

Jewish West Bank Settler: 'I'm Not the Racist.'

Rachel Moore, owner of a "coworking space" in the West Bank, was born and raised in Connecticut, but has lived an Orthodox Jewish life in the Judean Hills with her husband and eight children for the past 20 years.

Friday, she penned an op-ed for *The Times of Israel* titled "You are the racist, actually, not me." In it, she defends not only Jewish settlements in Judea and Samaria, but also the benefits of Israelis and Palestinians living together in one nation.

She wrote, in part:

I am an Orthodox Jewish settler raising seven children in the West Bank. I'm also an American citizen and I voted for Donald Trump. Yeah, I'm that lady. I opened a local business here, and I did so on purpose—to respond to BDS anti-settler activities by encouraging Jewish West Bank residents to work in the West Bank and keep their own businesses local in the West Bank. I believe in annexation and I do not support a two-state solution.

And that makes me a peace-loving, Palestinian-respecting individual. I'm not the racist. You are.

You, my liberal, anti-settler, anti-Trump friends who hate my views—if not me (yet)—are the racists. I have spent a lot of time particularly in the past three months being told by U.S. Democratic voters and U.N. supporters what a monstrous racist group of people we are, those people "like me."

I've finally had enough. I've invited so many of you to engage and hear from real people instead of judging, and you show no interest. Apparently, it's preferable to let

television and the New York Times inform your views on my little corner of the world.

Click here to read the entire article.

Embrace This Friend Who Sticks Closer Than a Brother

One recent morning as I was walking to my car in my driveway, I sensed that familiar voice speaking to me—the voice of the Holy Spirit. The words triggered a big smile on my face. He said to me, “Lee, I get a big kick out of you!” For the next 10 minutes in my car, I praised Him for showing me, yet again, His overwhelming love.

I can already hear some people gnashing their religious teeth over this comment and saying, “You just made that up!” But I know my Father’s love, and His acceptance has transformed me. I’m eager to grow more intimate with Him, and it is the Holy Spirit’s presence that helps me know Him better.

Many Christians struggle to know God as an affectionate, approachable and even playful Daddy. They read the Bible, listen to sermons and attend church, and they can quote Scriptures about God’s love. But for them, God’s love is a cold, clinical doctrine, not a warm experience. If you want to go deeper in intimacy with your Father, consider taking these steps:

First, you must discover your identity as a child of God. I’ve met a few people who don’t know who their father is. But I meet Christians all the time who doubt God loves them as a Father.

The Bible tells us that when we are born again, the Holy Spirit enters our hearts to solve our own paternity mystery. Romans 8:15 says, "You have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, 'Abba! Father!'" The Holy Spirit helps us understand whom we belong to. And His name is *Abba*—the Hebrew word for "Daddy" or "Papa."

Second, you must throw out all old religious mindsets. Are you uncomfortable calling God your "Daddy"? If you are, then you don't really believe Romans 8:15. He is *Abba*! The problem is that many Christians have been conditioned by harsh sermons, rote prayers and somber organ music to believe God is (1) very distant, (2) always angry and (3) too busy managing heaven to take notice of us. That's how the legalistic Pharisees viewed God, but Jesus challenged their warped ideas.

Throughout His life here, Jesus showed us that God is approachable, accepting of all people, friendly toward sinners, forgiving, protective and affectionate. He even let the disciple John lay his head on His chest (John 13:23), something a proper Pharisee would never do! Yet Jesus isn't the slightest bit religious.

If you let Him, He will pull you close to His chest and let you hear the beating of His heart. He really wants you to be close!

Third, you must accept the forgiveness you've already been given. Some Christians can quote every Bible verse about God's forgiveness, yet what they believe in their heads has never shifted to their hearts. Deep down they think God simply tolerates them. They know the blood of Jesus paid for their sins, but this seems more like a legal transaction ratified by a benevolent judge. They still believe God is silently mad at them, even though He canceled their guilty sentence. That is not the gospel!

God did not halfheartedly or reluctantly forgive you. He

forgave you from His gushing heart of love.

Fourth, you must bring your hidden shame out of the closet.

You can receive Christ's forgiveness the moment you confess your sins (1 John 1:9). But James 5:16 says you can go further: you can also confess your secret sins to another person "so that you may be healed." Many Christians have never taken this bold step because it's too embarrassing. But the more transparent you are with others, the freer you will be from your past.

If the devil is constantly reminding you of your past sins, grab another Christian and pray together about these accusations. I guarantee your accuser will flee.

Finally, you must be healed from your own issues with your parents.

When some people hear the word *father*, it conjures up painful memories of domestic abuse, abandonment, alcoholism, or frightening punishments. Others associate *father* with a numb detachment because they never connected emotionally with their dads. These are called "father wounds"—and there is a maternal version too. Don't let the mistakes of your imperfect parents keep you from enjoying God's perfect love.

Talk to a pastor, mentor or counselor about your pain. Then let the Holy Spirit show you that your heavenly Daddy is strong, compassionate, accepting, gentle, kind, and faithful.
{eoa}

*The preceding is an excerpt from **J. Lee Grady's** book, Set My Heart on Fire (Charisma House, 2016). Copyright © 2016 by J. Lee Grady. All rights reserved.*

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including 10 Lies the Church Tells Women, he has just released his newest book, Set My Heart on Fire, from Charisma House. You can follow him on Twitter at @leegrady or go to his website, .

Shatter Shame as You Pray Through This Book of the Bible

Is there something in your past that haunts you?

Is there a moment of indiscretion you can't seem to let go of?

Do you struggle with forgiving yourself for things in your past you've already repented for time and time again?

On Monday, I will begin a new series for the month of January called "What Does the Bible Say About Your Identity in Christ?" We'll not only see why it is important that our identity is firmly planted in Jesus Christ, but how we can get there!

It's the how that so many people struggle with today.

I want to share with you a brief story:

The young man was raging with anger. He was just a boy really, but his anger and actions were those of someone older. A bigger boy had been teasing him and in his fun had unwittingly stepped into an area that instantly incited rage.

The fun quickly changed to fighting, and the fighting became a matter of survival for the one doing the teasing. He was

warding off fists and kicks when suddenly he was thrown to the ground on his back and out of nowhere a sharp object was pointing at his heart.

Just as quickly, a man in his early 20s was standing over both of them and had the attacker by the arm, preventing him from stabbing the boy on the ground. "What are you doing?" he yelled at the attacker. "Stop this now!"

He pulled the attacker off the boy who had been teasing him. The 20-year-old was a volunteer police officer; he showed his badge and told the young man he was under arrest. The boy who had been doing the teasing jumped up and ran home.

The volunteer policeman and the attacker began walking down the street. "I am not going to cuff you or take you to the station. Instead, I am going take you to another office, and you will receive a different kind of sentencing."

They continued walking and talking. The boy shared his struggle with anger, and the officer spoke calmly and compassionately.

Instead of hearing the yelling and demeaning words he was used to, the troubled boy heard words of care and encouragement. The walk and conversation continued for a lengthy time, and to the boy's surprise, he and the officer entered a YMCA building.

The officer took the boy to the YMCA manager's office and sentenced him to one month of weekly attendance of YMCA activities.

The officer never made an official record of the attempted murder.

This volunteer police officer's act of mercy along with the kindness and positive Christian atmosphere of the YMCA were the initial steps that would lead this 10-year-old boy to

life transformation.

Six years later, after this same boy gave way to another explosion of anger, a Christian leader showed him a similar act of mercy. This act of mercy led that boy to a full encounter with Almighty God, which brought him to repentance and a born-again experience.

That boy was my dad. You can read the whole post here: “When Mercy Triumphed.”

You may wonder how someone could ever live with the guilt of knowing they almost took another person’s life with their own hands.

Well, that is exactly what we’re going to be looking at in January—the truth that we don’t have to live with guilt, condemnation, our past mistakes and failures or our past hurts and disappointments.

That is why I chose the book of Ephesians as our January 30 Day Prayer Challenge.

It says so much about our identity and our role in every part of society as His children.

I hope you’ll join me this month as we discover our identity in Christ and as we learn to live life through that lens, something that will truly set us free! {eoa}

Rosilind Jukic, a Pacific Northwest native, is a missionary living in Croatia and married to her Bosnian hero. Together they live with their two active boys where she enjoys fruity candles, good coffee and a hot cup of herbal tea on a blustery fall evening. Her passion for writing led her to author her best-selling book *The Missional Handbook*. At *A Little R & R* she encourages women to find contentment in what God created them to be. You can also find her at *Missional Call* where she shares her passion for local and global missions. She can also

be found at on a regular basis. You can follow her on Facebook, Pinterest and Google +.

Prophetic Word: Walking in the Currency of Heaven

On Friday, I spoke about self-ambition disguised as vision. I see this as one of three soulish idols—something the enemy is using against God’s church to keep it from striving for things they already have and abandoning what they have for things they do not want or need.

The second idol of the soul-realm is self-preservation, which the enemy disguises as wisdom. Most of us have had our fair share of rejection and betrayal. Some of us have had more than a fair share.

The old saying goes, “Fool me once, shame on you; fool me twice, shame on me.” In an attempt to avoid being fooled again, we often establish walls that hinder intimacy with the body of Christ but most importantly, the Trinity. These walls can appear to be wisdom. We may think we are building safe boundaries, but there is a difference between a wall and a boundary. A wall is a vow we make to protect ourselves, such as “I will never allow someone to hurt me like that again.” A wall causes us to avoid people, situations and opportunities in an attempt to stay safe. A boundary empowers us to trust people and work with them without fear.

The enemy and God both use rejection as a rite of passage. God uses rejection to reveal our weak spots so we become aware and can be healed. The devil uses rejection to reveal our weak spots so we can become self-contained and powerless.

We must run into God and allow him to be our refuge rather than walking in self-preservation.

So what is self-preservation exactly?

Self-preservation is a state of isolation brought on by rejection, resulting in a strong desire and self-centered determination to maintain one's present condition. There is no delight in understanding, only expressing one's own heart (see Prov. 18:1-2). Life often teaches us it is wise to avoid people, refusing to trust our hearts to anyone; yet the Scripture teaches us differently in 1 John 1:5-7.

"God is light, and in Him is no darkness ... if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin."

Based on the Greek understanding of this passage, we could also say it like this: "God is truth and in Him there is no deception ... If we walk in the truth as He walks in the truth, we have fellowship with one another and blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin."

Deception is presenting ourselves in the best possible light. In doing so, we will leave a certain truth out and manipulate situations and people to keep that truth from surfacing. We mainly do all of this on a subconscious level because we are proud. We do not want people to know who we really are because we are afraid of rejection. Most of us think our deception is actually helping our relationships because we cannot trust people with the truth.

Let me give you an example of the deception of self-preservation. When I was a young mother and pastor, I struggled with punctuality. So, if I was running late for a meeting, I would be trying to come up with an excuse that would make me look as good as I could in the situation. I told myself I didn't want to make the person feel like she wasn't

important enough to me. So I sought to deceive her in order to preserve my relationship with her. It was about that time in my life that the Lord revealed this passage in 1 John to me. He told me, "People would rather have the truth, and so would I."

When I thought about it, I was just trying to protect myself from criticism. True humility is not thinking less of ourselves; it is thinking of ourselves less often. We have all experienced being deceived; we can usually tell when people are lying or keeping something from us. We all long for people to just admit when they are wrong.

Most of us would respect them and forgive them for what they did. Yet, when we need to admit wrong, it can feel so degrading, and we often resort to deception, thinking that others will not respect us if we tell the truth. We must abandon self-preservation, which comes from rejection and is generated by our pride. We must yield to the truth of God's Word and walk in truth rather than deception.

What is genuine wisdom?

Wisdom is the soundness of an action or decision with regard to the application of experience and knowledge. According to Proverbs, wisdom begins with the Spirit of the fear of the Lord. Isaiah 11 tells us that the Spirit of the fear of the Lord is one of the names of the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit of the fear of the Lord empowers us to recognize sinful thoughts, feelings and beliefs that are grounded in worldly wisdom. They may appear sound because of hurtful experiences, but they are not biblical. When we walk with Holy Spirit, inviting Him to bring conviction into our lives, we learn to repent rather than make excuses for our actions. If we are walking intimately with Holy Spirit, we have more of a desire to be changed by people and situations rather than to change our situation and the people we think are the problem.

Many years ago, I was facing persecution from the church affiliation I was a part of at the time.

They were godly people but were not accepting of prophetic ministry or anyone who accepted the call to such an office. It was very difficult for me to keep my heart free from offense because no one confronted me personally, but they were quite vocal from their pulpits. I could have felt justified in using my pulpit to retaliate. But the Spirit of the fear of the Lord led me to honor my persecutors publicly—and privately when in their company. This often felt humiliating, but I am so thankful for all I learned and how that experience helped me to mature spiritually and gain authority in my calling.

It is time for the church to walk with the Spirit of the fear of the Lord so we honor God more than our own interests. God will protect us when we stop trying to do it ourselves. Self-preservation is often disguised as wisdom. We must invite the Spirit of the fear of the Lord to bring conviction and illuminate the difference for us.

Self-Condensation Disguised as Humility

The third idol of the soul-realm is self-condemnation, which means “to express complete disapproval of, to declare someone unfit for use, to sentence to a particular punishment.”

Self-condemnation made me feel like I needed to sit down, shut up and wear beige. The Lord began to show me how I kept exchanging the anointing for humility. Every time a proud thought came to my mind, I would stop letting the Lord use me, telling myself I was too proud to be effective for God. It was easy for the devil to stop me from being who God wanted me to be; all he had to do was convince me I was proud for using my gifts. We have to learn to rebuke pride, but not disqualify ourselves from walking in the anointing God has chosen to place on our lives.

How do we recognize self-condemnation?

We can often think self-condemnation is conviction from God. Self-condemnation requires us to walk with inferiority, and that does not come from our Father who desires to empower us. Father has passed out gifts to us, and we are to use them as we mature in our faith, not afterwards.

Romans 12 reveals seven DNA gifts given by Father, and He requires us to use them according to our level of faith. I have a DNA gift mix of prophet and servant. For many years, I struggled with an internal battle between the very different perspectives in these two gifts. I can best describe this turmoil with a vision I had that reveals my personal struggle with self-condemnation.

In the vision, I saw my prophetic gift as a very intimidating beekeeper, powerful and scary-looking with tattoos and large muscles. Bees were swarming a young woman, and I was fearlessly hosing her off with a fire hose. She was screaming for me to stop because the water was stinging her more than the bees. But I ignored her, because I knew the water wouldn't kill her, but the bees might.

At the same time, I saw my servant gift as a refined version of myself, sitting behind a desk. My servant gift was speaking very gently to the woman as to not offend her but was having no effect on her or the bees. Yet the servant part of me felt good about the fact that I was able to remain calm in the situation, demonstrating gentleness and patience. Once the prophetic version of myself, represented by the beekeeper, freed the woman from the bees, the woman was very grateful.

However, my servant gift, represented by the refined version of myself, was disgusted by the beekeeper's behavior and sat very smug, speaking with condemnation to both the beekeeper and the girl who needed to be rescued. My servant side felt ignored by both the prophet and the girl being attacked.

I realize now that Holy Spirit brought healing and maturity to

both my prophetic gift and servant gift through that tug-of-war on the inside. As iron sharpens iron, so the two different perspectives inside of me sharpened each other. Now I am both a prophet with a softer approach and a servant who isn't afraid to be bold.

So what internal conversation is going on inside of you? Are you being refined in the fire or oppressed by your imperfections?

Walk in True Humility

“You search the Scriptures, because you think in them you have eternal life. These are they who bear witness of Me [Jesus]. Yet you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life. ... Do not think that I shall accuse you to the Father. There is one who accuses you—Moses, in whom you trust” (John 5:39-40, 45).

Self-condemnation is generated by the letter of the Law, while Jesus is the Spirit of the Law. As the above Scripture points out, diligently studying the Word should lead us to depend on Jesus.

However, if it leads you to feeling disapproved of, that condemnation does not come from Jesus.

It comes from Moses or, in other words, a religious view that sees the Word as laws to be kept, not a person to trust in.

True humility comes from confidence and safety in the love of Jesus. It frees us to be known for who we are, nothing more and nothing less. Arrogance and insecurity are just different expressions of a proud heart. If you walk in arrogance, you will think more highly of yourself, making excuses for failure, rendering Holy Spirit unable to move you. If you walk in insecurity, you will think less of yourself, exempting yourself in failure, again rendering Holy Spirit unable to move you.

When you are not afraid to be yourself, you will honor God in success, accept failure, remain a learner and allow Holy Spirit to move you. This is genuine humility. It is actually much easier to just be yourself, trusting Jesus to make up the difference, but first you have to get rid of self-condemnation.

I bless you to walk in genuine vision, wisdom and humility, which is the currency of heaven.

Heaven's currency produces rest in God and joyful remembrance for all God is and does. It also empowers us with resurrection power. May you encounter the Spirit of the fear of the Lord, who will expose the currency of hell and free you from the soulish idols of self-ambition, self-preservation and self-condemnation, which align you with the enemy who comes to steal, kill and destroy.

As I see the tide rising and the winds of change stirring, heaven is unleashing a current of the Father's thoughts intended to sweep his bride up into the arms of her Savior. May you have ears to hear and eyes to see what the Father is saying in this hour. May your spirit be nourished with these words and your soul aligned with the currency of heaven. Be released from the turbulence of the soul-realm, resting in your identity as a Son of God and the bride of Christ. {eoa}

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You Must Change This in Order To Walk in God's Plan for You

Do you ever feel it is too late to fulfill the plan and purpose God has for your life?

If you do, let me encourage you. According to our country's legal retirement years, I am several years past retirement age but still work and enjoy it. I work because I want to, not because I have to.

Yet, I know that until God calls me home I will continue to walk in the destiny He has for me. God has promised in His Word that with long life and length of days will He satisfy me (see Ps. 91:16). I don't allow my age to dictate what I can accomplish for God.

This year, for example, I still work part-time at my job, write articles for my website and continue to minister regularly, often traveling to different states and out of the country. I also attend church and special meetings on a regular basis and find time to enjoy my grandchildren. Walking in the destiny of God is fun and exciting.

In fact, I see no reason why we can't experience life as Moses did until the end of our days. The Word of God tells us that although he was old when he died (120 years), his eyes were not dim and his strength was not abated (see Deut. 34:7). I rejoice that I can give a similar report. Although I am up in years, I have no lack of vitality and see perfectly with the glasses God provided.

In order to walk in the fullness of God's plan for our lives, however, we have to change the way we see ourselves. We are not weak, ineffective and purposeless—or too old to make a difference. God's plan does not have time limits like a parking meter. It doesn't have to be fulfilled before you

reach a certain age or end when your children are grown up or you stop receiving a paycheck.

God has had thoughts “to give you a future and a hope” (Jer. 29:11c) since before you were conceived. And He created you and equipped you to bear fruit until the day you leave this Earth.

The psalmist alludes to this destiny when he says to God: “For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother’s womb. I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, And that my soul knows very well” (Ps. 139:13-14, NKJV).

Does your soul (your mind, will and emotions) know “very well” that you are “fearfully and wonderfully made”? Do you really believe it?

If not, renew your thinking by memorizing Scriptures like this that point to the destiny and plan God has for your life. As you meditate on the Word, your mind will begin to grasp the truth that you are not an accident. You will see that God considered every detail in forming you in your mothers’ womb. He knew you even before He fashioned you.

In essence, here is what verses 13 and 14 of Psalm 139 say of God’s creation: “Fearfully” indicates that God took extreme and very great care when He created you. “Wonderfully” means He made you “marvelous, surprisingly fine or excellent.” And “marvelous” says you are “astonishingly excellent.”

Verses 15 and 16 declare that God knew what He was doing: “My frame was not hidden from You, when I was made in secret, and skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they are all written, the days fashioned for me, when as yet there were none of them.”

God had a plan for you before you could even step into it, and

only you can keep you from it. The devil can't.

The devil tried everything he could to destroy Moses. But crocodiles couldn't kill him. False gods of the Nile could not destroy him. Pharaoh could not eradicate him. Instead, Pharaoh's own daughter paid wages to have Moses' birth mother nurse him. God had a destiny for Moses, and He protected Him so he could fulfill it.

But there's even more encouraging news: Much of what God used Moses to accomplish came about in the later years of Moses' life. He didn't even get much of a start until he turned 80.

It's never too late for you to step into God's plan for your life and accomplish the purpose for which He created you. If you think you've missed it somehow by not cooperating with Him, simply repent and express your willingness to be and do all He desires. Before you know it, you'll see that, like Jesus, you are anointed to preach the good news, heal the brokenhearted and set the captives free (see Is. 61:1-3; Luke 4:18-19)—and that you have ample opportunities remaining to bear “much fruit” (John 15:5).

Prayer Power for the Week of January 1, 2017

As you begin this “Happy New Year,” thank God that He knows the end from the beginning and while you have breath He has a plan, a purpose and a destiny for you to fulfill, no matter how young or how old you are. Continue to look with anticipation for the good things He has in store for you, and ask Him for divine appointments and connections in your daily walk. Continue to lift up our nation and its allies, and thank the Lord for His ongoing provision and protection. Pray for our leaders as they transition to a new administration. Continue to ask the Lord for revival and more laborers to reap the harvest of souls (Is. 61: 1-3; Luke 4:18-19; John 15:5).
{eoa}

Manhunt Under Way For Gunman Who Killed 39 in Turkish New Year's Attack

A gunman opened fire on New Year revelers at a packed nightclub on the shores of Istanbul's Bosphorus waterway on Sunday killing at least 39 people, including many foreigners, then fled the scene.

Some people jumped into the Bosphorus waters to save themselves after the attacker opened fire at random in the Reina nightclub just over an hour into the new year. Officials spoke of a single attacker but some reports, including on social media, suggested there may have been more.

The attack shook NATO member Turkey as it tries to recover from a failed July coup and a series of deadly bombings in cities including Istanbul and the capital Ankara, some blamed on Islamic State and others claimed by Kurdish militants.

Security services had been on alert across Europe for new year celebrations following an attack on a Christmas market in Berlin that killed 12 people. Only days ago, an online message from a pro-Islamic State group called for attacks by "lone wolves" on "celebrations, gatherings and clubs."

The Hurriyet newspaper cited witnesses as saying the attackers shouted in Arabic as they opened fire at Reina.

"We were having fun. All of a sudden people started to run. My husband said don't be afraid, and he jumped on me. People ran over me. My husband was hit in three places," one club-goer, Sinem Uyanik, told the newspaper.

"I managed to push through and get out, it was terrible," she

said, describing seeing people soaked in blood.

The incident bore echoes of an attack by militant Islamists on Paris's Bataclan music hall in November 2015 that, along with assaults on bars and restaurants, killed 130 people.

Interior Minister Suleyman Soylu said 15 or 16 of those killed at Reina were foreigners but only 21 bodies had so far been identified. He told reporters 69 people were in hospital, four of them in critical condition.

"A manhunt for the terrorist is underway," he said.

Nationals of Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Lebanon, Libya, Israel and Belgium were among those killed, officials said. France said three of its citizens were wounded.

Turkey is part of the coalition against Islamic State and launched an incursion into Syria in August to drive the radical Sunni militants from its borders. It also helped broker a fragile ceasefire in Syria with Russia.

As a nation, we will fight to the end against not just the armed attacks of terror groups, but also against their economic, political and social attacks," President Tayyip Erdogan said in a written statement.

"They are trying to create chaos, demoralize our people, and destabilize our country ... We will retain our cool-headedness as a nation, standing more closely together, and we will never give ground to such dirty games," he said.

There has been no claim of responsibility, but Erdogan linked the attacks to developments in the region where Turkey faces conflict across its frontier in Syria and Iraq. Some three million Syrian refugees currently live on Turkish soil.

The Reina club is one of Istanbul's best known nightspots, popular with locals and foreigners. Some 600 people were thought to have been inside when the gunman shot dead a

policeman and civilian at the door, forced his way in and then opened fire.

Istanbul Governor Vasip Sahin said the attacker used a “long-range weapon” to “brutally and savagely” fire on people, apparently referring to some form of assault rifle.

U.S. President Barack Obama, on vacation in Hawaii, expressed condolences and directed his team to offer help to the Turkish authorities, the White House said.

‘Police Moved in Quickly’

Dozens of ambulances and police vehicles were dispatched to the club in Ortakoy, a neighborhood on the city’s European side nestled under one of three bridges crossing the Bosphorus and home to nightclubs, restaurants and art galleries.

“I didn’t see who was shooting but heard the gun shots and people fled. Police moved in quickly,” Sefa Boydas, a Turkish soccer player, wrote on Twitter.

“My girlfriend was wearing high heels. I lifted her and carried her out on my back,” he said.

Hurriyet quoted Reina’s owner, Mehmet Kocarslan, as saying security measures had been taken over the past 10 days after U.S. intelligence reports suggested a possible attack.

Turkey faces multiple threats including spillover from the war in Syria. Beside its cross-border campaign against Islamic State, it is fighting Kurdish militants in its southeast.

The New Year’s Day attack came five months after a failed military coup, in which more than 240 people were killed, many of them in Istanbul, as rogue soldiers commandeered tanks and fighter jets in a bid to seize power.

More than 100,000 people, including soldiers and police officers, have been sacked or suspended in a subsequent

crackdown ordered by Erdogan, raising concern both about civic rights and the effectiveness of Turkey's security apparatus.

On Dec. 28, the Nashir Media Foundation, which backs Islamic State, urged sympathizers to carry out attacks in Europe during the holiday period and to "replace their fireworks with explosive belts and devices, and turn their singing and clapping into weeping and wailing."

A month ago, a spokesman for Islamic State urged supporters to target "the secular, apostate Turkish government."

Turkey has seen repeated attacks in recent weeks. On Dec. 10, two bombs claimed by Kurdish militants exploded outside a soccer stadium in Istanbul, killing 44 people.

A car bomb killed at least 13 soldiers and wounded 56 when it ripped through a bus carrying off-duty military personnel in the central city of Kayseri a week later, an attack Erdogan also blamed on Kurdish militants.

The Russian ambassador to Turkey was shot dead as he gave a speech in Ankara on Dec. 19 by an off-duty police officer who shouted "Don't forget Aleppo" and "Allahu Akbar."

In June, around 45 people were killed and hundreds wounded as three suspected Islamic State militants carried out a gun and bomb attack on Istanbul's main Ataturk airport. {eo}

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(Additional reporting by Yesim Dikmen and Daren Butler in Istanbul, Ece Toksabay in Ankara, Jeffrey Heller in Jerusalem, Jan Strupczewski in Brussels, Laurence Frost in Paris; Writing by Nick Tattersall; Editing by Ralph Boulton)