

Team to Israel

2018.10.29~2018.11.10

■ Israel Suga

(Pastor/TLCCC Philadelphia Church)



Pastor Paul Akimoto (center)

I give thanks for your intercessory prayers from my heart. I was led to go to Israel for consecutive 4 years. This team dispatch was special one firstly because this year is the 70th anniversary year of foundation of Israel and secondly because Pastor Samuel Suga, my husband had been called to heaven from the hospital at Mt. of Olives because of pneumonia 3 years ago, when we joined the Israel team 2015. This year, God has opened the door to “Heavenly Jerusalem” through Pastor Paul Akimoto’s message and let our mind be closer to heaven.

The place that Heavenly Jerusalem will come down to the earth was pictured that it was around the place that the Dome of the Rock exists now. It has been unlocked that there are deep meanings for us to pray at the Mt. of Olives.

The place that we used to worship and pray is the exact place where we will worship toward His throne when Heavenly Jerusalem will come down to the earth. Hallelujah! My son and I were surprised to have entered the hotel room A-303 in Jerusalem after we left Jerusalem once and Galilee, because there was a picture of Heavenly Jerusalem coming down on the earth on the wall.

The Israel team 2017 was a hard one for me, with my patience tested in various ways. They were blessings from God at the same time, because this year I could pray for the preparation to go to Israel before visiting there. God spoke to me, “Your prayer will be heard” at the moment I entered Israel. After I reached the hotel and when the elevator door of my room floor opened, I found my room just in front of the elevator. This is God’s answer to my prayer, because in the last year, I could not find my room, because it was in a hidden place and I got lost. This year, I prayed, “Please give me the room near the elevator.” Moreover, there was another blessing waiting for me in the room. A chocolate cake was prepared for us in our room. Hallelujah! Even after that, my prayers I had done before the dispatch were answered one by one.

When I was watching T.V. around 1 week before the Israel team departed, I happened to watch a program about one of past airplane accidents. The plane failed to land, was broken into two and got burned. Half of the passengers were killed and the other half was saved. Later, the cause of the accident was found out. It was because big hailstones entered into the machine part to raise the height of the plane and when the pilot tried to raise the height because it was dangerous to land, the machine did not work because of hailstones that stacked in there. When I saw this on T.V, I started to pray immediately. I prayed the same topic in the prayer meeting, too. I really think we have to continue praying, with our eyes open in order to receive word from God.

I give all the glory to the Lord who blessed this Israel team and protected us.

■ Michiko Ojira (CHRIST Church The Light of Eternal Agape Tokyo Antioch Church (*) / Mission Staff)

I Thank you for your precious prayers. This was the first Israel dispatch for me, who have been a Christian for 19 years. I was so excited and curious how the team dispatch was going to be, especially when it was my first dispatch as a staff of mission.

I actually did not worry much about my service as a staff, because there were 6 other well-experienced staffs and I thought that I only had to follow what they were doing. However, when I reached Israel, I was shocked to know that I was to join all of “holy place tour” as a staff, sometimes as the only staff.

So I had no choice other than to rely on God. I accompanied the members who joined in the tour, feeling sorry for them because I was so unexperienced. I prayed so that all the people in the tour group would be able to come back to the hotel as the way we left the hotel, that none of us would experience any danger, and that all of them would surely receive God’s blessing in the tour. Pastor S served as a leader of tour group almost every day and two pastors who joined with their wives served as a leader one day each.

Two ladies served as first and second interpreters of local guide, and those who took responsibility as bodyguards always watched us from behind. Those in charge of uploading blogs, media and others cooperated to serve very well. I was touched to see that each of us served as parts of the body for the precious work of God, just as the Bible says that the church is the body of Christ. I was given many helps, since I was lack of experience. I was finally able to complete my service, supported by people's intercessory prayers. When I praised and worshipped God on the boat in the middle of the Sea of Galilee, I could not stop crying, because I was touched by God’s love who guided me to that extent.

When the team visited a Russian Messianic congregation, I was impressed by their musicians’ praising. The musicians played their musical instruments many times and for very long. At the end of the worship service, they invited our Japanese team to join in their dance. We held our hands together with Russian Jewish people, danced together and rejoiced praising the Lord. Watching that, I imagined that this could be the happiness that we will have in heaven.

On Sunday, 4th of November, we had our new year worship service at the lakeside of the Sea of Galilee. We received new year scripture verse from God, when we were spiritually and fleshly heated in the clear and warm weather. The verse was, "But the seed falling on good soil refers to someone who hears the word and understands it. This is the one who produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown." from Matthew 13:23.

It was when we were worshipping God on top of Mt. Arbel after the new year worship service that small rain suddenly started to fall in a sunny weather with the sound of thunders. It really seemed like God spoke to us. The rain was strangely shining, reflecting the sun, which made me comfortable and I even wanted to be in the rain longer.

On Monday the next day, two sisters were baptized at the River Jordan. Their testimonies at the night meeting were very pure and impressive to me. I recalled my water baptism 19 years ago and noticed that I forgot a lot of blessings from God. In this Israel team, I received a lot more of blessings, which is too many and cannot write here. I am praying now so that I can go to Israel next year again.

* The Lord’s Cross Christian Center Tokyo Antioch Church, the mother body of the Water Flowing From The Sanctuary Mission, has changed its name to “CHRIST Church The Light of Eternal Agape Tokyo Antioch Church” on Dec. 9th, 2018.