ISAIAH 62 PRAYER INITIATIVE
December 2017 Prayer Letter
Dear prayer partners,

Our recent Feast of Tabernacles celebration ended with a glorious time of prayer and intercession at the Tower of David in the Old City of Jerusalem. Around eight hundred Christians from around the world took part in the closing prayer vigil at this majestic walled fortress just inside Jaffa Gate. The beautiful scenery and the anointed worship team made it easy to start flowing in the spirit of prayer, but as the sun rose higher overhead the place grew very warm. It became a real battle for everyone to ignore the heat and stay focused on prayer.

In that moment, the Lord reminded me that He loves the smell of burning flesh. He was not just referring to animal sacrifices offered on the altar, but to humans forgetting about their own flesh and offering a pleasing aroma to God in praise and prayer. I knew that God was delighted with the way these Feast pilgrims were putting their flesh aside that morning to stay in the Spirit, even in the sweltering heat.

Often the Bible describes our prayers as an incense rising up to the throne room in heaven. We see this, for example, in Revelation 5:8 and 8:3-4. In both passages, there are golden bowls or censers of burning incense which ascend “with the prayers of the saints.” These verses allude to the Day of Atonement, or Yom Kippur, when the High Priest would enter the Holy of Holies with two items only – the blood of an animal and a golden censer of burning incense.

Likewise, the Book of Hebrews tells us how Christ, our eternal High Priest, offered up prayers as an incense to God, saying: “in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear...” (Hebrews 5:7). This is speaking, of course, about the agony of Jesus as he prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane. Note how his prayer in that moment was so selfless... “not my will, but Yours, be done” (Luke 22:42).

I believe that the “prayers of the saints” which rise as an incense to the Lord are those that are devoid of our own will and desire. Selfish prayers simply fall flat on the ground. But those coming from a saintly person who seeks God’s will and
kingdom above all else, those are the prayers which gain altitude and reach His throne room in heaven.

This attitude of humility and sacrifice is part of how the Bible would define a “saint”. The Old Testament uses the Hebrew word qadosh, which usually refers to God or to holy places, but can also refer to saints or “holy ones” – meaning either angels or redeemed persons on earth. In the New Testament, the Greek word used for “saint” is hagios. Taken together, they refer to those who are humble, God-fearing, patient, upright, and undefiled by the world. The foundational verse for this concept is Leviticus 11:44, which commands us to “be holy as I am holy”. We are to be pious, faithful worshippers of God, exclusively set apart to the Lord. If we belong to this company of saints, then one day we will not only receive an eternal inheritance, but we also will judge the world (1 Corinthians 6:2).

So as we pray together over the month of December, let us remember to lay our own will and desire aside and offer up only selfless prayers – the kind that are most pleasing to Him.

In His abounding grace!

David Parsons
Vice President and Senior Spokesman

ISAIAH 62
The next day of prayer and fasting in our Isaiah 62 Global Prayer Campaign will be on Wednesday, 6 December 2017. Please join us!

Pray with us according to the following guidelines:

1. **Prayer for Israel**
   
   - **Government**
     
     i. Pray that Israeli leaders will be able to meet the many challenges facing the nation both internally and abroad.
     
     ii. Pray that politicians will bridge divisions, e.g. the secular-religious divide, and work for the greater good of Israel.
     
     iii. Pray for stability within the coalition government.
     
     iv. Pray that the frayed relations between Jews in Israel and in the Diaspora would be mended.
     
     v. Pray for the believers in Yeshua here in the land to continue to deny themselves, pick up their cross, and continue to follow Yeshua!
     
     vi. Some Arab-Israeli members of the Knesset exploit their parliamentary immunity to undermine Israel’s interests and reputation abroad. Pray that their efforts would be thwarted and that Israel will be able to find the right balance of allowing legitimate Arab political representation and putting an end to disloyal activities.
     
     vii. Use the following scriptures:

     "The LORD will give strength to His people:
     The LORD will bless His people with peace.” (Psalm 29:11)

     “I will hear what God the LORD will speak,
     For He will speak peace
     To His people and to His saints:
     But let them not turn back to folly.” (Psalm 85:8)
“Then He said to them all, ‘If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.’” (Luke 9:23)

**Society**

i. A disturbing string of physical and verbal student-on-teacher violence has uncovered a disciplinary problem in the Israeli education system. Pray that children would learn to benefit from and respect those who seek to equip them for life and that teachers would respond to provocations with both firmness and love.

ii. Use the following scriptures:

   “...and that their children, who have not known it, may hear and learn to fear the LORD your God as long as you live in the land which you cross the Jordan to possess.” Deuteronomy (31:13)

   “Whoever loves instruction loves knowledge, But he who hates correction is stupid.” (Proverbs 12:1)

**Energy Security**

i. Israel is enjoying an energy boon as it becomes a major exporter of natural gas to neighboring countries, and even Europe in the future, and furthermore generates 70% if its own electricity from offshore gas fields in the Mediterranean. But this also makes the country vulnerable in the event of war.

ii. Use the following scriptures:

   “After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, saying, “Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward.” (Genesis 15:1)
2. **Prayer for the Nations**

- **Middle East**
  
i. Pray for Israel’s improving relations with key Arab states like Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

  
  
  ii. Pray that Iran would be forced to withdraw all its troops and proxy militias from Syria.

  
  
  iii. Pray that Israel would be fully protected from all threats and schemes being planned and carried out by Iran.

  
  
  iv. Pray that Israel’s efforts to assist wounded and suffering Syrians would enjoy divine protection and would change many in the Arab world to no longer view Israel as an enemy.

  
  
  v. Pray that Islamic State and its allies would not succeed in lashing out with terrorist attacks as the organization is driven from its strongholds.

  
  
  vi. Use the following scriptures:

    "By this I know that You are well pleased with me, Because my enemy does not triumph over me." (Psalm 41:11)

    "For You have been a shelter for me, A strong tower from the enemy." (Psalm 61:3)

    “Therefore ‘If your enemy is hungry, feed him; If he is thirsty, give him a drink; For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head.’” (Romans 12:20)

- **Arabian Peninsula**

  
i. Pray that the political shake-up taking place in Saudi Arabia will prove to be a blessing for that country’s relations with Israel and for Saudi society overall.
ii. Pray that the political infiltration and military interventions by Iran and Saudi Arabia in Yemen would come to an end.

iii. Pray for humanitarian relief for Yemen.

iv. Use the following scriptures:

“A ruler who lacks understanding is a great oppressor, but he who hates covetousness will prolong his days.” (Proverbs 28:16)

3. Prayer for the ICEJ

   - ICEJ Ministry

   i. Pray for the work and ministry of the Christian Embassy as we enter the new year of 2018.

   ii. Pray for our efforts to prosper and bear lasting fruit as never before, throughout Israel and every nation on earth.

   iii. Pray for the ICEJ leadership to have the “mind of Christ” in making decisions about the future direction of the ministry.

   iv. Pray for fruitful follow-ups to this year’s successes with Christian-Jewish cooperation, as well as for the ICEJ’s holiday events.

   v. Use the following scriptures:

   “For You are my rock and my fortress; Therefore, for Your name’s sake, Lead me and guide me.” (Psalm 31:3)

   However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth: for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak: and He will tell you things to come. (John 16:13)

   “‘For who has known the mind of the LORD that he may instruct Him?’ But we have the mind of Christ.” (1 Corinthians 2:16)
ICEJ Staff

i. Pray for critical staff needs, both in terms of recruitment and retention.

ii. Pray for continued energy, creativity and vision for our workers and for Feast Team Members to keep communicating and implementing God’s vision for the ICEJ in 2018.

iii. Use the following scriptures:

“...with goodwill doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men...” (Ephesians 6:7)

“And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.” (Galatians 6:9)

Thank you for joining with us in prayer!