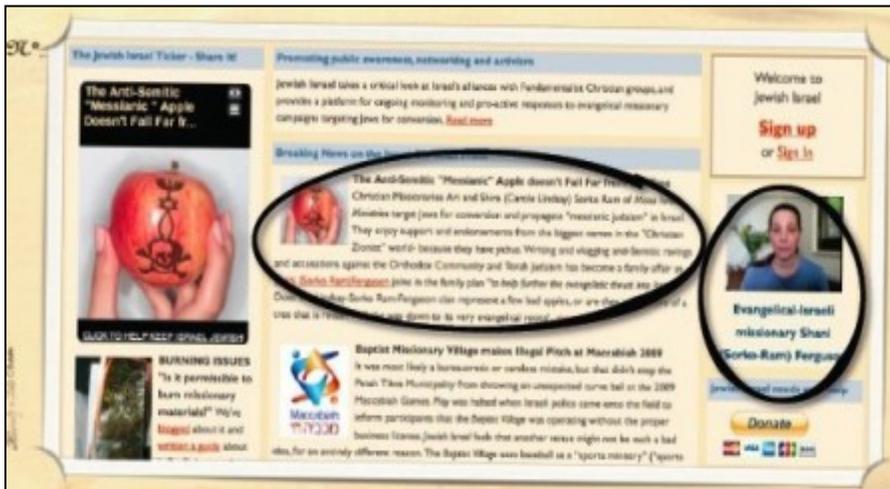
declaring “war” on the “missionaries” as Jewish followers of Jesus appear often, and “anti-missionary” organizations like Yad L’Achim stoke the fires of hate and harassment.

It was only a matter of time before intimidation of individual believers and attacks against their properties would escalate to attempted murder. With the bombing of the Ortiz family, that line was crossed.



¹⁴[One Year After the Terror Bomb Explosion](#) by Liel, a Messianic youth, March 2009

One self-proclaimed Israeli anti-missionary web site spies on indigenous believer ministries in Israel. The information that it publishes is picked up by activist readers in Israel that translate the intel into various forms of persecution—whatever is within the means to do.

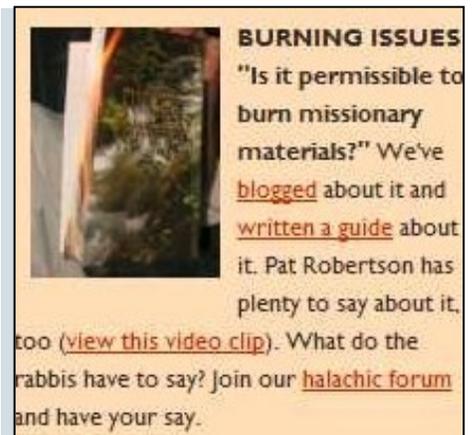


Notice the apple graphic is carved with a Christian symbol plus skull and crossbones.

Left: “The Anti-Semitic ‘Messianic’ Apple Doesn’t Fall Far from the Tree...” is a report on Yeshua Israel’s Shani Ferguson, the daughter of Messianic leaders and elders in Israel, Ari and Shira Sorko-Ram of Maoz Ministry.

The Ortiz family was also being probed in advance of the bombing. They had received suspicious telephone calls in months prior from both men and women requesting their location in order to attend to the worship services. As a rule, Israeli ministries do not widely publish the physical location of their congregations or homes. As a matter of security they must keep their contact information carefully guarded from unknown inquirers.

Just three months before he planted the Purim terror bomb, for instance, the confessed bomber Yaakov Teitel contacted the Ortiz family via email using an alias, Daniel Ivgeny. He wrote that he was interested in attending their next service and asked for the congregational address – which is housed in the same building as the family residence. The email aroused suspicions about someone they had no prior contact with, so David and Leah decided not to answer it but to keep the correspondence on file.



Example of topics on “Jewish Israel” anti-Missionary web site



Another reason for caution is because the “anti-missionary” activist group Yad L’Achim likes to plant moles in congregations – people that pretend to be genuinely interested but are only coming for the nefarious purpose of gathering information about members that can be used to cause them trouble. Plants are also used in U.S. Messianic congregations to gather information on Messianic Jews planning to immigrate to Israel. Names are fed to like-minded anti-Messianics within the Interior Ministry that oversees all coming in and out of Israel.



A young Israeli reporter poses as a new believer to dish ‘the dirt’ on a Tel Aviv Messianic congregation. Her article, “Baptizing Cult” sees the proverbial demon behind every bush.

The full article is translated on the Maoz Israel web site in the Sept 2008 Monthly Report.

http://maoz_convio.net/site/News2?abbr=maoz_&page=NewsArticle&id=6875&news_iv_ctrl=-1

In western democratic nations, an email request like the one Teitel sent the Ortiz ministry would not have been given a second thought, but Israeli ministries are forced to operate with more security consciousness. Even those who are involved with the Israeli indigenous ministries have learned to be cautious with sharing their information, and discerning of those who seek it. Giving out information too freely – not being wise as serpents and harmless as doves – can lead to many harmful consequences for both Arab and Jewish believers in Israel.

More examples of anti-Christian & Messianic articles in Israeli religious media

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Protesting a true report</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>"Missionary" is a dirty word in Israel indicating a predator.</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Targeting properties of believers in Israel?</i></p>
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An example of an Old City internet cafe'

After the bombing, police asked if they had received any suspicious emails.

David and Leah promptly turned over the email from “Daniel Ivgeny” to police investigators. When police arrested Yaakov Teitel on October 7th they placed a gag order on the Israeli press reporting of the arrest while the investigation continued. When the gag order was lifted one month later, David and Leah read accounts in Israeli newspapers of how Teitel’s use of the internet had played a part in the arrest.

Two months before his arrest, police tracked Teitel to a Jerusalem internet café on Jaffa Street.

Ten minutes after he left, five investigators descended on the café seizing the computer he used and the security tapes. Café owner, Moshe Cohen told *Haaretz* reporters that Teitel was a frequent customer and internet user, “He used to sit here a lot,” Cohen said.¹⁵

“When we read this and realized that email was from Teitel himself, it really shook us up,” David Ortiz would write. “But we were amazed at how the Lord had given us the warning in our spirits and the wisdom to not answer.”¹⁶

“We were amazed at how the Lord had given us the warning in our spirits and the wisdom to not answer.”

– David Ortiz

ENOUGH! REWARD PROMISED OF 1.1 MILLION NIS TO ANYONE WHO KILLS A MEMBER OF "PEACE NOW". THE STATE OF ISRAEL HAS BECOME OUR ENEMY

Our blind loyalty to our country and her acts has rewarded us with treachery and death every time. Many of these Arabs stand and laugh at the same time that we are burying our dead. They sit and they probably know the spiritual and political leaders will continue to cooperate with them and to betray us time after time. They think that we are cowards and it is clear to them that the threat of torture and imprisonment will stop us from standing on what is ours. However they are wrong! The time has come to take their crushing heels off of our faces and to demand what belongs to us, what God promised us as His chosen people, this land! The time has come to establish a Halachic (Code of Jewish law) state in Judah and Samaria! The time has come for the kingdom of Judah!

THE LIBERATION ROYAL ARMY

By the time of the internet café raid, two other attacks had occurred on higher profile victims

with similar methods and threat patterns as the bombing of Ami. The first was the pipe bomb explosion of an Israeli Peace Now activist, Professor Ze’ev Sternhell. The professor narrowly escaped serious wounding in the blast, which Teitel would say later had been meant as just a warning – not to kill.

After the bombing, fliers were distributed in the area calling the state of Israel the enemy, calling for a religious state and promising a \$290,000 reward for anyone who killed a Peace Now member.

The flier Teitel has confessed he distributed after planting the bomb at Sternhell’s home is picked apart by some writers in the Israeli religious media. In an Israeli National News [article](#) in September of 2008 the flier is parsed pointing out mistakes in the Hebrew or in the talking points of various right-wing factions. In the end, “*The Flyer is More than Fishy. It Stinks*” decides the flier was either written by ultra-Orthodox groups or by the Israeli General Security Service, the latter to make religious-nationalists look bad.

¹⁵11-23-09 Ami Update

¹⁶11-18-09 Ami Update

In the breaking news of the Sternhell bombing an Israeli newspaper would reveal that police suspected that it was connected to the Ortiz bombing and two other incidents from 2006-7, but the admission was published as a leak. Within hours that bit of information had disappeared from the web under a gag order. Later police denied any connections between the bombings.

Leah Ortiz would write, "The story was published in the second largest newspaper in Israel. It is totally reputable and caters to the more conservative element in Israel. I believe that what they reported was true, but the authorities don't want to bring us into the picture before arrests are made *because of our faith*."¹⁷

Phone & Internet Threats in Attack of Gay & Lesbian Youth Club; Soldier from the Ultra-Orthodox IDF unit arrested for web threats



Two coordinators responsible for transportation to ceremony honoring victims of shooting attack on Tel Aviv gay youth center say they get threatening phone calls by anonymous persons saying they will bring grenades to event. Meanwhile, Jerusalem Police arrest haredi soldier suspected of making threat in online gay forums. M.O. fits the pattern of the Ami Ortiz bomber.

One year later around the same time investigators confiscated the computer Teitel used at the internet café, a masked attacker burst in with a pistol on a gay and lesbian youth club in Tel Aviv killing two and wounding thirteen.

In the days following the attack, threats of another larger attack were made on gay web forums which led police to arrest a 20-year old soldier in the ultra-Orthodox IDF unit. Several days later Shmuel Preimark was released from police custody for lack of evidence to connect him with "*the cases*" investigators said they were eyeing him for; but they also refused to explain to reporters "why Primarik's arrest for posting online threats sparked such an extensive investigation."¹⁸

On the day of the Ortiz bombing Ami was not supposed to be home, but normally David and Leah would have been. Out of her routine, Leah decided to accompany David to Jerusalem as he led a Danish tour group in a tour of the ancient City of David. Leah had an old friend staying with them and decided that the tour would be a nice outing for her friend. As she was leaving at 8 AM, Leah woke Ami telling him to get ready for school. A typical teenager, Ami went right back to sleep.

When he woke, Ami saw the Purim package on the kitchen table. It had been brought in by Marina who was cleaning the home and the congregational floor. Ami saw that the family dog needed to go out, so he took Dusty down for a walk. When he came back Marina was preparing to leave for the day. She had just made it down to the street level dumpster when the bomb exploded. The blast blew out car windows on the street and throughout the apartment. Marina raced back up to the residence and found Ami lying on the kitchen floor bleeding profusely.

¹⁷9-28-08 and 9-30-08 Ami Updates

¹⁸[Police widen probe of Haredi soldier who threatened gays](#) By Jonathan Lis Haaretz August 11, 2009



Damage from the blast



Police investigators on the street



Crowd holds vigil into the evening

The first responders were neighbors; and it is a good thing Israelis get valuable emergency training during their mandatory military service after high school. It enables men and women to keep a cooler head and render aid in emergencies.

A neighbor in the building next door was home from work sick when he heard the explosion. Items were blown off the shelves in his apartment. He ran down to the street and identified which apartment the blast had come from by the sight of its windows having been blown out. When he entered, he saw the teenager lying in his own blood on the floor with someone by his side, so the neighbor proceeded to search for a gas leak. Confirming there was no gas leak, he then observed the hole that had been blown in the kitchen table and knew it had been a bomb.



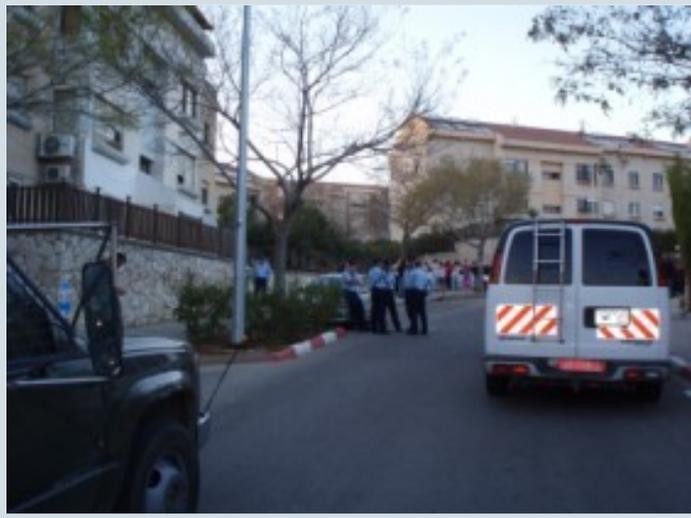
Neighbor responding to the blast shoots photos of Ami with his cell phone

Ami was lying on the floor ravaged and bleeding profusely, a large chunk of glass protruding from his neck – but he was conscious and able to speak. When emergency responders arrived Ami was asked his name, where his parents were and what had happened. He was able to answer all of the questions and even knew that what happened was that the Purim basket had exploded.

Down the street a young paramedic, who had moved into an apartment with fellow students the day before, heard the explosion. She went down to the street searching for what she also assumed had been a gas leak explosion and saw police arriving at the scene. When the fire department came, they were the first to enter the residence to confirm it was safe—that a gas leak had not caused the explosion. Fire officials then gave clearance for other emergency services to enter. Someone yelled down that there was a wounded victim, so the paramedic neighbor raced upstairs to help. Months later she would tell the Ortiz family that even though she had been a paramedic for many years, what she saw when she came into the residence had been difficult beyond words.

She was able to administer life saving measures that were critical to Ami’s survival until the ambulance arrived. It was a 20 minute period which she would later say had seemed like hours. She assessed that Ami could not breathe because of a collapsed lung, but did not have equipment to deal with it. She did help to stem some of the severe bleeding and gave Ami care that his parents said they will be eternally grateful to her for.¹⁹

¹⁹2-7-09 Ami Update



Emergency vehicles outside the Ortiz apartment.

When Ami arrived at the Beilensen hospital ER, doctors did not give him much chance of survival. The bomb had literally exploded in his hands into his body. There was extensive damage, and his body was riddled with the shrapnel that had been loaded into the bomb to make it as deadly as possible.

First news of the explosion was intercepted by the fifth Ortiz child, Elad, an army soldier who was serving in Samaria (West Bank). The bomb attack showed up in the army map room as taking place on the block the family lived on. A friend of Elad's called confirming the bomb had been at his

parent's home. Elad called his parents on their cell phone and they in turn immediately called Ami's cell phone, getting no answer. Then Leah called the lady who had been at the house cleaning. Police answered saying their son was on the way to the hospital. She screamed, "Is he alive?" The police person answered, "You have to get to the hospital right away."²⁰

At the hospital emergency room in Petah Tikva, horrified family, friends and fellow believers gathered to wait for news of Ami's condition.



Screen shot from the Uvda TV special report



In the days and weeks that followed, although there was little mention of it, believers across Israel experienced an increase in incidents of vandalism, disruption of services, thefts of security equipment and even stolen contact lists of believers in the land.

There has also been another swell in incidents since the arrest of Yaakov Teitel.

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At the hospital believers from across Israel gathered

to stand with the Ortiz family as Ami began the first surgeries to save his life. After ER surgery Ami was transferred into Schneider Children’s hospital, which is back-to-back to Beilensen where he was admitted to ER. In the waiting room Jews, Arabs and other believers from Dan to Beer Sheva would gather daily – as many as 70 per day – coming to encourage and comfort the stricken family. David is well known and appreciated for his ministry among the Palestinians, as well as his fellowship and ministry among Jews in Ariel. The next morning doctors reported that Ami would live but was severely injured. Ami had been put in an induced coma and was expected to be in the intensive care unit for at least two weeks.

Ami had second and third degree burns on his stomach, chest, and thighs but none on his face.



Ami’s wounds many weeks after the bomb-

ing. Five pieces of shrapnel were lodged in both lungs and another one in his right eye. Shards of metal and glass

peppered both eyes and it was expected that he would be blind in the right eye. Three of his toes had been severed. He had an extensive loss of flesh and blood from his thighs and serious injuries to his hands. But Ami was a living miracle – for him to be living was a miracle in itself. The blast had not damaged any of his organs, no arteries were severed despite the horrible wound in his neck, and there was no brain damage.²¹

“Death has climbed in through our window and has entered our fortresses; it has cut off the children from the streets and the young men from the public squares.”
Jeremiah 9:21



David gives the testimony at “Epicenter 2008” gathering of Christians in Jerusalem, the invited guest of Joel Rosenberg.

Ortiz son, Elad (20) is standing to the left behind David. **View full video testimony at <http://blip.tv/file/815590>**

“We ran for the hospital,” David told a gathering of Christians at Joel Rosenberg’s Epicenter 2008 conference in Israel just a few weeks following the attack on Ami.

“After we got there they operated on him for eight hours. Afterwards the doctor came over to me and said, ‘We don’t know if he is going to make it. Even if he makes it we may have to amputate his legs and his arms because he has been badly wounded.’ There were so many horrible things that they were describing.

“At two o’clock in the morning they gave us a place to lie down and I said to the Lord, ‘Lord, You are my best friend. But I can’t see. I feel like I’m in a tunnel. I can’t see up; I can’t see down. I have no light whatsoever. I need you, Lord. I don’t even know what to pray. I can’t afford anything less than a miracle. Lord, give me a miracle.’

“And right there – I’m not into visions or anything like this – but God spoke to me directly. And He showed me the death angel come into my home and He said to the death angel, ‘angel you can’t pass this line. You can’t take him.’ I saw the enemy pleaded for my

²¹3-21-08 Howard Bass Update

Ami is the youngest of five brothers and one sister.

One of his brothers, Ariel, who was 24 at the time and working in Tel Aviv, rushed to the hospital after getting a call from his dad, David.

When Ariel was told it had been a bomb, he assumed his brother had been caught up in a terrorist attack and expected the hospital to be a flurry of ambulances and paramedics. At first he was confused never



Leah with sons, the eldest Ariel (25) on the left and on the right is Natan (23). Both sons served in elite units of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF).

suspecting that his family had been singled out as targets of a terrorist attack. He had expected many victims from a terror attack in a public place.

In an interview with *Ma'ariv* newspaper an impassioned Ariel spoke of how he never anticipated that the threats or harassment his family had experienced for their faith would reach such a stage of violence.

"They all write about us as part of a cult. What's a cult?" Ariel asked. "Do we hold rituals and burn cats? Do we sacrifice virgins at the stake? We've never done anything bad to anyone.

"We're Jews. We've served in the army like everyone else. I was circumcised and had a bar mitzvah. This is our faith, our way of life, and at most it's a bit different – so what?"

"They say about my parents that they're missionaries. Nu – really – like in every other religion, they also believe very deeply, and believe that this is the way. But they've never forced it on anyone else, not even us," he said, referring to his siblings.

This thing that's been done to us stems from cowardice" Ariel declared. "It's terror. What's the difference between the person who did this to us and Hamas? In my wildest dreams I never thought that they would hurt us physically."²²

son but God said 'You can touch him, but you can't take him.'

"In an instant I received light. I knew God was on the throne. I knew He wanted to glorify Himself.

"I told my wife, 'The Lord just spoke to me. Ami is going to make it. God is going to glorify Himself. He has chosen us at this particular point and God is going to do something that we don't understand. There is something taking place in heaven that we're not aware of. God wants to glorify Himself and God is going to do a miracle.

That was at 2 o'clock in the morning. At 9 o'clock in the morning the doctor came over to us and said, 'I don't know how to say this; I want to be careful.' I didn't know where he was coming from. He said, 'I don't know how to explain this in medical terms because your son has just received a miracle. In hours things have completely changed. We see that we can save his arms. We can save his legs.'

He described from top to bottom – he said, 'He is full of shrapnel. He has big pieces of metal in his right eye but it did not hit the nerve. Your son's neck was severed but it did not touch the artery; we're putting him back together. He has holes all over him. He has in his lungs pieces of bolts and screws – and his legs, he's missing chunks of flesh but we're going to put him back together. He's missing two toes. The lung expanded so much from the blast but now we have hope that everything is going to be okay with his lungs.'

"By God's grace," David cried, "God gave us a miracle."

²²Caspari Center Media Review, for March 28, 2008- http://www.caspari.com/media_review/2008/08-03-28.html



Israeli newspaper article shows David comforting Ami

It's terror. What's the difference between the person who did this to us and Hamas?

—Ariel Ortiz

There is also a fear within the Messianic community that if the attack turns out to have been perpetrated by religious Jews, that anti-Semitic fires will flare. This same fear infects the authorities and leaves the door wide open for persecutors of Messianic Jews in Israel to continue without fear of exposure or restraint.

The bombing sends shock waves through the Israeli Messianic community.



Howard Bass, a BeerSheva Messianic pastor, holds vigil with David Ortiz in the hospital waiting room.

Despite continuous reports of persecution, among the indigenous believer community there is a strong sense of alarm. Some are in denial, but most understand that the attack was the inevitable consequence

of the hate speech that is leveled against them for their faith.

Some of the believers are also very reluctant to believe that the attack was an act of Jewish terrorism, asserting that it was “premature” to be reporting the bombing as such. Some preferred to believe that the Ortiz family had been targeted by Islamists because of their ministry among Palestinians – though even the police did not think so and there was little evidence to support the theory. And as terribly as they feel for Ami, some

believers just do not want to face the truth that their own countrymen can feed on hatred so deeply that eventually they are turned into murderous zealots.



Yaacov Tietel



Nidal Hasan

These fears are almost identical to the fears in the U.S. of a violent public backlash against Muslims

if media and authorities identify acts of terror as terror, such as in the recent attack of soldiers at Fort Hood, Texas. In truth, the denials and fear of dealing honestly with the facts only leaves the public vulnerable to escalating incidents. In trying to distance an attacker from the group or mindset that gave birth to the act of terror, no one is protected except the terrorists.

To try to disconnect a “lone wolf” type act from a radical group mindset, or to press a lone wolf theory when there are clear indications that others knew or even participated in the plan, is a form of societal suicide. We have so much more to lose by denial than we do by honestly facing the truth. As believers we are to speak the truth in love, not let love keep us from speaking the truth.

From the beginning, there has been reluctance to speak of the persecution angle of the terror attack on Ami. On the day of the attack the Jerusalem Post identified the victim as the “son of a prominent Christian pastor.” The same article reported that the police spokesman for Judea and Samaria “have *not ruled out the possibility* that the explosion was terror related.”²³ The spokesman’s hesitance to make the T-word call comes off as just slightly right of the new American euphemism for terrorism: “a man-made disaster.”



The Ortiz family attorney, Yossi Graiver is asked in early 2009 in the UvdaTV report – after the journalist has seen the total area covered by the Ortiz’ motion sensor security camera system, “There aren’t any suspects. How do you explain this?” The attorney who also represents the Samir Balbisi family in a civil suit against Yaakov Teitel and is an Orthodox Jew answers, “This is a question we should be asking the police.”

From the *Uvda* television special on Ami – an Anti-missionary activist speaks



“If we put aside the bombing story, which is hard and painful, which we are disclaiming, but if we look at those and won’t hesitate, and won’t look at this story, through this horrible bombing, but we will look at this family’s deeds, we will see that this family is actually the dangerous one, which causes the worse sabotage.”

– Asher Medina, Jewish anti-missionary interviewed in the *Uvda* Channel 2 News special on Ami.

Later reports would become more realistic about what took place, but by the day after the blast a court-imposed media blackout would be in force at the request of investigators. The anti-missionary organization Yad L’Achim made its usual distancing comments to the press even though it is at the center of stirring up hatred and persecution of Israeli Messianic believers from Arad to Haifa.²⁴ Such groups have the political savvy to use “plausible deniability” for the sake of public opinion.

After the arrest of Yaakov Teitel and his confession to the bombings, Knesset Minister Avi Dichter released a statement on the multiple charges against Teitel for murder and attempted murder. Dichter had served as the Israeli Public Security Minister in March 2008 when the attack on Ami occurred.

²³Son of Ariel pastor injured in blast By Rebecca Anna Stoil Jerusalem Post Mar 20, 2008

²⁴Anti-missionaries suspected in attack By Yaakov Lappin Jerusalem Post Mar 23, 2008

The statement read, “Someone who does not hesitate to carry out a terror attack against one in opposition to political or social ideology starts off with a dummy bomb, moves to a real bomb and finishes off shooting to kill.”²⁵

Dichter has put his finger on the truth that hate-crimes escalate from hate speech and verbal threats, to intimidation and finally to earnest attempts to murder. Murders begin with verbal murder – the hate speech that creates an environment where individuals are willing to progress from hostile acts to deadly ones. Whether terrorism comes by ‘lone wolf’ attempts or by an organized conspiracy of several individuals, it is the mindset and hate speech that are the jet propulsion of all terrorist acts and hate crimes.

This is an uncomfortable reality, even for the police who have been called into countless hostile acts over the past decade against Israel’s Messianic Jews. These incidents have occurred in multiple towns of Israel and even in a single police jurisdiction, hostilities are repeatedly directed at the same victims. It appears to be a systemic failure of police who do not seem concerned enough for Messianic Jews – not by the number or incidents nor the serious nature of aggression police are called to intervene in.

Not much has changed in how the police respond to incidents against the Messianic Jews, even after the terror bombing of Ami Ortiz.²⁶

Often police deny that there are any connections between the incidents occurring against Messianic Jews. In July of 2008, police also told the Ortiz family that there was no connection between the bombing of Ami and the bombing of Sternhell and other bombings that were yet unsolved.

“Someone who does not hesitate to carry out a terror attack against one in opposition to political or social ideology starts off with a dummy bomb, moves to a real bomb and finishes off shooting to kill.”

“We told them,” Leah wrote, “there are many connections, one of them being that because these kind of people are having their way, using violence and arson in other places such as Arad, Beer Sheva and Jerusalem, against Messianic Jews with the police doing nothing about it. The people that tried to kill our son had confidence that they could do what they did and the police would also do nothing²⁷.”

Persecution of Messianic believers is not just a police problem but also a political problem. It is an inconvenient truth for the Israeli government which must face a hostile international political environment in order to acknowledge that extremist religious-nationalists would be able to commit acts of terror against fellow Jews over issues of faith or ideology.

Persecution of Jewish believers in Yeshua/Jesus in Israel is the proverbial fly in the ointment – a public relations nightmare – as Israel has few friends in the world backing Jewish settlements in



Anti-missionary ultra-Orthodox with bullhorns stationed outside the home of Eddie and Lura Beckford’s home in Arad, summer 2008. A backlash to this Jerusalem Post article – “Watch out, missionaries”

²⁵[MK Dichter condemns political violence in statement after Teitel arrest](#) By Jpost staff Nov 1, 2009

²⁶[Haredim torched messianic Jew’s car’](#) By Ben Hartman Jerusalem Post Dec 3, 2009

²⁷7-23-08 Ami Update

the disputed territories. Christians are the main supporters of Israel and since the change in the U.S. presidency Christians are nearly the only supporters of Israeli presence in the West Bank. Too many staunch Israel supporters within the Christian community are supporters of even the most radical of “outpost” settlements. A parade of prominent Christian church and government leaders showing support for some of the more radical elements within the settlements is not exactly an encouragement for Israel to openly discuss or aggressively pursue the most likely suspects responsible for nearly killing Ami. It could alienate Christians who have been Israel’s most stalwart supporters.

In March 2009, an 11-year old girl, the daughter of a Messianic pastor

in Beit She’an, Israel, was taken from her classroom by the principal to be questioned by three known “anti-missionary” activists. They asked her questions about worship meeting times and location, and asked her to name members of the congregation. They asked her to give them her family home address. When the school principal returned to his office, the little 6th grader was told not to tell her parents. About two weeks later, the family car was firebombed in the night – just inches away from the bedroom window of the little girl.



A second fire-bombing of the family car took place on December 1, 2009, a week after ultra-Orthodox activists came driving through the streets with loud speakers calling to “kick the ‘evil missionaries’ out of town.” This year, the family

has had to vacate two apartments due to threats to their landlords.

Yad L’Achim activist Benjamin Kluger is an ex-“Christian”, ex-Muslim and now an ultra-Orthodox anti-missionary seen here stirring the pot in Arad.



Ultra-Orthodox disruptions of the lives of believers in Arad has gone on almost daily since 2004. Here is one such occasion in 2005 when they hurled abuses against Arad believers.



Fire-bombed several times, one 20 year old ultra-Orthodox in 2006 poured gasoline around the King’s Men in Arad while people were inside! He was found “mentally unstable” and put in a facility for a few months where he got day passes out – daily!

Protests in Arad may not be sanctioned by Israeli authorities, but they certainly are allowed with little hindrance. Protesters are even allowed to congregate in the dozens or even hundreds outside of residential homes of Messianic Jews. When the police show up, they often want to arrest the Messianic being protested rather than the protesters.



In another current case of persecution where a Messianic Jewish believer's business has been targeted, Pnina Konforty lost one of her bakeries and struggles to maintain another after rabbis pulled her kashrut certification. Kashrut means that the food is in accordance with Mosaic dietary laws.

Even if her clientèle is non-religious, it means a loss of business to not have the certification because even secular Jews buy from kashrut certified sources. In spite of the fact that the Israeli courts ruled in favor of Pnina's Pies, it refuses to hold rabbis in contempt for not complying by returning her certification. In what has turned out to be a stalling game, the court has just ruled in mid-December that Pnina must re-apply for her certification before the court steps in again. Meanwhile her bakery loses business.²⁸

It is like the legal game being played in Arad with the many court cases that the ultra-Orthodox have filed against many believers there. In the case of



Lura and Eddie Beckford, The King's Men in Arad

Eddie and Lura Beckford, the court has ordered Eddie to be under house arrest pending the completion of the trial proceedings. So far, he has been under house arrest since March of 2008.²⁹

Huckabee Hobnobs with Hilltop Youth at Moskowitz' Shepherd Hotel

Aug 17, 2009.

Richard Silverstein is an American peace activist – but he makes a good point:

His trip is sponsored by a settler wingnut outfit called the Jewish Reclamation Project, which is a front group for Ateret Hacoanim, a U.S. registered non-profit which raises an average of \$2 million each year used to displace Arab residents of Jerusalem and replace them with pro-settler Jewish fanatics.



Huckabee Hobnobs with Hilltop Youth at Moskowitz' Shepherd Hotel Aug 17,

“What I find extraordinary is that Huckabee is spending almost all his time visiting settlements.

“And not just any settlements, he's going into the heart of the most extreme of the settler extremists meeting with the Gush Katif dissidents and Hebron settlers ... “

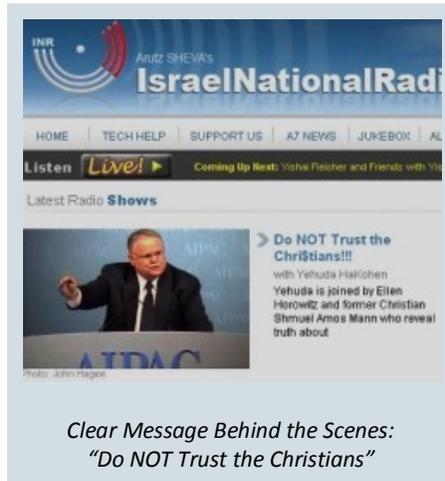
Mike Huckabee is a wonderful man and rightfully is a strong supporter of Israel. He is but one of many prominent examples of Christian clergy and political leaders who could benefit from better counsel as to the groups he aligns himself with in Israel.

Wouldn't it be great if there was a playbook so all Christians could understand who they were getting in league with?

²⁸Death Threats Calls to Penina, re-enactment video http://maoz.convio.net/site/PageServer?pagename=maoz_pnina_threatened_video

²⁹Arad Prayer Update 3-11-2008

It is more convenient for the Israeli government to downplay the persecution of Messianic Jews and also the emergence of a new extremist radical minority within the settlements to their Christian friends. This is understandable on their part, but on the part of Christians and Messianic Jews worldwide, it is unacceptable to remain uninformed.



that these are groups who are also behind the scenes persecuting Jewish believers in Jesus. The Israeli government is in no rush to clarify the situation for Christian Israel-supporters, the few but mighty supporters Israel has. Hence, there has not been a rush to expose the ugly truth of religious intolerance that is involved in the Ortiz case. Even many Israeli Messianic believers are cautious, fearing that the facts

Inside Israel in the aftermath of the Purim bombing of Ami,

most understood immediately that religious-nationalist activists and/or anti-missionaries were the most likely perpetrators. Outside Israel, Christians generally support the view that all Israel belongs to Jews but they also do not have a good understanding of political or religious factions within Israel. Most don't really understand how religious-nationalist extremes are becoming a serious problem for the duly elected government representatives in Israel. These groups are a danger to the general population, and believers outside of Israel should not become involved in things they don't begin to understand. Most Christian supporters of extremist religious-nationalist groups do not even seem to notice

of the case might feed anti-Semitism even within Christianity.



IDF cracks down on its settler rebels
By Anshel Pfeffer, November 26, 2009

At an IDF recruiting office in Jerusalem this week, young settlers hold a sign that says, "We are not recruited to send Jews away from their home". Soldiers in uniform who made a similar protest have been jailed for a month

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Arson

Settlers suspected of torching Palestinian mosque

Arsonists spray walls with words 'we will burn you all' and 'price tag' – settler slogan for reprisal acts against settlement evacuation efforts. IDF says mosque door and rug damaged, while Palestinians claim entire library including books of Koran destroyed

Ali Waked
Published: 12.11.09, 10:51 / Israel News

Examining the damage Photo: AP

Fire was set to a large mosque in the West Bank Palestinian

Religious soldiers told by Yeshiva rabbi to disobey orders; Settler rabbis tell Barak: Don't out extremist yeshivas

Insanity? or the Flip Wilson Defense: “The Devil Made Me Do It”

Instead of stating the obvious religious hatred motives behind Yaakov Teitel’s murderous actions, many alternative theories have been offered. Teitel’s twelve year murder spree of Arabs, Leftists and Messianic Jews was immediately explained by the ever popular, “He has mental problems,” canard. If that is allowed to stand as an excuse, it represents something far worse than just a disingenuous legal defense strategy. It represents the same kind of Leftist reasoning that exists in the United States among those who would like to dismiss Muslim acts of terror by the counter-charge that it was caused by American oppression or other mental distresses provoking the terrorist.

Attorneys for Teitel and Hasan Take Same Defense – with plenty of officials willing to allow religious hate crimes be excused as “mental instability”



“What should be clear to any person is that my client is, in the best case, mentally unstable, and he believes he has been sent by God,” Teitel’s attorney Adi Keidar said.

“He saw signs, he had dreams, and became motivated to act. He told his interrogators [he] could not refrain from doing it.”



Major Nidal Hasan’s attorney told interviewers in December: “The unit commander has concluded that there’s adequate grounds to believe the accused may have lacked mental responsibility and capacity to such a point where [he is requesting] a formal inquiry.” The attorney added, “It corroborates what I’ve been saying all along, and that is that this case would invariably present issues of mental responsibility.”

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Part III – The Family Grapples with the Unthinkable That is, the Ortiz family, the family of indigenous believers in Israel, and the greater family of Israeli Jews – citizens and officials.

Part IV – Meanwhile in the Real World What must we do to safeguard innocent people from those willing to commit religious terrorism? Counter terrorism experts are telling, but is anyone listening?

Part V – Israeli Justice on Trial What is at stake in the trial of Yaakov Teitel is a hidden spiritual truth. It is one of those trials of God that we often don’t recognize as from Him until after our choices are made and the test is over. In this trial, Israel is also choosing in measure her own future – “For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged.”

ex·po·sé

THE TERROR BOMBING OF
ISRAELI MESSIANIC
TEEN AMI ORTIZ

Part IV – Meanwhile in the Real World

Like the hesitance of U.S. officials to call Major Nidal Hasan’s attack at Fort Hood a terror attack,

at first the media and other officials were tripping all over themselves to identify the reason for Teitel’s murder spree to be mental illness. This is the problem with politically correct responses to hate crimes and terror acts – it serves no one but the group and individuals who are radicalized to perpetrate violence against innocents.³⁰

Yaakov Teitel’s attorney has claimed his client is “mentally unstable” from the beginning. It is a claim that has been echoed by many in Israel’s political right, especially among religious-nationalists. Adi Kedar is the attorney hired to represent Teitel by a group called Honenu, an organization that provides legal



Hilltop Youth protest 2006 Prime Minister Olmert’s visit to Washington, D.C.

representation to radical right activists. For example, it raised funds for the legal representation of Yitzhak Rabin’s assassin.³¹ Honenu is also connected with a couple of leaders³² of the radical Hilltop Youth³³ a group Teitel connected with when he first came to Israel in the late 1990’s.³⁴

Studies suggest that a quest for identity and the bonding process among small groups often drive militants more than personal hardship

Counter-terrorism experts who are focused on fighting terrorism rather than embroiled in the political considerations have less cluttered views of ideological terrorists. According to an *LA Times* report, “Studies suggest that a quest for identity and the bonding process among small groups often drive militants more than personal hardship does,” the report says.

Matthew Levitt, a former anti-terrorism official for the Treasury Department now with the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, is quoted in the report: “We don’t do enough about

fostering a counter-narrative. Competing for space with the radicalizers and challenging their radical ideologies is the key.”³⁵

As long as the U.S. or Israel denies it has a problem with radical ideologies producing terrorists, neither will take the constructive, productive steps to actually *counter* terrorism that CT experts propose. We are all less safe

when the authorities would rather approach the problems with a wishful-thinking aversion to the facts and a heavy application of politically correct newspeak.

We don't do enough about fostering a counter-narrative. Competing for space with the radicalizers and challenging their radical ideologies is the key."

-Counter Terrorism expert Matthew Levitt

³⁰[Major Nidal Hasan had an enabler](#) by Mark Steyne Macleans 11-26-09

³¹[Settler suspected of multiple hate crimes](#) *Ynet* reporters 11-1-09

³²[Radical Settlers Take On Israel](#) By Isabel Kershner NY Times September 26, 2008

³³[Shin Bet hunting for Rightists who threatened to bomb gays](#) By Chaim Levinson and Anshel Pfeffer Haaretz 10-13-09

³⁴[The Two Faces Of Accused Terrorist Jack Teitel](#) by Joshua Mitnick Israel Correspondent The Jewish Week 11-4-09

³⁵[U.S. sees homegrown Muslim extremism as rising threat](#) By Sebastian Rotella LA Times December 7, 2009

From the first day of the bombing, police investigators knew what they were up against

and indicated to the Ortiz family that they suspected religious Jews had committed the attack. When police asked David and Leah who they thought had done it, the Ortiz's answered, "Arabs, no? Do Jews build bombs with screws and bolts?" The police responded, "There are all kinds of Jews."

Even though some Palestinian terror groups claimed responsibility, the claims were dismissed by investigators. They knew how difficult, if not impossible, it would have been for a Palestinian terror group to enter the gates in a car with a Purim basket. Few seriously entertained the attack coming from Palestinians past the initial reaction of shock.³⁶

On the day the arrest gag order was lifted the officer in charge of interrogations reported that Yaakov Teitel had revealed that David Ortiz had been the primary target of the bomb attack. Teitel confessed that he wanted to kill Ortiz because he was 'stealing the souls' of Jews, a common accusation against



Religious mob stirred up by false accusations do a hostile takeover of a Messianic service in Beer Sheva

Messianic Jews in Israel.³⁷

Some of the ministries who have been targets of ongoing persecution in Beer Sheva and Arad have been interviewed by Israeli news media following the attack of Ami. Howard Bass, the leader of a congregation in Beer Sheva was interviewed by Israeli Channel 2 because of an incident in 2005.

On December 24 of that year, an angry religious mob disrupted services and took over the building. A false accusation had been circulated that they were going to illegally baptize busloads of underage kids.

Damage to the *Yeshua's Inheritance* facility included tossing Bass into the baptismal and intimidation of the congregants.³⁸ The mob had been stirred up by false accusations by Yad L'Achim and the Chief Rabbi of Beer Sheva who said illegal baptisms of underage children were to take place during the services.

The legal case, which is still pending in the Israeli court system four years after it was filed, had received little Israeli media notice until after the

murder attempt on the Ortiz family. Now Israeli news journalists were taking a fresh look at the outcry they had been hearing for quite some time from the Messianic Jewish community.

Howard Bass was given an Op-Ed in the *Jerusalem Post* in June 2009 prior to the start of the trial. Bass asks,

However one Israeli newspaper, *Yediot Aharonot* carried a prominent story of persecution against Messianics

³⁶11- 28-09 personal response to a question to David & Leah Ortiz

³⁷11- 3-09 Ami Update

³⁸12-24-05 Howard Bass Update

that featured a photograph of Howard Bass alongside Eddie and Lura Beckford, a couple from nearby Arad who have been relentlessly targeted at their King's Men Chess Club and Bible Shop. The photo, under the banner headline "We Hope That We Will Not Be Next in Line" is given in quotes, even though neither Howard Bass nor



determination to defend the rights of believers in Israel. Nachman was the only government or political leader to show the family support.

"A nation under law? Have we returned to the land of our forefathers just to turn it over to a band of jihadists?"

The Ortiz family is quick to point out how much public support they have received from Israelis

the Beckford's said any such thing.³⁹ Overall, the press coverage is in a surprisingly positive tone.



who heard of the bombing and were horrified that the attacker might be a religious Jew. After every major news article or television report featuring their story, Israelis from all walks of life would approach Ami, David and Leah in public to say how

sorry they were that the attack had happened, and how they did not agree that such a thing should be done.



In August 2008 had to go to court twice to overcome police requests of the court to stop the broadcast of their news report. The court ordered removal of the police gag order.

After the popular Israeli TV news program "Uvda" (Fact) did a half-hour program at the beginning of 2009, Leah reported, From the moment that the story was over, our phone began ringing off the hook. Israelis from all over the country, from the north to the south, began to call. The message from everyone was the same: They all said that the story was shocking and heart wrenching, and that it was shameful that such a thing had happened in the land of Israel. They all said that they supported us and 'Send Ami warm hugs, and that he should go forward in life and only succeed in whatever he wants to do in life.'" One man who called from the Tel Aviv area was in tears, and he said he couldn't stop crying."⁴⁰

Click [here](#) for the video with English translation subtitles.

Most of the media investigations have led to press coverage that recognizes the Messianic community to be good solid citizens of Israel and undeserving of the tactics being used against them by religious opposition. But there are still a lot of misgivings, misunderstanding and misrepresentation of Messianic Jews in the press including labeling them as "Christians" or "Jews for Jesus," or identifying them as a cult.

Many in the Israeli public are troubled by the news reports of the attack on the Ortiz family, including the religious public. The mayor of Ariel,

Ron Nachman, came to the hospital within the first three days to show support and his open



Uvda reporter joins the Ortiz family enjoying Ami playing basketball

³⁹3-24-08 Howard Bass Update

⁴⁰3-6-09 Ami Update

David also reported a dramatic turnaround in a local man: "We were in a restaurant in town, Ami, myself and Leah." A man who had previously been terribly opposed to them said, 'When this thing happened to Ami, I said to myself, how could this tragedy happen?'

"In his understanding," David explains, "God allows these things only when He punishes people." But then when I saw your son on TV, and I saw the story and saw him playing basketball, I came to the conclusion that I was wrong,' the man continued, "because what happened with your son, proves that God is with you. He has been resurrected from the dead. Look at your son! He's alive and going forward.'

"He then invited us to come to his home for a visit and he reaffirmed his friendship with us. He grabbed my hand to tell me that he is one of the people that are with us at this time."⁴¹

It is important to share these testimonies of good will toward the Ortiz family among the Israeli people, and also of the fair, balanced and even sympathetic media coverage of the Messianic community since this horrible attack took place. Everyone should understand that the radicalized persecutors are in the smallest minority among Israelis.



The purpose of this honest accounting of the situation for believers in Israel is not to leave readers with animosities towards Jews. That would

miss the point entirely. But there is still this "Fact" – "The police are not arresting suspects," Leah wrote in the 3-6-09 update, "and haven't even interrogated one suspect for unknown reasons. *This means that our family and the whole community of Messianic Jews are still in danger.*"

In February of 2009, as the "Uvda" TV news segment was being produced and almost one year after the bombing, the Ortiz family was forced to take the police department to court. They were seeking copies of the hard disk from security cameras, which had been given to police after the bombing. It was footage that showed the person planting the bomb, having circled the block as a passenger in a car before entering their building.

The footage also showed the Jews who had cased the residence in the weeks before the bombing.

[Download the Uvda segment transcript on amiortiz.com]

During the hearing, the police head of the investigation presented secret letters to the judge from their division and from the security services detailing why they believed the material should not be given to the Ortiz family. When pressed further, the police representative told the judge they did not want the footage released to the family so the information could not be passed on to the media. He then admitted to the judge in open court that the Ortiz case was part of a wider investigation that included three incidents of bombs being planted before and one after the Ortiz bombing.

When the judge gave ruling several days later, it was that the hard disk could be given back to the family, but that the images could not be shown to anyone outside the family. Six weeks after Teitel's arrest police had still not admitted that footage exists of Teitel's accomplices.⁴²

⁴¹5-15-09 Ami Update

⁴²2-24-09 Ami Update



Clip from the Uvda special demonstrates the street view coverage of the Ortiz' motion sensor security system of the kind many Israeli ministries now employ for personal safety.

In the first days after the bombing when the mayor of Ariel visited the family, he was able to inform them that the investigation of the attack had been moved to a higher-level department in Jerusalem. As the family understood it, the move was to avoid any local conflicts of interest that may exist locally.

Local police jurisdictions have a poor track record for dealing with incidents of violence, threat or persecution to the Messianic community. From past experience with incidents, few believed the investigation would be aggressively pursued – not at the local police level or at a centralized national level.

A couple of weeks after the bombing, the Israeli ministries organization, the Messianic Action Committee (MAC) issued a report to believers worldwide asking for the Church to register alarm for the bombing and to press the Israeli

authorities to give the case due diligence. The MAC wrote:

“To date, police efforts have been minimal at best in protecting the rights and safety of believers, once again because they are perceived as “missionaries” who are assumed to ‘prey upon the poor, young, and ignorant, using every underhanded trick (including bribery) in order to steal their souls from the Jewish people via conversion to Christianity.’ Unfortunately, even the public media in the country promote this prejudice and unwittingly justify the attacks with statements such as, “where there are missionaries there will be anti-missionaries” (Channel 10 television news on the evening following the attack on the Ortiz family).⁴⁴”

Another ministry report we received on the same day sought to enlist believers – Christians and Messianic Jews worldwide – to press the Israeli government and police to aggressively pursue the terrorists who planted the bomb. “Even the police and security forces have expressed their concern [to David] that ‘interested parties’ will attempt to interfere with the apprehension of the perpetrators and/or their being charged with the serious crimes of which they are guilty.⁴⁵”

Those concerns appear to have been valid. The long delay in identifying and arresting Yaakov Teitel has been greatly criticized in the Israeli press. His arrest came nineteen long months after the attack on Ami, but twelve long years after the first murder of a Palestinian in 1997, to which Teitel has confessed.

Continue reading online now at:

[Part I –Purim 2008: Haman Visits Ariel](#) An act of

⁴³3-24-08 Howard Bass Update

⁴⁴The Messianic Action Committee (MAC) Report 82--March 2008 via email

⁴⁵4-1-08 Charles Kopp Update

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Part V – Israeli Justice on Trial What is at stake in the trial of Yaakov Teitel is a hidden spiritual truth. It is one of those trials of God that we often don’t recognize as from Him until after our choices are made and the test is over. In this trial, Israel is also choosing in measure her own future – “For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged.”

ex·po·sé

THE TERROR BOMBING OF
ISRAELI MESSIANIC
TEEN AMI ORTIZ

Part V – Israeli Justice on Trial



It was in 1997 that Teitel first appeared on the radar of Israeli authorities when he was picked up on suspicion of the murder of a young Israeli Arab student/taxi driver. That same year he shot a Palestinian shepherd at point blank range in a premeditated and carefully planned scheme to murder a ‘target of opportunity’ on a countryside road. Had the crimes been prosecuted of the murdered Palestinians, the attacks on Jewish targets might have been prevented.

Teitel has also now confessed to the murder of Samir Balbisi, a young technology student attending Jerusalem College when he was murdered in his cab by Teitel. He also confessed to the cold blooded murder of the shepherd and of planting bombs targeting Arabs in 2006, a monastery in 2007 and of hurling explosives at a police car in 2007.

Israeli news reports have revealed that after the general security service (Shin Bet) had questioned Teitel as a suspect in the two 1997 Palestinian murders, they had attempted to recruit him as an informer. The “extreme right-wing elements” he was associating with have been reported to be Hilltop

Youth, a radicalized religious-settler movement. After several unfruitful months of meetings with Teitel, the security services gave up on using him as an informer.

It was only after two higher profile targets – victims that generated more public sympathy – were struck that



it seems investigators began a more diligent search. Israel Prize Laureate Professor Ze’ev Sternhell was injured by a pipe bomb rigged to the door of his house five months after Ami was bombed. Teitel has confessed to planting the pipe bomb, but he may not have acted alone in this bombing either.

The tipping point in public outrage came when a year later, in August 2009, a shooter attacked a Tel Aviv youth club for gay and lesbian teens killing 2 and injuring 15. Teitel confessed to the shooting attack, but authorities say they know he did not commit that crime, probably because he was already under active surveillance when the Tel Aviv attack occurred. It may be that Teitel has confessed to the gay club attack – or even other attacks that he has inside knowledge of – in order to protect comrades who would be free to continue targeting those considered enemies.



⁴⁶Teitel operated by Shin Bet in past Ynet News 11-6-09

Regardless of not having direct involvement in the youth club attack, investigators began to close in on Yaakov Teitel after that date leading some in Israeli media and Op-Ed commentaries to question why authorities had not been able to identify him after twelve years of his first murders of Palestinians in 1997.



Some speculate that if Teitel had just stuck with murdering Arabs he would not have ever been caught.

From the outside looking in, we could ask the same question about a seeming lackluster motivation to solve the Ortiz case before the attempts on Professor Sternhell and the gay youth club. All of these victims have fallen into the profile category of groups which a religious-nationalist might target (including Teitel's Palestinian victims).

In the nineteen months between the Purim bomb and the arrest of Yaakov Teitel, the Ortiz family would meet with police investigators only five times. Leah writes that the police "would always assure us in word" that they saw the crime as very serious and the case was given "100%" of their attention. "But in practice and deed, we didn't see anything move until Sternhell and the gay club."⁴⁷ "The police handled our case as if we were the suspects," Leah added, "and even questioned our witnesses about us and tried to drive a wedge between us. It's been a battle all the way."⁴⁸

In November, David Ortiz told an interview for Maoz Ministries, "The American FBI has come in to help us.... You see, when the bomb blast took place the state of Israel did not help us. In the words of a government official, he said, 'You

don't have too many fans in this country. If you are Messianic Jews, you are not going to have too many friends. The law protects you, but you don't have too many people behind that law giving you favor."



Anyone else struck by this surveillance photo that bears an uncanny resemblance to the famous scene in Schindler's List of the girl in the red coat?

In August of 2008, almost a month to the day before Professor Sternhell was attacked at his home in Tel Aviv, a police investigation unit arrived at the Ortiz home to conduct an additional investigation involving civilian photographic and computer experts that who crime scenes. The police official accompanying the civilian team said that in the beginning of investigations they use conventional methods to find suspects, but when they need to sift through those who are suspects and refine the list, then they call in outside experts. The team was on-site to study the crime scene and pictures of the suspect in order to construct the unique physical parameters of the suspect.⁴⁹

⁴⁷Personal correspondence on 12-1-09

⁴⁸11-28-09 Ami Update

⁴⁹8-21-08 Ami Update



One of the street views of the Ortiz security system

The science behind this investigative tool should provide some of the strongest evidence Israeli authorities have in possession for any of the cases against Yaakov Teitel. It should also guarantee that prosecutors will not set aside or attempt to exclude the attempted murder charges in Ami's case as unnecessary to make their case against Teitel.

In the United States, it is often a prosecutorial strategy to drop some charges in order "to streamline" a strong trial presentation that is heavy on evidence and witnesses. Or, to not prosecute all the cases against a defendant, where not all victims of the perpetrator actually get their day in court depending on what the prosecutor assesses. If the same holds true in Israeli courts, excluding the presentation of the case against Teitel in Ami's attempted murder, should not be allowed under any circumstance. It would amount to suppression of the case.

Whether or not the investigation was being aggressively investigated before the Sternhell attack, the Messianic Jewish community was never reassured by police, security or government officials that the attempted murder of Ami Ortiz was being seriously pursued. Government leaders did not speak out against the crime and perhaps the worst indication of apathy – other incidents against believers

continued unabated without mitigating police intervention. Did they care? It looks like not.

[Leah Ortiz wrote](#) a letter to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on October 1, 2008 following the pipe bombing of Professor Sternhell.

An excerpt from Leah's letter to Prime Minister Netanyahu

"My son Ami doesn't understand why the incident that nearly took his life and has scarred him for life hasn't been acknowledged by the government, as the Prime Minister and every other minister has publicly decried the attack against Prof. Sternhell, and this is right. We, however, did not receive one phone call or visit from a government official. Is the professor's life more valuable than the life of our son? I would like to say that Ron Nachman (mayor of Ariel) did visit us in the hospital, called us, and is accessible if we want to talk to him.

"Our case has been treated, I can only say it this way, in an unprofessional manner. My heart breaks as a mother for my son whose life has been violated by people who believe they are doing God a favor to murder those whose philosophies, ideologies, or faith doesn't conform to their twisted version of right and wrong.

"...The fact that Israel is publicly trying to ignore our case is not wise, and could cause trouble in relations between supporters of Israel and the government of Israel. Neither we nor Ami want this to happen."



The State of Israel The Judicial Authority

But, as Leah noted in an update recently, “Never before in Israel's history have Messianic Jews [been](#) covered with so much sympathy and support in the Israeli media.” Much of this she says is the work of the Jerusalem Institute of Justice, because they are quick to take up media misrepresentations, or unfair labeling, such as calling the Messianic faith a cult. JIJ is primarily a legal team for the civil and religious freedoms of Messianic Jews in Israel, and they also are Messianic Jewish attorneys.

One of the more puzzling reports to emerge after the gag order was lifted (11/3) on the arrest (10/7) of Yaakov Teitel came in the form of [cell phone video](#) purportedly shot by a neighbor of Teitel in Shvut Rachel of police sappers blowing up the bomb cache he kept in a field behind his house. A caption accompanying the video which appeared on WeJew.com stated the video was shot “on Thursday morning two weeks ago, a day before the first arrest of Teitel” indicating the date of 10/22.⁵⁰ Official reports put the date of Teitel's arrest at October 7th and there are no indications that he was ever released from police custody after that date.

Another puzzling set of facts appeared in an October 13th article on Haaretz newspaper – three weeks before the gag order was lifted in the Teitel arrest and one week prior to the controlled detonation of Teitel's bomb cache. In an article titled *Shin Bet hunting for Rightists who threatened to bomb gays*, Chaim Levinson and Anshel Pfeffer reported the first allusion to the security investigation going on surrounding the Teitel arrest.

The reporters wrote that the Security Service “is investigating who has distributed leaflets containing instructions on how to make bombs and weapons” that were “circulated in various illegal outposts a year ago.” The article also noted

that a similar flier was passed out in 2006 ahead of the Gay Pride Parade titled “Death to Sodomites.” Another pamphlet offered a reward for anyone who caused the death of “one of the people of Sodom and Gomorrah.” It was signed by “The Red Hand for Redemption.” After the bomb attempt on professor Sternhell's house the park nearby was blanketed with a similar flier offering a similar reward in the murder of any Peace Now activists.⁵¹

In the same article it was reported that security services imposed a 6-month exile on three “right-wing activists” from the West Bank. Two of the three – Akiva HaCohen and Ariel Groner – have been identified as leaders in the Hilltop Youth and considered the “architects” of the “price tag” doctrine which calls on “settlers to avenge Palestinian acts of violence by taking the law into their own hands.”⁵²

Since the arrest gag order was lifted, police officials have insisted that Yaakov Teitel is a “lone wolf” terrorist with no connections to any others. Protests in the right wing settler ranks over the banning of Groner and HaCohen from their homes in the Yitzhar settlement fell silent within a week as news of the Teitel arrest became big news on the religious blogs in Israel. **Is there a connection between Yaakov Teitel and these right-wing settler extremists? If there is, no one in Israel is reporting the potential – at least not in English.**

Yaakov Teitel has been unrepentant in all his court appearances, according to the Israeli press. In a report by Chaim Levinson in *Haaretz*, the ‘Jewish terrorist’ who showed “no remorse in court” has admitted that “he found out online that the messianic Jewish family was proselytizing, and began collecting information. He contacted them through a false

⁵⁰Police Sappers Outside Home of Yaakov Teitel video upload at WeJew.com http://wejew.com/media/6688/Police_Sappers_Outside_Home_of_Yaakov_Teitel/

⁵¹[Shin Bet hunting for Rightists who threatened to bomb gays](#) By Chaim Levinson and Anshel Pfeffer Haaretz 10-13-09

⁵²[Radical Settlers Take On Israel](#) By Isabel Kershner NY Times September 26, 2008

name from an Internet cafe, and said he wanted to pray with the community.⁵³

"The legal process is different in Israel," Leah wrote recently, "we have no jury system. [The system is] Based on the Mosaic law and model, cases are heard by only one judge or a panel of judges." The decisions, Leah explains, "are made only by judges. There is a law for victims' rights and so we have the right to appeal every decision made by the court."

"The reason we have to use those rights in this case," she explained, "is because this is the first time in Israel's history that a Jewish person brought a bomb into another Jewish person's home with intent to murder because of ideological differences. It is a precedent setting case and an example has to be set."

For that reason, we're also filing a civil suit against Teitel together with the Balbisi family from East Jerusalem," Leah wrote, explaining that young Samir Balbisi was Teitel's first victim and was murdered simply for being Arab. "The civil suit is being done in conjunction with the State's prosecution, as we want any future Teitels to know that their crimes will not pay in any form."⁵⁴

In the first public court appearance both families were in attendance for the hearing to give Teitel's response to the indictments. The attorney representing both the Ortiz and Balbisi families is an Orthodox man, Yossi Gravier. Teitel's attorney, Adi Keidar, was a no-show, as Leah reported the following day. "The word was that he was doing army reserve duty, but neither he nor his organization made a formal announcement to the court and therefore they had to find a State appointed defense attorney to represent Teitel. This caused a two hour delay."

"Teitel entered with what has become his trademark," she continued, "cynically smiling and holding up his hands in the V for victory sign. It is true that his eyes are frightening but I could see from all of his bravado, it was an act. He averted his eyes from us even though we tried to make eye contact with him."



The next court date for Teitel's response to the indictments is set for January 11, 2010.

Leah wrote of the emotional intensity of facing the man for the first who tried to murder their family and inflicted so much damage to her young son. "Thank the Lord that yesterday has passed. We want you to know that the grace and peace of the Holy Spirit was with us, and your prayer was tangibly felt," she wrote also thanking all the believers who came to be with them in court.

"We felt that the Spirit of the Lord was not at all hindered in the court," she said, and added, "the believers were relaxed and honored Yeshua in deed and word. We were proud to introduce them to everyone as our brothers and sisters."

"I personally was surprised when I saw our interviews on TV and heard them on radio. We appeared joyful and full of grace! The strange thing was, I didn't feel that way within, so I realized it was a supernatural impartation from the Lord, ordered by prayer."

Outside the courtroom David would say of the confessed terrorist who almost murdered his son, "We pray that he will seek repentance, and that this Saul will become a Paul."



CBN interviewing David Ortiz at Teitel hearing, Akram Balbisi the father of a 1997 murder victim Teitel has confessed to is pictured on the right

⁵³ [Cool, calculated 'Jewish terrorist' shows no remorse in court](http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/pages/1127910.html) By Chaim Levinson, Haaretz 11-13-09 <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/pages/1127910.html>

⁵⁴11-28-09 Ami Update

There is no telling how long it will take for the court case of Yaakov Teitel to run its course.

Justice grinds slowly in the Israeli courts and in this case, there are over 100 witnesses for the prosecution case alone. Likely as in U.S. cases not every witness will be called to testify, but only those that the prosecution needs to make its case.

It is important for the entire story to be brought out by prosecutors in the Israeli judicial courts and also in the court of public opinion by the media coverage. This case represents a powerful opportunity in Israel for a display of the contrast between darkness and light to be made evident in the faces of two opposing spiritual belief systems.

On trial is a religious view that believes it has the right to exact the vengeance of God upon what it believes are God's enemies. Being represented by the State of Israel are the victims targeted by misguided religious hatred and zealotry. It is a proverbial valley of decision as Israelis watch the case and let their hearts choose on which side they will stand.

What is at stake in the trial of Yaakov Teitel is a hidden spiritual truth. It is one of those trials of God that we often don't recognize as from Him until after our choices are made and the test is over. In this trial, Israel is also choosing in measure her own future – "For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged."

The time for prayer for this case is not past. Please pray not only for the proceedings, but also for the heated spiritual climate surrounding all the Messianic Jews because of it. This is an important spiritual showdown on so many levels. There is a line drawn in the sand, and each of us must take our stance on one side or the other. Will we begin to really see the plight of the indigenous believers in Israel, or will we continue to look the other way? This is a challenge not only to the Body in Israel, but to the Body of Christ worldwide.



**“By this all men will know that you are My disciples,
if you have love for one another.”**

John 13:34

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