

# Christian Broadcaster “Blown Off Feet” Near Gaza

*International Christian broadcaster Earl Cox survived two Hamas rocket attacks last Thursday.*



[ ] A Christian broadcaster and staunch pro-Israel advocate narrowly escaped injury following two Hamas rocket attacks near the Israeli-Gaza border.

Earl Cox, founder of Israel Always, which has raised significant financial support for Israel in recent years, traveled to southern Israel last week to report on the Mideast conflict and to identify some of the many humanitarian needs in the border area.

According to a ministry report, as sirens screamed last Thursday in Sderot, Israel, warning the population of incoming rockets, Cox and his team **scrambled for cover** inside a portable bomb shelter. Though they escaped serious injury, the rocket landed so close to Cox and his crew that shock waves from the blast threw him and one of his aids against the wall. “I was blown off my feet,” Cox later recalled.

After the first blast, he and others escaped a second rocket attack unharmed after taking cover in a nearby building.

“Those of you in America who don’t believe this war is real, let me tell you, it is real,” Cox said in a video appeal for prayer and financial support. “I know what it is like. It’s terrifying, believe me.”

Cox’s wife, Kathleen, who organized a motorcade rally on Sunday from her home in Mount Pleasant, S.C., to downtown Charleston to show the Christian community’s solidarity with Israel, knows the risks her husband is taking. “Earl [has] experienced a taste of the horror the people living in southern Israel suffer every day,” she said.

Israel’s offensive on Hamas militants holed up in Gaza entered a third week on Saturday, furthering a sense of civilian fear on both sides of the border. As observers worldwide hoped for an end to the fighting, the leader of an international ministry that advocates for the persecuted church called Palestinian Christians “clear losers” in the conflict.

"[We're] not politically involved with this conflict, and we don't attempt to tease out the answer of which side is most responsible for starting it," Carl Moeller, president and CEO of Open Doors U.S., told *Charisma*. "We stand with those who are suffering. Our major focus is [Christians in Gaza], since there are only about 2,500 of them left and they are in the cross hairs of both the Hamas extremists and the Israeli Defense Forces."

Bishara Awad, president of Bethlehem Bible College, which maintains contact with Gazan Christians through the Baptist Church of Gaza, reported on Wednesday that three Christians, all of them civilians, have lost their lives in the war so far, and that civilian casualties often include women and children.

"We are witnessing a great humanitarian crisis; the situation in Gaza is horrible," Bishara said in a letter requesting financial and prayer support. "[Most] Gazans are out of electricity and gas, and most of the time they have no running water. There were days when they did not have any food to cook."

The Jewish state has consistently defended its decision to send Israeli troops and planes into Gaza as an act of self-defense. Israeli forces, which halt fighting daily to send humanitarian aid into Gaza, drew immediate support from the U.S. and other key allies for its actions.

Christians in the West who believe terrorism is the root cause of Palestinian suffering reject global denunciation of the Israel-led offensive, especially from the Arab world.

"Israel is again being condemned worldwide for commencing an attack against Hamas terrorists entrenched in Gaza," said Mideast analyst and *New York Times* best-selling author Mike Evans. "Israeli government leaders have reiterated that they [did] not wish to move militarily against the Gaza Strip and its inhabitants.

"They do, however, have the right and the obligation to protect innocent Israelis, which include both Jews and Arabs, from being held hostage by Hamas and its fellow terrorist organizations operating in Gaza," Evans added.

Other observers share Evans' view that Israel is being unfairly portrayed as the aggressor. "Whether it is bias or laziness, the media is not doing enough to provide the context

for Israel's actions," David Brog, executive director of Christians United for Israel, told *Charisma* on Tuesday. "Israel did not just decide out of the blue to go into Gaza. On the contrary, Israel exercised enormous restraint as over 10,000 rockets and mortars have been fired into southern Israel from Gaza in recent years.

"What we are seeing now is a long-overdue response," Brog said. "By ignoring this history, the media too often portrays Israel as the aggressor when it is in fact only exercising its legitimate right to self defense."

Meanwhile, Chaya Mizrachi, a co-founder of Dugit Messianic Outreach Center in Tel Aviv, said on Tuesday that she planned to travel to the dangerous border town of Sderot to pray for Israel and its troops. "We have around 70 Messianic Jewish soldiers in the Israel Defense Force (IDF)—young believers fighting in Gaza," she said. "I knew them as children playing with my girls. I have known some of their parents for many years. Now, today, they are fighting a just war in defense of their nation.

"Israel stands behind her soldiers, and we are involved in doing things to help," she said.—**Paul Steven Ghiringhelli**  
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