

Pray for Peace



During my trip to Israel in late March, I ran into a group of Jewish kids on a field trip in Jerusalem's tourist area. They were giggling and chatting like a brood of cackling hens, when two of them jumped in front of my camera and asked me to take a picture of them. I did and they skipped off.

With backpacks in tow and ponytail dangling, those kids looked like the kids in my neighborhood; they looked normal to me. But their chaperone did not.

The 21-year-old wore a pair of blue jeans with a dark-colored jacket; a bracelet and something else—a high-powered assault rifle strapped to her shoulder. The weapon was longer than the arms that carried it.

My tour guide, Tsion Ben David, told me that it is a law in Israel that when students in groups of 20 or more go on a field trip or tour they must be accompanied by an armed escort. The young woman I saw was once a soldier in the Israeli army.

He also told me that when Israeli children turn 18, they are required to join the army. Boys must serve their country for a minimum of three years, and girls are required to put in two years.

When I looked into my viewfinder to take a picture of the young woman, it became clear to me why I was there. As a believer in the Lord Jesus, I have an obligation to pray for Israel and stand with its people in any way I can. That's why I am the editor of Standing With Israel. I want the record in heaven to reflect my commitment to God's chosen people.

I didn't feel the least bit afraid during my pilgrimage in the

Holy Land, but Israel is under the constant threat of attack. We Christians may not wield semi-automatic weapons, but we can pray. I believe prayer is one of the believer's most powerful weapons and when we use it for God's purposes, He responds.

When we cover Israel in prayer, we cover ourselves too, and God promises to bless us for our efforts. Genesis 12:3 says, "I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed" (NKJV).

Let's pray for the peace of Jerusalem.

Valerie G. Lowe is the editor of Standing With Israel e-newsletter. Below are photos of children she met who were on a field trip with their armed escort.

