Aliyah Update

Historic Meeting in Berlin

Christmas and Hanukkah in Israel

The Season of Giving
Dear Friends,

Recent Islamic terror attacks have challenged the western world in a new way, and many nations are beginning to understand they need to prepare for and expect a rise in violence in the years ahead. One European head of security recently suggested that Western nations should learn how to deal with terrorism from Israel; it was indeed the Israeli security service, Mossad, which prevented a major attack at a German soccer game just a day after the Paris attacks.

At the same time, Europeans are concerned about the influx of more than a million immigrants from mostly Muslim countries into the West. It is surely a time when nations are shaken and people are filled with fear of the things to come.

In this context, the Christmas story offers incredible consolation. The prophet Isaiah lived in a time when the Assyrian Empire was rising; according to historians it was one of the cruelest powers in history, with Assyrians indiscriminately killing children, women, and the elderly. As this dark rule of terror arose, the prophet saw the coming hope of the world:

“For unto us a Child is born, unto us a son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end…” (Isaiah 9:6–7).

Today, the answer to our world’s problems is still the coming of Jesus Christ. The reach of His kingdom is ever-expanding, even in the midst of the greatest chaos. We see this today in Arab nations, where the Holy Spirit is touching many Muslims in spite of the chaos that ISIS and other militias are inflicting, and similarly in the West! On my last trip to Germany, in every city I visited stories were shared of Syrian refugees coming to Christ!

“Of the increase of His government there is no end!” This is my Christmas greeting to you from Jerusalem. I hope you enjoy reading this newest edition of the Word from Jerusalem!

Yours in Christ,

Dr. Jürgen Bühler
ICEJ Executive Director

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LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

The International Christian Embassy Jerusalem was established in 1980 in recognition of the biblical significance of all of Jerusalem and its unique connection to the Jewish people. Today the ICEJ represents millions of Christians, churches, and denominations to the nation and people of Israel. We recognize in the restoration of Israel the faithfulness of God to keep His ancient covenant with the Jewish people. Our main objectives are:

- To stand with Israel in support and friendship;
- To equip and teach the worldwide Church regarding God’s purposes with Israel and the nations of the Middle East;
- To be an active voice of reconciliation between Jews, Christians, and Arabs and to support the churches and congregations in the Holy Land.

From its head offices in Jerusalem, the ICEJ reaches out into more than 140 countries worldwide, with branch offices in over 80 nations.

Our vision is:

- To reach every segment of Israel’s society with a Christian testimony of comfort and love, and
- To reach and actively represent to Israel the support of denominations, churches, and believers from every nation on earth.

The Christian Embassy is a non-denominational faith-based ministry supported by the voluntary contributions of our members and friends across the globe. We invite you to join with us as we minister to Israel and the Jewish people worldwide by donating to the ongoing work and witness of the ICEJ.

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CREDITS

Executive Director Dr. Jürgen Bühler
International Director Juha Ketola
Editor/Communications Director Estera Wieja
Graphic Design/Illustrator Peter Ecerroad, Patricia Ecerroad
Cover Design Jani Salokangas
Copy Editor Juliane Stark

Administration David van der Watt, Wim van der Zande
Photography ICEJ Staff & Branches, Istock, AP, Wikimedia, Getty Images, Reuters, Jani Salokangas

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INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN EMBASSY JERUSALEM - USA
P.O. Box 332974, Murfreesboro, TN 37133

Support our ministry online at: www.icejusa.org

COVER PHOTO: Western Wall, Jerusalem

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THE CRYING RULER OF EGYPT

ACCORDING TO JEWISH TRADITION THERE ARE TWO MAIN PROTOTYPES OF MESSIAH IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

BY DR. JÜRGEN BÜHLER
he more prominent prototype is the person of David. Both Jews and Christians see the Messiah in the tradition of the great King of Israel. People on the streets of Israel referred to Jesus as “son of David,” indicating their recognition of his messianic credentials.

But, there is another prototype of Messiah which is less well known and parallels to the life of Jesus are equally striking, and that is Joseph, the son of Jacob, whose life is recorded in Genesis, chapters 37-50.

MESSIAH SON OF JOSEPH
The Talmud in the tractate Sanhedrin refers to Messiah ben Yosef (Hebrew for “son of Joseph”) in a most remarkable manner. The passage refers to the prophecy of Zechariah which foresees all Israel mourning “as one mourns for his only begotten son” (Zec. 12:10f). In that context the Talmud answers the question, “What was the reason for the mourning?” with: “It is on account of the Messiah, the son of Joseph, who was killed.” The Talmud also gives a reason for why he was killed: Because of “the evil inclination of men.” Amazingly, the passage is followed by a prayer for his resurrection.

A PROTOTYPE OF THE SUFFERING AND RESURRECTED CHRIST
The life of Joseph in the Bible contains many astonishing parallels to the life of Jesus and his story climaxes in a most powerful way with the reconciliation of Joseph and his brothers, the sons of Jacob.

We are introduced to Joseph when he is 17 years old (Gen. 37). This gifted young man became his father’s favorite and because of that was envied and even hated by his brothers. When Joseph recklessly shared with his family two dreams he had, in which his brothers and his parents bowed down to him, their hatred grew so strong that they refused to greet Joseph and started plotting to kill him.

As their plans for evil developed, Joseph was rescued from death at the last minute by one of his brothers, only to be handed over to gentile Ishmaelites by the other brothers. They sold Joseph for 20 shekels to a caravan carrying spices to Egypt and then told their father Jacob that his favorite son was dead. Joseph was brought as a slave to Egypt and eventually was falsely convicted and put in an Egyptian prison.

Joseph was miraculously “resurrected” out of this most desperate condition and raised to the highest position in the land. Joseph became the right hand of Pharaoh, ruler of the ancient world who was considered a deity by his subjects. Pharaoh set Joseph over the whole land of Egypt, clothed him in royal clothes, and declared to all of Egypt that if they heard Joseph speak they were to obey and worship him as if he was Pharaoh himself (Gen. 41:40ff).

The story of Jesus is very similar. We read that Jesus was the “beloved son” of his Father in Heaven (Matt. 3:17). He came into his own country but they would not receive him and his own countrymen even planned to kill him. Jesus was sold for 30 shekels and handed over to the Gentiles (Romans). He died on the cross and his disciples wrapped his body in spices and laid him in a tomb. When He was miraculously raised from the dead, Jesus sat at the right hand of the Father and all authority was given to Him in heaven and on earth (Matt. 28:18).

THE FAMILY REUNION
The story of Joseph tells us that a terrible drought visited the earth and through Joseph’s leadership, Egypt became the only place where bread was available. Consequently all nations came to Joseph. “So all countries came to Joseph in Egypt to buy grain, because the famine was severe in all lands” (Genesis 41:57). In many ways Joseph became the savior of the ancient world, very much like Jesus has become the savior of the world as “every tribe and nation” comes to Him to receive the Bread of Life.

As the drought continued, the climax of the story unfolded when one day ten Canaanite tribesmen arrived in Egypt in search of food (Gen.42). Joseph immediately recognized his brothers, but they didn’t recognize him. Joseph didn’t look like a son of the Hebrews. On the contrary, his appearance must have been that of typical Egyptian royalty. As the mystery, Joseph talked to his brothers through an interpreter.

There is much more to this amazing story, but one important thread runs through the entire story of Joseph, which is his emotional attitude toward his brothers, as well as Pharaoh’s response to Joseph’s family. When Joseph sees his brothers for the first time, he could have reacted in many ways. It was his brothers who were responsible for the most traumatic experiences in his life – the family betrayal, slavery, and imprisonment. As they all stood before him, he could have considered it as a divine appointment for revenge but he chose not to seek it.

THE WEEPING RULER
At his first encounter with his brothers Joseph reacted emotionally. “And he turned himself away from them and wept...” (Gen. 42:24). The biblical account of Joseph’s reconciliation with his own family describes seven separate instances of him weeping, more than any other person recorded in the Bible. Even after so many difficult years, the heart of Joseph was full of compassion and love for his family. He recognized the rejection of his brothers had, in reality, fulfilled God’s intention (Gen. 45:3).

Today God is restoring Jesus’ biological family. His Jewish brothers and sisters. Like Joseph’s family, the restoration of Israel is a matter which is central to God’s heart. Israel’s modern day restoration is
not just a footnote at the bottom of God’s agenda for the world. On the contrary! The prophet Zechariah declares: “Thus says the Lord of hosts: I am zealous for Zion with great zeal; with great fervor I am zealous for her. Thus says the Lord: ‘I will return to Zion, and dwell in the midst of Jerusalem.’” (Zec. 8:1f).

In spite of everything which had happened to him, Joseph was still attached to his own family and Jesus is still passionate about his fellow Jews who have and are still returning to the land of Israel. This raises the important question: If Jesus is passionate about Israel, are we?

As the bride of Christ, a passion for Jesus’ family needs to be our priority as well. Any married couple can affirm that an important ingredient of a healthy marriage is caring for and being affectionate toward our spouse’s family. Too many Christians today belong to the bride of Christ, yet could not care less about the physical brothers and sisters of Jesus. We regularly visit our family members, even if they don’t hold the same beliefs as we do. Paul calls the Jewish people “beloved for the sake of the fathers,” (Rom 11:28) even if they may be “enemies of the gospel.” Loving Israel is not optional, it must be a part of any healthy relationship with Jesus.

LOVE MADE PUBLIC
Even more fascinating is how Joseph’s emotional reaction to his brothers develops. “...Joseph made haste and sought somewhere to weep. And he went into his chamber and wept there. Then he washed his face and came out...” (Genesis 43:30–31). The first two times when Joseph wept, he did so in secret. Only a few servants around him were aware of his strong emotional reaction. But as the story unfolds, Joseph reached a point where he could no longer keep his feelings secret.

“Then Joseph could not restrain himself before all those who stood by him, and he cried out, ‘Make everyone go out from me!’ So no one stood with him when he made himself known to his brothers. And he wept aloud, and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard it” (Genesis 45:1–2).

Eventually the entire kingdom of Egypt understood that Joseph was not a Gentile like them, rather he had a family who were Hebrews. If we look at the history of the church, for many centuries the Israel-awareness was often in “a hidden chamber.” For many long years, very few Christians understood the heartbeat of God toward the Jewish people. Surmising that the church had replaced the Jews in God’s plan, the majority of them were indifferent or
worse, believed there to be no future for the Jews.

Today, a dramatic shift is taking place within the church. Wherever we go around the world we see churches and even entire denominations aligning themselves with what God is doing in Israel like never before. This is true in particular for the centers of revival in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. For them, standing with Israel is a part of what defines a believer. We also see it happening in the churches and denominations in the West. Jesus’ passion and His love for His people has gone public in the house of God.

PHARAOH REACTS

Finally, it is also of central importance to us, how Pharaoh saw and reacted to the family reunion of his most trusted right hand man. Again, there were many ways he could have responded. He could have tried to keep Joseph’s Jewish ancestry a secret or he could have said: “Joseph, it is great that your family is here, but we are facing a global crisis! Our people and the whole world need to be fed. Stay focused!”

This would have been a very logical reaction given the crisis in the land of Egypt at that time. It reminds me of a response I recently received from a pastor of a large church with thousands of members, when I asked what they, as a church body, were doing for Israel: “Jürgen, you do not know how busy we are in our church. We have several hundred home groups, we care for the homeless and women in prostitution, and we reach virtually every segment of our city. We honestly do not have room for Israel.”

In contrast, let us look at what Pharaoh said in the midst of a global crisis:

“Now the report of it was heard in Pharaoh’s house, saying, ‘Joseph’s brothers have come.’ So it pleased Pharaoh and his servants well. […] ‘Bring your father and your households and come to me; I will give you the best of the land of Egypt, and you will eat the fat of the land’” (Genesis 45:16–18).

It pleased Pharaoh! Joseph’s family was not an additional burden. We can imagine him saying: “I must meet this family, who brought forth a son that blessed my nation so greatly!” He wanted to learn who they were and eagerly welcomed them. Not only that, he also called for an immediate action: “I will give you the best! They need to eat the fat of the land!” In the midst of a crisis, when resources were scarce, Pharaoh released the best for Joseph’s family.

CONCLUSION

Recently I heard Pastor Robert Morris of Gateway Church in Texas, tell a story to a group of leaders in Jerusalem. God revealed to him why his church and ministry were blessed in such extraordinary ways. God showed him a parable of a father, who had a large family, but out of love and passion for children, the father started adopting many more children. Because of this, many orphanages opened around the world, but in the process, his own children felt neglected. Pastor Morris realized God was telling him: “Robert, I bless your ministry because you took care of my natural children. You bless my family, the Jews, and that’s why I bless you.” According to Pastor Morris, the main reason why God blesses the Gateway Church is because they bless Israel.

The story of Joseph teaches us that God is passionate about His people. Since the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948, God’s love for the Jews has been made public. As with Joseph, Jesus has a very emotional passion for His family and His land. Jesus wept over Jerusalem, and I believe He is weeping today. Pharaoh reacted immediately, releasing the best for Joseph’s family. Let us pray and consider with discernment, what can we do to bless the Jewish people who are returning home today after 2000 years. It is a time of restoration and, for us as believers and as the global Church, it is a time to act! 😄
The year of 2015 has been full of new opportunities, great challenges and tremendous blessing for the International Christian Embassy in Jerusalem. Serving as the bridge between the Christians from around the world and the nation of Israel we were privileged to once again leave a lasting impact on the people of this land by fulfilling God’s command to comfort His people and stand fast in His Word.

**COMPASSION**
The ICEJ continues to progressively achieve the goal of reaching every segment of Israeli society through assistance projects, which target areas of need throughout Israel. Support from Christians worldwide is crucial, and has a profound effect in this special land. Our mission is to be wise stewards of that support; to be the hands and feet of those who desire to bless Israel in practical ways. On the following pages of this magazine you can read some highlights of what great work has been accomplished in 2015.

**EDUCATION**
In 2015 the ICEJ made it a priority to bring a prophetic message to the Church around the world. Directors of ICEJ have traveled to every continent teaching the church about God’s plans for Israel and His covenant with the Jewish people, and encouraging Christians to pray for Israel. The ICEJ continues to host the Envision Conference for pastors and Christian leaders at the beginning of every year. The diverse spectrum of speakers and time for personal connections made the 2015 conference a great success, and we hope to develop this vision even further in the years to come.
Mobilization
The Church can no longer afford to remain lukewarm regarding matters of highest importance to the Lord of Hosts: The people and the land of Israel. The ICEJ branches in over 80 nations have organized multiple rallies, conferences and other events to demonstrate Christian support for Israel, while also bringing awareness, mobilizing the society, and building relationships with local governments.

None of the ICEJ work would be possible, if it weren’t preceded with prayer. Every project, initiative or event is first brought to God’s throne of grace. At the same time, prayer is what unites us Christians across the nations and links us to Israel. The Isaiah 62 Prayer Initiative has already connected almost four thousand prayer groups with ICEJ, drawing tens of thousands of intercessors to pray for Israel. It is becoming a powerful movement of global intercession for God’s chosen people and land.

Celebration
The annual Christian celebration of ICEJ’s Feast of Tabernacles was a tremendous success. More than 100 nations came up to Jerusalem in September to celebrate the Feast. This is a unique opportunity to teach and encourage believers among the nations to align themselves with the nation of Israel and God’s purposes regarding His people.

The Lord opened remarkable doors for the Christian Embassy in 2015, and as we approach 2016 we will dedicate ourselves afresh to prayer and diligently seek God’s wisdom and guidance for the year to come. Stand with us in prayer in the month of January! Pray with our staff for Israel and the city of Jerusalem, but also pray for our ministry in this land as we continue to serve this nation.

The Bible promises us that as we bless Israel, God will bless us in return. May you experience tremendous blessing from the God of Israel as you partner with ICEJ - your Embassy in Jerusalem.

Isaiah 62 Prayer Movement
The Isaiah 62 Prayer Initiative has been growing strong ever since the Holy Spirit put it on our hearts in the beginning of 2011. Churches, various prayer groups and individuals from almost every nation have been uniting in prayer on the first Wednesday of every month according to the command of Isaiah 62:

“I have set watchmen on your walls O Jerusalem; they shall never hold their peace day or night. You who make mention of the Lord do not keep silent, and give Him no rest till He establishes and He makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth” (Isaiah 62:6-7).

The ICEJ is inviting you to join us in prayer and fasting as we enter the year of 2016. Join us in January and pray with us for Israel and Jerusalem in particular (Isaiah 62:1-7; Psalm 122). We want to call on the name of the Lord to fulfill His every promise for this land and this nation!

Visit our website and sign up to receive our monthly prayer letter. Specific topics and updates from the region will help you pray with wisdom and determination for God’s beloved land.

www.icejusa.org/isaiah62
The International Christian Embassy Jerusalem offers year-round assistance to the needy across all segments of Israeli society. The following are selected highlights of our work in 2015; although not representative of the entirety of ICEJ’s work, these examples demonstrate how broadly ICEJ’s Christian support is distributed throughout the land of Israel.

1. Hurfeish: Education for the Druze Minority
While representing Christians to the people of Israel, the ICEJ is also mindful of minority issues in the country. The strong and faithful community of Druze in Israel serves the country, but often struggles with poverty and access to education. The ICEJ helped upgrade the library in one of their schools and also sponsored equipment for computer rooms.

2. Haifa: Home for Holocaust Survivors
ICEJ completed more renovations and apartment adaptations this year as well as an expansion of the services provided at the Haifa Home. A new member of the staff is a social worker who assists residents in understanding their rights and also helps them address other bureaucratic problems they may encounter. The social worker is instrumental when the residents change accommodations, and need help with the transition.

3. Nazareth: Employment Programs for Arab Women
Higher education not only offers economic mobility, but it also provides for opportunities to become part of mainstream Israeli society. However, Arab women often face many barriers to completing their degrees. The ICEJ-sponsored program in Nazareth provides much-needed guidance to assist Arab women complete their courses of study. The program utilizes outreach, counseling, and a range of other services, including job placement for academics.
4 Tel Aviv: Women in Crisis
The ICEJ partners with a shelter for women in Tel Aviv where the homeless, drug addicted, and victims of human trafficking receive practical assistance and counseling. Approximately 20 women come by the shelter each day it operates to receive hot meals, a shower, clothing, haircuts, and medical manicures and pedicures. It is a safe place for women to get off the streets and be encouraged to take steps towards rehabilitation.

5 Jerusalem and more: New Immigrant Absorption, Mentoring Project
The ICEJ sponsored mentors for new immigrant families in four centers located in Jerusalem, Beersheva, Netanya, and Ashdod. The mentoring project assists families acclimatize to Israel by providing aid; such as, basic household items, education, cultural enrichment and tutoring aid for children, and by offering assistance with employment.

6 Beersheva: Vocational Training
The three pillars of successful absorption are language proficiency, a sense of belonging (social network), and employment. The ICEJ sponsors vocational training for new immigrants, which allows them to integrate into the job market and live independently. An average course includes five months of Hebrew classes, and eight months of professional training. Many students are offered employment upon successful completion of the course.

7 Ofakim: Youth at Risk
The “Touching the Horizon” educational program takes action in education and leadership development for Israeli youth. Young people in Israel often have potential, talent, and resolve, but lack the opportunities and support needed to realize their goals. The program targets youth who are at risk of dropping out of school, and seeks to provide them with a safety net of assistance. ICEJ is sponsoring the program in two schools, with approximately 26 students on each campus.

8 Kibbutz Sa’ad and more (Gaza border): Bomb Shelters
Just this year seven new bomb shelters have been purchased by ICEJ and placed in several Israeli communities which border Gaza. These shelters save lives and bring some peace of mind to residents who continually live under the threat of attack.

We are proud to be your Embassy in Jerusalem, your hands and feet in the land.

Today’s overwhelming social needs give us an unprecedented opportunity to comfort and bless this nation in the name of Christians around the world as an act of reconciliation and love. We invite you to partner with us in showing Christian care to the nation of Israel by contributing to our projects!

You can send your donation by visiting www.icejusa.org/aid
The ICEJ is called to touch every segment of Israeli society with a message of Christian love, and to reach every country with a message about God’s love for Israel. In 2015, we were heavily engaged in both areas, supporting various humanitarian projects in Israel and sending speakers to events organized by our branches in many countries including: Romania, India, Fiji, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Ireland, Canada, and the USA.

Our ability to reach the nations is expanding, with the recent opening of new ICEJ branches in three countries on three different continents: Mali, Argentina, and Ukraine, in addition to our existing branches.

1. Mali is a predominantly Muslim country in northwestern Africa, which has been afflicted by a terrible civil war and just recently even experienced a major terror attack at a luxury hotel. But the Lord is raising up believers in this land who are eager to support the ICEJ’s mission to stand with Israel. Rev. Emmanuel Dembele, Chairman of all evangelical and protestant churches in Mali, was appointed to be the Chairman of the ICEJ branch in Mali, and Pastor Andre Thera was appointed as the national director.

2. In Argentina, Pastor Hernan Acosta and his wife, Claudia, were appointed as directors of the new ICEJ branch at the “Transformation” Conference held last spring in Moreno, near Buenos Aires. Many of the senior pastors, elders and leaders of the body of Christ in Argentina attended the conference, and they heartily applauded strengthening Argentina’s relationship with ICEJ and Israel. They also expressed their support for the new ICEJ representatives in their country.

3. The war-torn country of Ukraine also became a part of the ICEJ family in 2015. Ukraine was on our hearts and in our minds all throughout this year as we assisted with the journey of Aliyah for thousands of Ukrainian Jews fleeing the conflict. The ICEJ was privileged to stand with the Ukrainian Jewry and provide assistance in this time of great need. The continued faithful giving of Christians over the past months enabled the ICEJ to sponsor many flights for Ukrainian Jews to Israel.
The US Branch of the ICEJ has had an extremely busy year with the launch of several new initiatives and expansive growth of existing ones. Speakers crossed the USA from California to Colorado, Nebraska, Tennessee, Louisiana, Alabama, Georgia, Florida, Pennsylvania, Ohio, New Jersey, Maryland, Virginia, and Washington, DC.

Iran Petition Campaign
On March 4th, the day after Prime Minister Netanyahu’s historic speech before Congress warning of a nuclear Iran, the US Branch launched a petition to the White House and Congressional leadership. The petition was against any deal that did not dismantle Iran’s nuclear program and was signed by some 60,000 Americans. It was presented in person to key Senate and House leadership such as Senator Ted Cruz, Senator Mitch McConnell, and House Speaker John Boehner.

Isaiah 62 Prayer Campaign
Recognizing the seriousness of the hour that Israel and the world find themselves in, the US Branch is mobilizing 10,000 Americans to join the monthly Isaiah 62 day of prayer. In addition, there are 150 registered Isaiah 62 prayer groups in 44 states using the Isaiah 62 monthly prayer points in corporate prayer.

Mobilizing Leaders in Support of Israel
The seriousness of the Iran issue brought home to many Christian leaders that they needed to unite their voices in order to have an impact greater than any one organization. Some 100 national leaders in addition to another 650 local pastors and leaders joined their voice against the Administration’s deal with Iran.
Join the growing number of Christians worldwide who are partnering with the ICEJ to help Israelis in need and who understand the biblical significance of the modern ingathering of the Jews to the land of their forefathers.

COVENANT PARTNER
Show your love and support for Israel by partnering with the ICEJ in ministry. Become a Covenant Partner at a giving level of at least $30 a month. Supporting Israel and the Jewish people through your Embassy in Jerusalem, will provide Christian love and comfort to His people. In return we would like to encourage you with the following ICEJ resources:

- A beautiful partnership certificate
- Receive the Word from Jerusalem magazine
- Online access to free teaching from the ICEJ’s annual Feast of Tabernacles celebration in Jerusalem
- A special year-end gift of appreciation

AMBASSADORIAL PARTNER
Partnership in ministry is a gift God gives to strengthen and undergird His work. Become an Ambassadorial Partner with the ICEJ with support at a giving level of at least $100 a month. Together, we will defend and support Israel and comfort His people. In return we would like to encourage you with the following ICEJ resources:

- A beautiful partnership certificate
- Receive the Word from Jerusalem magazine
- Online access to free teaching from the ICEJ’s annual Feast of Tabernacles celebration in Jerusalem
- A special year-end gift of appreciation

BUILDER OF ZION PARTNER
The Lord will call her walls Salvation and her gates Praise. As we walk together side by side, the ICEJ would be honored if you would become a Builder of Zion Partner at a giving level of $2,500 a year or more. Together, He is increasing our efforts to restore His people, and bless the nation of Israel. In appreciation, you will receive from the ICEJ the following resources:

- A beautiful partnership certificate
- Receive the Word from Jerusalem magazine
- Online access to free teaching from the ICEJ’s quarterly Mid-East Update conference call from Jerusalem
- An invitation to attend our annual ICEJ-USA Leadership Briefing
- Special invitations to meet with ICEJ Leadership or receive personal briefings on ICEJ projects.
- Personal news updates during times of escalating news from the region
- An additional gift acknowledging you as a Builder of Zion Partner

Send in your commitment for 2016 today to icejusa@icejusa.org or go to www.icejusa.org/partner or call us at (615) 895-9830. You will receive a beautiful partnership certificate.
ALIYAH UPDATE

Ukraine // Aliyah numbers have increased rapidly over the past few years due to wars and anti-Semitic aggression around the world. In 2015, the ICEJ led the way in helping Jews from many countries come home to the land of their fathers: from Ukraine, France, China, and more, while also preparing for a new wave of Aliyah from Ethiopia and India. The Jewish Agency for Israel recently expressed their gratitude for the fruitful partnership between the agency and the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem:

“‘You have helped fulfill the prophecy of the Jewish people returning to their homeland. The recent French Olim who have come after the attacks in Paris have come with the support of the recent donation that we received from your organization,’” continued Sharf. “At this sad and dark time for the French Jews your generosity is a beckoning light for them, and for the Jewish Agency. With your help we know we can succeed in this sacred mission. Thank you for your support and friendship.”

In 2015, ICEJ’s Aliyah work focused mainly on helping Ukrainian Jews escape the conflict in their land. Brutal urban warfare between Ukrainian troops and pro-Russian forces drove thousands of Jews into refugee camps. With no reason to return to their homes, many now desire to move to Israel.

“‘At this time of crisis in Paris, I want to express our sincere appreciation for the strategic support the International Christian Embassy and your many Christian supporters from around the world provide us in our historic role in bringing Jews back home to Israel, and in easing their absorption into a new society,’” wrote Yehuda Sharf, Director of the Aliyah, Absorption and Special Operation Unit.

France // ICEJ is also sensitive to the current situation in Western Europe. After the November attacks in Paris, French Jews are the most vulnerable Jews in Western Europe, many of whom still live in poor neighborhoods in Paris alongside Muslim immigrants. With support from Christians around the world, ICEJ sponsored the first 80 Olim to arrive in Israel from France since the Paris bombings. As terror intensifies in Western countries, you can help French Jews move their families to Israel.

Donate at www.icejusa.org/ukraine

Donate at www.icejusa.org/french-aliyah
AS SHE BOARDED A JERUSALEM BUS, Marike Veldman immediately noticed two young men who seemed strangely out of place. They looked unkempt and at that hour of the day should have been at work, she thought to herself.

When the bus started moving the men repositioned themselves, one sitting ominously across from Veldman. They laughed as if sharing a joke between them and then, in one fateful instant, both jumped to their feet and yelled, “Allahu akbar” - and embarked upon a killing spree.

The attacker stabbed Veldman six times: In her shoulder, right arm, hand and chest. The blade punctured one of her lungs, but according to medical staff, miraculously missed an artery.

“I called upon the name of Jesus. In Dutch I was saying his name over and over again. I feel that saved me,” she said. “The attacker left me after that.”

The assault on passengers of bus 78 occurred in Jerusalem’s Armon HaNetziv neighborhood, amidst the recent surge in stabbings, shootings and vehicular and rock attacks by Palestinians targeting Israelis. The violence is allegedly fueled by rumors that Israel plans to change the status quo at the Temple Mount, where anyone is permitted to visit but only Muslims may pray. Israel denies these rumors.

“I understand there is a lot of frustration between Arabs and Israel, but to react like this? This is very, very evil,” she insisted. “Nobody deserves to die like that...”

Though she is struggling now with indelible trauma, Veldman found it easier than expected to forgive and to see redemption in the situation. She believes God allowed her attacker to live. (The second terrorist was killed at the scene.) Still, she contemplates how she will return to “normal.”

“I will have to go through a dark tunnel, but there will be light at the end. God will heal me,” Veldman said. “If I had died I would have been with the Lord. But he still has a plan for me.”

Marike Veldman’s life has changed dramatically. From an independent woman with great inner strength, she became dependent on the help of social workers and psychologists to cope with her trauma. Because of what has happened, she is hesitant to use public transportation. The ICEJ wishes to help Marike with moving around Jerusalem without fear. By making a donation to this cause, you can help cover some of the costs that are now part of her daily routines.
Treating trauma in the face of danger

WITH THE WORLD IN TURMOIL ICEJ COMFORTS ISRAELIS SHAKEN BY FEAR

ESTERA WIEJA

It has been a very difficult season for Jews, both in Israel and throughout the nations. In Israel, the level of psychological trauma in children and many adults has intensified, while a new wave of Aliyah from France brings in even more anxiety and fear to an already shaken-up society.

Although direct victims of terror understandably receive the most attention and help, the significant effects of PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) experienced by secondary terror victims are often overlooked. These secondary victims are individuals who know a friend, teacher, or neighbor killed or wounded in a terror attack. Trauma applies also to the tertiary victims, who experience and are traumatized in an attack but not wounded, or just know about a terror attack and feel susceptible to one.

ICEJ is already at work throughout Israel, providing support services to all terror victims, both direct and indirect. One service is a series of workshops which equips parents to help their children cope with the sharp increase in trauma. ICEJ has partnered with a center which reaches out with comprehensive therapeutic and educational development to every terror victim and family in the land.

You can have an impact on the Israeli society at this difficult time! Partner with us and donate to this urgent cause today! Go to:

www.icejusa.org/aid/israel_in_crisis

The ICEJ-France Director, Robert Baxter, commented on the recent attacks in Paris and called the church to prayer:

In just 10 months, France has twice been the target of radical Islamic terrorism. The President of France, François Hollande, declared, France is at war. As this war which Israel battles daily comes to major European capitals, we stand at a strategic moment in history where liberty-loving people must stand together against these forces of darkness.

As Christians we know our battle is not against flesh and blood so we call upon the believers in France and internationally to pray and fast. We have three specific directions from the Lord:

- We are praying for God’s great mercy and compassion to be poured out on those who have lost a family member, friend or colleague. We are praying for this evil to be turned into a wave of spiritual revival throughout France.

- God has revealed to us there are still other terrorist cells active in France; we are praying they would be exposed to the authorities, and dealt with effectively.

- Finally, we believe God has called us to repent for the silence of the Church as our society continues to slide into moral decadence. We believe the “normalization” of immorality has destroyed God’s protection over our nation and He is calling us to repent.

Thank you for joining with us as we advance the Kingdom of our Lord!
Over 400 participants gathered to express their support for the State of Israel at an event that was inaugurated with the anthems of both the Czech Republic and the State of Israel. Shai Abramson, Chief Cantor of the Israeli Army (IDF), sent a video greeting which was followed by speeches from representatives of civic organizations and groups, who stressed the right of the State of Israel to defend itself against terrorist attacks.

The people involved in the event were deeply impressed by Professor Alexander Fried, a Holocaust survivor, who recalled the traditionally good relations between Czechs and Jews. The gathering was enriched by Hebrew songs and prayers, including a prayer for the State of Israel. At the conclusion, a strong message of hope was expressed for the Israeli nation to overcome these challenging times and put a stop to this wave of terror. After the official portion of the event, participants filled the Wenceslas Square in Prague with singing and dancing to the rhythm of modern Israeli songs.

The event was a joint venture of several organizations, including the ICEJ-Czech Republic, Bnei Israel Congregation, Jewish Liberal Union, League against Anti-Semitism, and the Facebook group “We support Israel.”

Also in October, nearly 300 Christians gathered in the streets in the capital of the Slovak Republic. The event, organized by ICEJ-Slovakia, publicly expressed Slovak solidarity with Israel, and was attended by numerous high profile personalities from the country’s political and social scenes. This event also opened with the Slovak and Israeli anthems.

Peter Svec, Chairman of ICEJ-Slovakia, introduced a declaration of solidarity with Israel signed by prominent Christian organizations operating in Slovakia. Well-known and respected security analyst, Mr. Ivo Samson, explained the current situation in Israel. On behalf of the Central Union of Jewish Religious Communities in Slovakia, honorary chairman, Pavol Traubner, stressed that Israel must and will defend itself against terrorist attacks.

At the end of the event, the participants formed a five-meter radius Star of David with candles while singer Jana Orliclá gave a live performance. The peaceful rally on the Main Square in Bratislava concluded with Jewish music resounding throughout the city.

By November 11, 2015, a total of 22 public Slovak personalities had signed the declaration of solidarity, which was then delivered into the hands of Israeli ambassador to Slovakia, H.E. Alexander Ben Zvi by Peter Svec, the ICEJ Slovakia national director. In only five days, a thousand signatures were collected online without any major media coverage.
MEET THE STAFF

Nicholaus Mills is a recent graduate of Oral Roberts University in Tulsa, Oklahoma, USA. Throughout his college career, Nicholaus was involved in work with nonprofit organizations and startup businesses around the globe.

Today, Nicholaus works with the ICEJ in Jerusalem, Israel. He is involved with both the distribution of ICEJ media as well as our international prayer initiative, Isaiah 62. In the future, Nicholaus plans to study for both his JD and MBA degrees in order to progress his career of societal impact.

“Of every nation on the earth, none holds the allure that Israel provides,” said Nicholaus of his recent move. “Being able to live in Jerusalem, serve the practical needs of Israel, and represent the global body of Christ is an experience unlike any other. From the start, the ICEJ staff and leadership have been very welcoming and went out of their way to help me adjust to life in the Middle East. Joining the ICEJ has been a defining experience of my life!”

Come to Jerusalem to live and serve with the ICEJ family!

The International Christian Embassy in Jerusalem is always on the lookout for professional and committed believers who are interested in volunteering in Israel. Do you have a heart for Israel? Is God speaking to you about investing your unique gifts to bless the Jewish people? Volunteer with ICEJ and let it change your life! If you would like to be a part of our team in Jerusalem, contact us: volunteer@icej.org

HISTORIC MEETING IN BERLIN

ICEJ brings together pastors and MPs from Europe and Israel

BY LISA SCHMID

ON THE EVE OF THE 77TH commemoration of Kristallnacht (also known as the “Night of Broken Glass” from 1938) 150 lawmakers from Europe and Israel gathered in Berlin with German pastors and spiritual leaders to show their solidarity and support for Israel.

The event was organized by the Israel Allies Foundation in partnership with the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem, and the Israeli Ministry of Tourism. The gala dinner, honoring the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Israel and Germany, was part of the “Israel Allies European Summit” (November 7-9).

The many guests of honor included Yacov Hadas-Handelsmann, Israel’s ambassador in Germany; MK Yair Lapid (Yesh Atid), former Israeli minister of finance; Yoel Hasson (Zionist Union), Deputy speaker of the Knesset, and other members of the Knesset from various parties. Many members of the German Parliament were also in attendance, along with representatives from: Estonia, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Poland, Romania, France, Slovakia, Macedonia, and Lithuania.

Dr. Jürgen Bühler, Executive Director of the ICEJ in Jerusalem, called the positive development of Jewish-Christian relations worldwide 70 years after the end of the Holocaust “nothing short of a miracle.” He then challenged the German parliamentarians to translate the oft-quoted sentence that the existence of Israel was part of the State rationale of Germany into specific and practical action.

“Imagine the Allies of the United States repeatedly assuring the USA of their right to exist,” stressed Dr. Bühler. “The representatives of the US would be indeed bewildered. What does this sentence mean in practical terms? Germany’s special obligation towards the State of Israel must find its expression in political initiatives which are relevant and practical!”

Lapid eloquently described what the current wave of Palestinian terror means for the average Israeli citizen, comparing present events in Israel with Kristallnacht: “The first lesson is that we have to survive. Survive at all costs... Not believing that someone will come to the rescue. The second lesson we learned is that we must be moral people. Not in words, but in deeds.”

Come to Jerusalem to live and serve with the ICEJ family!
The leadership of the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem (ICEJ) is gravely concerned about the EU’s directive which demands all products from disputed Israeli territories be labeled, a move that would undermine economic coexistence between Palestinians and Israelis and harm those working toward peace.

For this reason the ICEJ is holding a symposium on the labeling law in Brussels on the 2nd of December in cooperation with MEPs and representatives from dozens of ICEJ branches throughout Europe. It will call upon members of the European Parliament to take a different approach in finding a solution between the conflict parties and to foster economic co-operation, stability, and peace between Israelis and Palestinians in the area.

“Coexistence can only be achieved by establishing factories and business partnerships in areas where Palestinians and Israelis live side-by-side,” said Dr. Jürgen Bühler, ICEJ Executive Director ahead of the ICEJ-sponsored Symposium.

“This highly-politicized directive will only end up hurting those it claims to help,” Bühler said. “All the evidence indicates that the businesses being targeted employ tens of thousands of Palestinians and contribute to the well-being of all those living in the affected areas, both Jews and Arabs alike.”

This labeling law also has no precedence or parallel to any other member state or associated state with similar conflicts, nor does the European Union intend to apply this standard to any other conflict area within its reach. There are no labeling laws planned for the Kurdish territory of Turkey nor for the northern territory of Cyprus, which is considered by the international community as occupied. This is all the more puzzling, as the State of Turkey still refuses to recognize the Republic of Cyprus as a State, even though it is a full member of the European Union.

“If the EU really wants to promote peace they should stop penalizing those Israelis and Palestinians who are working together to make a living. Instead they should provide greater incentives for them to forge deeper bonds of cooperation, without using their labeling laws to further the anti-Israeli propaganda that is sweeping Europe.”

The symposium in Brussels will be hosted by Hannu Takkula, Finnish politician and Member of the European Parliament with the Center Party of Finland, and Bastiaan (Bas) Belder, a Dutch politician and member of the European Parliament with the SGP, who is also part of the European Conservatives and Reformists Group and sits on the European Parliament’s Committee on Foreign Affairs. Dr. Jürgen Bühler, ICEJ Executive Director, will be one of the main speakers at the symposium.
**THE SEASON OF GIVING**

**HANUKKAH**
With the Hanukkah holidays approaching, residents of the Haifa Home for Holocaust Survivors will be celebrating this winter holiday in their safe, warm environment. Also known as the Festival of Lights, Hanukkah is celebrated around Israel with lighting of the candles and enjoying holiday sweets called sufganyot – a special Israeli doughnut with filling inside.

At the Haifa Home, their brand new recreational facility is a tremendous blessing - especially during the holidays. A variety of activities are held daily in the hall; drinking coffee with friends, going to the gym, or entertaining guests from Israel and abroad. For special events or celebrations, like holidays, the facility also serves as a reception hall.

One of the residents shared with us while drinking coffee with her neighbor: “I do not understand that in this time of unrest in the Land I feel so relaxed and at peace. It probably has to do with the fact that many people pray for us.”

Shimon Sabag, Director of the Home, often calls the Haifa Home, “God’s Home.” To run a Home like this completely on private donations from people in Israel and abroad is quite a challenge.

**CHRISTMAS**
In partnership with local Arab pastors and churches, the ICEJ will sponsor holiday gatherings and distribute Christmas gifts to many needy Christian families in the cities of Bethlehem and Nazareth. The children in these Christian communities will receive Christmas packages with clothing and toys.

The Christian residents of both Bethlehem and Nazareth are immensely proud to live in cities where Jesus was born and raised. Because of this the Christmas season is especially important to them. In early December, the municipality of Bethlehem starts decorating the streets with lights and signs. This is the cue for all the stores to begin decorating as well. Around the 20th of the month big Christmas parties start. The ICEJ wants to make sure that the Christian families in this land are well prepared for this special season!

Your gift today will also help us bless needy Christian families in Jerusalem and Nazareth with food coupons, so they can celebrate together around a Christmas meal. At the same time, by making a donation at this time you can bless the nation of Israel just in time for Hanukkah!

Donate to our Holiday Fund by visiting: www.icejusa.org/holidays
THE STORY OF HANUKKAH takes place during the period in-between the Old and New Testaments, when Antiochus IV Epiphanes became the King of the Hellenistic Seleucid empire. While the Hellenization of the region, including Judea, already threatened the survival of the Jewish religion, Antiochus seemed obsessed with ensuring the demise of the Jewish faith and thereby, the future of the Jewish people.

He not only murdered the High Priest, Onias III, but he slaughtered 40,000 inhabitants of Jerusalem. All sacrifices, the service of the Temple, and the observance of the Sabbath and feast days were prohibited. The Temple was dedicated to Zeus, the Holy Scriptures were destroyed, and the Jews were forced to take part in heathen rites. In his attempt to destroy every trace of the Jewish religion, the final assault was the slaughter of a pig on the sacrificial altar of the Temple, thereby desecrating it. The Maccabean family, from the priestly line of Aaron, led a revolt against this evil ruler and miraculously experienced victory after victory over the mighty Greek forces, until at last the Temple could be purified and its services restored.

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The revolt against the forces of Hellenization actually saved the Jewish people from extinction because they would have assimilated into the pagan culture around them. This preservation of Judaism and the rededication of the Temple helped set the stage for the birth of Jesus into a traditional orthodox Jewish home in Judea. It is no surprise that He went to the Temple for Hanukkah - the Feast of Dedication - in John 10.

The End of Antiochus and His Empire
But wait, there is more to the story. The rededication of the Temple took place on the 25th day of Kislev, which was December 14, 164 BC. Within weeks, if not days, the evil Antiochus IV Epiphanes died suddenly. The Greek historian Polybius said that Antiochus was on an expedition to the eastern part of the empire to rob another temple when he died of a sudden illness and “certain manifestations of divine displeasure.”

Polybius hints at the very real possibility that the King suffered judgment by God. Whether he understood it to be the God of the Jews we do not know, but the non-canonical book of 2nd Maccabees claims he did. His sudden death is just one example out of many of the demise of those who have come against the Jewish people. Upon the king’s death, the Seleucid kingdom began to weaken and fell into irreparable decline.

The Israel Test
The Bible is clear that God will judge the nations over their treatment of the Jewish people. Both Old and New Testaments teach this, and the principal has been played out over and over throughout history.

The most obvious explanation is that the Jewish people are very special to Him. He did not just choose them, but created them through Sarah who was past child-bearing years, and He takes their treatment by others very seriously. More than this, God uses Israel to test the hearts of the nations, thereby exposing either their goodness, which leads to blessing, or their evil intent, which leads to judgement. Some have likened Israel to litmus paper that when dipped into water shows whether the water is acidic or alkaline. Israel exposes what is in the heart of people.

George Gilder, a venture-capitalist businessman, proposes in his book The Israel Test that Israel presents a moral and ethical challenge to the world and therefore has become the ultimate faultline. At the root of the Israel Test is the knowledge that Israel is contributing more to the human cause through its scientific, technological and financial advances than any other country in the world, except the US. He predicts that over the next two decades, Israel will grow into the dominant economy in the Middle East and one of the most productive economies in the world.

This is the test that Israel presents to the world: what is your attitude towards people who excel you in the creation of wealth or in other accomplishments? Do you aspire to their excellence, or do you see the at it? Do you admire and celebrate exceptional achievement, or do you impugn it and seek to tear it down?

God is using Israel to test the hearts of the nations and their future will be determined by how they respond. Could it be that the same test is at operation within the Church?

In Romans 11, the Apostle Paul addresses the attitude of the Roman church towards the Jewish people. He
warned the believers to make sure their attitude was humble and honoring of the Jewish people. He even cautioned them about possible judgment by God if their attitude was not right. A church that honors its Hebraic roots, as wild branches that are grafted into the olive tree, receives great strength and nourishment. To dishonor the very root that supports our faith brings spiritual decline and even death.

Antiochus IV Epiphanes failed the Israel Test and his kingdom is long gone. Others throughout history have also fallen short on the test and experienced decline and extinction. My prayer is that our nation and our churches pass the Israel Test, exhibiting good hearts, and experience the many blessings God has promised.

Susan Michael is the US Director of the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem.

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