**CFI News Insights**

**Explosion in Beirut:**

**Catastrophe for the Lebanese nation**

Calamity is defined in Webster’s as **:**a disastrous event marked by great loss and lasting [distress](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/distress#h1) and suffering. To refer to the recent explosion that occurred at the port in Beirut as a “calamity”, might be a significant understatement. Along with much of the planet, the nation of Lebanon was already facing crushing pressure upon its political and economic system due to the effect that the COVID-19 epidemic has had. Internally, resentment has been growing against Hezbollah, the terrorist organization birthed and backed by mullahs in Iran that has been affecting Lebanese international and domestic policy.

The value of the national currency has dropped 78% since October of 2019 (washingtonpost.com) negatively impacting every citizen. The exposure of administrative negligence and malfeasance in its response to the community, affected medically, structurally and logistically has created so much vitriol that the entire Lebanese cabinet has stepped down (Israelnationalnews.com).

Over 150 dead, 5000 injured, and up to 35,000 instantly rendered homeless is not a circumstance that could have been foreseen by the majority of citizenry in Lebanon, at least not in a non-military or war-related incident. As believers in Israel and around the globe, there is much compassion and sympathy being extended to the Lebanese people, materially and verbally. We extend heartfelt prayers to that nation and her people. We pray that barricades of pride are lowered particularly for Israelis to assist their cousins to the north with emergency services, as they treat the wounded, search for the missing and bury their dead.

 ***“[But instead] I could strengthen and encourage you with [the words of] my mouth, And the consolation and solace of my lips would soothe your suffering and lessen your anguish****”* **Job 16:5**

The pagan deity that has been connected to Beirut was the goddess Tyche, is believed to bestow the attributes of fortune or luck. Lebanon has colloquially been referred to as the “Switzerland” of the middle east due to its previously prominent role as a regional banking hub and possessing a national identity that resists alignments beyond its own national identity (at least prior to Hezbollah entrenchment’s within political institutions). The attributes of fortune in Lebanon and her capital Beirut now, seem to be as flimsy as any theological belief in the deity mentioned. Any fortune or prominence that Lebanon can aspire to now will only come from the true Deity, YHWH, especially with reference to recovering from the circumstances of this past fortnight.

Along with lending support or showing sympathy in the international faith community, many of us are attempting to process the current situation in Lebanon through a biblical lens. There are scriptures throughout the Word of God that not only indicate the destiny of the nation of Israel and the Jewish people, but also give clues to the possible fate of her neighbors in the not-too distant future.

Nations that surround God’s covenant land have tended to have animosity toward Israel because of the teachings of Islam, ancient ethnic rivalries, and competition for resources, international influence and nationalistic pride.

From Lebanon, to Egypt, to Iraq, to Syria, to Jordan, there have been many conflicts over millennia over thousands of years amongst these nations that border Israel and between them and Israel.

Despite this reality, there are many promises from God connected to these nations that do not include doom or foreboding, particularly if their populations on the whole acknowledge the God of Israel is the God of all. It is important to remind ourselves of these passages, to encourage in this case the people of Lebanon and those who have a special concern for good outcomes for the population there:

***“Is it not yet a very little while Until Lebanon will be turned into a fertile field, And the fertile field regarded as a forest?”*** [**Isaiah 29:17**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah%2029%3A17&version=AMP)

***“I will bring them (all Israel) back home again from the land of Egypt And gather them from Assyria, And I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon [the land on the east and on the west of the Jordan] Until no room can be found for them.”* Zechariah 10:10**

According to the Song of Songs, Lebanon has its own fragrance. According to Isaiah and Kings, the strongest timber comes from there and fine gold can be drawn from there.

If this was the case during times of Tanahk, we at CFI approach Creator God and pray that the current population of the city of Beirut (and the rest of Lebanon) acquire these biblical era attributes, mimicking the strongest timber to weather this storm, responding as finely burnished gold during this fiery trial, and that as the smoke subsides over their port that indicates decimation and despair, they would produce a savour for Heaven in their brokenness that provokes the merciful God to reverse their “fortunes” and stabilize that nation-state once again.