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Aliyah Of Rescue

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In Ukraine today there are the thousands of units of heavy armament on the occupied part of Eastern territories now under control of pro-Russian soldiers. A comparison from 2014 to August 2016 shows how the number of weapons has increased. The Ukrainian Vice-Premier regarding European and Euro-Atlantic integration of Ukraine gave the following statistics.

The number of tanks increased from the beginning of conflict in 2014 till August 2016 from 30 to 600 units. The number of military armored vehicles has gone from 124 to 1260 units. Artillery and rocket guns have increased from 110 to 1060 units, and anti-aircraft mounts from 50 to 470 units.

In March of 2014, following the Russian annexation of Crimea, government troops began fighting pro-Russian rebels in the east. It is estimated that there are still around 260,000 Jews living in the Ukraine. Thousands of them are currently living in the region most threatened by an escalating war. Many have been forced to flee the cities that have been experiencing violence and unrest for well over two years.

Since the violence began Ezra International representatives have been driving in and out the cities that have been hit the hardest by the war with the sole purpose of rescuing Jewish families. The need for Aliyah of rescue is a reality in Ukraine today. But why should anyone from the west care?

*“The Bible is an answer to the supreme question: **what does God demand of us?** Yet the question has gone out of the world. God is portrayed as a mass of vagueness behind a veil of enigmas, and His voice has become alien to our minds to our hearts, to our souls. We have listened to every ‘I’ except the ‘I’ of God.” (1)*

But to the true seeker He is not vague at all. He not only gives general instructions such as: *He has shown you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?* (2) But He also gets downright specific: *Thus says the Lord GOD: “Behold, I will lift My hand in an oath to the nations, and set up My standard for the peoples; they shall bring your sons in their arms, and your daughters shall be carried on their shoulders;”* (3)

Walking in humble lock-step with a living God requires taking His word literally. He has beckoned to those of us in the nations to literally be the vehicles of rescue for His children in the diaspora. To do what is just for His children by being merciful and serving them in their hour of their greatest need.

The Russian annexation of Crimea is a fact. The military build-up on the border of eastern Ukraine is a fact. Thus, the need to rescue Jewish families is a fact. There remains only a degree of uncertainty regarding Putin’s intentions for all of Ukraine. But there is no uncertainty in God’s word regarding our responsibility to rescue the Jewish people caught-up in the violence.

(1) Abraham Joshua Heschel, *God in Search of Man*, 168

(2) Micah 6:8

(3) Isaiah 49:22