

Mamilla
Mall near
Jerusalem's
Jaffa Gate

Praying Beyond the Peace of Jerusalem

By **Shani Sorko-Ram Ferguson**

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1979 is now famous for the year Western-friendly Iran collapsed into an Islamic stronghold. It also happened to be the year I was born in Tel Aviv. Apparently, I was a particularly loud baby, as the doctors told my parents I'd make a great singer one day. In my first twenty years, I watched Israel evolve. Villages became towns and towns became bustling cities.

In 1999, Kobi and I married and settled in Israel, just in time for Y2K—which, despite predictions, surprised everyone by not bringing the developed world to an end. Our first twenty-ish years in Israel were pretty normal—by Israeli standards, anyway. Kobi learned the language and culture and plugged into Tiferet Yeshua, the congregation my parents planted in our basement when I was a teenager.

We dove into worship and youth ministry and added five Israeli babies into the world. Life included tens of thousands of rockets and missiles, bus bombings and other random terrorist attacks. This happened frequently enough that our kids picked up military terms before they could properly recite their ABCs. The usual waves of antisemitism abroad brought waves of immigration, which brought economic and population growth in turn. And with this, the Body of Israeli believers also grew from a few thousand to some 20,000.

Then came the pandemic of 2020 and the planet shut down. For most of the world, it was a bumpy couple of years. But by the time 2022 closed out, most countries were back to normal.

2023 was set to be a fresh start for Israel—until it wasn't. For Israel, those few months between the

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end of the pandemic lockdowns and the October 7, 2023 attacks, were just enough time to allow for the Israeli government to attempt to pass controversial laws that set the country on fire with mass protests.

Then for three years and counting, more than 95% of Israel's reserves were called up to fight for our survival. The nation is still here, but the population is broken, physically weary, emotionally crushed, in debt, and most significantly, fearful of their future as they watch the world—and even previously reliable allies—turn hostile.

And so, for more than six years—with no end in sight—Israel has been in some state of unprecedented disruption and desperation. This constant state of pressure is bringing out both the

best and worst in us as a people. It is also creating space for significant changes to take place in our culture. And if we want these changes to push Israel towards the Lord, we will need to cover this process in fervent prayer.

There are so many areas in our culture we could highlight for prayer. In this *Maoz Israel Report*, we will present six insightful topics to help guide your intercession.

As you pray for Israel, you may notice that the very needs you are lifting before the Lord also resonate with your own life, your family or your community.

We encourage you to pray, as the Apostle Paul put it, for “the Jew first and also for the nations”! So, let's pray beyond the “peace of Jerusalem.”

Misdirected Worship

If there is anything that angered God in the Scriptures, it was the repeated misdirection of Israel's affections towards other gods. “Don't worship any other god. I am YAHWEH KANAH—the jealous Lord.” That is my Name. I hate for my people to worship other gods.” Exodus 34:14

God's tone on this topic ranges from:

- **mocking—**
“Can people make their own gods? No, if they did, those would not really be gods.” Jeremiah 16:20
- **to anger—**
“For they went and served other gods and worshiped them... Therefore the anger of the Lord was aroused...” Deuteronomy 29:26-27
- **to brokenhearted—**
“...they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them...” Jeremiah 31:32

No matter how frustrating Israel is, God remains passionately in love with her. When considering how to judge Israel for her repeated offenses God confesses, “...My heart will not let me do it! My love for you is too strong.” Hosea 11:8

You can see in these verses that God is consumed with having a happily-ever-after with Israel. Since He is God, we know He will ultimately get what He wants. The question isn't “if”, but “how.”

Interestingly enough, He wants His win to be a **joint effort with mankind**. Ezekiel 22:30 God describes this as He searches for someone to stand in the gap. *He's looking for a few of His people to pray in the rest of His people.*

1

PRAYER

Father, You alone know the hearts of men.

- We want to intercede on behalf of those You have called but who do not yet know You. John 6:44
- You said the prayers of a righteous man avail much. James 5:16
- So, we begin at Your throne of grace and ask for mercy for ourselves and our nation. Hebrews 4:16
- Give us clean hands and a pure heart that we may ascend to Your holy place and that our lives would give honor and make Your name a praise among the nations. Psalm 24

2

PRAYER

The Courage to Wrestle

Jacob led a complicated life. He made some good choices, some bad ones, and even some that are hard to judge definitively one way or the other. When it comes to his legacy, however, few can compete with the conclusion God reached about Jacob—a man who wrestled with God and prevailed—and earned the name Israel.

Wrestling is a process of fighting for something, getting knocked down, getting back up, and ultimately flipping the situation in your favor. This crowning characteristic of Israel—the man and the nation—illuminates a deep truth of what God is looking for in a people who define what it looks like to pursue Him. Wrestling takes courage. You risk failure, embarrassment, and even injury before success. But it's worth it for the prize—when the prize is God's blessing.

Father, You called Yourself the God of Israel. The honor of Your name is at stake.

- May Israel have the courage to continue to wrestle.
- We ask that You would hold back the masses trying to crush Israel—and allow Israel the space to wrestle through the issues a young nation will naturally have.
- Look favorably upon those in Israel reaching out to know You in the little ways they understand. For every small step they take towards You, take seven towards them!
- Israel's instinct is to worship. It was the first thing they did when the Red Sea permanently separated them from the Egyptian army. Now, show Israel today how to worship You in Spirit and Truth. *John 4:23*
- May You be found as they search for You with all their hearts. *Jeremiah 29:13*

During the Iranian missile attacks on Israel, access to all religious areas in Jerusalem's Old City was prohibited for safety reasons. This included the Western Wall, synagogues, mosques and churches. Despite Iranian missile debris falling just feet away from the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, (proving the danger), Christians hostile to Israel used the occasion to create a narrative touting Christian persecution.

Christian Hostility

Go back a decade or two, and Israel had a solid shoulder to lean on. From the outside, it might have looked like it was the United States government. In reality, it was Evangelicals, who saw past the political lines and understood the Biblical responsibility that Christians had to the covenant people from whom their Savior came.

Their prayers and efforts behind the scenes did a lot to heal wounds from the bloody history between Jews and Christians. From the Crusaders to the Nazis, exiling or killing Jews in the name of Christianity has perhaps been the most significant reason Jews steer clear from anything to do with Yeshua and the New Covenant. Christians turning on Jews is possibly the most bizarre oxymoron in the history of the world. **How exactly does a person reconcile loving the King of the Jews while hating Jews?**

Israel's enemies—both spiritual and physical—saw this blossoming alliance with Christians and went on the attack. Mature believers were harder to convince, and so they targeted the younger generation, whose beliefs are heavily influenced by feelings and perception. Catchy phrases, ancient conspiracy theories and painful personal stories have proven to be the perfect recipe to establish the desired theology. For those who are old enough to remember, compare today's social mood of irrational obsession with blaming Jews for everything wrong with the world, to 1939—just before Hitler's final solution began to be implemented.

Christianity at its core is a story of redemption. The Bible records generations of Israel's repeated journey, from darkness and error into light and truth. It's the whole point of the story. So why would Christians adopt the idea that anyone can be saved from the darkest of sins, except Jews—who brought this incredible message to the nations?

3

PRAYER

Father, Your promises are eternal. They anchor us in the confidence of Your love.

- You have established that Your commitment to Israel is as stable as the elements of the universe. [Jeremiah 31](#)
- You desire the nations to join in Your New Covenant with Israel. Many have accepted the forgiveness principles of the Covenant but do not understand there is so much more involved in this forever agreement. [Jeremiah 31](#)
- Open the eyes of the Gentiles to understand Your ways, Your plans and Your faithfulness to Your Word—and to recognize why Israel cannot and will not be removed from Your sight.
- Place a deep desire in all who call themselves Yours to read the Bible so they may know Your ways.

4

Let's Hold Hands

Good leadership looks amazing and even envious from a distance. But you won't find a single leader who would describe their role as easy or simple. Leaders aren't superhuman. They are people who pursue their dreams and wrestle with their strengths and weaknesses, just like you and me. Only they take on the added responsibility of helping others do the same. Their success benefits those around them.

Pastors and other spiritual leaders in Israel have unique challenges because Israel is culturally hostile to Jewish believers in Yeshua. They are often isolated, underpaid and definitely not respected when they walk down the street. But they are the ones fighting for God's Kingdom in Israel.

PRAYER

Father, You have called us to bear one another's burdens.

- Many Israelis deep in the trenches of ministry are lacking a supportive environment to hold up their hands. Show us how to hold up the hands of your leaders as they faithfully shepherd Your people. [Exodus 17:12](#)
- We bless their homes and households with peace and unity. We honor the role You placed them in.
- We recognize they are but human and have need of healthy friendships and encouragement. We ask that You would show them Your path and guide their decisions and steps. [Romans 3:10](#)

Everyone Has a Gift

We know there are differing opinions on the gifts of the Spirit today. But I believe we can all agree that God places in each of us giftings to help us fulfill His calling in our lives. These gifts usually work best when they are teamed up with giftings from others in the Body.

In Israel, there are comparatively few believers. As such, every gift in each person matters, if we are to build an impactful community that Israelis and Christians worldwide cannot ignore.

However, it's important for us to recognize that discovering and turning the gift He has given us into a seasoned skill does not happen automatically. More than often, the enemy will attempt to hinder our development or divert the use of our giftings for selfish or futile endeavors.

PRAYER

Father, Your gifts and callings are without repentance.

- We do not want to neglect the gifts You placed in us. [1 Timothy 4:14](#)
- And so, we speak life into the process of discovery, growth and application of God's gifts and calling.
- May the Body in Israel be known for its excellence in character and abilities.
- May the people of the land turn to Jewish believers for their unique God-blessed abilities.
- May Your name be revered because of the testimony of the lives of Your people you have already redeemed.

5





6

The Structure of Government

It's not uncommon for nations to be born amidst chaos and surrounding war. Though you could argue that having to fight off five larger countries, like Israel did on the eve of its birth, is a bit excessive.

Still, surviving a war doesn't turn you into a thriving country. The test is in creating a government that can lead and care for its people. In Israel, aside from Jews returning home from so many different countries and cultures, Israel has Christian and Muslim Arabs, Bedouins and Druze. This potent diversity creates unique challenges. As Israel's population has more than doubled in the last 30 years, you could say Israel built a parliamentary democratic system that worked for a while. But it's hard to argue the system is keeping up with the times.

For almost a decade now, Israel's government seems to be stuck. The last half dozen elections have failed to deliver a coalition that can properly survive a four-year term. In the current system, there are so many political parties to deal with that multiple elections resulted in reelections, because no one could put together a new coalition that would work together.

When a coalition is achieved, it is usually made up of the more radical parties. Subsequently, the laws our Knesset attempts to pass are so extreme that they either draw out hundreds of thousands of protesters, or collapse the government and bring another round of early elections.

In Israel's defense, the Middle East is an intense region with challenges other areas of the world cannot fathom. In fact, of the multiple nations born after WWII in the region, Israel is the only one that has managed to remain a democracy and not dissolve into a dictatorship or all-out civil war.

PRAYER

Father, You see the end from the beginning.

- You said, "Unless the Lord builds the house, the builders labor in vain. Unless the Lord watches over the city, the guards stand watch in vain." [Psalm 127:1](#)
- You know the paths of success and the ones that lead to calamity. We ask that You would watch over our land and show us how to build Your way. We do not wish to glory in our wisdom and cleverness. We desire to build according to Your blueprints.
- You said, "The king's heart is a stream of water in the hand of the Lord; You turn it wherever You will." [Proverbs 21:1](#)
- Oh, God of Israel! Every nation must have leaders. As humans, they will always be imperfect. But we ask that You guide their hearts and the decisions they make on behalf of this nation.

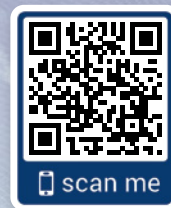
PRAYER

In Conclusion

For in You all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through You and for You. You are before all things, and in You all things hold together! [Colossians 1:16-17](#)



August 2026



Shalom from Jerusalem!

What would you say if I told you there is an empty space between the promises of God and the fulfillment of those promises? According to Daniel, it's a space that must be filled with prayer.

"I, Daniel, learned from the Scriptures... the LORD had told the prophet Jeremiah that Jerusalem would remain in ruins for 70 years. So I turned to the Lord God and pleaded with him in prayer and petition, in fasting, and in sackcloth and ashes..." Daniel 9:2-3

Daniel fasted and prayed for breakthrough of something God had already foretold would happen! But before he prayed for restoration and the fulfillment of prophecy, he began with repentance on behalf of himself and his people.

This year, for Maoz' 50-year Jubilee celebrations, we are offering a special prayer calendar. Together with stunning scenic photos of Israel like you've never imagined, you will be given a prayer theme for each month.

You can take on the monthly prayer theme challenge with your family, prayer group or Sunday school. **The best part? Each of these prayer themes can be prayed over Israel—and then extended to prayer for your own life and community!**

Israel has changed so much over the past 50 years. And like a child that has different needs at different ages—Israel's needs have evolved over the decades. And so, the needs we cover here in prayer evolve as well.

From the local Body, to agriculture, to security, to Christian/Jewish relations—the times we live in demand special attention in prayer.

As our thank-you for your **gift of \$50 or more**, you may request a complimentary **2026–2027 Maoz Jubilee Calendar** for yourself or to bless someone else.

Blessings from the Promised Land,

Kobi and Shani Ferguson

Kobi & Shani Ferguson

Kobi Ferguson
President & CEO

Shani Ferguson
COO



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