

(David and Leah Ortiz are Christian missionaries in the Israeli settlement of Ariel, in Samaria. Their ministry is supported by donations from friends in Europe and America, including the Religious Freedom Coalition. The following was an e-mail written by Leah).

Update July 13, 2005

We want to thank God, firstly, that the lives of my son's army unit were spared this week. Yesterday, a suicide bomber drove into the settlement where their base is, and blew himself up in his car, maybe 30 yards from the caravans they sleep in. Those that were in the area were in an armored personnel carrier called a Hammer, and their injuries are very light. The base itself is just 1/2 hour from our home. Natan himself was on leave at home – but the aftermath still leaves a sense of being traumatized and serves to terrorize and demoralize the ones left behind. We continue to pray that during this difficult time that the Lord would continue watching over Natan and his fellow-soldiers.

The four that were murdered and the 90 wounded in the terror attack in Netanya, a major city 45 minutes northwest of Ariel, were not so fortunate. The bomber, who was prevented from entering into a mall by a security guard, ran to the adjacent intersection and blew himself up. Terror is increasing again, and there are many incidents that don't make international news, and terror attacks being prevented daily.

This is an article about the car bomb from the JERUSALEM POST July 12, 2005:

CAR BLAST ROCKS SHAVEI SHOMRON

A truck infiltrated into the West Bank settlement of Shavei Shomron and exploded in the center of the settlement Tuesday around 6:30 p.m., wounding only the driver of the vehicle.

The vehicle, a pick-up truck which was reportedly stolen from an airline industry, managed to drive through the security gates after they were opened for another vehicle to drive out of the settlement.

The pick-up truck, which had Israeli plates - reducing the suspicion of the settlements' guards - was loaded with three highly explosive gas balloons. The car also contained nails and other sharp materials.

The bomber detonated the explosives after driving about 100 meters into the settlement, alongside a basketball court, Judea and Samaria police reported.

When emergency teams approached the truck, which caught fire and remained smoldering long after the explosion, they found the apparent suicide bomber still alive.

Rescuers found his right hand tied to the steering wheel and a large boulder weighing down the gas pedal.

The bomber said that he was forced to do the bombing, although he did not want to.

Magen David Adom medics treated the bomber, who suffered from severe burns.

The security establishment suspected that the Shavei Shomron attack was linked to a Netanya suicide bombing outside of the Sharon Mall, which occurred within an hour.

The Islamic Jihad claimed responsibility for the Netanya attack.

Sources close to the Prime Minister's Office said that Israel would respond to the attacks with a heavy hand.

Natan's fellow-soldier, who is a good friend also from Ariel and in his unit, was the first one to get to the scene. He said that the bomber was tied up with chains. He was burnt like charcoal, and he said that he was told if he didn't do this bombing, his whole family would be killed.

This phenomenon is being exported from here all over the world as we saw in London; it is the deadly result of Islam. There's something about hatred, though. After you use it on your enemies, then you turn it against yourself and those around you. We see this in the bombings in Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Turkey and other Arab countries. The Saudis and the Palestinians have actually created these things, and it's turned into a monster. What was supposed to be a weapon against the West, is now completely out of their control.

Please pray for the Arabic world to receive the Lord. Let's pray for Christians in the Christian world to share the Gospel with Muslims.

Thank you all for your faithful prayers and support. We are grateful, and never take for granted your friendship, love and concern for the work in Samaria.

In Yeshua,

David and Leah Ortiz