



THE Defender

"BUT THERE IS A FRIEND WHO STICKS CLOSER THAN A BROTHER." PROVERBS 18:24

AMAZING AND TRANSFORMATIONAL TIME IN ISRAEL

It was ten straight 16-hour days—and I wouldn't trade it for the world. Together with our Covenant Journey tour team, I had the great joy of introducing 42 college-age Christian leaders to Israel on our 22nd Covenant Journey tour to the Holy Land, May 26-June 4.

As always, it was an amazing time with an amazing group of young leaders. For many, the trip was transformational. Covenant Journey gave these bright and talented college students an opportunity to have an immersive experience in Israel and to grow closer to God as they spent time in His land. Here are a few of their post-tour comments . . .

I fell into the camp of believing the prophecies were more metaphorical, but after seeing the land and meeting the people, I know now these prophecies were specifically for and about these chosen people of God! —Ann

I feel more connected to the Jewish people and therefore feel like I can empathize with them more as well as defend the Jewish people and faith to those with anti-Semitic perspectives. —Caroline

Covenant Journey gave me a brand-new understanding of the Bible. To be able to see and now mentally picture where Jesus walked with his disciples or where David hid in caves from Saul makes reading the Bible change from black and white into color. —Laine

The students came from 27 colleges and most did not know each other beforehand. But the group



Mat Staver with Covenant Journey participants at Tel Dan in northern Israel. Behind is a still-standing 4,000-year-old mud brick gate from the time of Abraham!

quickly bonded and many were ministered to as we fellowshiped, worshiped, sang and learned about ancient and modern Israel. As we left Israel, many were crying.

To learn more about the impact of Covenant Journey, read Bri's story on page three. And consider a gift to help raise up more advocates for Israel through Covenant Journey and Christians in Defense of Israel.

Thank you for standing with us and for your heart for Israel and the Jewish people!

Mat Staver
Chairman

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CHRISTIANS IN DEFENSE OF ISRAEL

PO Box 540209, Orlando, FL 32854 • Israel@CIDIsrael.org • (407) 875-1948

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TRUMP RECOGNIZES GOLAN AND REDRAWS ISRAEL'S MAP

President Trump thrilled Israelis in March when he recognized the Jewish state's sovereignty over the Golan Heights—a strategic mountainous region that serves as a buffer against invasion by Syria and Iran.

Friends like you urged Trump to make this decision by signing CIDI's "Recognize the Golan Heights Now!" petition. Thank you to all who signed this petition delivered to the White House two weeks before Trump's surprise announcement on the Golan.

Trump's move bucked the UN and international opinion. And it reversed a 52-year-old American mistake dating to 1967 when Israel took the Golan from Syria in the Six-Day War.

"Israeli-Occupied Territory" No More

From that time until Trump's recognition, the U.S., along with the rest of the international community, referred to the Golan, a 40-mile strip of rocky highlands, as "Israeli-occupied territory."

But after the U.S. recognized Israel's sovereign right over the Golan Heights, the U. S. State Department revised its map of Israel to show the Golan as part of Israel proper—and not as "occupied territory." Trump gave Netanyahu a signed copy of the revised map on which he wrote "Nice!" with an arrow pointing to the Golan.

Thank you, again, to all who joined in petitioning the President to make this historic Golan Heights announcement!



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu with U.S. State Department map showing the Golan Heights as part of Israel, along with President's Trump signed comment: "Nice!"

Trump Moves to Name Muslim Brotherhood a Terror Group

The Washington Establishment jumped into action in late April after President Trump acted to designate the Muslim Brotherhood as a terrorist organization. The designation is "working its way through the internal process," White House spokeswoman Sarah Huckabee Sanders said at the time.



The Muslim Brotherhood seal, above. Its motto states "jihad is our way."

But many "experts" quickly came to the Muslim Brotherhood's defense. They warned Trump's planned move will "greatly complicate American diplomacy in the Middle East, fuel extremism and lead to the persecution of Muslim groups in the U.S.," as HuffPost reported.

Your Petitions Delivered

Overheated rhetoric like that makes our petition calling on President Trump to name the Brotherhood a terrorist group all the more critical. Thank you to each one who took the time to sign this petition, which we recently delivered to the White House.

And when it comes to whether or not the Muslim Brotherhood is, in fact, a terror organization, the Brotherhood's own words are the best evidence. In its "Explanatory Memorandum," a secret document found hidden in the group's clandestine Virginia archive, the Brotherhood declared that its "work in America is a kind of grand Jihad in eliminating and destroying the Western civilization from within and 'sabotaging' its miserable house by their hands and the hands of the believers so that it [America/Western civilization] is eliminated and Allah's religion is made victorious over all other religions."

Add to that the Brotherhood's motto, which too many "experts" ignore: 'Allah is our objective; the Prophet is our leader; the Quran is our law; Jihad is our way; dying in the way of Allah is our highest hope.' Thank you to each one who signed this important petition to President Trump!

COVENANT JOURNEY SPARKS PRO-ISRAEL ACTION, MIDDLE EAST MINISTRY

“Oh, you’re a Christian; I always wanted to go to a Christian church. Will you take me?” That request, from a Jewish college student, is just one of many unique opportunities Bri had after returning from Israel with Covenant Journey.

She always knew she supported Israel, but she had lacked the knowledge and confidence to stand up against Apartheid Week and other anti-Semitic events on campus.

“Changed Everything”

“I had always been very supportive of Israel as a state, but this trip honestly changed everything,” Bri said.

“I absolutely fell hard in love with Israel. I came back to my campus with a strong conviction to minister to Jews, as well as advocate for Israel politically.”

Back at the University of Southern California, Bri reached out to Jewish, Palestinian and Arab student groups. She even involved her Christian sorority in bridging the gap through outreaches and joint projects.

Engaging on Israel

“My biggest calling [on campus] was to have conversations about what people thought about Israel. If they would let me, I would share about my trip. I had so many conversations with people. Some disagreed with me, but I am still having those conversations,” Bri said.

Bri had also traveled to London for a two-week mission trip passing out Jesus Film Project resources in Middle Eastern neighborhoods. Bri recalls seeing “these women in all black coverings snatch a Bible and quickly cover it in the folds of material.”

Those memories stayed with Bri. “The lack of freedom they have to just be curious” shocked her. “The Middle East very clearly needs the Gospel, and it needs to change.” This London experience, along with her trip with Covenant Journey, sparked a passion for sharing the Gospel with Arabs.



After visiting Israel on a Covenant Journey trip, Bri returned to her school, USC, with confidence to be an advocate for Israel. She later launched into Middle East ministry through film.

After graduation, Bri did a one-year internship with Cru. Working out of the Paris office, she helped edit a movie about a Christian from North Africa. The movie, with a clear Gospel message, won an award and premiered in several Arab countries.

One Middle Eastern government didn’t just welcome the film into their country. Leaders there were so excited about the project they actually provided funding to help cover part of the production costs!

Middle East Ministry

“Covenant Journey is a big part of why I am passionate about the Middle East,” Bri shares. Her time in Israel helped her to better understand the people and to navigate within a closed culture in order to minister within Arab countries. Now she wants to spread the Gospel through film in areas where it is difficult or nearly impossible for Christians to be open about their faith.

Your generosity is crucial to giving students like Bri the life-transforming, pro-Israel experience offered by Covenant Journey. Please make your gift today to produce more champions for Israel and to bless and defend Israel through the work of Christians in Defense of Israel.



Discover a Modern Miracle!



Even if you've never set foot in Israel, you'll gain a vivid sense of the land and the people when you watch *Why Israel Matters*. This fascinating 13-episode documentary video series is filled with incredible stories direct from Israel. Meet the war heroes, business leaders and everyday people who make Israel what it is today—a thriving and dynamic nation and a modern miracle.

Why Israel Matters on DVD is our gift to you in thanks for your gift of \$50 or more this month. Discover modern Israel for yourself as you request this amazing resource on the reply card enclosed!



Join Us In The Holy Land!

Join Mat and Anita for a life-changing experience in Israel for the Holy Land tour, **March 29 – April 7, 2020.**

The 10-day experience will change your life. Mat Staver will provide the spiritual teaching. The total inclusive cost is \$4,475 per person, double occupancy. Call **407-875-1967**.

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