

A Cause Of Terrorism

When Terrorism Strikes the Nations of Israel

Richard T. Ritenbaugh

Given 25-Mar-17; Sermon #1369c

Terrorism is again in the news. Maybe I should ask, When is terrorism ever *not* in the news these days? In reality, acts of terror occur just about every day of the year, sometimes two or three times a day, all around the world. We hear only about those attacks that are especially atrocious, or strike at a particularly significant place or time, or—I have to admit that our news is Western-oriented—occur in a Western nation. So our newscasts have let us know about particular acts that have occurred just recently in France, the UK, and Belgium, just his past week.

In Paris on March 16 and 17 were a bombing at the European headquarters of the International Monetary Fund and a throat-slitting of two men outside an apartment block. The next day, March 18, a man shot and seriously wounded three police officers, then fled to Orly Airport where he overcame a soldier, assaulted him, took his gun, but he was later caught.

In London on March 22 was the most significant attack of late, in which four people died. Lone wolf Khalid Masood, 52 years old, ran over civilians on Westminster Bridge, killing three and causing numerous injuries to people who were trying to get out of the way. Then he ultimately crashed into the Westminster Palace gates. Masood fled the vehicle and attempted to enter the Palace of Westminster, where the Houses of Parliament are. On the way, he fatally stabbed a police officer before being shot dead by a plain clothes officer. In total, he inflicted 40 injuries, 29 of which required hospital treatment. Seven are still so series that they are still in critical condition, still hospitalized.

The next day, in Antwerp, Belgium, a man, dressed in camouflage and identified as 39-year-old “Mohamed R,” a North African-born Tunisian living in France, drove his car at high speed into a crowd of pedestrians strolling along a main shopping street in Antwerp’s historic center. This district or area was mostly cordoned off just for pedestrian traffic but he

somehow got in there. Several people were hit and a great many were injured, both by the vehicle and by trying to jump out of the way of the car as it was speeding through this pedestrian area. Belgian security forces were able to stop him before he could do too much damage, and they found in his car a rifle, bladed weapons, and a container of an unidentified liquid. They wonder if the attack could have been far worse.

Some people see these things—they happen all the time; these just the last three or four things that have happened this week in Western nations. I specifically chose those Western nations because they are Israelitish nations.

Scholars and pundits are able to come up with all kinds of reasons why the world is suffering from terrorism, and even why there has been such an upsurge in terrorism since the 1970s. You can find these on the Internet easily enough. They will tell you this reason and that reason, things like religious fervor, left-wing politics, demography, envy, and many other reasons for all these terrorist acts. It is clear to see that terrorism certainly has exploded over the past year, and over the past four, maybe five, decades.

But, as men do—especially the scholars and pundits, it seems, but all of us, really—we often forget the most certain and compelling reason of all: that is, God. I say it is a “certain” reason because we believe that God is the sovereign governor of all. Nothing of such importance occurs without at least His permission—His allowing something to occur. And I say “compelling” because, once we realize His involvement in such things, it should drive us to respond appropriately.

We're going to turn to Deuteronomy 32. Deuteronomy 32 is the Song of Moses. It is a prophecy of future Israel, future from Moses' point of view. He was writing around 1400 BC. It is a prophecy about God's great care for His people, and also their proclivity to forsake Him for other gods and other pursuits. Of course, it is also about His reaction to Israel when they do such things:

Deuteronomy 32:15-18 “But Jeshurun grew fat and kicked [meaning they became prosperous and they rebelled]; you grew fat, you grew thick, you are obese [very fat; showing the great prosperity God gave]! Then he [Jeshurun/Israel] forsook God who

made him, and scornfully esteemed the Rock of his salvation. They provoked Him to jealousy with foreign gods; with abominations they provoked Him to anger. They sacrificed to demons, not to God, to gods they did not know, to new gods, new arrivals that your fathers did not fear. Of the Rock who begot you, you are unmindful, and have forgotten the God who fathered you.

This passage tells of Israel's total rebellion against God to the point that they forget Him. That is what verse 18 says: "you are unmindful, and have forgotten the God who fathered you." In one sense, they do not consider Him as part of their lives *at all*. Another way we could put it is, "They leave Him completely out of their calculations when they think about what is going on. That is a very dangerous thing.

Verses 19-25 describe God's furious reaction. It is not pretty at all:

Deuteronomy 32:19-25 And when the LORD saw it, He spurned them, because of the provocation of His sons and His daughters. And He said: 'I will hide My face from them, I will see what their end will be, for they are a perverse generation, children in whom is no faith. They have provoked Me to jealousy by what is not God; they have moved Me to anger by their foolish idols. But I will provoke them to jealousy by those who are not a nation; I will move them to anger by a foolish nation. For a fire is kindled in My anger, and shall burn to the lowest hell [pit]; it shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains. [God is hot!] 'I will heap disasters on them; I will spend My arrows on them. They shall be wasted with hunger, devoured by pestilence and bitter destruction; I will also send against them the teeth of beasts, with the poison of serpents of the dust. The sword shall destroy outside; there shall be terror within for the young man and virgin, the nursing child with the man of gray hairs.

In other words, everyone within the nation will be affected by terror. And you can take it all the way back up through the list of things that He is going to bring upon these nations of Israel. But the sword, the pestilence, the poison [of serpents], the beasts, all those things will affect everyone. Notice how He puts it here: "the young man and virgin, the nursing child with the

man of gray hairs." Man and woman; young and old. He covers everyone. Everyone will fear. Everyone will be affected in one way or another.

If you want to back this up, you could jot down Leviticus 26:14-17 and the curses there, where He says that "if you don't obey Me, this is what is going to happen," and terror is one of those things He says He will bring on Israel for forsaking Him. And there are several other verses that say the same thing.

These verses clearly indicate that among the Israelitish nations, terror /terrorism comes as a result of forsaking God. In fact, Isaiah 54:14, speaking of a repentant Israel reunited with God in the Millennium, says, "In righteousness you shall be established; you shall be far from oppression, for you shall not fear; and from terror, for it shall not come near you." Now that they had turned back from God, He will protect them from it. So, the cause of terrorism among the nations of Israel is forsaking or forgetting God. Its antidote—the way we get rid of terrorism—is not by greater security, not by military forces; it is by humility, repentance, and seeking God. It is that simple.

Perhaps I am a cynic, but what this means is that terrorism will continue to plague the apostate nations of Israel, whether Manasseh, Ephraim, Reuben, Judah, Zebulon, Asher, or any of those other nations of Israel, because they show no sign of repentance.

But personally, we can place our trust in the words of Psalm 91:1, 5, which tell us that if we dwell in the secret place of the Most High, under the shadow of the Almighty, we do not need to be afraid of the terror by night, nor of the arrow that flies by day.