

Cease-Fire: Will the Truce Hold?

After 50 days of Hamas' war against the people of Israel, a cease-fire—the 12th one in seven weeks—has been declared. On Tuesday, Hamas and Israel agreed to a new deal, one that was negotiated by the Al-Sissi government in Egypt.

Thus far during the war, Hamas and its radical Islamic terrorist allies have fired 4,450 rockets, missiles and mortars at Israeli civilians, both Jews and Arabs.

Hamas has broken all 11 of the previous deals. So there is not a lot of confidence here in Israel that the true quiet and calm has come.

That said, we are certainly hoping and praying that this quiet will come at last. We are cautious, and somewhat skeptical, but we're trying not to be cynical. We all want peace to come.

Where my wife, Lynn, and the boys and I live, we have been spared the rocket fire. But Israelis living in the south have been under relentless attack. They are brave and determined. But many of them are exhausted as well.

Not since the Nazis fired rockets at London during World War II have civilian populations been under such relentless rocket attack. The sooner this ends—with as few casualties as possible—the better.

What has been extraordinary is to see how the Lord God of Israel has been so kind and gracious to the Israeli people during this time. There have been deaths, and injuries, to be sure. But if it weren't for the Lord's mercy and the miraculous Iron Dome system, this could have been a horrific massacre of the Jewish people. And it wasn't.

The Israeli people have much to be thankful for, and I hope and pray that Israel's Prime Minister and other leaders will call the nation to give thanks to the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob for His many blessings.

Here are the details on the cease-fire:

"Israel and the Palestinians agreed to an Egyptian proposal for a cease-fire to end Gaza hostilities which went into effect at 7 p.m. Israeli time on Tuesday," reports the *Jerusalem Post*. "Despite the Egyptian announcement of the cease-fire, red alert sirens continued to be heard in Israel's southern communities after 7 p.m. An Israeli was killed by one of dozens of mortar shells fired at the Eshkol Regional Council just before the cease-fire was set to commence."

"Senior Israeli officials said that the cabinet ministers were updated by phone that Israel would accept the cease-fire," the *Post* reported. "The eight-person security cabinet was briefed on the decision to accept the cease-fire, but not asked to vote on it."

"The Egyptian proposal which the sides agreed to entails an unlimited cease-fire letting material in to rehabilitate Gaza under supervision. In addition, each side will raise other demands within a month. The announcement came after Palestinian officials had earlier stated that a deal had been reached to end the nearly two months of fighting."

The Times of Israel is reporting the following summary of the past 50 days of fighting:

- Hamas has fired 4,450 rockets and other projectiles at Israel.
- Of these, 3,555 fell in Israel – 221 of them in residential areas.
- The Iron Dome missile defense system intercepted 714 incoming rockets.
- In Gaza, the Israel Air Force has hit 5,226 Hamas and

other terror targets, the army says.