

Bomb Shelters for Israel

The shelters we provide will serve as a lasting testimony of Christian love.

Later this month Jews will celebrate Purim, a holiday that has its origins in the biblical story of Esther, the young Jewish queen who saved the Jews from annihilation by their enemy, Haman. This well-known story formed the basis of Matt Crouch's beautiful 2006 movie, *One Night With the King*.

Today Jews face annihilation from radical Muslims, including Palestinians, who continually launch missiles from Gaza to attack towns in southern Israel. The violence has escalated sharply since Israel withdrew from Gaza in the summer of 2005, and often when the air-raid sirens sound in towns such as Sderot, there is nowhere for innocent civilians to hide.

To provide shelter for these potential victims, an Israeli organization, Operation Lifeshield, has built portable, above-ground air-raid shelters that can be placed where needed to provide temporary shelter until the pounding from the Kassam missiles I was in Israel last fall, I saw two models: one the size of a bus stop that is capable of holding more than 15 people and a larger one capable of holding more than 40—typically put near parks, playgrounds, schools or hospitals.

Earl Cox, founder of Israel Always, told me about the need for these portable bomb shelters. He has been supporting the effort for more than a year and has helped purchase 22 shelters. But he said at least 124 more are needed to sufficiently protect the Israelis.

When I learned of the need, I wanted to help out. Cox emphasized that a plaque is placed at the entrance of each

shelter bearing the name of the person or group responsible for providing shelters will serve as a lasting testimony of Christian love to those who seek safety and comfort inside them. Many of the shelters bear witness to this love with plaques that state, "This shelter provided by your Christian friend, _____."

The Israeli government isn't able to provide shelters as quickly as needed and is currently concentrating its efforts on fortifying existing schools and kindergartens. And local governments often lack finances for these lifesaving shelters due to the other realities of living in a war zone. That's why Operation Lifeshield, a nonprofit Israeli charity, stepped in. Thankfully many Christian Zionists in addition to Cox have come to their aid.

To me it's a wonderful opportunity to express love to the Jewish people. For only \$19,500 we can provide a bus-stop-size shelter, and for \$38,000 we can provide a larger, 132-square-foot shelter.

As a regional director for Christians United for Israel, I have taken on Operation Lifeshield as a project. So far we've raised money at A Night to Honor Israel events in Miami and Orlando, Florida; Atlanta and Charlotte, North Carolina. All the money we took in above expenses went to Operation Lifeshield. But so much more is needed that I'm reaching out to the readers of Charisma.

Two years ago we raised \$60,000 when I wrote about the need to buy an ambulance for Israel through Magen David Adom, the Israeli equivalent of the American Red Cross. With that and the money raised through A Night to Honor Israel, we had a total of \$120,000 to purchase what they call an "emergency

room on wheels"—a very well-equipped ambulance.

I believe it's important for us to demonstrate our love to the Jewish people through actions as well as words. Raising money for the ambulance to transport victims of suicide bombers to the hospital was an act of love. But how much better is it to prevent injuries in the first place?

I hope you'll give generously as I have to this project. But I hope you'll also share the vision with your church. If your church sponsors a shelter, a plaque noting its support will be mounted to the shelter. For additional information, go to [opera](#) or [.](#)

You can donate with your credit card on the Web site of our nonprofit partner, Christian Life Missions ([christianlifemissions .org](http://christianlifemissions.org)), or by calling Bryan Newswander at 407-333-7111 during business hours (Eastern Standard Time). Or you can mail your tax-deductible donation to Operation Lifeshield, c/o Christian Life Missions, P.O. Box 952248, Lake Mary, FL 32795-2248.

Won't you donate generously today as you have in the past?

Stephen Strang is the founder and publisher of Charisma. For more information about the threat that Kassam rockets pose to Israel and the need of the Jewish people, go to [.](#)