This second phase of the restoration of Israel is repeatedly spoken of by most of the Hebrew prophets. A look at some of these passages reveals an exciting divine program which unfolds as the Spirit of God starts moving upon Israel. This program of the Holy Spirit affects each individual member of God’s people. It affects the entire nation of Israel, its immediate neighborhood and eventually the entire world.

Personal Transformation
It is again the prophet Ezekiel who describes best the personal impact which the spiritual restoration will have on Israel (Ezekiel 36: 24-27). God promises the cleansing of all past sins, to remove the hearts of stone and replace them with hearts of flesh. Then God promises to fill them with His very presence, with the Spirit of God. A nation which throughout their history struggled to meet the righteous requirements of God will now become a nation of shining saints.

As the prophet Ezekiel is confronted with the vision of Israel as a hopeless field of dry bones, God twice tells him to prophesy.

After the first prophetic proclamation a massive miracle unfolds as the dry bone start to move, rearrange themselves into skeletons, and finally become covered with flesh and sinews. The bones turned into a large number of restored bodies, yet they were still dead!

Then God tells him to prophesy a second time: “Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe on these slain, that they may live” (Ezekiel 37:9).

As Ezekiel begins to speak, life enters into the stiff bodies and they rise to become “an exceedingly great army.”

The theme for this year’s Feast of Tabernacles celebration is “The Spirit of Grace and Supplication”, which is taken from Zechariah 12:10 and touches upon one of the most exciting, yet unfulfilled promises, for the Jewish people in the Bible. It was the common understanding of the Old Testament prophets that the end-time restoration of Israel would not only be a restoration to their land but also – and more importantly – a return to their God.

Two of the great prophetic chapters on this restoration, Ezekiel 36 and 37, both foresee two phases in this restoration process for Israel. The first phase will be a physical return back to the Land of Israel. The ancient cities will be rebuilt, barren ground will become fertile fields, and an exiled people will re-gather in their homeland. But God also promises a second phase of restoration which will bring forth a spiritual restoration of the entire nation.

As the prophet Ezekiel is confronted with the vision of Israel as a hopeless field of dry bones, God twice tells him to prophesy.
The International Christian Embassy Jerusalem was founded in 1980 as an act of comfort and solidarity with Israel and the Jewish people in their claim to Jerusalem.

Today, the Christian Embassy stands at the forefront of a growing mainstream movement of Christians worldwide who share a love and concern for Israel and an understanding of the biblical significance of the modern ingathering of Jews to the land of their forefathers.

From our headquarters in Jerusalem and through our branches and representatives in over 80 nations, we seek to challenge the Church to take up its scriptural responsibilities towards the Jewish people, to remind Israel of the wonderful promises made to her in the Bible, and to be a source of practical assistance to all the people of the Land of Israel.

The ICEJ’s United States Branch is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization with offices in Washington, D.C. and in Murfreesboro, Tennessee. We are a non-denominational faith ministry supported by the voluntary contributions of our members and friends.

We invite you to join with us as we minister to Israel and the Jewish people worldwide by using the enclosed response card to make your donation to the ongoing work and witness of the ICEJ.

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The International Christian Embassy Jerusalem recently hosted a traditional Jerusalem Day reception on its grounds which drew a wide array of Israeli officials and Jewish and Christian leaders in the land. Guests included officials from the Prime Minister’s Office, the Foreign Ministry and the Ministry of Tourism, the Chief Rabbinate, the deputy mayor of Jerusalem, senior representatives from Yad Vashem, the World Jewish Congress, Bnai Brith Israel, and many other organizations.

ICEJ Executive Director Dr. Juergen Buehler introduced Merv Watson as the first to conceive the idea of a Christian Embassy in Jerusalem, which in its 30-plus years of existence has developed the scope of its activities and influence way beyond what its founding fathers ever imagined.

“This is an answer to a dream,” said Watson, who had toured the world in the late 1970s hoping that his idea would inspire other Christians to realize the significance of Jerusalem as the spiritual, historic and political capital of the Jewish people and the State of Israel, and as a holy city of pilgrimage for Christians.

“We didn’t need another church or synagogue but common ground where people could meet as friends,” said Watson as he happily greeted the crowd of Jews and Christians mingling on the lawns of the Embassy’s premises.

Watson also noted that in 1978, his wife Merla organized an initial Feast of Tabernacles gathering for Christians in Jerusalem, even before the ICEJ had been established.

David Parsons serves as ICEJ Media Director in Jerusalem
In a country that places such emphasis on securing its borders, it is hard to believe Israel would be a center for human trafficking and the sex-slave trade. Unpleasant though this sad reality is, it is one that Christian supporters of Israel need to face head-on with the love and compassion of Jesus...
n a country that places such emphasis on securing its borders, it is hard to believe Israel would have a problem like human trafficking. How great a surprise to learn that the sex slave trade not only exists in Israel, but is a thriving business. Although this is an unpleasant thought for Christian supporters of Israel, it is reality.

Since the 1990s, Israel has become one of the central destinations for human trafficking. The majority of these victims are brought to Israel via Egypt by Bedouin guides. Over three thousand enslaved women are smuggled into Israel each year and nine out of ten of these girls had never been involved with prostitution before.

Most girls who fall prey to human trafficking, are not forced. They are lured into leaving their home because they are led to believe that a better future awaits them—working as a caretaker, nanny or dancer. However, after their journey begins, many realize that this is not the case as oftentimes their guides will abuse the girls verbally, physically and emotionally leaving them with nowhere to go.

Once the girls cross the border into Israel, their passports are confiscated, they are locked up in apartments and are ready to be sold. A young girl will sell for between $4,000 to $10,000. While, over half of the girls will be abused by their clients, most girls will be also abused by their ‘owners.’

In addition, there are Israeli girls turning to prostitution usually after experiencing sexual abuse or incest in their childhood. The average age of a “woman” who enters prostitution in Israel is between 12 and 13 years old.

Every month, men in Israel visit brothels an estimated one million times. In Tel Aviv, the old central bus station in the southern part of town has turned into a district of brothels and drug dealers. Israel’s largest coastal city is in dire need of prayer and intervention!

The ICEJ is currently working together with several local centers that care for these entrapped and abused women, fight for their unborn and battle for new laws that would stop human trafficking in Israel.

Some very prominent lawyers are currently pushing for a law that would greatly reduce this shameful industry. Instead of criminalizing the women and minors who are victims of the sex industry, the law would target the purchasers of sex. The goal is simple: no clients = no demand.

One of the organizations that the ICEJ is partnering with on this problem is “Abundant Life,” which reaches out to women engaged in prostitution and offers special care to those who are pregnant. Most of them are addicted to drugs and have no means to support themselves, not to mention a little child.

After praying for a homeless prostitute on the beach in Tel Aviv one day, Anat - one of the directors of Abundant Life - noticed the woman kept picking and scratching her toes as they were praying for her. Her feet were dirty and itchy from lack of proper care. So a new idea was born to connect with these desperate women in a simple way.

Soon, they opened a new center in the middle of town where the prostitutes could come for manicures and pedicures, and at the same time have a chance to talk to someone who cares for them. The center began its operations last December under the name Red Carpet. The women who visit the center are Jewish, Arab, and Russian.

With support from ICEJ AID, the new center provides an escape from the gruesome reality these women face every day. In addition to the treatments, the women are provided food, home-baked cookies, clothes, and even showers. We hope to soon be able to provide a nurse to treat them medically.

Israel is making significant progress in bringing this problem under control, and has just been upgraded in an annual US report to Tier-1 status, meaning a much improved record of compliance with international standards on human trafficking.

Yet through ICEJ AID, you can have a life-changing impact on those still trapped in this degrading form of modern slavery. Support this vital work today!

Estera Wieja is a staff writer for the ICEJ Media team in Jerusalem

Make a monthly online commitment to support the ministry of ICEJ AID at: www.icej.org/aid
“I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them” (Ezekiel 36:27).

Moses foresaw this development even before Israel first entered the Promised Land.

Moses understood that Israel would be exiled but also return to their land, where God would “circumcise their heart... to love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live” (Deuteronomy 30:6).

In John chapter 3, when Jesus talks to Nicodemus – one of the greatest rabbis of his time – he compares this process with somebody being “born again.” Everything will become new, regenerated from within.

**Personal Relationship with God**

Unlike Christianity, Judaism traditionally sees relationship with God not so much from the individual perspective but as a community experience between the nation and God. It is more a corporate understanding of “We and our God,” rather than “I and my God.” According to most rabbis, God deals with Israel as a nation rather than with the individual Jew.

The prophet Isaiah suggests that this collective national experience with God will be expanded into a very individual and personal relationship with God.

“For I will pour water on him who is thirsty, and floods on the dry ground; I will pour My Spirit on your descendants, ... One will say, ‘I am the Lord’s.’ Another will call himself by the name of Jacob; Another will write with his hand, ‘The Lord’s,’ and name himself by the name of Israel.” (Isaiah 44:3-5)

And this is exactly what characterizes the new covenant relationship which the prophet Jeremiah foresees for a restored people of Israel: “No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the Lord” (Jeremiah 31:34).

Herein lies a significant lesson for each one of us. Being part of the Kingdom of God means each one of us is privileged to enjoy a very personal relationship with God. Yes, we are part of a large family with many members, which always has and needs a communal expression. But at the same time each one of God's children should personally hear the voice of our Heavenly Father. As is promised to Israel, everyone who has the Spirit of God needs to be able to say very personally, “I am the Lord’s!” And on our hands it should be written, “The Lord’s” – meaning each one of us belongs to the Father in heaven.

**Peace & Security**

Another direct result of the outpouring of the Spirit of God will be the ushering in of righteousness, peace and safety. The prophet Isaiah describes a rather distressing picture of her unfruitfulness: her palaces are forsaken, the city deserted, Jerusalem has become a wasteland, the “joy of wild donkeys [and] a pasture of flocks” (Isaiah 32:10-14).

But God places a time limit to this time of trouble for Israel. He declares that this disturbing situation will last “until the Spirit is poured upon us from on high” (Isaiah 32:15). And this changes everything! The words which then describe the time after the Spirit of God has been poured out are: “justice”, “righteousness”, “peace”, “quietness and assurance forever”, “secure dwelling”, “quiet resting places”, “peaceful habitations” (verses 16 and following).

Now this is exactly what both Jews and Arabs have been longing for over so many decades. This means God’s roadmap for peace in the Middle East is revival – the outpouring of the Holy Spirit!

**National & Personal Deliverance**

The prophets also saw a very unusual result of a Holy Spirit outpouring: deliverance from their enemies! Isaiah sees the enemies coming upon Israel “like a flood”, but then beholds “the Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him” (Isaiah 59:19).
Already in chapter 10, when Israel is being suppressed by the Assyrian army, God promises Isaiah that this yoke will be broken “by the anointing oil” – a powerful symbol of the Holy Spirit (Isaiah 10:27).

In addition, the prophet Zechariah is reminded by God that in Israel’s time of need the ultimate deliverance will not come through an almighty army. Instead, God declares: “Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,’ says the Lord of hosts.” The Lord also adds that there is no mountain or challenge too big for Him: “Who are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain!” (Zechariah 4:6-7)

What powerful and encouraging declarations for Israel!

**The Recognition of Messiah**

Another of the amazing results of this outpouring of the Spirit will be that they will “look upon Me whom they pierced” and they will “mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son” (Zechariah 12:10 - emphasis added).

It is worth noting what the Talmud has to say regarding this passage. On the question of why there was such mourning in Jerusalem, the Talmud declares: “It is on account of the Messiah, the son of Joseph, who was killed.”

This refers to the two types of Messiah in Jewish tradition. One is Mosiach ben-David, Messiah the Son of David, who will liberate and rule the nation. But there is also the suffering Mosiach ben-Joseph, referring to Joseph, the son of Jacob, who suffered at the hand of his brothers, saved the nations from starvation, and later reconciled with his family. It is fascinating to consider that the Talmud and the New Testament understanding agree that the outpouring of the Spirit of Grace will lead in Israel to a national recognition of the Suffering Messiah! May that day come soon!

**A Promise for Israel**

Large parts of the Christian world see the Holy Spirit as an exclusive gift to the gentile Church. The above passages should remind us that the Spirit of God is promised “to the Jew first.”

Speaking of the “gift of the Holy Spirit,” the Apostle Peter told a Jewish audience in the Temple courts in Jerusalem: “For the promise is to you and to your children...” (Act 2:39)

If there is any nation which has a legitimate right to expect the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, it is Israel!

That being said, I want to encourage all of us to hunger for a fresh infilling of the Holy Spirit for ourselves. These promises reviewed here are true for all those who through faith in Jesus Christ became part of the family of God.

Invite the Holy Spirit to transform your life. Allow the Spirit of God to empower you afresh. Expect the anointing of the Spirit to break the yoke which stops you from fulfilling the calling of God on your life. Invite the Holy Spirit to reveal Jesus more fully to you. And allow the Spirit of sonship to bring you into a more intimate relationship with our Father in heaven. It will change your life!

We also want to invite you to join us for this year’s Feast celebration in Jerusalem. As we gather the last few days of September, we are expecting a fresh outpouring of His Spirit in keeping with the theme, The Spirit of Grace and Supplication. In addition we are making arrangements for special prayer and body ministry. You will most assuredly be blessed!

Finally, please pray with us that God’s Spirit of ‘grace and supplication’ will be poured out soon on the inhabitants of Jerusalem and the House of David! Go online to [www.icej.org](http://www.icej.org) and get involved with our monthly Isaiah 62 Prayer Campaign. By His Spirit, we can move mountains! (☞)

“And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.” Zechariah 12:10 (NKJV)
In early June, a team of three ICEJ staff members set off on a 477-kilometer (296-mile) bike trek from Metulla on the northern border to the Red Sea resort of Eilat on the southern tip, in order to raise much-needed funds for the Disabled Sports Center in the Tel Aviv suburb of Ramat Gan.

Herbert Kelly from South Africa, Jani Salokangas from Finland and Emanuel Mfoukou from Sweden/Congo secured sponsorships from Christians around the world who pledged different amounts for every kilometer they travelled over the course of the three-day trek. The initiative was conceived by Salokangas, the new director of the ICEJ’s Arise young adults program, as a potential annual charity bike ride.

“We realized we have to do something for others, even if it was tough going,” said Salokangas. “It was also a unique way to connect with this land. Everything we saw stayed deep inside of us.”

With daily temperatures soaring over 104 degrees Farenheit, the gruelling route took them across the Hula Valley, astride the Sea of Galilee, down the Jordan Valley, past the Dead Sea and then through the Arava desert to Eilat. The three brave riders did not lose their sense of humor on the way. “I was saved only by the grace of God, and only by the grace of God will we finish this race,” Herbert laughed at the end of the first day.

Dubbed “The 477 Quest,” the initiative aimed to raise funds to help sponsor members of the Israeli team training for the 2016 Paralympic Games in Brazil, and to replace the well-worn court used by the wheelchair basketball league at the Ramat Gan facility.

The ICEJ has sponsored sports training sessions for disabled Israeli athletes for about a decade, and has committed to help upgrade the sports facility in Ramat Gan as well.

An accompanying team documented the bike ride by video in order to produce a positive informational film on Israel and to build this inaugural ride into an annual event.

“The idea is to continue with follow-up efforts, bike again next year, and hopefully turn it into an annual challenge,” explained Salokangas. “We hope next spring more cyclists from other countries will be able to join us too!”

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