

Christian Women Wage a Different Kind of War in Israel

As an Israeli missile sped toward the compound where the Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and many of his senior leaders gathered to plan their response to airstrikes by the United States and Israel, one hundred and fifteen Christian women leaders waged spiritual warfare from a bomb shelter in Galilee.

The women—the largest delegation of Christian women leaders in Israel’s history—landed at Ben Gurion Airport one day before the first airstrikes, despite the threat of war. The women hold senior positions in their communities and collectively influence hundreds of thousands of Christians across the United States and around the world.

They are pastors and faith leaders, public figures, media personalities, academics, CEOs, and a social media influencer from the Arab world. They lead social and educational initiatives alongside prominent pastors at some of the largest churches in the United States.

The delegation chose to visit at a moment of heightened regional tensions and amid the looming threat of an Iranian attack, delivering a clear and unequivocal message of support for the State of Israel and the Jewish people. One day after their arrival, the war with Iran began, transforming the entire course of the visit.



Israeli airspace was closed making it impossible for the women to leave the country. Meetings with the President of Israel and the First Lady, government ministers and members of

Knesset and hostage survivors were canceled.

The women were not afraid or frustrated. Instead, when the skies closed, they bombarded heaven. They interceded for Israel. They interceded for the Iranian people. They asked God to intervene decisively in the affairs of nations.

At 12:12 p.m., one of the pastors on the tour, DeHavilland Ford, prayed aloud:

Iranian people are praying for liberation right now! We strike in the place of prayer and we say by faith the Ayatollah is falling!

Within the hour, the news broke.

The Ayatollah was dead.

There is a back story to the trip that suggests that what seemed like the interruption of an Israel tour may be much more.

One of the organizers of the mission reports that the trip was born during a large convention in Orlando, Florida, last August. Leaders of Eagles' Wings, an international Christian organization that has been building bridges of solidarity and relationship between Jews and Christians for more than thirty years, were talking about taking pastors and leaders to Israel when, Sue Lacy, a pastor's wife from Columbus, Georgia, said, "What about the women?"

"You need to take women leaders," she asserted.

An Eagles' Wings leader pointed out that the ministry had taken a small group to Israel the previous April. Sue Lacy pushed. "You need to go during Purim. There's a shift coming and the women need to go during Purim."



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The leader went to other Eagles' Wings leaders and reported the conversation with Lacy. Within hours the Purim trip was born.

Eagles' Wings is no stranger to the war-torn region.

Founder and president Robert Stearns has led more than eight hundred pastors on trips to Israel—24 solidarity missions since Hamas launched terrorist attacks on Oct. 7, 2023, that took the lives of 1,250 men, women and children in the most heinous ways imaginable.

Over the next few months, women from across America began to register for the trip. Eventually, more than 130 joined the effort. As the threat of war intensified, some women dropped out; the vast majority did not.

"These women are warriors," one Eagles' Wings staff members observed. "They sensed a divine moment and gave themselves to it without reservation."

"It is no coincidence that we are here during the time of Purim,' Eagles' Wings trip director Sue TenEyck says, "As in Esther's time, there are dark forces bent on the destruction of Israel. We are here to pray and stand in solidarity."

Stearns was on a flight to Tel Aviv to join the women. Four hours into that flight, his El Al flight was forced to turn around and head back to New York. Once back on the ground Stearns coordinated the efforts of senior staff began to move the group to get the group out of Israel safely. On Monday, March 3rd, the group boarded three buses to make the grueling two-day trip from Galilee to Cairo, Egypt, accompanied by armed security.

The group breathed a collective sigh of relief when they walked across the Israeli-Egyptian border. They sent texts and

made phone calls to husbands, children and parents to let them know they were safe. All of them gave thanks to God for the opportunity to be a part of an historic moment of change.

Emily Emanuel offered a major takeaway that these women will carry with them, "It's important for the church to understand that this is a real battle. The physical and the spiritual are interlinked...We need to stand as men and women of God in peace and faith amidst it all."

Submitted by Dr. Gary Kellner