

Justice Prevails in Trial of Terrorism Attack on Jewish Family

A little more than five years ago, a young Israeli boy opened what looked like a holiday package left on his doorstep. The package was a bomb. It was one in a series of attacks targeting the family of Ami Ortiz and others.

On Tuesday, an Israeli court brought the case to closure by sentencing American-born Jack Teitel, who perpetrated that attack and several others.

An amazing part of the story deals with the forgiving spirit shown by Ami Ortiz, his parents and siblings.

Jack Teitel walked into the Jerusalem courtroom unrepentant Tuesday, saying he had no regrets.

The judge responded with two life sentences for two murder cases and an additional 30 years for other crimes, including the attempted murder of the Ortiz family.

"We hope that this heavy punishment will deter any others who might think of doing any kind of terror activities or participate in such," said Jerusalem District Attorney Sagi Ofire.

Teitel's reign of terror included killing two Arabs and planting a bomb at the home of Messianic pastors David and Leah Ortiz.

The explosion nearly killed then 15-year-old Ami. Miraculously, he survived.

At one point, Teitel claimed he did God's will, but during sentencing the judge said his "holy" work had become dust

under his feet, and his actions contradicted the values of the Jewish state.

Part of his mission included eradicating Jews who believe Jesus is the Jewish Messiah – from Israel. Ironically, his actions spread the news of Messianic Jews throughout the country.

“The Lord has, in His mercy, chosen us to suffer for His name sake that His name should be lifted up because that’s the only thing we take with us, only Jesus,” his father told CBN News.

His mother, Leah, says God told her from the outset to pray for the man who almost killed her son.

“He really dealt with me from the very beginning concerning that and He gave me His love for Jack Teitel,” she said. “I didn’t even know who Jack Teitel was, but He gave me the love of God and told me to pray for the person who did this and pray for his salvation and that’s what I did.”

“Have you and David, Ami and the rest of the family forgiven him,” CBN News asked her.

“All of us, from the very beginning,” she responded without hesitation. “Otherwise, we would have been prisoners along with him. We would have been destroyed. We wouldn’t have been able to receive any kind of healing in our lives whatsoever and so we did. We all forgave him.”

The family’s lawyer, Yossi Greiber, called them “an amazing family.”

“For me, I consider them as heroes,” Greiber said. “To deal with [at] the same time as the medical situation and with a son who almost died in the explosion...on the other hand [to] deal with the psychological situation with the family—all the house was destroyed by the explosives—and the legal issues, and they dealt with that with a good sensitivity,” he said.

“They are an amazing family.”

Yet the Ortiz family credits the prayers of believers from around the world for carrying them through this horrendous time.

“It was their prayers that were able to lift us up and keep us afloat,” Ortiz said. “Without the prayers, we wouldn’t be able to do it.”

His mother says she came to know God more closely than ever.

“I have never known the Lord as Emanuel [God with us] as I have through this situation,” she said. “He has stayed so close to us. We have experienced the Body of Christ around the world that is unbelievable, how everyone pulled together.”

David and Leah Ortiz were relieved at the verdict, grateful Teitel cannot harm other families and hope one day to visit him in jail to share God’s love.

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