



THE Defender

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

2018: AMAZING YEAR FOR ISRAEL!

You and I have witnessed history this year. It all began late last year with President Donald Trump's startling recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital. That bold move shifted the Middle East chess board. It also put the U.S. firmly on the "right side of history."

While the U.S. has been a solid friend of the Jewish people since our nation's founding, and of the Jewish state since 1948, successive American presidents refused to recognize Jerusalem. But on December 6, 2017, President Trump shattered decades of misguided U.S. foreign policy, declaring "we finally acknowledge the obvious: that Jerusalem is Israel's capital."

And that was just the beginning. Six short months later, Ambassador David Friedman dedicated the new U.S. Embassy in Jerusalem on May 14, Israel's 70th birthday. Two months later, I had the joy and honor of leading Covenant Journey students as we gathered outside the new embassy.

Trump's Blockbuster Actions

And the Trump administration followed that with a series of blockbuster pro-Israel moves . . .

- Withdrawing from the Israel-hating UN Human Rights Council. This misnamed body, which includes some of the world's worst human rights abusers—China, Cuba, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia—targets Israel each year for condemnation.
- Defunding the UN Relief and Works Agency—the UN outfit which bears huge responsibility for prolonging the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
- Defunding at long last the Palestinian Authority, which has for years made cash payments to terrorists who attack Israelis and Americans.



Mat Staver, left, with Covenant Journey students in July outside the new U.S. Embassy in Jerusalem, Israel's capital.

- Withdrew the U.S. from the wretched Iran deal and slapped tough new economic sanctions on the radical mullahs who tyrannize the people of Iran—and seek Israel's annihilation.

As we look ahead to Christmas this month, you and I can lift up hearts of gratitude for the historic steps the Trump administration took this year to bless and defend Israel. And your voice played a role. Thank you for partnering with us through your prayers and generous support!

Mat Staver
Chairman

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TRUMP CUTS RESHAPE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

Friends of Israel like you called on President Donald Trump this year to slash all U.S. funding to “UNRWA,” the UN refugee agency



Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu praised President Donald Trump for defunding UNRWA, the UN agency for Palestinian refugees which he called a “refugee perpetuation agency.”

for Palestinians. And in August, he pulled the plug, putting an end to nearly 70 years of American taxpayer support for the bloated, inefficient and pro-Palestinian UN Relief and Works Agency.

An UNRWA spokesman lashed out at the U.S. and warned of a “doomsday scenario.” But Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu hailed Trump for the move and called it “a blessed and important change.” Netanyahu blasted UNRWA, calling it the “refugee perpetuation agency.” And for good reason.

The UN established UNRWA in 1949 to feed and resettle some 700,000 Arab refugees who fled Israel when five Arab nations attacked the newborn Jewish state in a bid to destroy it at birth. UNRWA’s mission was supposed to be complete by 1954, but Arab nations refused to take in the refugees—known today as Palestinians. Unable to find them permanent homes, UNRWA made them permanent refugees—and now counts all their descendants as refugees, too.

That’s how UNRWA turned 700,000 refugees in 1948 into more than five million today. It’s been seven decades since the last Arab refugee left Israel, but UNRWA still adds roughly 10,000 fifth and sixth generation “refugees” to its rolls each month. And its list of services now includes housing, healthcare, and education. UNRWA schools teach hatred for Israel and some UNRWA school buildings in Gaza have been used to store Hamas munitions.

American taxpayers have provided more than \$6 billion to UNRWA since 1950—far more than any other nation. But on August 31, 2018, the State Department announced the U.S. will no longer fund “this irredeemably flawed operation.”

Another Historic Step

Pro-Israel partners like you also joined CIDI in urging the Trump administration to take another historic step: sever American funding to the Palestinian Authority (PA)—the quasi-governmental entity that rules Palestinians living in the West Bank.

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CIDI’S 2019 ACTION AGENDA

Christians in Defense of Israel’s Washington, DC, presence is now located just across the street from the U.S. Supreme Court building and one block from the U.S. Capitol. This strategically located new Liberty Counsel Ministry Center will be a crucial asset this year as we advocate for Israel and press, with your help, the following eight-point 2019 Safeguard Israel Action Agenda.

- Nominate and confirm another staunchly pro-Israel ambassador to the UN
- Designate the anti-Israel Muslim Brotherhood as a terrorist organization
- Stop U.S. funding of the anti-Semitic United Nations
- Shield Israel and Israeli companies from the BDS movement by supporting and signing the Israel Anti-Boycott Act

- Reject the “two-state solution,” a failed formula for Israel and Palestinian peace
- Recognize Israel’s sovereignty over the Golan Heights
- Hold terror groups like Hamas and Hezbollah accountable for using civilians as human shields by supporting the “STOP Using Human Shields Act”
- Expose the Palestinian Authority’s use of textbooks to poison young minds with hate for Israel by passing the “Palestinian Authority Educational Curriculum Transparency Act”

We’re grateful for your prayers and support—they’re vital to everything we will do in 2019 to defend Israel!

COVENANT JOURNEY ALUMNI IMPACT POLITICS

Thanks to friends of Israel like you, more than 900 Christian college-age leaders from more than 300 colleges have had a life-changing experience in Israel with Covenant Journey.

These immersive 10-day experiences in the Holy Land fire college-age believers with a passion for Jesus and for Israel. “It was amazing seeing the Bible ‘come alive’ in front of me,” said Allie, who joined a Covenant Journey trip this year. “Visiting Israel with Covenant Journey reignited my passion for Christ and His cause.”

Each Covenant Journey trip introduces 40-50 young leaders to biblical, historic, and modern Israel. The tours help them discover and affirm their Christian faith and identity. Participants return ready to advocate for Israel.

Your Support Generates Results

And now your investment is paying off as these young leaders make an impact. Two recently won re-election to public office while a third helped return a young pro-Israel Congressman to office in November and elect Florida’s new pro-Israel governor. Each of these Covenant Journey alumni is committed to Christ and passionately pro-Israel.

State Legislator

Florida state legislator Jennifer Sullivan, 27, visited Israel on a Covenant Journey trip in 2016. Sullivan returned to the states eager to support Israel. She quickly co-sponsored a measure in the Florida legislature protecting Israel from the boycott, divestment, and sanctions (BDS) movement

“It was such an honor to be a part of getting that passed,” she recalled. Sullivan first won office in 2014 at age 23, making her the youngest woman ever elected to the Florida House of Representatives. This November voters gave her a third term when she handily defeated her opponent with 61 percent of the vote.

“The more that I’ve learned about Israel, the more that I respect them,” says Sullivan. “What you see in their people is a drive of ingenuity . . . and a selflessness that I wish more of my own generation had.”

County Commissioner

Gavin Rollins, 32, is a Florida county commissioner, Army National Guard Reserves captain, high school teacher, and entrepreneur. With all that, he found time two years ago to visit Israel via Covenant Journey and recalls a favorite memory: “Standing on Mt. Carmel, you can see the clouds coming from the Mediterranean right where the showdown was between Elijah and the prophets of Baal.”

Touring Israel is “like coming home,” he said. “It’s hard to explain the deep connection you develop with the people

of Israel. . . . I think it will continue to impact me through the Scripture and also politically.”



Florida County Commissioner Gavin Rollins, one of nearly 1,000 Covenant Journey alumni positively impacting our culture.

The son of missionaries, Gavin just won a second four-year term as Clay County Commissioner, beating his opponent with 83 percent of the vote. Gavin feels “called into the political arena” and is committed to making a difference. “Christians can’t sit by,” he says. “We have to engage.”

Capitol Hill Aide

“Engage” is exactly what Luke Ball did while serving on Capitol Hill in the office of U.S. Rep. Matt Gaetz—a good friend of Israel. Luke says his Covenant Journey trip fortified his Christian foundation. “For me, the trip really strengthened my faith to stand in the places I’d learned about all my life and witness what Jesus did for me. Now I can share that with others!”

Luke graduated from college this year as President of the class of 2018. He most recently served as deputy chairman of Rep. Gaetz’ successful re-election campaign and as deputy digital director of Ron DeSantis’ successful bid to become Florida governor.

Now Luke is eager to build on what his trip with Covenant Journey taught him. “I am seeking to strengthen my own faith so that I can witness to and/or encourage others. God has just blessed me and I am excited to see what other doors He will open.”

Thank You

Thank you for your gifts to build a pro-Israel future for America by supporting Christians in Defense of Israel and our allied ministry, Covenant Journey.



(Continued from page 2)

American taxpayers have given \$5 billion to the Palestinian Authority since 1994 to encourage Israeli-Palestinian peace. But a quarter century later, peace is not any closer.

The Trump administration slashed \$200 million in Palestinian aid in August. The Palestinian Authority

blasted the cut as “blackmail” to force it back to the negotiating table with Israel—something the Israeli leadership vows it will not do.

In October, the State Department denied another \$165 million to the Palestinian Authority. This second cut came, Secretary of State Mike

Pompeo said, because the Palestinian Authority paid out that amount to terrorists who attack and kill Israelis.

Thank you for partnering with CIDI. Together, our voice is being heard and historic changes are taking place in American policy toward Israel and the Palestinians!



Visit Israel!

You can join Mat and Anita Staver in Israel next year on the Liberty Ambassador Counsel® VIP Tour, March 31-April 9, 2019. This unique trip offers you a very special Israel experience and takes you to more than 25 historic sites including Jerusalem, Galilee, the Jordan River, Judean Desert, Jezreel Valley and the Mediterranean.

LEARN MORE AT
www.CIDIIsrael.org/tour.



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