*Watchman’s Prayer Letter Sept 2020*

*“So Peter was kept in prison, but prayer for him was being offered fervently to God by Messiah’s community…he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John whose other name was Mark, where many were gathered together and were praying.” (Acts 12:5, 12b TLV)*

**THE BLESSINGS OF CORPORATE PRAYER**

COVID 19 may hinder people from physically coming together at prayer times, but it cannot stop prayer. Rather than halting it, COVID has actually **intensified** prayer!  Seasons of trouble can bring people to their knees returning to God for help; whereas times of peace do not usually have that effect. When groups of people turn to God, humbly call on Him and begin trusting in His power, He will hear and bring about deliverance.*“For this is what Adonai Elohim, the Holy One of Israel, says: “Returning and resting is what will save you; calmness and confidence will make you strong…” (Isaiah 30:15 CJB).*

What is***prayer***? **It is a conversation with God.** We can communicate with God individually in our private “prayer closets,” as well as praying corporately. Cambridge Dictionary defines***corporate***as **“of or shared by a whole group and not just of a single member.”**  In this discussion, we will describe a *corporate prayer* *team* as ”*a group of people who have gathered to converse with God*.” Although there are various types of corporate prayer, we will only refer to prayers of agreement, thanksgiving, worship, supplication, and intercession.

* **Prayer of agreement:** Effective corporate prayer means everyone in the group knows and agrees with what you are asking God to do. There is a unified focus of each person praying for the same thing. *(Ezra 8:21,23; Acts 1:14)*
* **Prayer of thanksgiving:** The presence of God comes into our prayer meetings by invitation. We can invoke His Presence by *“entering His gates with thanksgiving”* as we enumerate the things He has done. *(Psalms 100:4)*
* **Prayer of worship**: The presence of God comes through worshipping Him for who He is. God’s “manifest presence” is a transforming presence that can actually be sensed. This is an important aspect of powerful corporate prayer. *(2 Chronicles 5:13-14; Acts 13:2-3)*
* **Prayer of supplication (request)**: Adonai invites us to bring our requests to Him and not to be anxious about anything.*(Philippians 4:6)*
* **Prayer of intercession**:  Our prayers often include requests for others because we are interceding on their behalf. The Word of God instructs us to make intercession for everyone. *(I Timothy 2:1)*                                                 (Jonathon Graf and gotquestions.org)

How does a person learn to pray? From hearing someone else pray. “*Now Yeshua was praying in a certain place. When He finished, one of His disciples said to Him, “Master, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples.” (Luke 11:1)* If we only pray individually in our prayer closets, how will others learn to pray?”My mother and one of my former pastors were my first mentors in learning to prayer.

From personal experience, praying with different groups from various backgrounds provides rich encounters in moving in the Spirit realm. There are numerous benefits in learning to pray with a team of people. Many times the Holy Spirit will highlight one person’s words to fine tune the focus of the group to what God truly wants to do. Johnathon Graf noted, *“*As we pray with others, we become more open to God’s agenda, and we begin let go of our own.” As an intercessory team regularly takes turns praying aloud together, there is a certain spiritual bonding that occurs. Praying alongside other strong believers infuses you with spiritual reinforcement because there is strength in numbers.*“Though a man might overpower one, two can stand against him. Moreover, a threefold cord cannot be quickly broken.” (Ecclesiastes 4: 12 TLV)*

A person carrying a heavy burden can be tremendously benefited by having an intercessor come alongside to help bear it or to give God’s Word of relief.  Such was the case of Hannah’s plea for a son; her grief over her childlessness was so intense that she could not even utter words—only weep bitterly*(1 Samuel 1:1-25)*. Hannah did not retreat in seclusion during her period of sadness. She brought her pain and anguish to the temple—a place where she could receive help. Eli, the priest, gave her God’s word, which brought relief, and later Samuel was born. As prayer warriors, we have the sacred privilege and responsibility of uplifting and praying with others in their time of need.  ***“****Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Yeshua the Messiah, the Father of compassion and God of all encouragement. He encourages us in every trouble, so that we may be able to encourage those who are in any trouble, through the very encouragement with which we ourselves are encouraged by God” (2 Corinthians 1:3-4 TLV).*

As a direct result of COVID, the use of technology by religious groups (large and small) has multiplied exponentially by linking people to worship, prayer, and the word of God through video chats, telephone conferencing, live streaming, and video conferences*.*The pandemic restrictions have birthed creativity providing ways to stay connected to God and to one another. Over the last six months, we have witnessed some powerful international worship and prayer sessions that spanned several continents simultaneously. During Passover for several hours, we experienced the worldwide Body of Messiah worshipping, praying and taking communion together by video! It was phenomenal and unprecedented! In the midst of the pandemic, I believe we made significant spiritual inroads that night. *“…but God produced something good from it, in order to save the lives of many people, just as he’s doing today.” (Genesis 50:20b CEB)*

My pastor, Dr. Mark Brown Sr. says, “The Kingdom of God is voice-activated!” We can activate the Kingdom of God by lifting our voices together in corporate prayer.  Join with others and call out to Adonai!

**Let’s lift our voices on behalf of Israel**

* **Thank God** for preserving our lives and our sanity during this time of worldwide disease and chaos! We are sheltered by The Almighty. ***“Give thanks to* Adonai*; for he is good, for his grace continues forever. Now let Israel say, ’His grace continues forever’” (Psalms 118:1-2 CJB).***
* **Praise Adonai** because He will fulfill His promise to redeem Israel physically and spiritually.***“For I will take you from the nations, gather you out of all the countries and bring you back to your own land … Moreover, I will give you a new heart. I will put a new spirit within you.” (Ezekiel 36:24, 26 TLV)***
* **Petition the Lord** during these High Holy Days to release a spirit of repentance throughout Israel and across the face of the earth that will cause people to bow in recognition of His reality and supremacy. ***“Then I will pour out a spirit of grace and prayer on the house of David and the residents of Jerusalem, and they will look at me whom they pierced. They will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child…” (Zechariah 12:10 NLT)***
* **Intercede** for unity in the Knesset, Israel’s governing body, so that lawmakers would lay down their own agendas and follow God’s law. Pray that righteous men and women in government would stand firm on godly principles and that others would be removed from office**. “*When the righteous thrive, people rejoice. When the wicked rule, people groan.” (Proverbs 29:2 TLV)***
* **Pray** for the younger generation to arise in the power of the Ruach Kodesh (Holy Spirit.)  May they burst forth in passionate zeal, hungry to experience the presence of God in even greater ways. May they hear the voice of the Good Shepherd and follow Him. ***“...I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy...your young men will see visions.” (Joel 2:28; Acts 2:17 NIV)***
* **Proclaim** that Adonai is Our Shield! He will guard the IDF (Israel Defense Force) troops on all of Israel’s borders, and in Judea and Samaria, while they guard Israel.***“But You, O Lord, are a shield for me, my glory [and my honor], and the One who lifts my head...I lay down and slept [safely]; I awakened, for the Lord sustains me. I will not be intimidated or afraid of the ten thousands who have set themselves against me all around.” (Psalms 3:3,5-6 AMP)***
* **Worship the Lord** because of His faithfulness and the permanence of His word. We can trust whatever He said**.*“Forever, Adonai, Your word stands firm in the heavens.* *Your faithfulness endures from generation to generation. You established the earth, and it stands” (Psalms 119:89-90 TLV).***

**Dear Prayer Warriors,**

As we enter into the Jewish new-year, 5781, may we dedicate ourselves to listening more closely to the voice of the Lord and following His directives. What a privilege it is to help usher in the Kingdom of God through prayer for Israel! “*Thy Kingdom come; thy will be done.”*

This is the time of *“voice activation”* through corporate prayer. We are sounding out a call for intercessors and worshippers to unite with the *“Israel Watch”* Prayer Network. If God is prompting you to connect with us, please don’t hesitate. To enlist, you may visit our website at <https://www.cfijerusalem.org/wall-of-prayer>.

In His Love,

Linda D. McMurray

Wall of Prayer Supervisor