

*Dear Praying Friends,*

Thank you for standing with us during this difficult time! Our ministry continues in all our projects, but at present our main focus is on Ashkelon, the city that is situated about 10 km from Gaza. It is a big city of about 170,000 people that has been under constant attack by rockets since the beginning of the war. Our employee Eduard lives there. He is the manager of our Aviv outreach Center and the leader of Aviv Ministry project among new immigrants in his city. These days, he is busy from morning till evening helping his fellow Ashkelonians.

Since the fighting began, over 1000 rockets have been fired at Ashkelon, about 15% of which have not been intercepted and have fallen in its territory. The situation in the city is very tense, one fourth of the citizens have left, and those who could not leave are hiding from the rockets either in their homes (if they have a bomb shelter there) or at the public bomb shelters. Some cannot go outside at all (because of fear, physical conditions, elevators not working, etc.), and even those who do go outside are not always able to supply their basic needs, as many shops are closed and those that are open become empty of food and other essential products very quickly. Ashkelonians who are in especially difficult situations are the elderly and the disabled, single mothers with small children and new immigrants. Municipality is trying to help, but it is overwhelmed.

Eduard and his helpers daily cook and distribute hot meals in bomb shelters, as well as visit people who hide at their homes, bringing them food packages, water, etc. In addition, Eduard helps some people move from apartments that have no bomb shelters to safer places. During these food distributions and visits Eduard has a chance to talk to the people, encourage and support them, and this is no less important than food these days. Many of Eduard's contacts are refugees from Ukraine who are now getting traumatized again, having fled from one war and now facing another.

We would be very grateful for any financial assistance that would help Eduard meet the essential needs of Ashkelonians. The daily cost of this work is about 1000 dollars, which is a big sum for us. Moreover, with more finances we would be able to distribute food to more needy people, along with hygiene items and other basic necessities. Eduard and his team are very energetic and are ready to expand this activity.

We are attaching several photos below.

Every blessing,

Dov and Olga Bikas and Aviv Ministry team

*P.S. If God puts it on your heart to send a donation for our ministry in Ashkelon, please send us a short note, so that we know the amount and use your donation right away.*

