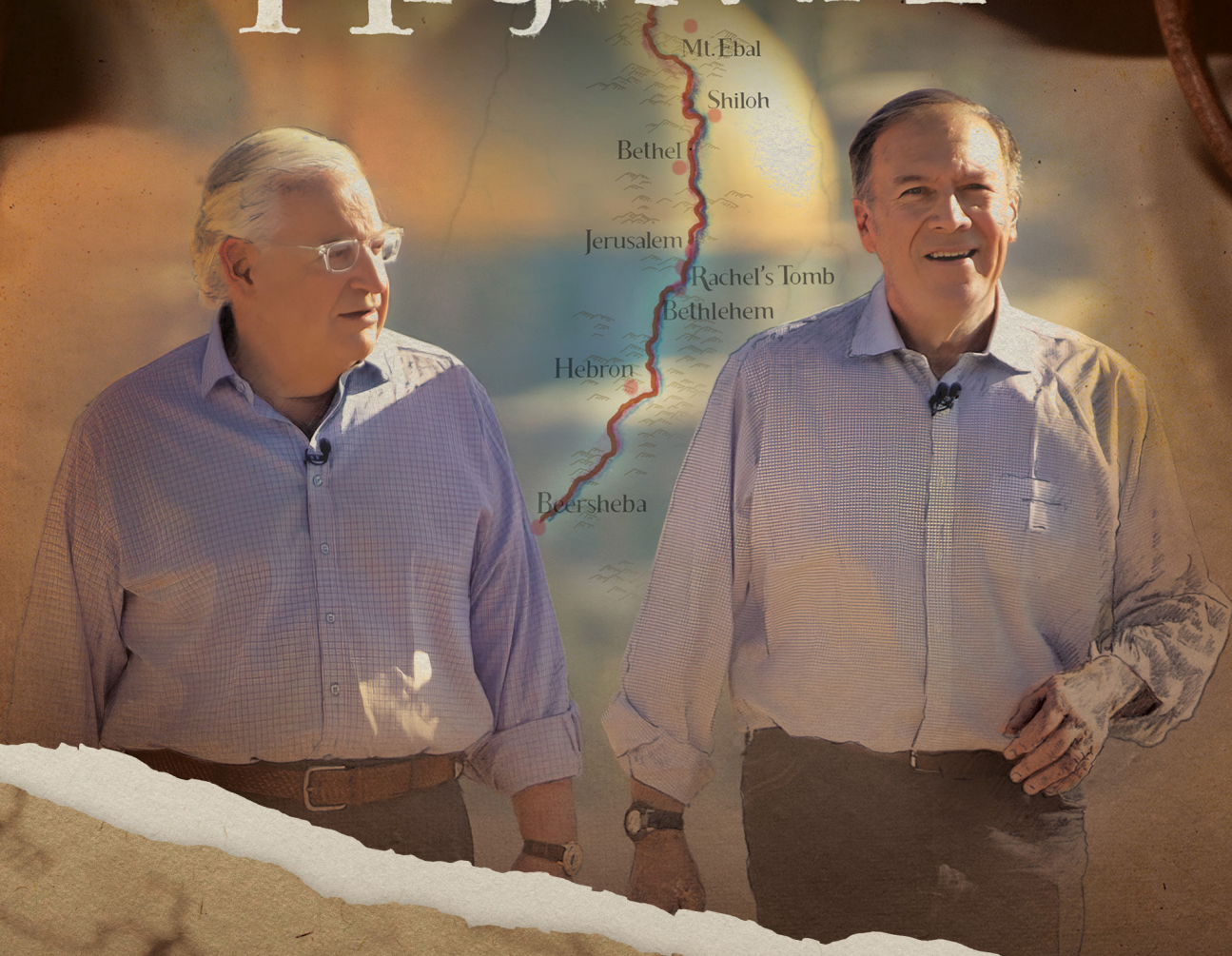


ROUTE 60 THE BIBLICAL HIGHWAY



PRAYER GUIDE

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Running North to South through the heart of the Promised Land, Route 60 is the Biblical spine of Israel. Sometimes referred to as the “Path of the Patriarchs,” this 146-mile highway holds deep historical significance. From Nazareth, Israel’s largest Arab city, and to the hi-tech center of Beersheba the route connects ancient Israel with modern Israel, Jews and Christians with Muslims, and Israelis with Palestinians.

Far more than a two-lane roadway, this historic, sacred trek links the roots of Judaism and Christianity and the stories of the Old and New Testaments. The film follows world-changing diplomats David Friedman and Mike Pompeo as they tread the very ground Abraham, Jacob, King David, and Jesus once walked.

Prayer is a powerful theme in the Route 60 film and here at **Shiloh (Tour Stop #3)** our hosts offered the first of their answered prayer experiences.

Friedman and Pompeo explained that America also contains many cities called Shiloh and for good reason. Mentioned 34 times in the Hebrew Bible (Tanach), this gender-neutral name means “tranquil,” “abundance,” and “His gift.” Some translate the name as Tranquility Town. Shiloh is the town where Jewish religious life was centered from the time of the Book of Joshua until King David established Jerusalem as the nation’s eternal capital. It was here that ---

- David made a permanent location for the tabernacle.
- The Ark of the Covenant remained for 369 years until it was captured by the Philistines
- The Israelites stopped their wandering.
- Hannah pleaded with God for a child in the Bible story that lays the foundation for the Jewish approach to prayer.

Her story appears in **1 Samuel, chapters 1 and 2** when she asked God at Shiloh to give her a child. **1 Samuel 1:10-11** sets the stage.

¹⁰ She was deeply distressed and prayed to the Lord and wept bitterly.

¹¹ And she vowed a vow and said, “O Lord of hosts, if you will indeed look on the affliction of your servant and remember me and not forget your servant, but will give to your servant a son, then I will give him to the Lord all the days of his life, and no razor shall touch his head.”

As Hannah continued praying, Eli observed her lips moving but didn’t hear her words, so he presumed she was drunk. **Verse 13** tells us “Hannah was speaking in her heart...” and **15-20** report the happy ending.

¹⁵ But Hannah answered, "No, my lord, I am a woman troubled in spirit. I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but I have been pouring out my soul before the Lord. ¹⁶ Do not regard your servant as a worthless woman, for all along I have been speaking out of my great anxiety and vexation." ¹⁷ Then Eli answered, "Go in peace, and the God of Israel grant your petition that you have made to him." ¹⁸ And she said, "Let your servant find favor in your eyes." Then the woman went her way and ate, and her face was no longer sad. ¹⁹ They rose early in the morning and worshiped before the Lord; then they went back to their house at Ramah. And Elkanah knew Hannah his wife, and the Lord remembered her. ²⁰ And in due time Hannah conceived and bore a son, and she called his name Samuel, for she said, "I have asked for him from the Lord."

After Samuel's birth, his father and the whole household went again from Ramah to Shiloh to offer the Lord his yearly sacrifice. But continuing in **verse 22**, Hannah explained to her husband why she wouldn't go this time.

"As soon as the child is weaned, I will bring him, so that he may appear in the presence of the Lord and dwell there forever."

When she finally made that trip and offered her sacrifice at the house of the Lord at Shiloh, she explained to Eli the priest.

²⁶ And she said, "Oh, my lord! As you live, my lord, I am the woman who was standing here in your presence, praying to the Lord. ²⁷ For this child I prayed, and the Lord has granted me my petition that I made to him. ²⁸ Therefore I have lent him to the Lord. As long as he lives, he is lent to the Lord." And he worshiped the Lord there.

The beginning verses of Hannah's long prayer are filled with praise.

Hannah's Prayer

*¹ And Hannah prayed and said,
"My heart exults in the Lord;
my horn is exalted in the Lord.
My mouth derides my enemies,
because I rejoice in your salvation.
² "There is none holy like the Lord:
for there is none besides you;
there is no rock like our God.*

At this tour stop, Mike Pompeo mentioned that his wife was part of a Hannah Circle (prayer group) at Eastminster Presbyterian Church. And David Friedman explained how the area has lots of broken vessel shards, as remainders from the time of 1200-1300 B.C. when Israel was a sacrificial society that worshiped God.



Tour Stop #5 is Jerusalem, where the hosts and film crew visit the **Pool of Siloam** and the **Western Wall**.

The story in **Acts 3:6-8** (NIV) relates the exciting incident when Peter and John were heading to the temple to pray and a man lame from birth asked for money.

⁶ Then Peter said, "Silver or gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk." ⁷ Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man's feet and ankles became strong. ⁸ He jumped to his feet and began to walk. Then he went with them into the temple courts, walking and jumping, and praising God.

This is also the city where King David coined his fifteen Songs of Ascent, another form of prayer. Can you imagine the spiritual power of tens, hundreds, and thousands of people singing those psalms as they head up to worship their God?

The holy wall where so many pray daily is the remnant and an outer retaining wall of the temple built by Solomon. That temple lasted 400 years, but was destroyed in 500 B.C. At the Western Wall, Friedman explained how Solomon asked God to answer the prayers of Jews and non-Jews. At this place of prayer for all nations, Solomon recognized that the entire world could have a relationship with God. We read of this in **I Kings 8:41-43**.

⁴¹ "Likewise, when a foreigner, who is not of your people Israel, comes from a far country for your name's sake ⁴² (for they shall hear of your great name and your mighty and of your outstretched arm), when he comes and prays toward this house, ⁴³ hear in heaven your dwelling place and do according to all for which the foreigner calls to you, in order that all the peoples of the earth may know your name and fear you, as do your people Israel, and that they may know that this house that I have built is called by your name."

David Friedman recalled one very clear memory from his early years, when one morning in June of 1967 he came downstairs to find his parents in tears, tears of joy. The newscaster was reporting that the Israeli Defense Force had successfully reunified Israel. And Rabbi Goren stood at the Western Wall, blowing a shofar. His parents had prayed regularly for their homeland to be restored to Jewish control, and they "were crying uncontrollably," he said. "And I understood how for them this answered prayer was the realization of a 2,000-year-old dream."

While In the City of David, Mike Pompeo shared about the importance and necessity of prayer in his problem-solving negotiations as U.S. Secretary of State. "We never knew what was in these world leaders' hearts. Only the Lord knew that. We were deeply imperfect as well. When we pray, when we bring God's grace, we have to own it and try to do our best to fix it. Standing here in the City of David reminds us of that responsibility, to both your people as a leader, but also to your Savior."

Psalm 51:10-11 relates a prayer of King David we can all say often.

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast – Do not cast me away from your presence and do not take your holy spirit from me.

Just outside Jerusalem, the Garden of Gethsemane and Mount of Olives are special places for Christians. Jesus came to this garden after the Last Supper with a couple of his closest associates to pray. Picture these words from **Matthew 26:39**.

“He went a little farther and fell on His face and prayed, saying, Oh, my father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me. Nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will.”

His experience gives us all the courage and inspiration to accept challenges. We don't want them and pray we don't need to confront them. But then we pray He helps us prevail over those difficulties.

During Pompeo's second trip to North Korea as Secretary of State, he met with Chairman Kim. Just prior, Kim had returned Otto Warmbier, a 22-year-old American student held hostage. Because of mistreatment by North Korean guards, Otto died in a comatose state shortly after his arrival back in the States. You can imagine Pompeo's prayers for his goal to retrieve the three remaining American prisoners. And you can imagine his praise when God answered those prayers. Pompeo added, "It's very emotional for me to tell this story. They thought they were on their way to be killed when they left that prison. I think of the strength I needed to make that demand, but it doesn't compare to what they had to suffer."

Friedman came into office as the U.S. Ambassador to Israel with a commitment to move the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. But the idea was vehemently opposed by our then Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense and National Security Advisor. With much prayer before and during the interagency process, Friedman had President Trump's permission to list the pros for the move on the T-chart where General McMaster had listed only cons. He remembers praying and thinking, "It's on me." He confronted the challenge and obviously, with God's help through answered prayer, he was successful.

Friedman explained how the Jewish faithful say the main prayer three times a day: "God, please, open my lips" (*"that my mouth may declare Your praise"* – **Psalm 51:17**) "They ask God to open their lips, so they'll say the right words." He added, "We'll always have challenges. Sometimes the best path is not to avoid but to take those straight on with the inspiration we draw from a place like here, and with God's help we'll succeed."

Although not mentioned in the film, The Garden Tomb is another "must see" site some believe was the place of Christ's crucifixion, burial, and resurrection. Owned and administered by The Garden Tomb (Jerusalem) Association, a charitable trust based in the United Kingdom and in Israel, the ministry has focused since 1894 on proclaiming Jesus Christ to the nations, so all can know and live for His glory. Located just outside the city walls of Jerusalem, this site revered by many pilgrims to Israel feels like holy ground. Planted in the shadow of Skull Hill (a.k.a. Golgotha) near the

Damascus Gate, this beautiful garden with its ancient empty tomb is a sacred space for contemplation on Christ's sacrifice and one's personal relationship with Him. It's a peaceful and comforting spot for prayer, worship, and communion, too.

Rachel's Tomb near the northern entrance to Bethlehem is a sacred place where people from all three monotheistic religions pray. One prayer yet to be answered for Israeli Jews is that the walls of separation surrounding the tomb be taken down one day so Palestinians have free access as well.

We read a portion of Rachel's story from **Genesis 35:16-20** (ESV)

¹⁶ Then they journeyed from Bethel. When they were still some distance from Ephrath, Rachel went into labor, and she had hard labor. ¹⁷ And when her labor was at its hardest, the midwife said to her, "Do not fear, for you have another son." ¹⁸ And as her soul was departing (for she was dying), she called his name Ben-oni; but his father called him Benjamin. ¹⁹ So Rachel died, and she was buried on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem), ²⁰ and Jacob set up a pillar over her tomb. It is the pillar of Rachel's Tomb, which is there to this day.

Rachel is celebrated as the mother of the Jewish people. If the Jewish people celebrated Mother's Day it would probably be on the day she died, the 11th day of Cheshvan. Today, people come to this holy site to pray when they're suffering or struggling.

In the men's section of the building, Friedman related a personal story. While at home in New York, the family's Rabbi came to the house and spoke to his son, who had just gotten married. The new husband asked for prayer so that they could become pregnant. So, two months later, David and his wife prayed at Rachel's Tomb in Israel. When they returned to New York a few months later, they learned their daughter-in-law was pregnant. Tracing back the calculations, Friedman determined she must have conceived on the day of the prayer in Israel. He said, "I can't come here without getting emotional."

Many who visit here pray for children, for blessings on their family, and for salvation.

Tomb of the Patriarchs

This completely intact and in pristine condition Tomb of the Patriarchs was built by King Herod as a monument to Israel's patriarchs and the matriarchs. Remarkably, there is no dispute over what happened in this place, something all faiths can appreciate.

Inside this monument, Jews pray at the Abraham and Sarah pavilion, Muslims pray at the Isaac and Rebekah pavilion, and Christians pray at the Jacob and Rachel pavilion. Friedman explains, "This place is the paradigm for religious freedom, for inspiration, and for everyone recognizing that we all come from a common humanity. Our cousins across the road see the world differently. They think that until every grievance is addressed and remedied, there can be no progress."

Speaking of the Abraham Accords he was so instrumental in orchestrating, Friedman added, “We broke that mold and disproved it...Here at this monument, we can think about the continuum of life. God’s promise is for all of us, that our children, grandchildren, and descendants ‘will be like the stars in the sky, too many to count.’”

It’s here that Mike Pompeo thinks back to the **people and the prayers** they said. He encouraged, “I pray we will do everything we can and honor Him in every action we take.”



QUESTIONS FOR THOUGHT AND DISCUSSION

1. Have you prayed for healing for yourself or others? Were you confident that God heard your prayer?
2. How did He answer your prayer(s)?
3. Have you or anyone you’ve known experienced a miraculous healing – one that has only come through God’s power?
4. How have you given God praise for His healing help?