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The funeral that sealed Hezbollah's unbreakable covenant

Hassan Nasrallah's funeral in Beirut became a powerful testament to the enduring spirit of resistance, as millions gathered to honor his memory amidst the wreckage left by the Israeli aggression in south Lebanon and the southern suburbs of Beirut. Despite the destruction and constant threats, the resolute defiance of the people made it clear: the resistance remains steadfast.

BEIRUT - It's about 1:30 pm on Sunday, 23 February. Inside Beirut's vast Sports City Stadium, at least 100,000 people clad in black and draped in yellow resistance flags pay their respects as the caskets of the late Hezbollah secretary-generals Hassan Nasrallah and Hashem Safieddine begin to make a slow turn around the arena.

Suddenly a triangular formation of Israeli F-15 and F-35 fighter jets pierce the skies, buzzing the stadium as low as aeronautically possible. In any other nation, on such a somber occasion, this would have been an aerial tribute for the ceremony taking place on the ground.

But this is Lebanon – a nation under pressure by the usual suspects, whose national army is prohibited from purchasing high-tech jet fighters and any meaningful air defenses. So the Israeli aerial show was, predictably, yet another provocation – one which, incidentally, instantly turned against the perpetrators.



A photo of Beirut's Sports City Stadium during Hassan Nasrallah and Hashem Safieddine's funeral ceremony.

The whole stadium – plus the more than a million Lebanese congregating around it – outroared the agent provocateurs, in a cacophony of insults and deprecatory remarks.

Mockery prevailed, rather than rage. What are you gonna do? Bomb all of us at the same time – as you did with Sayyed Nasrallah on 27 September 2024? We're here, and we're ready. Bring it on, cowards.

“Death to Israel,” they chanted, a sea of fists pumping the air. “Labayka ya Nasrallah” (“at your service, oh Nasrallah”), they roared in unison.

The handlers obviously did not get the message, because the pathetic Hasbara air show got a replay less than an hour later, met with even louder cries of derision and defiance.

Incidentally, Lebanese engineers confirm that when the Israeli Air Force dropped dozens of synchronized bombs on Hezbollah's underground command HQ in Dahiye, the southern Beirut suburb, to assassinate the resistance leader, this could only have been accomplished with US high-tech intel/satellite know-how.

The gathered human intel that facilitated this massive hit could only have been collected by boots on the ground.

Israeli intel may boast of – potentially – infiltrating some nodes of Hezbollah's nearly iron-clad internal discipline as well as possessing all the American high-tech gear it needs to stage everything from childish provocations to Hell from Above. But when it comes to the nitty gritty – actual battle – the Israeli occupation army is actually a bunch of wimps.

Masters of Destruction

And that brings us to the senseless devastation inflicted by Israel on south Lebanon with its failed “invasion.” Occupation troops tried desperately for 66 days to penetrate deep into the south, but were unable to progress more than a few kilometers across the border, before immediately retreating back to their safe zones.

This daily pattern of loss infuriated Israeli leaders, who made up for this deficiency by launching disproportionate and indiscriminate air attacks across Lebanon. The numbers vary, but at least 4,800 Lebanese were killed in battles and missile attacks across the south, the majority civilians.

With no tangible gains and massive Israeli troop demoralization on the Lebanese border, Tel Aviv literally begged Washington to strike a ceasefire deal with Hezbollah.

That inevitably opened the terrain for the true and tested specialty of a cowardly army: Revenge.

Nothing prepares anyone to witness the remains of the insane destruction perpetrated by the Israelis in selected south Lebanon latitudes – from Maroun al-Ras to Odaisseh – most of this carnage wreaked *after* the ceasefire agreement was struck.

Maroun al-Ras is on the top of a hill, strategically overlooking Palestine in the deep background. It’s now a classic case of how Israel totally destroys a village in order *not* to save it.

Maroun al-Ras, part of the union of municipalities of Qalaa, harbored roughly 600 residential units, with around 2,500 to 3,000 residents. During the ceasefire, the Israelis – who lacked the competence to occupy it during the war – came back and destroyed everything, from booby-trapping homes to bulldozing roads and uprooting trees.

Walking around the wasteland of Maroun al-Ras is the epitome of Desolation Row: a sort of microcosm of Gaza, equally unlivable. Yet the resistance is everywhere – from Hezbollah flags and countless pictures of local martyrs duly honored to the first bulldozers starting to remove piles of detritus.



A photo showing the destruction in south Lebanon's Maroun al-Ras.

Odaiseh, smack at the Palestine border, is an equally horrifying case. Once again, the Israeli army failed to capture the town after two months of fierce fighting with Hezbollah. Once again, the ceasefire was used for a Revenge Operation. Odaiseh, today, stands literally razed to the ground.

In all these cases, there was absolutely not a single peep from NATOstan media and not a single forceful condemnation, not to mention action, by the United Nations.

Unlike Maroun al-Ras, where you see occupied Palestine from afar, at the top of the hill (in the foreground, it's actually stolen Lebanese land), the limits of Odaiseh are right in front of an occupying/invasive power checkpoint. A group of Israeli occupiers pointed their guns at us [during our visit](#). But the most significant bunch were those who peered behind a wall in fear.



A photo showing the destruction in south Lebanon's Odaisseh.

Tel Aviv, predictably, continues to violate the ceasefire it begged for: its troops remain as invaders in [five hilltop positions](#) in south Lebanon, and its air force persists in conducting air strikes across the country.

Seen as pieces in a mosaic, the aerial provocation on Sunday, coupled with the senseless destruction of villages in south Lebanon, depict what, at best, should be construed as a Revenge Killing Machine posing as a nation-state.

Yet the resistance, now embodied by the memory and example of Sayyed Nasrallah, simply will not be intimidated. It's no accident that he is and will continue to be revered all across the Arab world, the lands of Islam, and the Global Majority.

So what if the president and premier of Lebanon did not attend the funeral ceremony on Sunday? These are mere puppets. What matters is what was sealed by this extraordinarily moving funeral ceremony: "We are the covenant." The resistance's rallying cry simply won't be erased.

In his last speech, on 19 September 2024, the day after the Israeli terror attack on Hezbollah's pagers and walkie-talkies, and only eight days before his assassination by 85 one-ton American bombs, Nasrallah all but laid out the inevitable future:

"The hour of reckoning will come, but we alone will determine its nature, its scale, its location, and its execution – within the tightest circle possible. For we are at the heart of the most precise, the most sensitive, the most profound, and the most decisive battle."