



Photos by en.wikipedia.org

Tsunami Devastates Japan—and BFP Israel

THE WORLD WATCHED as the people of Japan were devastated by a 9.0 earthquake, followed by a tsunami and then a nuclear accident at the Fukushima power plant. We have been stricken by horror at the devastation and destruction. Our hearts have been crying out for the Japanese people in their time of suffering.

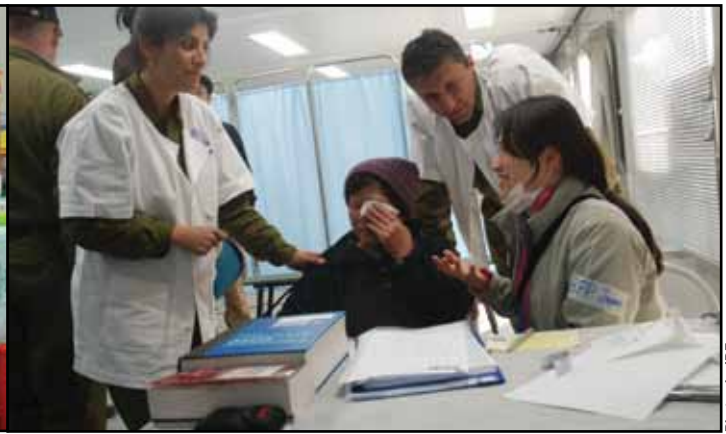
I have been on the phone with Atsumi Takada, our Japan national director, frequently and heard firsthand the extreme circumstances they are facing. She told me that most of the Christians we know are safe, but not all; some Christians are among the missing. Pastors and churches are reaching out to the injured and those evacuated in the midst of great difficulties, including fuel, food, and water shortages, power outages, and freezing temperatures. A Japanese volunteer sat in my living room a few days after the earthquake bringing tears to our eyes as he talked about his heart for his people.

The needs are overwhelming Japan's ability to cope. Many say that it will be at least a year before Japan can recover; others say it will take much longer.

Bridges for Peace Israel Impacted

Japanese Christians have been a huge blessing to Israel. In fact, over 20% of our budget comes from Japan's Christians. How amazing when you consider that less than 1% of the population of Japan are Christians! Believers in Japan have prayed for Israel for over 80 years and contributed millions of dollars to help Jewish people come home from the Diaspora and provide for their needs in their new homeland.

We understand that, in the present circumstances, Japanese Christians will not be able to continue giving to Israel and Bridges for Peace at these levels until they get back on their feet again. This means that many of the projects in Israel and even our infrastructure are at risk. We are calling out to God to make up the difference in donations, so that we don't have to significantly cut programs. For example, 51% of the Adoption Program budget comes from Japan. Other programs including the Feed a Child Program, food, Project Rescue, and Project Tikvah (Hope) are also supported heavily from our Japan family.



Photos by IDF

As I write this, our managers are looking at their budgets and considering how they can cut 20% off. This is an extremely heartbreaking process, as we know the people we help depend on us for assistance. In order to avoid severely cutting the outreach programs of Bridges for Peace, we need a miracle from God. We receive more than US \$100,000 a month from Japanese donors, and those funds are now not expected to resume for many months.

Israel Sends Medical Team to Assist

In the midst of the darkness of Japan's tragedy, there were some rays of light. Immediately Israel offered their services. Sadly, Israel knows firsthand about emergency. They are some of the most experienced trauma workers in the world, and they also have a huge heart of compassion for those in pain and distress.

As soon as Japan confirmed their need of Israel's help, the Israeli Medical Corps called and asked for our financial help as they reached out to Japan. Immediately we knew this was a wonderful way for us to help Japan and enable Israel to show compassion to the world. By faith, we gave a significant gift to help cover the costs of the operation and supplies. They flew a planeload of 60 medical workers and supplies to assist in the stricken area. Bridges were built with the Israeli team as some of our Bridges for Peace Japan team served as translators and helpers.

In Genesis 12:3, God told Abraham, "...in you all the families of the earth will be blessed." Today, we see that this Scripture is literally being fulfilled as the little nation of Israel so quickly responds to crises wherever they occur. This time, the nation in need was Japan, on the other side of the world.

How Can You Help?

Many of you have been asking how you can help Japan. First, please pray for the Christians in Japan. We believe that God will be with them through the water and the fire (Isaiah 43:1-3), and that

Above: Israeli medical team cares for victims of the earthquake and tsunami, assisted by translators provided by Bridges for Peace Japan.

Below: Bridges for Peace provided supplies and operational funds to the Israeli medical team.

He will bless them because they have been so faithful to bless Israel (Genesis 12:3). Pray that as they reach out to the non-Christian population that their love will show the face and character of God to the people of Japan in their time of suffering.

Pray about giving a special additional offering for Bridges for Peace to supplement the drop in giving from Japan as they recover. We are asking our friends around the world to "stand in the gap" for their brothers and sisters in Japan. We are praying that God will lay this burden on many who can help carry the Israel programs during this time. Perhaps some can give significant gifts. Your gift to "Greatest Israel Need" at this time will allow us to help the projects that need it the most. This support will bless our Bridges family in Japan. Our Japanese director has communicated how badly they feel that they cannot give at this time. I would love to be able to tell them of the gifts given on their behalf from around the world.

Another way is to help defray the cost of sending the dedicated medical team from Israel. Our partnership with Israelis helped bring healing to the wounded and also showed the world the heart of Israel for hurting people.

I thank God for all of you and your steadfast commitment to God and Israel. By partnering with Bridges for Peace, you are showing the Jewish people Christian love in action. May God shower you with abundant blessings in these critical hours.

Blessings from Jerusalem,

Rebecca J. Brimmer

Rebecca J. Brimmer

International President and CEO



Photos by IDF

Photo by en.wikipedia.org