



# Global Ministries

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## Pray with Israel/Palestine on Sunday, September 17, 2017

BY [VICTOR MAKARI](#) ON SEPTEMBER 11, 2017

***Lectionary Selection: Matthew 18:21-35***

***Prayers for Israel/Palestine:***

Gracious God, your Word exposes our predisposition to retaliate, seek vengeance and pay evil for evil. Jesus' picture of the Kingdom to which you invite our citizenship convicts our individual and collective consciences. By his sacrifice, you have shown us the breadth, depth and richness of your mercy, and have granted us forgiveness of all our sins. By the power of your Holy Spirit, instill in our hearts the grace of forgiveness toward others in our time and place – in our homes, in our churches, in our nation and in the world that you have loved. Help us to demonstrate your love, pursue peace and be agents of reconciliation. We pray in Christ's name.



***Mission Stewardship Moment from Israel/Palestine:***

While there is still a residue of summer when life necessarily slows down in the Middle East, autumn in Israel and Palestine returns the full measure of activities to their normal pace. In fact, to a hyper pace: schools and universities re-opened three weeks ago; a series of festival celebrations including the Great Muslim Feast of *al-Adha*, celebrated earlier this month, the Jewish New Year "*Rosh ha-Shana*" coming up this week, and later the Feast of Tabernacles "*Sukkot*," the Feast of Contrition/Atonement "*Yom Kippur*," then *Purim*, and *Hanukah*...

Heightened activity, celebrations, frantic shopping, commotion, traffic congestion, louder noise, tell us something. While there is an appearance of "normality," beneath it all there are varieties of feelings: for some it is nonchalance; for others, it is restlessness, fear and anxiety, hopelessness, even futility. Many act as though there is no tomorrow. Some seek escape – the ubiquitous surfing of the *Internet* for many, chatting with virtual "friends;" cruising the streets; playing blaring "music;" resorting to acts of violence; indulgence in food, even in substance abuse; and, yes, emigration – we see it or hear about it frequently.

This has been the year of sad anniversaries: 50 years since the 1967 Occupation of the West Bank of the Jordan River and Gaza, with an increased confiscation of land, expansion of colonies, diversion of water, hikes in food and fuel prices and increased taxation on imports; 100 years of the Balfour

Declaration ceding the land to Israel (as if it had belonged to the British colonizers to give away!); the many thousands who lost their lives in wars and acts of violence.

In a previous year, we wrote: “Inaction of the international community is complicity, collusion. The Church here prays, yes; but it also actively calls for a just and durable peace, through negotiation and reconciliation. We are grateful to God for all who make it possible for us to be part of a community that exhibits love, offers active hope as its form of creative resistance, and promotes peace as the only remaining option.” Beyond whatever tasks we are called upon to perform, we affirm our higher call to be present and witness to God’s reconciling grace in Jesus Christ.

(Prayer and Mission Moment by Victor and Sara Makari)

***Global Ministries Mission Coworker in Israel/Palestine:***

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***More information on Israel/Palestine:***

[http://www.globalministries.org/israel\\_palestine](http://www.globalministries.org/israel_palestine)



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**ISRAEL/PALESTINE**

## Israel/Palestine

Israel is located in the Middle East, bordering the Mediterranean Sea, between Egypt and Lebanon. East Jerusalem, Gaza and the West Bank are regarded as militarily-occupied territories controlled by Israel since the 1967 war. Since the 1993 Oslo peace process a Palestinian Authority (PA) has had administrative responsibility in most Palestinian towns and cities, yet these pockets of Palestinian control are non-contiguous and remain under the broader political, commercial, and military control of Israeli occupation.

Since the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, struggles for land and property rights have characterized this Biblical land. Wars fought in 1948, 1956, 1967, and 1973 caused a significant number of Palestinians to be displaced from their homes. In some cases, people were displaced more than once. Despite peace agreements between Israel and Egypt, and Israel and Jordan, Israeli-Palestinian efforts to solve this long-standing conflict have thus far not achieved a lasting resolution of the major issues of Jerusalem's status, Jewish settlements, sovereignty, and refugees, all of which remain divisive. Local and international, including U.S. and church supported, efforts to end Israeli occupation and create a just two-state solution remain key to future peace and development throughout the region, yet continue to suffer political obstacles and tragic violence.

Population (2014 est) – 7,821,850

Area – 8,019 sq. mi

Capital – Jerusalem

Ethnic Background (2012 est.)

Jewish – 75.1%

(Israel-born 73.6%, Europe/America/Oceania-born 17.9%, Africa-born 5.2%, Asia-born 3.2%)

non-Jewish – 24.9% (mostly Arab)

Exports – machinery and equipment, software, cut diamonds, agricultural products, chemicals, textiles and apparel

Imports – raw materials, military equipment, investment goods, rough diamonds, fuels, grain, consumer goods

Life Expectancy (2014 est) – M 79 years F 84 years

Infant Mortality (2014 est) – 3.98 deaths/1,000 live births

Adult Illiteracy Rate – 2.9%

*(Source: [www.cia.gov/library/publications/resources/the-world-factbook/geos/is.html](http://www.cia.gov/library/publications/resources/the-world-factbook/geos/is.html))*