



# Sabeel Wave of Prayer

May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2019

This prayer ministry enables local and international friends of Sabeel to pray over regional concerns on a weekly basis. Sent to Sabeel's network of supporters, the prayer is used in services around the world and during Sabeel's Thursday Communion service; as each community in its respective time zone lifts these concerns in prayer at noon every Thursday, this "wave of prayer" washes over the world.

The 'Great March of Return' protest was cancelled by the organisers for only the second time in over a year. A large demonstration had already taken place in Gaza on Wednesday, the 15th of May to commemorate Nakba Day and call for their right to return to their homes to be recognised. Sixty-five Gazans were injured during that demonstration as the Israeli army used live fire and tear gas against ten thousand protestors.

- **Lord, we pray for all those who were injured during the demonstration in Gaza. We continue to pray for an end to the blockade of Gaza and for the right of return to their homes for the Palestinian refugees. Lord, in your mercy...*hear our prayer.***

Supporters of the Kumi Now initiative are encouraged this week to meet up in Kumi city gatherings. The idea is that such gatherings would help activists to get to know one another better. Hopefully they will then want to organise future events, such as sharing a meal, showing a film or inviting a speaker to raise a greater awareness of Palestine in their communities.

- **Dear Lord, we thank you for all those people who have a heart for the injustice suffered by those living in Palestine and Israel. We pray that they may work together to help bring a clearer understanding of the oppression suffered by Palestinians. We long for an international outcry against the injustice they face. Lord, in your mercy...*hear our prayer.***

Palestinians called for a boycott of the Eurovision Song Contest final in Tel Aviv on Saturday, the 18th of May. They staged an alternative show called 'Globalvision' in Haifa with Palestinian, Israeli, and international artists. The hope was to draw attention to the country's occupation. Globalvision parties were also planned in London, Dublin, and Bethlehem as well as a separate Gazavision which took place in Gaza held by a group of youth called We Are Not Numbers which was won by 23-year-old Jahed Shehada.

- **Dear Lord, we thank you that Palestinian artists have come together to use their creative gifts to highlight the difficulties faced by their people living under occupation in Israel. Lord, in your mercy...*hear our prayer.***

The Israeli group 'Breaking the Silence' erected an enormous billboard on the busiest street in Tel Aviv with the slogan, 'Dare to Dream of Freedom', playing on this year's Eurovision slogan, 'Dare to Dream'. 'Breaking the Silence' is an NGO group comprised of former soldiers against Israel's occupation of the West Bank. Behind the slogan the billboard shows a picture of Tel Aviv's Mediterranean beachfront alongside a view of Israel's West Bank separation wall with a military watchtower. It also invites visitors to 'See the Full Picture' with daily free tours to Hebron in the occupied West Bank.

- **Dear Lord, millions of people viewed the Eurovision Song Contest on Saturday, the 18th of May. Many will be unaware of the apartheid conditions suffered by Palestinians living in the West Bank and particularly by those living near the separation wall. We are thankful for the courage of the activists in the 'Breaking the Silence' group in erecting the billboard and offering tours to the West Bank. We pray that they will open the eyes and hearts of many more people to the sufferings of the Palestinians. Lord, in your mercy...*hear our prayer.***

The situation in Gaza worsens by the day. The Palestinian Authority has imposed sanctions on the Gaza Strip as part of its ongoing dispute with Hamas. These sanctions have led to cuts in payments to thousands of civil servants and needy families. Now UNWRA is warning that more than one million people in Gaza will face hunger next month, due to the sudden cut in Palestinian refugee aid imposed by the US in 2018.

- **Oh Lord, we remember your undertaking to 'uphold all who are falling and to raise up all who are bowed down', (Psalm 145:14). We bring the people of Gaza to you as they try to survive in their confined land, which has become an open prison. We pray that international powers will respond to the urgent call for help, to keep the people there from starvation and recognise their right to return to their land. Lord, in your mercy...*hear our prayer.***

An Arab American musician, Tawfiq Zaher, was walking on a street in Nazareth when he was killed by a stray bullet. He was a well-known and gifted Oud player. Thousands of people attended his funeral. They also voiced their concern over the rising levels of violence being experienced by the Arab community living inside Israel.

- **Dear Lord, we pray for the family and friends of Tawfiq Zaher as they mourn his sudden and accidental death. We pray too that the Israeli police will take interest in combatting rising levels of crime and violence in the communities they are meant to protect. Lord, in your mercy...*hear our prayer.***

Aisha Al-Lulu, a five-year-old Palestinian girl with cancer from Gaza, died alone in a hospital after Israeli authorities prevented her family from accompanying her from Gaza to Jerusalem where she was receiving treatment. Aisha underwent a complex operation to remove a cancerous tumour from the brain stem and died due to complications after surgery. The Israeli occupation administration repeatedly denied Aisha's family permits to visit during her treatment under the pretext of security concerns.

- **Lord, we remember the family of Aisha as they grieve for their loss. We confess the sin of being silent and tolerating for long the unjust Israeli military practices. Lord help us in our struggle to regain our freedom and dignity. Lord in your mercy...*hear our prayer.***
- **We join with the World Council of Churches in their prayers for the Indian Ocean Islands of Comoros, Madagascar, the Maldives, Mauritius and the Seychelles. Lord, in your mercy...*hear our prayer.***