

Christian Friends of Israel UK

WATCHMAN'S PRAYER LETTER

A Guide to Intercessory Prayer

December 2024 ~ Jewish Year 5785



I will stand at my watch and station myself on the ramparts; I will look to see what he will say to me, and what answer I am to give (Habakkuk 2:1)

Ruth

“But Ruth replied, ‘Don’t urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the LORD deal with me, be it ever so severely, if even death separates you and me.’” (Ruth 1:16-17).

The historical reality for most of the world is that many don’t grow up with a spiritual view of Israel, and for many years in my own walk with the Lord, the view I was taught to have for Israel was through a Replacement Theology filter. Though some were reared to love Israel either by parents or in balanced ministries that embraced Israel’s high calling, it was God’s grace that opened my eyes and heart to his unrelenting, redeeming, and eternal love for his firstborn son (see *Exodus 4:22*). We must pray fervently for this same awakening grace to come upon the churches and the nations if they are to endure. Israel as a nation is God’s plumbline, and many will rise or fall upon it.

Just as the United States was celebrating the vote for Donald Trump to be their next president, hate-filled, antisemitic rebels were plotting to execute a pogrom against Israeli football fans who flew into Amsterdam to attend a Maccabi Tel Aviv match. Heartbreaking video footage unveiled the violent chaos reminiscent of Kristallnacht which was due to be commemorated only a few days later. It was like something out of 1930s Europe. As Israelis were being run over by cars and beaten unconscious (even women not being spared), some were turned away by police and bystanders who could have intervened but chose not to. The Israeli government acted quickly in an effort to rescue its citizens from Amsterdam, around 2,000 people. In light of our anchor text, it begs the question, what would we have done if the lot fell to us to help?

Many who love Israel identify with Ruth and love her, the Moabitess who joined herself to Naomi, a Hebrew woman devastated by the loss of her husband and sons, one of whom Ruth had married. Ruth professed devotion to her mother-in-law, saying she would spend the rest of her days with Naomi even though it could mean a destitute life ahead. She promised to worship Naomi's God and live as one of Naomi's people, but she didn't stop there. Ruth made the ultimate vow to Naomi, and I believe God is calling the global Church to make this same vow as Ruth did by faith, "*Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the LORD deal with me, be it ever so severely, if even death separates you and me*" (Ruth 1:16-17).

We recently concluded a three-day 'Possessing the Land' prayer walk, journeying the land of Israel while proclaiming God's promises of restoration, healing, atonement, protection, and redemption. We were like Gideon's army, smaller in number, but powerful in prayer and faith. And to us, coupled with God's presence, that was everything. All of our participants, modern day Ruth's in their own right, showed due courage as we spent the day in Southern Israel near the Gaza kibbutzim. When the first boom cracked through the air from nearby IDF operations, everyone grounded their hearts rightly in prayer, understanding that the God who brought them to Israel was with them and would not forsake them.

One female participant, who's 81 and a quite spry 'Ruth', said she sought the Lord in prayer and received the release to come to Israel (though it was very important for her to have the blessing of her family). It was her first time on a prayer tour, and it was a privilege to join God's heart of intercession through her faithful trust in the one who sent her. Like the biblical figure, Caleb, who at 85 told Joshua he was still able to possess the land God had promised him, we were inspired to deepen our own commitment as watchmen in prayer.

The Jewish people have had many professed friends and allies over the years who abandoned them when the going got tough. Sadly, we know the blood-stained past of the Church's persecution of the Jewish people. It's time for us to consider the extent of our profession of love, not just to God, but to the Jewish people. As antisemitism rises and the global safety of the Jewish people becomes increasingly fragile, we must not put our trust in the horses and chariots of government leaders. Our times are calling for a more costly love for the elect of God. But fear not little flock there is one who has paid the cost in advance that we might walk in his love for his people. The question is, how real is *Ruth 1:17* to you?

Praying as Ruth Prayed

Lord, grant me a heart like Ruth so that I may stand with your people, especially when they need me the most. *“Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the LORD deal with me, be it ever so severely, if even death separates you and me”* (Ruth 1:16-17).

Father, use me to be a voice of encouragement to Jewish people and a voice of truth in the Church and the world around me concerning your redemptive plan for Israel and the nations. *“You who call on the LORD, give yourselves no rest, and give him no rest till he establishes Jerusalem and makes her the praise of the earth”* (Isaiah 62:6-7).

I ask and keep on asking for the rescue of all the hostages, especially those who are still alive – may they not lose hope but be brought home to their waiting families. *“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners ...”* (Luke 4:18).

I commit the Israeli government, its leaders, and all Israel’s allies into God’s care and protection for wisdom and guidance until the restoration of all things – the battle and the victory are yours, Lord. *“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders ... Heaven must receive him until the time comes for God to restore everything, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets”* (Isaiah 9:6; Acts 3:21).

Amid much hope for the harvest of the last days, know that *“The night is nearly over; the day is almost here”* (Romans 13:12). Leonard Ravenhill famously said, “The world out there is not waiting for a new definition of Christianity; it's waiting for a new demonstration of Christianity.” Oh, how a fresh opportunity is before us for this ‘Ruth’ demonstration. May we rise in faith to seize it. God’s grace be multiplied to you as you trust.

Maranatha!

Suzie Georges

Coordinator – Wall of Prayer

Christian Friends of Israel – Jerusalem (UK edited version)

CFI UK News and Prayer items

As we draw to the close of another calendar year, we thank the Lord for sustaining us at CFI UK, our partners at CFI Jerusalem, Israel through more than 13 months of war, and the UK Jewish community. Our final outing with the CFI UK Resources Stall, to the Mission Worship Conference in Eastbourne, went well with encouragement from the organisers and other exhibitors, a good response to our seminar message, useful conversations, free literature taken, and resources sold.

We are well ahead on applications for Christian festivals in 2025, which are so important for reaching out to the wider church in encouraging understanding of Israel in the Bible, history and today. Pray for these applications, that the Lord would open the doors he wants us to go through. So far, we have booked Awaken, Lincoln, in August and CRE, Epsom, in October; and applied to Refuel, Scotland, in July, Elim Leaders, Harrogate, in May, and Big Church Festival, West Sussex, in August.

Registrations are starting to come through for our annual residential CFI UK Prayer Conference at King's Park Conference Centre, Northampton, Tuesday 18th – Thursday 20th March 2025. If you can join us for this strategic time together then please send in your completed booking forms to help us reach our allocated spaces, with some leeway to exceed them. Do pray for our hosts Julia and David Soakell as they seek the Lord over who should contribute and which prayer topics to cover.

2025 is the 40th anniversary of the commencement of Christian Friends of Israel as a ministry. Pray for us as we seek the Lord, together with CFI Jerusalem, as to how we might commemorate his goodness in equipping and sustaining us to fulfil our calling. It would be special if we could come together with a CFI tour of Israel, but planning ahead is difficult given the ongoing conflict and present travel advice from the UK Foreign Office.

We still need to coordinate with the National Jewish Assembly (NJA), our co-sponsors, to plan a Parliamentary Lobby Day next year. Ask the Lord to make a way and show us the right time and the subject to focus upon.

Thank you as ever for your prayerful support,

The CFI UK Team

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CFI Communications, PO Box 2687, EASTBOURNE, East Sussex, BN22 7LZ

Tel: 01323 410810 ~ Email: info@cfi.org.uk ~ Website: www.cfi.org.uk

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