

1st August 2010

Dear Praying Friends

You will be aware that over the past two weeks we have been in close discussion with the Islamic ruling authority in Jerusalem (the Waqf) about the 5m high wall they are planning to build above platforms A, B, C and D. On Friday, the Jerusalem Municipality staff arrived here un-announced and spent nearly 3 hours here in consultation, at the end of which they set out to stop the build. Having been spotted by the builders, the wall work rate was doubled (remember Friday is the Islamic day off), and indeed the noise of the building preparations kept Victor awake all night.

You will recall that there is also an issue of their undertaking another construction project by Golgotha. Here, my concern is the damage they might do to the skull face if they drive in foundation piles for a minaret above it, but this is not an immediate issue.

Yesterday was Shabbat. Early today (Sunday) the Jerusalem Municipality issued and delivered to the Waqf an injunction to stop building the wall. Since then, the building pace has doubled again and tonight they are ready to pour concrete such that by tomorrow we may have a 3m wall, the first stage of a two stage build. The only way to stop this is for the Jerusalem Police to place armed policeman in the bus station to the east of us to prevent access for the concrete lorries and pumping equipment: this will be significantly confrontational.

I am content for them to provide more burial sites in their cemetery. I do not mind a low wall to prevent our looking in – as if we could from 7m below the top of the current wall! My only concern is that the new wall is strong enough to prevent its collapse, if there is ever an earth tremor or heavy rain, onto hundreds of our visitors below.

Please pray daily that righteousness and justice might prevail. Please also pray for our protection spiritually.

I will keep you posted.

Pray like Nehemiah, in quite opposite circumstances when opposed by Sanballat and Tobiah, that 'The Lord of Heaven give us success'. (Neh 2.20a)

Richard Meryon

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