

With Rockets Falling All Around, Israelis Stand United

When Israel faces crisis and grief, the Jewish people and those who stand with it unite and are inseparable. This intuitive lesson is rooted in our faith and has biblical roots, such as in Ecclesiastes 4:

Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up. Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

As of this writing, hundreds of rockets continue to fall throughout Israel from terrorists in Gaza putting millions of Israelis in direct range, and riots are gathering steam both throughout Palestinian Arab areas as well as among Israeli Arabs. Israel's security forces are on high alert.

And Magen David Adom (MDA), Israel's national emergency medical response service is fully deployed, on all fronts. Israel's blood supply, also managed by MDA, has been dispatched to bomb shelters, as has the equipment to process it. We prepare for the worst, but pray for a positive outcome.

With the murders, violence and continued threats, Israel has been united like never before, and those who stand with Israel—Jews and Christians—are unhesitant in their resolve. Israelis know this, and are genuinely blessed by the outpouring of prayers, love, and support.

This past week, there were four notable examples of how Americans stand with Israel through Heart to Heart. They're especially praiseworthy and it gives me great pride to share

them here, as well as with Israelis who, too often, feel very alone.

Donna Calcaterra is a woman with a heart for Israel the size of the state in which she lives, New Jersey. She literally lives and works to support Israel. In response to the recent kidnapping and murder of the three teenage Israeli boys by Hamas terrorists, Donna stepped up personally to donate funds for a new ambulance in their memory to be delivered later this year.

"Other than praying, there's very little we can do in the U.S. that genuinely provides comfort and a sense of security to all Israelis. I wanted to do something that made a positive contribution. It just made sense to donate an ambulance in memory of the murdered Israeli teens as a way to express that support, and memorialize the boys who were murdered while providing this support for saving lives. "Through this, thousands of lives will be saved that the terrorists cannot take away," Calcaterra said.

On the opposite side of the country, Pastor Touré Roberts' grief was so profound that he called upon his entire Los Angeles church to take an offering also to dedicate an ambulance in the boys' memory. Pastor Touré, like so many others, understands the Biblical injunction to bless Israel, and his message to that end is unwavering.

"I have been praying for Israel and the peace of Jerusalem, and praying about how to help personally. When something so horrendous happens such as the terrorist murder of innocent Israeli boys, we want to raise Israel up and show our support and love. One Church International stands with Israel and all Israelis. I pray that the donation of this new ambulance will not just save lives in Israel, but be a vehicle to comfort for the boys' families and all Israelis," Pastor Toure said.

Rebecca Brimmer, International President and CEO of Bridges

for Peace, is intimately familiar with Jerusalem in specific and Israel in general, and her ministry promotes the imperative for Christians to stand with Israel. They touch the lives of more than 40,000 Israelis per month.

When they committed to donate an ambulance, it just made sense. "In the 1967 Six Day War, Dr. Young, our founder, volunteered as an ambulance driver. These times of crisis are the most important times to stand with Israel. What better way to commemorate this tradition and our service to Israel than to donate a new ambulance as Israel faces threats anew?"

These leaders have challenged others to step up and do the same, to join the growing tide of acts of love and charity so that somehow, through the grief, something positive could come out of it. Indeed, Rachel Frankel, whose son Naftali—a dual American and Israeli citizen—was one of the murdered teens noted, "Each prayer has its own work to do. There is no senseless act of love and charity. (Every) good act stands on its own."

In Jerusalem, a number of visiting American rabbis, assembled for a summer sabbatical of intensive study, literally came to the table to do something to help in a first hand, personal way. They donated blood.

Heart to Heart supports MDA, Israel's national EMS, ambulance, blood, and humanitarian organization. Your support of Heart to Heart makes a genuine difference—whether you donate blood personally in Jerusalem like thousands of other Americans, donate money to supply a new ambulance, or sponsor a unit of blood for only \$100 through our innovative virtual blood donation program. This is perhaps the most practical and personally meaningful way to bless Israel and save lives in Israel, regardless of ethnicity, religion, or nationality.

If you're already supporting Heart to Heart, thank you from the bottom of our hearts. Please continue and share this with

others. If you have yet to join us, please consider doing so individually or as partners through your church or ministry.

Jonathan Feldstein is the director of Heart to Heart, a unique virtual blood donation program to bless Israel and save lives in Israel. Born and educated in the U.S., Feldstein emigrated to Israel in 2004. He is married and the father of six. Throughout his life and career, he has been blessed by the calling to fellowship with Christian supporters of Israel and shares experiences of living as an Orthodox Jew in Israel. He writes a regular column for Charisma's Standing With Israel. You can contact Jonathan at firstpersonisrael@.