

CHAPTER 7

Terrorism



The young woman, an American, wept as she stood in Israel's Lod Airport. Only minutes before, people had been scurrying to catch flights or eagerly awaiting the arrival of friends and relatives.

No one paid much attention when vacation-bound passengers stepped off an Air France flight and walked toward the luggage area. In the crush of people, no one paid much attention as three young Japanese men picked up their luggage from that Air France flight. And then it happened. A tidal wave of terror turned the passenger lounge into a slaughterhouse.

The three Japanese, armed with machine guns and hand grenades plucked from their luggage, attacked. They hurled grenades in every direction and raked the crowd with hundreds of bullets, aiming at no one in particular. In the three to four minutes of killing frenzy, the terrorists lost control of time and direction. One died from the explosion of his own grenade. Another was cut in half by the bullets of another terrorist firing wildly into the crowd.

When the shooting and screaming subsided 24 people were dead. Another victim died two days later. Seventy-six people were wounded" (*Senior Scholastic*, February 8, 1979, p. 7). [The attack took place on May 30, 1972; some reports tell of 26 dead and 80 injured; the Japanese terrorists were working for *The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine*.]

This is but one example of what is commonly called **terrorism**, which involves unlawful acts of violence intended to fill the hearts and minds of people with fear and terror. **Terrorism** is an organized and systematic attempt to use terror as a means of *coercion* (using violence and force to get people to do what you want them to do). Terrorists will use almost any murderous or violent means to accomplish their wicked purposes including bombings, assassinations, kidnappings, hijackings and holding people hostage.

Other dreadful examples of terrorism are as follows:

The Ku Klux Klan is a terrorist group that was formed in 1865. Their goal was to terrify blacks and those who sympathized with blacks. Many Southern whites believed that they were the superior race and that blacks naturally should be slaves. The Ku Klux Klan's goal was to try to maintain superiority of the white race. They made every effort to cause terror among the blacks. Klan members would force wives to watch as their husbands were shot at point-blank range. They whipped, beat, and raped their victims. They hung black people on trees, in public view, so that others would fear. Some blacks even slept in the woods at night for fear that their cabin might be raided by the Klansmen.

In 1972, at the Munich Olympic Village, certain Israeli athletes were captured and later murdered by terrorists. This has been known as the Munich massacre. Members of the Israeli Olympic team were taken hostage and eventually killed by the Palestinian group Black September. By the end of the ordeal, the kidnappers had killed eleven Israeli athletes and coaches and a West German police officer. Five of the eight members of Black September were killed by police officers during a failed rescue attempt.

Aldo Moro was once the Italian premier, a man respected and loved by his countrymen. In 1978 he was kidnapped by a group of terrorists known as the Red Brigades. The kidnappers demanded the release of about 16 other Red Brigades who were being held as prisoners. The Italian government refused to do this. Finally on May 9, 1978, the bullet-ripped body of Aldo Moro was found in the trunk of a car in the center of Rome.

In November of 1979 the United States embassy in Iran was seized by a group of militant students and more than 50 Americans were held as hostages. They would be released only if the United States would return the deposed Shah of Iran (the former leader of the country) who at the time was being treated in a hospital in New York City.

Other examples of terrorist attacks include the following:

The Suicide Bombing of a Marine Barracks in Beirut, Lebanon in 1983

The city of Beirut was regarded as a base of international terrorism. In 1982 Israel invaded Lebanon in an ultimately successful effort to drive out the Palestinian resistance forces that had headquarters in West Beirut and bases in other nearby parts of Lebanon. After Israel's withdrawal, Beirut became notorious as a center for Muslim terrorist groups, some of them supported by Iran. More than 240 United States Marines were killed there in October 1983 in a truck-bombing incident.

The Destruction by Arab Agents of Pan America Flight 103 over Scotland in 1988

Lockerbie is a village in southern Scotland over which occurred, on Dec. 21, 1988, the explosion of Pan American flight 103 en route to New York City from Frankfurt, Germany, by way of London. The jumbo jet broke apart in midair and fell into and around the village, killing all 244 passengers and 15 crew members, as well as 11 people on the ground. The disaster was quickly determined to be the result of a plastic explosive hidden inside a radio-cassette player in luggage placed aboard the plane either in Frankfurt or London. In 1991 both the United States and the United Kingdom indicted two Libyan intelligence agents for the bombing. When Libya refused to allow extradition of these men for trial, the United Nations imposed sanctions on Libya in 1992 and renewed them several times thereafter. Many analysts believe, however, that responsibility for the bombing can more plausibly be placed at the door of the Syrian-based

Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine--General Command (PLFP-GC). According to one theory (one among many), the PLFP-GC, financed by Iran, acted in revenge for the shooting down of an Iranian airliner by the U.S.S. Vincennes in the Persian Gulf in July 1988.

The Garage Bombing of the World Trade Center in New York City in 1993

On Feb. 26, 1993, a powerful explosion in an underground garage collapsed walls and floors in the basement areas and destroyed the power distribution system, forcing most of the 55,000 working there to make their way down lightless stairways within the darkened towers. Six people were killed, over 1,000 injured, and some \$600 million in construction damage and business disruption costs was caused by what was quickly determined to have been a homemade bomb packed in a van that had been parked in the garage. Four men associated with radical Middle-East Islamic groups were tried and found guilty of the bombing in 1995; several others were either in hiding or awaiting trial.

A Car Bombing Outside the Uffizi Palace in 1993

The Uffizi Palace in Florence, Italy, consists of two long, connected parallel buildings by the Amo River near the Palazzo Vecchio. Commissioned (1560) as a civic structure by Cosimo I de'Medici, it was designed and in part built by Giorgio Vasari. Today the Uffizi serves as a museum that houses one of the world's major art collections. In May 1993 a portion of the Uffizi was damaged, and five deaths caused, by the explosion of a powerful car bomb in a street behind the museum. Some 33 paintings were gashed by flying glass. All were repaired, and the wrecked galleries were restored. Several members of the Italian Mafia have been accused of the bombing.

A Subway Gas Attack and a Chemical Weapon Attack in Tokyo in 1995

More than 700 people were hospitalized in Japan after phosgene, a chemical weapon used in World War I, was released on a crowded train at a railway station in Yokohama. The attack occurred just after 1:00 PM local time and caused hundreds of passengers to complain of dizziness, sore throats, and coughing. Japanese authorities did not make any arrests following the incident, which came just one month after a deadly poison gas attack in the Tokyo subway. However, attention was focused on the Aum Shinrikyo religious cult that was linked to the Tokyo gas attack.

The Truck Bombing of a Federal Office Building in Oklahoma City in 1995

In the worst terrorist bombing in United States history, a truckload of explosives was detonated in front of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, on April 19, killing 168 people and wounding more than 400 others. Among the victims were 15 children who were in a second-floor daycare center when the 5,000-pound (2,270-kilogram) bomb exploded at 9:00 a.m. local time. Rescue workers immediately began to search through the wreckage of the blast for possible survivors trapped beneath the rubble, but were hampered by falling debris and danger from the building's extensive structural damage. Federal authorities launched a massive manhunt for the terrorists responsible for the bombing, starting with a description of two men who had rented the truck used in the attack. On April 21, police in Oklahoma apprehended Timothy J. McVeigh, a 27-year-old U.S. Army veteran, and charged him with perpetrating the bombing. According to federal officials, McVeigh held strong anti government views and had ties to far right-wing paramilitary organizations. In particular, McVeigh was reportedly angry with the federal government's assault on the Branch Davidian compound near Waco, Texas, in 1993, which resulted in the deaths of 75 cult members. After taking McVeigh into custody, federal law enforcement personnel continued to search for several

men who were believed to have also participated in planning the attack. On May 10, federal authorities arrested Terry Lynn Nichols, an Army friend of McVeigh, and charged him with involvement in the plot. Attorney General Janet Reno vowed to seek the death penalty for those convicted of taking part in the bombing. Timothy McVeigh was executed on June 11, 2001.

The Bombings of Two American Embassies in Africa in 1998

On August 7, 1998 two separate bombings took place, one at the American embassy in Nairobi, Kenya and the other at the American embassy in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. The bombings were related. The blasts occurred only five minutes apart, ravaging buildings and dismembering passersby. More than 250 people were killed in the two incidents and some 5,000 were wounded. A Saudi-born multimillionaire, Osama Bin Laden, had organized a terrorist network, and he was blamed for the bombings. For many the pictures coming out of Nairobi, Kenya were painfully familiar: a building crumbled by a crushing bomb blast, the bloodied survivors, the rescuers combing through the rubble. The sights were horribly reminiscent of the 1995 bombing of the federal building in Oklahoma city (see above).

The 9/11 Terrorist Attacks on the United States

This was the worst terrorist attack to ever take place in the United States. The September 11 attacks (also referred to as September 11, September 11th or 9/11) were a series of four coordinated suicide attacks upon the United States in New York City and Washington, D.C. on September 11, 2001. On that Tuesday morning, 19 terrorists from the Islamist militant group al-Qaeda hijacked four passenger jets. The hijackers intentionally crashed two planes, American Airlines Flight 11 and United Airlines Flight 175, into the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center in New York City; both towers collapsed within two hours. Hijackers crashed American Airlines Flight 77 into the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia. The fourth jet, United Airlines Flight 93 crashed into a field near Shanksville, Pennsylvania after passengers attempted to take control before it could reach the hijacker's intended target in Washington, D.C. Nearly 3,000 died in the attacks.



Can you think of any other acts of violence and terrorism which have taken place in recent years?

Terrorism is an international problem, and it seems to be happening more frequently. Hardly a week goes by without some type of terrorist activity taking place somewhere in the world, causing panic, bloodshed and death.

What are the goals or aims of terrorists? Some may desire to spread a message or specific doctrine. When an act of terrorism is committed, it is given much publicity. The story is published on the Internet, and on the front page of newspapers, and everyone learns who the terrorists are and what they want. This advertising is free of charge except for the victims who had to pay a great price.



Other terrorists may seek to weaken or even overthrow the existing government. They often want to show that the current government cannot effectively rule the nation and is powerless to stop the acts of terrorism.

Other terrorist groups seek to occupy land that is not theirs. Compare Genesis 21:25. Why did the servants of Abimelech commit this act of violence? What did they want to obtain?
 _____ Some terrorist groups have an extreme hatred for a certain country (whether it be Israel or the United States or some other country). They want to do anything they can to help destroy the country they hate.

Certainly the desires for power, wealth and recognition are behind many outbreaks of terrorism. In Judges 9:5 Abimelech **violently** (see Judges 9:24 where "cruelty" means "violence") destroyed 70 persons with a stone in a vicious act of terrorism. What was the motive behind this (Judges 9:2,6)? _____

Can you find some verses in Romans 3:10-18 which accurately depict modern-day terrorists from God's point of view?

In Proverbs 4:14-19 the way of the wicked is described. According to verse 17, they eat the bread of _____ and drink the wine of _____. What is in their blood-defiled hands (**Isaiah 59:6** and compare verse 3)?

_____ Terrorists are those who love violence. What is God's attitude towards terrorists (Psalm 11:5)? _____

God will certainly repay men for their wicked and violent deeds. What was one of the marked characteristics of those who lived in the days of Noah (Genesis 6:11,13)?

_____ What happened to these violent ones (Genesis 7:23)? _____

Consider Psalm 7:15-16 ("pate" in verse 16 means "head"). Many terrorists end up dead, just like their victims. Some terrorists seem to get away with their crimes, but someday they will have to face God the Judge. All men have to answer to God for what they have done.

Sometimes it seems that terrorists are successful in fulfilling their goals (Psalm 73:3). They succeed in accomplishing their violent deeds (Psalm 73:6-7). Often they avoid arrest and go unpunished. Their wicked schemes are often carried out just as planned. However, when we consider their **end** (that which will happen to them *after* this life—Psalm 73:17), we realize that the **terrorists** will be consumed with _____ (Psalm 73:19)!

In Isaiah 53 we are given a prophetic picture of Calvary's cross, as the suffering Messiah is violently crucified. What violence had Christ done (Isaiah 53:9)? _____ Someday that same Christ will be King over all the earth. Will the earth be filled with violence and terrorism during the Kingdom Age (Isaiah 60:18)? _____ At that time, the nation Israel will no longer be subject to terrorist attacks!

How can we be protected and saved from violent people who may even walk the streets of our cities? Should we depend on the government to keep us from harm? Should we hire secret service agents to act as bodyguards day and night? Should we make our homes fortresses or citadels? No, there is a much better protection than any or all of these things just mentioned. David, whose life seemed to be in constant danger (he had more enemies than hairs!—Psalm 69:4), knew the secret of how to be protected from violent terrorists. What protection did He have (2 Samuel 22:3,49; Psalm 18:48; Psalm 140:1,4)?

What is one thing the child of God does not need to fear (Hebrews 13:6)? _____ Why is this so (Hebrews 13:5)?

How would you answer the question found in Psalm 118:6? _____ Why does the believer not need to fear, even though an host of terrorists should rise against him (Psalm 27:1-3)?

The aim of terrorists is to make men and women fear. They seek to terrify people. They want people to be afraid of walking out on the streets or going out at night. Some people are even afraid of sleeping in their own homes, thinking that violent men might break in and harm them.

The believer in Christ need not fear because he knows two things:

1) God Is Sovereign Over Every Situation.

Nothing can happen to a child of God apart from divine permission. Joseph was a victim of the "terrorist" activities of his own brothers (Genesis 37), but the Lord allowed this and worked it together for good (Genesis 50:20 and compare Romans 8:28). The devil and the devil's children can only go so far (Job 1:12; 2:6)! They can only go as far as God permits them to go.

This does not mean that we are to be presumptuous (overstepping due bounds) and say, "Since God is my Protector and since nothing can happen to me unless God allows it, I'll march through the worst section of the city at the worst time of the day, dangling \$20 bills in front of me as an invitation to any prospective crooks or terrorists!" No, unless you use your head, you may lose your head! If we make sure we do our part (with all reasonableness and God-given common sense), we can be sure God will do His part!

2) God is to be Feared.

There is a limit to what men can do to us. What is the worst thing they can do to the believer (Matthew 10:28)? _____ What is the worst thing God can do to a person (Matthew 10:28)? _____ Who then should we fear? _____

If we have a good and healthy fear of God, then we will never need to fear anyone else! If God is your Terror, then you will never be terrified by a terrorist!

"LET HIM BE YOUR _____ AND

LET HIM BE YOUR _____" (Isaiah 8:12)

When we fear God, we do not need to fear anything else!

Fear Not! Why Not?

What is the constant plea of God to those who belong to Him? (See Lamentations 3:57; Isaiah 41:14; Joshua 8:1; Luke 12:32; Matthew 10:31; Acts 27:24; etc.) F_____ N_____ The Lord gives us many **reasons** why *we need not fear*. Search the Scriptures and see if you can discover some of these reasons:

1. Gen. 26:24; Psalm 23:4; Isaiah 41:10; 43:5; Jer. 46:28; Deut. 20:1
I will not fear because _____
2. Exodus 14:13-14; Deut. 3:22; 20:3-4; 2 Chron. 20:15 (compare v.17)
I will not fear because _____
3. Deut. 31:6,8; 1 Chron. 28:20
I will not fear because _____
4. Psalm 118:6
I will not fear because _____
5. Isaiah 41:13-14
I will not fear because _____
6. Isaiah 43:1
I will not fear because _____
7. Deuteronomy 7:18 (compare 20:1)
I will not fear because _____
8. Psalm 56:3,4,11; Psalm 112:7 (cf. Mark 5:36)
I will not fear because _____

9. Matthew 10:29-31
I will not fear because _____

10. John 6:20
I will not fear because _____

UNDERSTANDING WHO GOD IS HELPS US NOT TO FEAR.

1) **Isaiah 41:10**

I will not fear because HE IS MY _____

2) **Genesis 15:1**

I will not fear because HE IS MY _____

3) **Proverbs 3:25-26**

I will not fear because HE IS MY _____

4) **Psalms 27:1**

I will not fear because HE IS MY _____

5) **Psalms 46:1-2**

I will not fear because HE IS MY _____

6) **Hebrews 13:6**

I will not fear because HE IS MY _____

7) **Psalms 91:2,5**

I will not fear because HE IS MY _____

The King of Fears

What is man's greatest fear (Heb. 2:14-15)? _____ Is this a legitimate fear for the **unsaved** (Heb. 9:27)? _____ What is even more fearful than physical death (Matt. 10:28; Rev. 21:8)? _____ God describes **death** as a *killer-bee* (think of a giant bumblebee!) who has a powerful and deadly sting for all its victims. What is the terrible **stinger** on this *killer-bee* (1 Cor. 15:56; cf. Rom. 6:23; James 1:15; Ezekiel 18:4)? _____ What gives this **stinger** its strength and power (1 Cor. 15:56; cf. Rom. 3:20; 7:7-13)? _____ The Lord Jesus, through His death and resurrection removed the **stinger** and _____ death (2 Timothy 1:10). Therefore, does the believer need to *fear* the **king of fears**, or may he bravely and joyfully *face* his hour of death (see 2 Tim. 4:6-8; 2 Pet. 1:13-14; Philippians 1:20-23, 2 Cor. 5:8; Luke 23:43)? _____