

Israel Prayer Letter

March/April 2014



Dear intercessors,

On Monday morning 13 January at 7am hundreds of Dutch people campaigned against the withdrawal of investments in several Israeli banks by pension fund PGGM. Getting up from prayer for Israel in your familiar surroundings to go out into the cold streets standing up for this same Israel is quite a step. But it's so very necessary! For Zion's sake we can no longer afford to be silent. Just a pious remark? No, on the contrary, check this is Isaiah chapter 62. Salvation and redemption for both Israel and the nations: isn't that enough reason to leave your house and go to the streets?

With a warm greeting,

Pieter Bénard

Prayer coordinator Christians for Israel

ALIYAH

From Ukraine alarming news was sent to me by Koen Carlier, who takes part in bringing home Jews from the former Soviet-Union as a representative of *Christians for Israel*. There was a great upheaval in the capital, Kiev.

The Israeli embassy in Kiev is anxious for the security of the Jewish population in Ukraine, if the violence will not stop soon. On 17 January the 'Kiev Post' reported, that Jews are openly being accused because of the troubles in the country. Neo-Nazi groups are getting more followers all the time, and from Kiev there are reports of violent crimes against Jews.

Koen writes, that when taking food-stuffs to the Jewish school in Vinnitsa, he said to the cook Lyuda: "Leave for Israel with all the children as quickly as you can, and close the thing here!" Usually she has her answer ready, but now she turned deathly pale! "*Flee from the land of the north,*" says Zechariah 2:6.

- **Pray for the safety of the Jewish population in Ukraine, that they may be protected against lies and attacks.**
- **Pray for the work of Koen and his team; pray that the Jews in Ukraine will come to see that they really are welcome to come home to the land of their ancestors: Israel.**

THE NATIONS

These months prayer for the nations will focus decisively on the international branch of Christians for Israel (C4I). The work of C4I is mushrooming all over the world. At a quick pace people are being reached with the message of God's faithfulness to His people Israel.

Christians for Israel New Zealand has appointed a coordinator, who will visit Christian leaders in the Pacific islands. Each of these islands has a vote in the United Nations.

In Australia C4I is very active in summoning believers to support the government, which in no unclear words has expressed its support to Israel.

The work in South-East Asia is growing wonderfully. As C4I Regional Coordinator for South East Asia Wilson Ng has established many contacts with Christian leaders in the region, also in Pakistan.

Recently a big conference was held in South Korea, with Rev. Willem Glashouwer as main speaker. The Korean translation of his book 'Why Israel' has been received with great enthusiasm. A Korean website and newspaper are also under development, and a translation of the book 'Why End Times?'

- **Pray for these remarkable developments in Oceania and Asia, for the Church in China, South Korea and other countries in that region.**
- **Pray and give thanks for the book written by Rev. Willem Glashouwer, the many translations, DVDs, conferences.**
- **Pray especially for the nations' voting policy in the Unites Nations. Australia, but also Canada, often votes in favor of Israel, pray that others will follow this example!**

Furthermore we ask your special attention in prayer for the work of Christians for Israel in some other countries.

- Italy - **thank God for the work that is being done there;** in a Roman Catholic country the work is often difficult.
- Unites States – **thank God for the good leadership team; pray for openness among the Churches;** that the message will reach the leaders.
- Africa – pray for the developments; the work is hard because of finances; it is difficult for the departments there to become independent.
- South-Sudan - **pray for the team.** We are in touch with some of them, who have been able to flee from the violence in this country.
- **Pray and give thanks for the work of Christians for Israel that is done around the globe; more and more preachers, teachers and students are being reached.**
- **Pray especially for sufficient financial means and for protection, for example in some African countries; for strong leadership.**

In recent weeks there has been a lot of upheaval about so-called BDS-actions: Boycott, Disinvestment and Sanctions. Companies but also institutions in the social sphere call for boycotting Israel because of its 'politics of occupation'. Pressure from the Arab-Palestinian lobby is exceedingly strong. The ultimate aim of these BDS-actions is to cause so much damage to Israel that the existence of the Jewish state will be threatened. But it is not just Israel that is being threatened: because public opinion usually does not distinguish between the State of Israel and world Jewry, our Jewish fellow-citizens also feel threatened. Especially among elderly Jews the actions call forth unmistakable reminiscences of the Nazi slogan '*Kauft nicht bei Juden*' – '*Do not buy from Jews*'.

- **Pray for protection of Israel and the Jews against the threat that comes from such actions.**
- **Pray that these actions will be struck with futility.**
- **Pray for wisdom and insight for all those, who have to make decisions at important posts in society, so they will not give in to the pressure to harm Israel's interests.**
- **Ask God's blessing on all protests against BDS-actions, put forth by organizations like *Christians for Israel* and many, many 'ordinary people'.**

Churches and Christian institutions also speak more and more negatively about the so-called 'occupied areas' and the 'settlements'. All over the world there are even churches that take part in BDS-actions.

- **Pray that God will quicken a new spirit of solidarity with and prayer for Israel in Christian churches in your country, irrespective of denominations.**

- **Pray for the leaders of churches and church institutions, that they will not allow themselves to be carried along with an anti-Israel spirit.**
- **Pray that the Jews in your country will not feel threatened, but safe.**

TERROR

At the end of last year Palestinian Authority chairman Mahmud Abbas posthumously awarded the highest order, the 'Star of Honor', to Abu Jihad because of his responsibility for the death of at least 125 Israelis, who died in terror attacks. In the bus hijacking in 1978 alone 37 civilians died. During the ceremony Abu Jihad was called the exemplary 'real warrior and devoted leader', a 'national role model'.

On Israel's other border, in the Gaza strip, Hamas celebrated its 26th anniversary. Hamas' military arm, the Al Qassam Brigade, claimed 87 suicide actions, hundreds of shooting incidents and sniper attacks, and over 10,000 mortar and rocket attacks. Not a single city or village in southern Israel is safe, but neither are Jerusalem and Tel Aviv!

Earlier this year Abbas Zaqui, a prominent member of the Palestinian Authority, said on Syrian television that any peace treaty with Israel is nothing but another phase towards their destruction. 'We and Hamas are of one mind in our demand for a State along the 1967 borders. That however is not our final demand, which consists in possession of all the territory that is under Zionist occupation.'

Weeks before PA chairman Abbas had already said, that the demand to recognize Israel as a Jewish state will never be granted. 'This is our red line,' he added. He also stated that not a single Jew would be accepted to live in Palestinian territory. This in spite of the fact that about 1,658,000 Arabs live in the Jewish State, have the same rights and obligations as Jewish Israelis, and can live there as full citizens!

The examples mentioned above are just a few of many hundreds. And Israel is expected to make peace with people who think and act like that! A peace treaty seems farther away than ever.

- **Pray that God will reach His purpose. That His prophetic Word will be visibly fulfilled in His dealings with Israel and the other nations.**
- **Pray also for the peace talks. Not just Israel would benefit from peace, but also the Palestinians and the population of all surrounding countries.**
- **Pray that the power of intimidation and terror will be broken; it is a many-headed monster, evil and murderous to anyone.**
- **Pray for the politicians in Europe (and your country) to have a fair appraisal of the situation in the Middle East. That righteousness will prevail over economic gain.**

ISRAEL

- **Pray for a good and safe celebration of Purim, on 16 March.** In the synagogue the book of Esther is read. Read this book again, it is more topical than ever in view of the attitude of Iran.
- **Thank God for the huge snowstorm in December last year, which caused the water level in the Sea of Galilee (Kinneret) to rise by 10 centimeters.** The melting snow on the mountains of Israel, on the Golan Heights and in other places will supply a lot of extra water during the coming weeks, to other fresh water reserves as well.
- **Pray for many senior Israelis, who have to live in very difficult conditions.** They have to choose all the time whether to spend their little money on heating, food or medicines. Of these elderly people 21% live below the poverty level.
- **Pray also for the children in Israel, 40% of them live below the poverty level and their future does not look bright.** The last year government cut subsidies drastically.

- **Pray for the soup-kitchens run by the Jaffa Institute and by Hineni.**
- **Thank God for growth in the tourist sector.** Last year 3,5 million tourists came to Israel – a new record and a growth of 3% compared to 2012.
- **Pray that these tourists will become ‘ambassadors’ for Israel.** Many experience that visiting the country has changed their life.
- **Continue to pray for protection for the State of Israel.** The threat of war, terror and intimidation remains unprecedentedly high.

The danger is coming from: Lebanon - terror by Hezbollah; Iran - intimidation and a threat of total destruction; the Palestinian Authority - intimidation and making impossible claims in the peace negotiations; the Gaza Strip – terror by Hamas. On top of this, in most schools in these countries and places the most horrible things are taught about the Jews.

Once again I pass unto you several Psalms, assigned by the rabbis for reading in times of great danger: Psalms 35, 44, 56, 83 and 102.

- **Pray for the soldiers who guard the borders, and for preservation of Biblical territory.**
- **Pray for the government of Prime Minister Netanyahu: for wisdom, for making decisions in accordance with Torah.**
- **Pray for the faltering peace negotiations with the Palestinian Authority, the mediation by the United States.**

It is not always easy to pray about these three points last mentioned. One guideline to stick to is this: all promises God made to His people, will also be fulfilled to His people!

PRAYER

The latest book by well-known Bible teacher Lance Lambert, ‘A House Of Prayer’ gives understanding of the importance of praying together. Because this prayer letter is used by dozens of prayer groups, I pass on some of its insights here.

1. Lack of forgiveness

A lack of forgiveness can seriously hinder effective prayer. Whoever we are, whatever our background and however miraculously we were saved, if we are not able to forgive, our prayers will be worthless. The Lord Jesus stressed this hindrance to prayer when he said: *‘For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.’* Matth. 6:14-15. In other words: then our prayers will be totally blocked.

- **Pray and forgive others their sins generously, so your prayers will not be hindered.**

2. Unconfessed sin

Another big hindrance to corporate prayer is unconfessed sin. As the Psalmist wrote: *‘If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened.’* (Psalm 66:18). The redemption we experienced is so comprehensive: all our sins have been blotted out. Only the Lord was able to take care of that! The apostle John writes: *‘If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.’* (1 John 1:9) It is unconfessed sin that forms an enormous hindrance in corporate prayer.

- **Pray and take unconfessed sins to the Lord, so your prayers will not be hindered and you will not be a hindrance to others.**

3. Israel and the Jewish people

An important area of intercession is Israel and the Jewish people. We must pray that Israel will not disappear, but attain full redemption and salvation through God. In the prophecies about the

concluding phase of world history the reborn State of Israel plays a very major role. Anyone who approaches this controversial subject without prejudice will receive understanding from the Lord of the divine mystery of Israel. Romans 11:25-29. But anyone who does not know what place Israel takes in the will of God, will have no possibility to understand what's happening in the end of days.

- **Thank God for Israel, that we may try to understand God's dealings with His people in this time. And see His preserving hand over them.**

4. Appointed as intercessors on the walls of Jerusalem.

We have to keep in mind that the Lord summons us above all to pray for the fulfillment of His eternal plan - Isaiah 62:6-7. That is the core which all God-given intercession is aimed at. All other forms of intercession are connected with it, even when sometimes we are not aware of it. We have been appointed by God Himself to be intercessors on the walls of Jerusalem, with the same burden and with the same zeal and perseverance as He has. We ought to be humble, knowing that the Lord appoints us, vulnerable people, in this work of intercession.

- **Thank God that we are allowed to intercede, to stand in the gap as a small group amidst so much uproar about Your land, Your people.**