



Dear Praying Friends in Europe,

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem:

“May those who love you be secure. May there be peace within your walls and security within your citadels.” (Psalm 122:6&7)
David exhorts us to pray for his beloved city, the place where the tribes went up to praise the name of the Lord in His house. Our prayers should be no less fervent than David’s, we who know and love the Lord and who long for his chosen people to know and love Him too.

How should we pray for Israel?

As I write this article I have just returned from a visit to Israel. Nothing could be more uplifting than spending a week by the Sea of Galilee and in Jerusalem in the early spring if it was not for the current upheaval in the country. Only last week tens of thousands of people filled the streets of Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, not with prayer and praise, but in protest.

The nation is divided. At a conference which I attended last week a famous Israeli futurist, David Passig, painted a picture of a nation which is again divided up into various tribes. On the one hand, there are the more religious Jews and on the other hand a growing opposition to anything Biblical.

The current uprising in Israel is not only about the so-called judicial reforms, which everyone agrees are long overdue, but rather an uneasiness with the overall direction of the country as a whole. Professor Passig defines some of these tribes, pointing out that 13 percent of the population is aggressively against any form of religious beliefs or national identity. This is a very vocal minority which is well represented both in media and academia, he adds. It is also a tribe which is the first to be mobilised for demonstrations against any centre-right wing government, regardless of political programmes. These are



also the ones who make up the popular Pride parades. On the other side of the divide, we have an equally large group of ultraorthodox Jews who do not believe in Zionism, do not want to serve in the army and is increasingly dependent on government handouts. A house divided cannot stand.

The main prayer point for Israel right now is unity. No single faction can subdue the others into accepting their vision of Israeli society but a compromise will have to be reached. The decline of Biblical Israel began when the twelve tribes went their own way. Today Israel is again a land divided by new tribes. However, Israel is not unique. Polarisation is today a global phenomenon but, when faced with an existential threat from Iran, the situation becomes dangerous, or what the speakers at the government sponsored conference described as “a perfect storm.”

But the God of the Bible can calm the storms. Prayer for the unity of His ancient covenant people, includes a renewed commitment for us Christians to stand with Israel when, due to the current problems, many other groups may want to abandon them. As we hear the fierce criticism against the current government, we will have to remember that much of that criticism (but not all) is the same which is expressed against any bible believing Christian who wants to be true to the word of God. When the media today speaks about violating human rights, they may simply refer to a limited embrace of the wider LGBTQ agenda.

Staying faithful to the Lord and his Word also means believing in the promises which He made to Israel. The day when He will reveal himself to Israel is drawing near. In the meantime, let us continue to pray for the people of Israel.



This week:-

The Jewish people have just celebrated the feast of Purim (see the book of Esther). This of course took place in today's Iran so it is an important time to pray for Iran and Israel together. There are concerns that Iran is very close to having enough enriched uranium for one nuclear bomb, which threatens Israel and so destabilises the Middle East. In addition the brave protests in Iran, led mainly by women with the men supporting them, are continuing despite a lot of brutality. It appears that the population has simply given up on the islamic regime, so what does this mean for the future of the country? Pray with faith for God to work out His sovereign will. Can Iran again change from a threat to the Jewish people to a blessing?

Additional Prayer Points:-

1. More deaths are occurring amongst refugees and migrants attempting boat crossings from France to the UK while the UK government is proposing a new law to arrest all illegal migrants and deport them. Let's pray for a compassionate and just solution to this Europe wide problem.
2. To mark International Women's Day, let's pray for those women who are important in our lives - in our family, church, community, nation and internationally.

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