



PRAYING THROUGH THE WINDOW 7

Political & Spiritual Leaders

GAZA STRIP

Leaders:

Yasser Arafat

Khaled Meshaal, leader of Hamas

Around 1.2 million Palestinians live in the Gaza Strip, the majority of whom are refugees or their direct descendants who fled Israel during the 1948 Arab-Israeli War. It currently has one of the highest population densities in the world. Most people in the strip are Muslim and there are small Christian and Jewish minorities, as well. Jews have claimed the entire Gaza Strip as part of Israel while Palestinians claim it for a future Palestinian state they intend to create. While Israel has occupied Gaza since 1967, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon just passed a plan to unilaterally withdraw settlers and Israeli troops from the Gaza Strip, and a few days ago said that he would not cave to opponents of his plan.

The Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, is a Palestinian Islamist paramilitary and political organization. Its stronghold is the Gaza Strip, but it also operates in the West Bank. Founded in 1987, it is an outgrowth of the Muslim Brotherhood and is dedicated to the destruction of Israel and the creation of an Islamic state in Palestine. Khaled Meshaal was named the new Hamas leader right after the assassination of Sheikh Ahmed Yassin in March earlier this year. In 1997, Israeli agents tried to kill Mr. Meshaal, saying that he was the pre-eminent figure in Hamas and responsible for the murder of innocent Israeli civilians. Hamas is considered a terrorist organization by many countries.

Yasser Arafat, the leader of the Palestinian Authority since 1993 and the chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) since 1969. He is also the co-winner of the 1994 Nobel Peace Prize. At age 75, Arafat is seriously ill. Earlier this month, doctors in Ramallah said that he most likely suffers from leukemia. He is currently undergoing medical tests in a French military hospital for what one of his doctors calls a life-threatening blood disorder. But just yesterday, new tests performed by the doctors have temporarily ruled out the possibility of Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat having leukemia.

Prayer points:

🌍 Pray that God will open the eyes and hearts of the Palestinians to Jesus.

🌍 Pray that seriously ill Yasser Arafat acknowledge the One true God and believe in the saving truth of Jesus Christ.

🌍 Pray that Hamas leader Khaled Meshaal will have a "Damascus Road" experience and miraculously discover the truth of God and salvation through Jesus.

Almighty God, as we look at the Middle East we see the last days are upon us. We see Israeli rising against Israeli and Palestinian against Palestinian--just as You said we would. We cry out for these people and their children. Show them Jesus. We lift up Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat to You and ask that You show Yourself to Him as he is possibly facing his last days. Help Him understand Your truth we pray. We also beg for you to change the heart of Hamas leader Khaled Meshaal. Speak to him through dreams and convict him of his evil ways. Only when these leaders see and receive Your love can they begin to learn to forgive. We cry out for the people living in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank--the good and the bad, for they all need You. We thank you for the Christians living in this land. Fill them with your Holy Spirit. Give them boldness to speak Your truth and to show others the way of salvation, we pray. Thank You LORD for Your love that sent Jesus to die for us. Thank You LORD for Your love that forgives and gives and is longsuffering. Open their eyes LORD, they need to see Jesus.