



Global Ministries

[HOME](#) > [RESOURCES](#) > [WEEKLY PRAYERS](#) > [PRAY WITH ISRAEL/PALESTINE SUNDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2018](#)

Pray with Israel/Palestine Sunday, December 9, 2018

BY [GLOBAL MINISTRIES](#) ON DECEMBER 03, 2018

Lectionary Selection: Luke 3:7-18

Prayers for Israel/Palestine:

God Who Hears the Cries of the Oppressed, bring relief to all in the world who suffer the political ruthlessness of a Tiberius, Pilate or Herod, to all who suffer the self-serving religious indifference of an Annas or Caiaphas.

Move the faithful in churches, synagogues and mosques, along with people of good will, to prepare your way, to fill every valley with justice, to level every mountain of greed, to make straight the crooked and to smooth the rough places in the world—and in us.

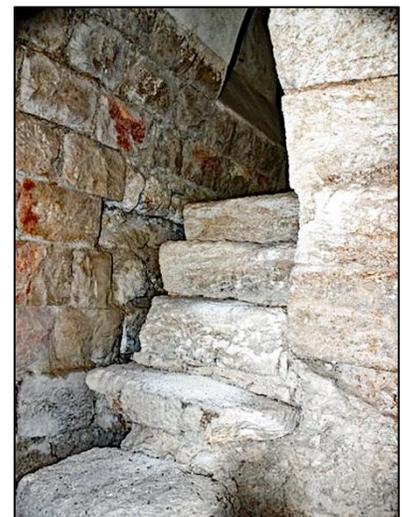
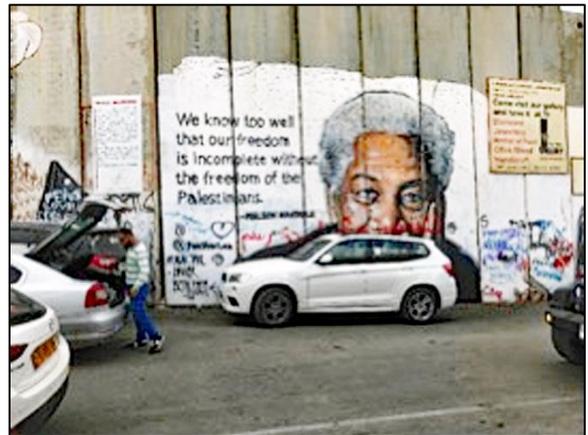
God, in those times when I'm left without words to pray, hear my sighs. But let neither my lack of words nor my sighs keep me from rising up to love and serve you by loving and serving others. In the name of the One who, for our sake, kept faith, hope and love under occupation. Amen.

Mission Stewardship Moment from Israel/Palestine:

“In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius... (Luke 3:1-2).” Luke isn't locating the ministries of John the Baptist and Jesus on the calendar.

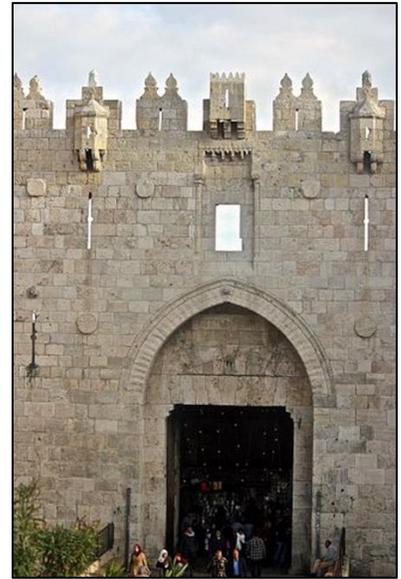
Luke is mixing politics and religion. He is signaling, as he does in Mary's *Magnificat* (Luke 1:46ff), that the life and ministry of Jesus will challenge the politics and the religion of his day.

In 2009, Palestinian Christians across a wide theological continuum released the document, *Kairos Palestine*. Reminiscent of the 1980s call from South African Christian leaders who challenged the legitimacy of the official “state theology” called Apartheid, the document describes



the reality on the ground in Palestine: the effects of a harsh occupation; the refusal of decision-makers to commit themselves to the serious task of finding a resolution; and the deepening economic, environmental and cultural crisis in Palestine. Our sisters and brothers in Palestine implore us to confront Christian Zionism, a heretical theology that denies the rights and harms the lives of our Palestinian Christian family and their Muslim neighbors.

On our alternative tours to Palestine and Israel, my wife Janet and I introduce pilgrims to our Global Ministries mission partners: B'Tselem (a Jewish NGO documenting Israeli human rights abuses in the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza); Rawdat el-Zuhur (an elementary school in Jerusalem); the Friends Meeting in Ramallah; the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Old City of Jerusalem and many others. Each person we meet expresses his or her faith in God by working for a just and lasting peace between Israelis and Palestinians. Our gifts are helping to make it happen.



More information on Israel/Palestine:

https://www.globalministries.org/israel_palestine



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[HOME](#) > [WHERE WE WORK](#) > [MIDDLE EAST & EUROPE](#) > [COUNTRY DIRECTORIES](#) >
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)