SEVENTY YEARS SINCE THE HOLOCAUST
A TIME FOR REFLECTION AND REDEDICATION
Dear Friends,

In April, all of Israel was commemorating the Holocaust. The nation's annual day of remembrance, Yom HaShoah, is held to honor the six million Jews who were brutally murdered in the Nazi genocide. And every year, the ICEJ is an active part of the official state ceremonies on this day at Yad Vashem, the revered memorial and museum in Jerusalem dedicated to preserving their memory.

Though launched by pagan Nazis, the Holocaust was actually the tragic climax of a long history of Christian anti-Semitism. For centuries, many of the established churches of Europe taught that God was finished with the Jewish people and had abandoned them. They believed that the Church had replaced Israel and all that was left for the Jews was the wrath of God for rejecting their Messiah.

Yet the Bible tells us differently. For instance, the Apostle Paul clearly foresees a glorious future for Israel. He understood that although they might be even enemies of the Gospel, the Lord God still loves them (Romans 11:28). He understood that even in their sin and unbelief, God used them to bring forth incredible blessings to the world. He then reasons, “For if their being cast away is the reconciling of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?” (Romans 11:15). In other words, the best is yet to come! Indeed, there is a glorious future for Israel.

Paul states this principle so beautifully, that even “If we are faithless, He remains faithful; [for] He cannot deny Himself” (2 Timothy 2:13). What a great comfort that is for Israel, as well as for us as Gentile believers today!

We may never fully understand why Christians over the centuries could not see this truth. But what we can do today is to act upon the revealed truth God has given us about our need to bless Israel. It is nothing short of a miracle that today, 70 years after the Holocaust, many Israelis see Evangelical Christians as strategic partners for Israel’s future.

So, we invite you to be part of this modern-day miracle through the channel of the Christian Embassy here in the heart of Jerusalem.

May the Lord bless you richly from Zion!

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INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN EMBASSY JERUSALEM - USA
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I will never forget as a high school student watching my father being used by God as a pastor. I saw people getting saved, healed, and delivered, and I developed a passion to become a pastor like my dad. One day, I told my father of my plans to go to Bible school and follow in his footsteps. I assumed he would be excited. But I will always remember his reply: “Son, if you feel called to the ministry I advise you to first study a secular profession. Go get yourself a job in construction!”

Over the years, I understood why he said this. Being a construction worker himself, he started to evangelize on weekends. The ministry quickly grew so that eventually he needed to devote his full time to it. But, his experience as a construction worker always helped him speak the language of ordinary people, and to easily connect with those in church. In the eight churches he established, people always considered him “one of us.” He would plan and build the church buildings himself. Until the very last years before his death, physical labor always remained an important part of his life.

The First “Pentecostal”
In the book of Exodus, we find the very first passage about someone “being filled with the Spirit of God.” Think for a minute - who could this be? Was it Moses the great lawgiver, or Aaron the high priest, or the 70 elders who prophesied? It was none of them.

“So, I have called by name Bezalel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah. And I have filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship, to design artistic works, to work in gold, in silver, in bronze, in cutting jewels for setting, in carving wood, and to work in all manner of workmanship” (Exodus 31:2–5).

So the first person the Bible speaks about being “filled with the Spirit of God” was not a clergyman, but a manual laborer. Bezalel might not have known how to lead worship, preach or prophecy, but he knew how to cut wood and stones, and work with metals and other materials.

This gives incredible dignity to the labors of our hands. From the very beginning, work had a unique value for God. He even identifies with it Himself. The deities of antiquity are known for spending their lives in revelry and pleasure, but the God of the Bible was a worker - the Maker of heaven and earth. He is “the Creator of the ends of the earth, Who neither faints nor is weary” (Isaiah 40:28). Yet despite such omnipotence and inexhaustible energy, He still paused after six days of work and sanctified the seventh day as a day of rest.
Work is highly regarded in Jewish tradition: “Love work!” is the Talmudic maxim of Sameas. Another sage proclaimed: “Greater is the merit of industry than of idle piety.”

This ran counter to the Greek approach to life. According to Aristotle, physical labor was a “corrupt waste of time” which was necessary so the elite might engage in “pure exercises of the mind” - art, philosophy, and politics.

In contrast, the Bible first places man in the Garden of Eden to “to tend and keep it” (Genesis 2:15). The Garden was not a place of eternal holiday but of fulfilling tasks. God blesses the work of our hand (Deuteronomy 28:12). The Hebrew word for work, oved, is also often used to describe our service and worship to God.

The strict division between the sacred and secular in many cultures barely exists in the Bible. The entire nation of Israel was considered a royal priesthood, meaning everyone was sacred to God.

Jesus himself was a carpenter (or stone mason), likely starting out from around the age of twelve. This means he worked for some 18 years in manual labor until he was 30, and spent only three years in “spiritual ministry.” That is a ratio of 6:1. But even in heaven Jesus is back in the construction business, as he said he was going there to prepare a home for us (John 14:2-3).

**Redeem your Time**

Now, it is true that our labor has been cursed since the fall of man. In today’s world, work has become an unpleasant necessity in order to provide for our families. Our work often seems unfulfilling and the fruits do not always match our efforts. But in the word of God we find a way to redeem and give meaning to our daily work.

The Apostle Paul makes an amazing statement to the believing slaves in Ephesus. Slaves often had little say in their type of work, and their heavy labors left little time to ponder God’s will for their lives. Yet Paul writes to them:

“Bondservants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, with goodwill doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men, knowing that whatever good anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord, whether he is a slave or free” (Ephesians 6:5–8).

Paul said it is not so much the type of work you do but your attitude that counts. These words elevated those at the bottom of society.

**No matter what work we do, we can use it to glorify God.**

You might serve the harshest master but if your work is done “as to Christ,” your work place is transformed into a sanctuary. You no longer serve a despotic ruler but you become “bondservants of Christ doing the will of God.”

Similarly, Paul writes to the church in Corinth: “... whatever you do, do all to the glory of God” (1 Corinthians 10:31). No matter what work we do, we can use it to glorify God. By working with such an attitude, we attract the blessing of God upon our work. Whether you hammer nails as a carpenter, write letters as a secretary, program computer files, teach children in school, or sweep the floors of a hospital – if you do your best as if to God, your work place becomes a sanctuary of worship.

Actually, this notion was a key part of the Reformation and became known as the “Protestant work ethic.” The philosopher Max Weber credits the advances of Western societies to this biblical, pietistic attitude.

I want to encourage you this Pentecost to invite the Holy Spirit afresh into your life. Ask God to fill your life’s daily pursuits with His Spirit as with Bezalel some 3500 years ago. This means that our worship will be for more than just two hours a week in the Sunday service, but will last 24/7.

With this biblical attitude, we can redeem our time, labors, and every segment of our lives. God will then prosper the work of our hands.

In my own work, whether as a scientist or here at the Christian Embassy, I have experienced God’s Spirit giving me wisdom and direction. I have equally felt His guidance when I used a nanosecond laser in the laboratory as when writing teachings like this.

No matter what our work is, God is looking on it and more importantly on our hearts. We should welcome His Spirit and anointing when we operate a lathing unit as much as when we invite His presence into our prayer meetings.

This, of course, does not preclude that He might call us into full-time ministry within the Church. It is the apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers who are given to God’s people as gifts to equip us to meet life’s daily challenges (Ephesians 4:11f). But in that sense everyone of us - whether a homemaker and mother, a gardener, or an accountant - we all become “full time ministers” if all our work is unto Him.

I pray that this Pentecost, the Spirit of God will come “in wisdom, in understanding, in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship” to anoint you afresh so that you can become a powerful testimony for Christ wherever He has placed you.
Many today look around at the rising threat of radical Islam and the weak Western response and wonder if we are repeating the costly mistakes of a bygone era.

No doubt we live in perilous times. The clever mass murderers of al-Qaeda have now morphed into the sadistic executioners of Islamic State. Iran is exporting its own fierce brand of Islamic militancy, destabilizing and devouring nations across the Middle East, while building a renegade nuclear weapons program to further its expansionist agenda. Each of these radical Islamist movements see themselves as the vanguard of that final jihadist surge which will ultimately destroy Israel, spread throughout the world, and subjugate humanity to a foretold “golden age” of Islamic rule. Meanwhile, many Western leaders are pressuring the small democratic nation of Israel to sacrifice the heart of its ancient homeland to secure an illusionary peace, and pacify these ravenous beasts.

So is it really 1938 again? Are we seeing an appeasement of great evil like Neville Chamberlain did in Munich?

The comparison is not without its merits. In September 1938, the British prime minister was negotiating with Adolf Hitler in hopes of stemming the threat of Nazism and buying “Peace for our Time!” The price was a strip of land along Germany’s border with the small democratic Czech Republic. In Prague, an emergency session of the Czech cabinet sat helplessly for hours awaiting word from Munich, with absolutely no say in their own nation’s fate. In the end Hitler’s appetite for conquest was whetted, not abated. And Chamberlain’s diplomatic mission became an infamous symbol of failed statesmanship.

But lest we pan the British premier too much, we should recall that this was an entire era of failed statesmanship, as Western leaders made decision after decision which signaled to the Nazis that the resistance against them was feeble.

Just two months before Munich, representatives from 32 nations gathered at the Evian conference to consider taking in more endangered Jews from Germany. Hitler openly mocked the gathering’s “deep sympathy for these criminals.” Yet the Dominican Republic stood alone as the only country present that was willing to accept a large number of Jewish refugees. Nazi observers at the conference reported back to Hitler: “You can do what you like with the Jews, nobody is interested in them.”

The next summer saw the tragic voyage of the St. Louis, a ship packed with 900 German Jewish children who could see the lights of Miami off the bow before being turned away by the Roosevelt administration, only to be returned to the sinking continent of Europe.

That same year of 1939, Britain issued the shameful White Paper strictly limiting the number of Jewish refugees who could enter mandatory Palestine – a decision that consigned millions of Jews to the Nazi gas chambers.

Then there was that one dark night in November 1938, when the world stood by as the Nazis arrested over 30,000 Jews
and burned more than one thousand synagogues on Kristallnacht. By morning the Sudetenland – surrendered to Hitler at Munich just five weeks earlier – had become the first territory in the Nazi grasp to be made judenrein. The Holocaust had begun!

So it was an entire era of failed statesmanship, not just by one but by many world leaders, who misjudged character and misread intentions with catastrophic results. And the reason this collective failure befell the community of nations is because it was an era of great seductions and deceptions on a global scale. Like a two-edged sword, men were fooled by others, but they also fooled themselves.

The German people were seduced by a mesmerizing figure who promised to restore Germany’s tattered fortunes, but instead brought the nation to ruin.

Chamberlain seduced himself into thinking Munich was about one small strip of border land, when in fact the whole expanse of Europe was at stake.

At Evian, an American president coolly calculated that 30,000 Jewish immigrants per year was enough, completely oblivious that 55 million souls of all races and creeds would soon perish in the ensuing deluge of war.

An entire world seduced itself into believing that Hitler was merely venting in Mein Kampf, when in fact he meant every word.

All these missteps helped trigger an unprecedented global conflict which ended seven years later with the unimaginable sight of mushroom clouds rising over incinerated Japanese cities.

So we have to be grateful for a leader of sober thinking and steel resolve like Winston Churchill, who rose up just in time to begin confronting the Nazi threat for what it truly was; shudder the thought that Hitler had gotten to the Bomb first.

Such alert, tenacious statesmanship is sorely needed again today, as the seductions in operation in our time are even more sinister and deceptive. Indeed, the Bible clearly warns of seducing spirits in the last days, such as Paul’s admonition: “But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come... evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived” (2 Timothy 3:1, 13).

And in a nuclear age, the margin of error for misjudging character and misreading intentions is dreadfully more razor thin.

One powerful deception today sees Israel’s surrender of the West Bank as a small sacrifice for the sake of peace in our time, when in fact it would only whet the appetite of global jihad.

Another reason is that mankind has not used atomic weapons against each other for the last 70 years now, enticing us to let down our guard. The film footage from Hiroshima and Nagasaki, along with all those nuclear tests on Bikini Atoll are so old and grainy, they date back to well before the digital age. Likewise, the “experts” lull us to sleep by explaining that Iran – as with North Korea – launched its nuclear program merely as a guarantee against regime change, when its’ true purpose is a frightening instrument of Islamic conquest.

All the while the P5+1 nations are quibbling with Tehran over the inspection of centrifuges, when their real burden should be for preventing the incineration of cities.

And like before, world leaders insist the Ayatollahs are only venting when they cry, “Death to Israel! Death to America!” When in fact they mean every word! 😞
TELL THE PRESIDENT AND CONGRESS: "NOT ONE BOMB FOR IRAN"

The greatest threat facing both Israel and America today is Iran’s radical regime that repeatedly and publicly vows to “wipe Israel off the map” and then attack America. Now, this terrorist state is only a few short steps away from achieving its dream of possessing nuclear weapons.

Time is short and we must tell President Obama and Congress “Not One Bomb for Iran.” We have only a few short weeks to prevent our government from making a disastrous mistake. Join us as we take a stand for the safety of America and Israel.

SIGN OUR PETITION TODAY to send a clear message that a bad deal on Iran’s nuclear program would gravely endanger America and Israel. The following petition, addressed to President Obama, will also be sent to the Congressional leaders of both parties:

SIGN THIS PETITION:

Dear President Obama:

We the people of the United States of America are deeply concerned about the impending threat a nuclear capable Iran poses for both Israel and the United States. We believe that America and its allies must demand that Iran fully dismantle its nuclear program. We do not believe Iran can be trusted to simply keep its word. Consequently, we believe any agreement between the United States and Iran must conform to the following two standards:

1. Any agreement the Administration signs with Iran must completely dismantle the regime’s ability to build a nuclear bomb.

2. Congress must ratify any agreement proposed by the Administration with regard to Iran’s nuclear program.

As the people of the United States we must settle for nothing less.

Sincerely,

To Sign This Petition please go online to www.notonebombforiran.net. If you do not have internet please sign this page and return in the enclosed envelope or mail to: ICEJ USA, PO Box 332974, Murfreesboro, TN 37133-2974
With the world now marking 70 years since the end of World War Two in Europe, the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem and Yad Vashem hosted a group of 25 Christian pastors and ministry leaders from around the world in April, for a special week-long seminar on the Holocaust and combating anti-Semitism today.

Organized by Christian Friends of Yad Vashem in cooperation with the International School for Holocaust Studies, the conference was timed to coincide with Yom HaShoah – Israel’s annual Holocaust Remembrance Day – so participants could attend the official state ceremonies at Yad Vashem.

The conference also featured lectures by Holocaust scholars, moving encounters with survivors, and visits to biblical and historic sites in Israel. Participants were able to broaden their knowledge on the Nazi genocide, as well as the tragic legacy of Christian anti-Semitism.

Rev. Debbie Slayton, Assistant Director of the Calvary Pentecostal Camp in Ashland, Virginia; has been to Israel over 30 times, including many visits to Yad Vashem, but this time was very different.

“I knew there was a Holocaust, but this has put a face to it,” said Debbie. “It’s not just a group of people who became statistics, but these were individuals who had lives and who suffered so greatly, sometimes our minds just can’t fathom it.”

“It’s pretty scary and very sad to learn more about the Christian role in the Nazi genocide. All of the courses have been very enlightening to me.”

Rev. John Hessler, senior pastor of a Calvary Chapel fellowship in Philadelphia, said he grew up around American Jews and always loved history, but he never really made the connection between the Holocaust and some of the Jewish families he knew.

“I now have a much greater sensitivity to the roots of anti-Semitism,” he explained. “I think it’s essential that we never forget. There’s hatred and prejudice towards others all over the world, but as Christians we need to be especially sensitive to the hatred of Jews. Thanks to this seminar, I’ll be better equipped to deal with this in my ministry and my community.”

Timothy Rabinek from Warsaw, who represents a pro-Israel ministry in Eastern Europe, noted that, “The history of the Holocaust is the history of my own country. Over three million Polish Jews were murdered by the Nazis.”

“I have been to Yad Vashem several times before, but to actually hear from professional teachers about the Holocaust is unforgettable,” said Timothy. “For me, the most incredible thing is to be in this place and to be taught the idea that ‘Israel is alive!’ In Poland, we have the death camps and that’s about it. Most of Jewish life has left Poland. But here there are Jews everywhere.”

“I am still young, and to meet Holocaust survivors and to learn about my nation’s past, this is something I will cherish and use all my life,” he added. “In Poland, it is popular to like the Jews today. But there is also a rejection of the historic reality that many Poles were involved in killing Jews back then. We need to face up to that.”

Please support the vital work of Christian Friends of Yad Vashem.

MAKE YOUR DONATION TODAY AT: http://www.icejusa.org/yadvashem
SEVENTY YEARS HAVE PASSED...
REFLECTING ON 1945 FROM THE VANTAGE POINT OF 2015

BY DR. SUSANNA KOKKONEN, DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN FRIENDS OF YAD VASHEM

“I visited every nook and cranny... [I felt it my duty] to be in a position from then on to testify about these things in case there ever grew up at home the belief... that the stories of Nazi brutality were just propaganda.”

- US General Dwight D. Eisenhower, upon visiting the Buchenwald concentration camp in April 1945.

The year 2015 is a special time of commemoration. On January 27 we recalled the liberation of the Auschwitz-Birkenau death camp, and in May we will commemorate the liberation of Europe, and indeed the world, from the Nazi war criminals.
May 1945 is forever etched in our minds as a time of great victory. But it was also a victory which, with finality, opened the gates of the Nazi concentration camps and extermination sites. A shocked world witnessed the horrors that had been perpetrated against the Jewish people.

Following these horrors, in the immediate post-war period, it was understood that anti-Semitism had led to this immense tragedy. As a logical consequence of this understanding, anti-Semitism became a taboo, something you would not openly confess to harboring. It is therefore puzzling that today, 70 years later, anti-Semitism is clearly visible in the very nations that fought against it in 1945.

As an Israeli newscaster recently said, if the Holocaust was a vaccination against anti-Semitism, the vaccination is no longer strong enough. When seeing these developments, serious concerns arise over the insecurity of Jewish communities in nations around the world. There is, however, also a larger question of history and memory: Is it true that history repeats itself because we choose to forget? In this particular context, the very essence of human life is at stake because we either ignore or remember the ultimate evil – the Holocaust and genocide.

Following the mass destruction of World War II, the new United Nations arrived at a definition of genocide published in 1948, which in many ways derived straight from the Holocaust. The Shoah, in its vastness had just occurred – an extreme case of genocide with the intention of murdering the entire Jewish population of Europe.

The UN declared: “Genocide is a denial of the right of existence of entire human groups, as homicide is the denial of the right to live of individual human beings; such denial of the right of existence shocks the conscience of mankind... and is contrary to moral law and to the spirit and aims of the United Nations.”

This statement defines the act of genocide but the act is only one part of it. Genocide is defined more specifically as the intent to annihilate a group based on their religion, race, national, or ethnic identity. The definition goes further in stating that the intent to destroy the ability of a group to exist, or destroying their political and cultural leadership, or their culture is the equivalent of genocide. Genocide is defined as a crime against humanity and thus it is contrary not only to the “spirit of the United Nations,” but to the human spirit of which we all are a part. Naturally to a Christian such a crime, clearly preceded by contempt for human life, is unthinkable.

Genocide, the carrying out of a deliberate campaign of mass murder, raises many difficult moral questions. Some of these questions will remain forever without answers. The murder of six million Jewish people is too large to comprehend but so are other post-Holocaust mass murders.

In the Nuremberg war crimes trials, the defendants were found guilty as follows: “They (the defendants) conducted deliberate and systematic genocide – viz., the extermination of racial and national groups – against the civilian populations of certain occupied territories in order to destroy particular races and classes of people, and national, racial or religious groups, particularly Jews, Poles, Gypsies and others.”

It is the intent, the deliberate character and the targeting of a specific group that sets genocide apart from other crimes.

It is assumed that learning about the Holocaust will help sensitize us to discrimination and hatred against targeted groups in our own time. The question is if we have indeed identified the issues we need to face? Do we face them as a community, or as individuals? Let us consider the Holocaust and the extremely small number of Christian communities which acted as such against the Nazi persecution of Jews. Most of the rescuers of Jews were individuals. How effective is an individual response vis-à-vis genocidal ideologies? Our helplessness is evident in our individualized ineffective response to persecution and genocidal campaigns even now. We are not speaking up, but rather are behaving like silent bystanders – just as the large majority of people did at the time of the Holocaust.

Looking around us, it is clear that anti-Semitism is rising again at an alarming rate and at the same time, as Christians we see our brethren persecuted in many places, most notably in the Middle East. While all of this is going on, many of us may feel that it is simply overwhelming.

It is easier to be silent than to confront these issues. The problem is that silence is a choice. One of the clear universal lessons of the Holocaust is that silence will always help the perpetrator but never the victim of persecution. If this is true, then by being silent we are choosing to help the perpetrator. Clearly, that is not what we should be doing.

Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Memorial and Education Center in Jerusalem, has been engaged in Holocaust education for decades. While we do not seek to tell each visitor what they need to think, the lessons that arise from the Holocaust speak for themselves.

Since 2010, the Christian Desk at Yad Vashem has been offering Holocaust education specifically to pastors and Christian leaders. They become educational multipliers and ambassadors for the Holocaust and its universal lessons. We realize that we cannot go everywhere in person, so we need partners and friends to spread the message all over the world.

I would like to invite you to help us educate for the future. Remembrance is essential to God, and we need to combat the rising tide of evil, which goes against history and memory – even as Gen. Eisenhower predicted.
Over the course of last summer’s conflict with Hamas in Gaza, residents of southern Israel not only suffered through 54 days of incessant rocket barrages, but they also were confronted by a whole new type of threat dreamed up by their enemies – the “terror tunnel.”

During Operation Protective Edge, Israeli forces uncovered a vast maze of tunnels running under the Gaza border, with more than a dozen tunnels extending up to a mile or more into Israeli territory. Some had openings that came out right in the middle of Israeli communities in the western Negev. And plans were captured which indicated the tunnels were to be used to launch terror attacks on civilians during a major Jewish holiday.

This new reality has been a shock to those living in the Sha’ar HaNegev region. Many now are coping with the fear every day and every night that a terror tunnel is located directly underneath their home. It has been a source of great anxiety and stress not only for children in the area, but also many parents. The ones who need to be strong for their children are themselves experiencing panic.

As a result, there has been a dramatic rise in the number of families in the Negev seeking therapy treatments for anxiety and emotional distress – for both the children and the parents.

The ICEJ was one of the first charitable organizations to respond and offer help for this new source of trauma affecting those living close to the Gaza Strip. Just ask Varda Goldstein of the Resilience Center in Sha’ar HaNegev, which offers trauma therapy to affected residents.

“The phone call that we received from you in the first days of Operation Protective Edge was very moving and gave us the feeling that we are not alone,” she said recently, noting that the offer of help came even while the conflict was still raging.

“The ICEJ is sponsoring treatments for individuals, families, and communities to help ease their fears whenever a crisis arises.

ICEJ supporters in New Zealand and Canada were especially responsive to this need and donated funds to cover the costs for trauma treatments. The therapeutic teams being sponsored by the Christian Embassy are made up of clinical psychologists, social workers and art therapists, who are all qualified and experienced in trauma and post-trauma therapy.

“No one knows how this will really end,” added Goldstein. “We truly hope that the quiet will continue even as we organize ourselves for other possibilities. The knowledge that we are important to you strengthens us and gives us great hope for better days ahead.”

Please consider making a contribution to ICEJ AID today, as we continue to reach out to the Israeli people at their point of need!

SO GIVE ON-LINE TODAY AT: www.icejusa.org/aid/icej-aid
During last summer’s conflict between Israel and Hamas in Gaza, the ICEJ raised emergency funds from Christians around the world to provide nine portable bomb shelters for communities in the western Negev that are under constant threat from Kassam rocket strikes.

Currently, the situation in Israel is calm but there is always an underlying tension. Hamas is being quickly rearmed by Iran and has openly called on Hizbullah in Lebanon to join them in the next rocket war against Israel. Meanwhile, many Israeli families are still struggling with the traumas caused by four such rocket wars over the past nine years. And along the borders with Gaza and Lebanon, many residents live in daily fear of the terror tunnels being dug underneath their very homes.

In response, the ICEJ continues to provide mobile bomb shelters to communities in the most impacted areas. This includes five new shelters delivered so far in 2015, bringing to nearly 50 the total number of mobile bomb shelters we have delivered to vulnerable communities throughout Israel over the past decade.

When Kibbutz Sa’ad suffered a direct hit from a rocket strike last year, it left the local residents in shock. The entire school on the kibbutz is fortified, but the surrounding area had no shelters for children who happened to be outside the school compound. This includes the school’s petting zoo, which has become a very important place for children on the kibbutz.

Many of the local children have been deeply impacted over the years by the numerous rocket barrages and constant terror threat on Kibbutz Sa’ad. So their concerned parents looked for a way to help them overcome the trauma and one of the best remedies has been animal therapy. Thus, opening a petting zoo beside the school has proven to be an invaluable addition to the community. Yet, until recently this therapy center risked being shut down because it did not have enough shelters. In fact, two boys playing in the petting zoo barely escaped harm when a rocket landed nearby last summer. Now, thanks to a bomb shelter
provided by the ICEJ, every corner of the large petting zoo and therapy center is covered by bomb shelters, making it a much safer place for the children.

In nearby Kfar Aza, which borders the Gaza Strip, local residents only have a matter of seconds to find shelter when the “Code Red” alarm sounds. So, the security needs there are even greater than most places in Israel. Even though every bus stop has been turned into a reinforced shelter, and every home is required to have a built-in safe room, the residents have still sought more protective measures for their families. That is how the idea was born to equip the community center with a new 50-ton bomb shelter capable of holding dozens of people. Donated by the Christian Embassy, the large shelter means that families in Kfar Aza can relax and enjoy their social activities more.

The ICEJ also delivered a portable bomb shelter recently to the community of Eshkol, placing it right outside the municipality offices where many people come every day to do business. Chaim Yelin, head of the Eshkol Regional Council, thanked the ICEJ in a letter for being such a great source of encouragement to Israelis living in the vulnerable southern part of the country.

“There is no doubt that we have once again learned and understood that in difficult times and in times of need we are surrounded with friends,” wrote Yelin. He added that the ICEJ was always ready to help without any hesitation and without expecting anything in return.

Your donation now to ICEJ AID can help us respond quickly in the next emergency situation in Israel, whether with more bomb shelters or other urgent relief efforts as the needs arise. Give today to our ISRAEL IN CRISIS fund so that we can be prepared for whatever this nation may face.

MAKE YOUR DONATION ON-LINE TODAY AT: www.icejusa.org/aid/icej-aid
The International Christian Embassy Jerusalem is currently funding several social projects in Israel to alleviate hunger and poverty, such as our food delivery van and grocery vouchers for poor families during Passover.

This spring the ICEJ reached hundreds of needy families with our Passover gift baskets. The ICEJ AID team personally visited families and communities in the Jerusalem area, as well as the cities of Netanya, Beit Shean, Ashdod, and Kiryat Gat, to deliver the Passover packages and our warmest holiday greetings.

One of the distributions was to Gilo, a neighborhood in southern Jerusalem overlooking Bethlehem where 37,000 people now live, including approximately 1,000 families who are registered with the state welfare department as being in need of help. We were warmly welcomed by a social worker at the Gilo community center, and there were already people waiting in line for us as we brought holiday blessings on behalf of our Christian supporters. The package of Passover essentials included; among other things, a large box of matza (unleavened bread), grape juice, a Haggadah book, and coupons for groceries.

The families we assisted were thrilled with the beautiful holiday packages, which had been carefully packed and wrapped by the ICEJ staff. Many said it helped make them feel respected and dignified.

In Kiryat Gat, the ICEJ delegation was welcomed once again this year to a little pre-Passover ceremony organized by the local Ethiopian Jewish community. The older men recited traditional blessings and later, Yudit Setz of ICEJ AID, was asked to share a few words with the community. So it was a great joy for us as Christians to be a part of this important Jewish holiday once more here in the land of Israel!

Thank you for your faithful contributions to our annual Passover distribution project, and our many other initiatives to help fight poverty and hunger in Israel. Please support our efforts to feed and assist needy families beyond the holidays! Your gift can make a huge difference in someone’s life today!

GIVE ON-LINE TODAY AT: www.icejusa.org/relief-work
The prophet Isaiah promises a time when all the nations will be coming up to Jerusalem to learn the ways of the Lord (Isaiah 2:1-4). While waiting for the complete and final fulfillment of this great vision, we at the Christian Embassy are going forth from Jerusalem to the nations in hopes of reaching that glorious day. Recently, I traveled to Poland and then Argentina on ministry trips aimed at sharing God’s great plans for Israel, and through her to all the rest of the world.

Teaching Ministry in Poland
At the end of March, I departed Jerusalem on a speaking tour with my wife Kati which took us to the southern part of Poland. Here, in the midst of beautiful mountains and ski resorts, our hosts Henryk and Alina Wieja from Life and Mission Ministry had organized a conference in the city of Wisła under the theme “Israel and the Church – A Shared Destiny!”

Two hundred participants came together representing different denominations and ministries, including many church leaders, in order to gain a deeper understanding of God’s amazing plan of salvation and His enduring covenant promises to Abraham and his natural descendants. God’s purposes, revealed in the Old and the New Testament, are coherent and very precise in tying together the paths of Israel and the Church.

The opening address by Henryk Wieja introduced the foundational value of reconciliation between Jews and Christians, especially in the context of Jewish life on Polish soil for the past millennium.

The conference attendees then listened intently to my teachings on the relationship between Israel and the Church in the nations. I spoke of how God not only sees individuals, families and cities, but also nations as an entity.

All the nations are included in God’s salvation plan and followers of Jesus are to be found today in all continents; but the nations will also be judged according to God’s standards of righteousness and sin.

Israel, on the other hand, has been carried back to their ancient homeland by God’s everlasting arms after two thousand years of exile, and will eventually be spiritually restored and saved as a nation. This will usher in the second coming of the Lord Jesus, who will then sit on the throne of His glory to judge between the “sheep and the goat nations.”

One of the main measuring sticks in this judgment will be how the nations have related...
Juha Ketola delivers a gift box of fresh Israeli dates to new ICEJ-Argentina National Directors, Hernan and Claudia Acosta in Buenos Aires.

Juha Ketola speaking at the Life and Mission Church pastored by Henryk and Alina Wieja.

The conference in Wisla, Poland on “Israel and the Church – A Shared Destiny!”

to the city of Jerusalem, the physical land of Israel, and the Jewish people (Zechariah 12; Joel 3; Matthew 25).

The attendees of the conference were encouraged to ask God some important questions about their own lives: “God, what is it that you are doing today? How can I be a part of that? Open my eyes, so I can understand.”

The ICEJ is thrilled with the opening which this conference provided for our ministry in Poland.

New Branch in Argentina

In early April, I flew to Buenos Aires to inaugurate our latest national branch of ICEJ-Argentina. This took place during a prophetic conference called “Transformation,” which was hosted by Hernan and Claudia Acosta in Moreno, near Buenos Aires.

Hernan Acosta has a strong apostolic and prophetic ministry, and leads and disciples a large group of pastors and ministers mainly in Argentina, but also in neighboring Uruguay. On the last day of this wonderful and powerful conference, we held the inaugural ceremony to set apart Hernan and his wife for service as the national directors of ICEJ-Argentina.

With much joy and honor, he was recognized before the Lord and the people, and all of the conference delegates (about 800 people in total) rejoiced greatly for this new connection between Israel and Argentina.

One of the most inspiring aspects of this gathering to see and experience was the enormous and unquenchable hunger and thirst among the Argentinian believers for the Lord and His Spirit. Meetings from morning until midnight every day were not enough for them – the people still wanted more as they lingered in His presence at the end of each night!

I had the privilege to preach a series of messages at the conference on God’s salvation plan for the whole world through Israel, the Abrahamic covenant, and God’s promise to restore all things. I ministered together with very influential leaders and ministers, such as Apostle Dr. Efrain Avelar from Guatemala; Pastor Marco Barrientos from Dallas, Texas; and Dionny Baez from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Dionny Baez carries an exceptionally strong prophetic anointing, and also a lot of healings and other miracles occurred while he was ministering!

During my trip to Argentina, I also met with Dr. Christian Hooft, Vice President of ACIERA, a large alliance of Evangelical churches in Argentina; as well as the National Council of Pastors, who represent 15,000 Churches from different denominations in Argentina. Again, the ministry and vision of the ICEJ was well received by these greatly respected church leaders.
**ENGAGING CHRISTIAN BUSINESS EXECUTIVES**

On March 25th the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem, in partnership with the CEO Forum and the Ambassador of Israel to the United States, H.E. Ron Dermer, hosted a meeting of top Christian Business Execs at the Embassy of Israel. CEOs from companies including Popeye’s Louisiana Kitchen, Tysons, organicgirl, MiTek and others heard presentations about doing business in and with Israel followed by dinner with the Ambassador. This new initiative of the ICEJ seeks to build a network of Christian business executives and connect them to Israeli companies, products and innovation. The response of many of the Executives was that they left the meeting more understanding of Israel and desiring to engage Israel in the course of their business when possible.

**UNITING CHRISTIAN LEADERS FOR ISRAEL**

Another unique and critical initiative of the US Branch of the ICEJ is the building of a network of Christian organizational and church leaders in support of Israel. The American Christian Leader for Israel network allows Christian leaders to unite their voices for greater impact for Israel. The first statement by the ACLI was a letter to the President against a nuclear Iran which was signed by some 100 leaders and delivered to the White House and Congressional leaders on March 26th. The activities of the network will continue to add leaders on to this and other statements, gradually growing to a network of hundreds if not thousands of leaders and pastors.

**STANDING FOR A UNITED JERUSALEM**

The US Branch of the ICEJ is partnering with the Israel Allies Foundation at events around the country in support of a united Jerusalem. ICEJ speakers are participating at many of the events and participants are given the opportunity sign up for the ICEJ mailing list. At a time when Israel’s right to build apartments in East Jerusalem is questioned, this significant grassroots program is mobilizing Christians in support of Jerusalem being the undivided, eternal capital of the State of Israel.

**ICEJ SPEAKERS TEACHING BIBLICAL TRUTH**

The ICEJ team has been crisscrossing the USA speaking and teaching in churches and conferences. Half-day seminars have been presented in Florida and California, Jerusalem Call events in Florida and Ohio, and other meetings in Texas, Nebraska, and Washington, DC.

**UPCOMING SUMMER CONFERENCE**

Plan to join the ICEJ at the Israel: Hope in Crisis conference June 5-6 in Murfreesboro, TN. Speakers will include the Israel Consul General from New York, Ambassador Ido Aharoni; the ICEJ’s Executive Director from Jerusalem, Dr. Jürgen Bühler; Rev. Malcolm Hedding, Pastor Allen Jackson, and others, including Ray Ramirez, the Feast of Tabernacles Music Director bringing worship from Jerusalem. For more information and to register go to www.icejusa.org/icej-conferences or call 615-895-9830.
JOIN THOUSANDS IN JERUSALEM FOR THE ICEJ’S FEAST OF TABERNACLES!

This fall, you can be part of the fulfillment of prophecy, journey to the land in which Scripture was written and join thousands of fellow worshippers seeking God at the 2015 International Christian Embassy Jerusalem’s Feast of Tabernacles Celebration.

This unforgettable time of celebration, teaching and pilgrimage declares to the nations that we stand with Israel and recognize God’s prophetic purpose for Jerusalem (Zechariah 14:16). Contact Inspiration Cruises & Tours today to join us in the City of God. We promise the travel experience of a lifetime!

BOOK THE TOUR ONLINE: ICEJFEAST.COM
OR FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL: 844.294.3833
Inside the innovative Friends of Zion museum

In April a new museum opened in Jerusalem dedicated to honoring some of Israel's greatest Christian friends in recent centuries. The Friends of Zion Heritage Center is home to a state-of-the-art multimedia exhibit which pays tribute to those Christians who made major contributions to the modern-day restoration of the Jewish state.

The interactive displays tell the story of the many Christians who supported the Zionist movement, from prominent political figures to courageous military commanders, from impassioned preachers to those humble Christians who rescued Jews in the Holocaust. Many were respected leaders of their day, while others were unheralded heroes forgotten by history - until now.

"The idea for this museum begins with Corrie ten Boom," said its founder, Dr. Michael D. Evans, a best-selling author and head of the Jerusalem Prayer Team. "When I first met her in 1972, she told me her dream was that her family's home in Haarlem [in Holland] would be opened as a testimony of God's love. And it was!"

Evans explained that after Corrie passed away, he purchased her family's house and watch shop, and has kept them open as a museum which receives 600,000 visitors per year. He has since met many of the 800 Jews who were hidden there by the ten Boom family during the Holocaust and survived, and their stories were very touching. "The ten Booms died so I could live," one Jewish lady told him.

"So I decided to bring Corrie to Jerusalem," Evans continued. "Many Israelis do not know her amazing story. They know about Anne Frank from Holland, but not the ten Booms. And even the younger Christian generations do not know about her."

"As I prayed about how to bring her story to Jerusalem, I finally realized there were many stories of Christian rescuers during the Holocaust. And as I researched this, I found there were people from Japan, from across Europe, from South America, and from all over the world with stories just as amazing as Corrie ten Boom's."

This led to a broadening of the museum's scope to include stories of Christians from recent generations who made significant contributions to Israel's re-birth.

"I wanted a place where Christians could celebrate their heroes and their history, and for Israelis to learn about it too," said Evans.

To do this, he hired some of Israel's top hi-tech wizards in animation and videography, to create a lively, colorful, and innovative audio-visual experience. They have incorporated...
new techniques in roto-scoping and video-mapping that are unique not only to Israel, but also globally.

The tour begins with the biblical promises to Abraham in Genesis 12, and an introduction by former Israeli president Shimon Peres, who recently signed on as international chairman of the museum board.

“Shimon Peres wanted to be a part of this effort because he knows the key role which Christians played in the founding of Israel, that it would not have happened without them,” according to Evans. “And he likes the idea of a ‘Friends of Zion’ Heritage Center.” And he just wrote to me that: “It takes a lot more energy to make enemies than friends, and I want to be a part of this.”

In this new role, Peres recently traveled to Texas to present former US president George W. Bush with the museum’s first annual Friends of Zion Award, for his behind-the-scenes assistance in Israel’s bombing of the Syrian nuclear reactor in 2007.

Evans offered that he considers Bush, as an Evangelical who stood firmly with Israel, to be a Christian Zionist hero along with many of those featured in the museum. This would include displays paying tribute to President Harry S. Truman, Rev. William Hechler, Rev. William Blackstone, Lords Shaftesbury and Balfour, and Maj. Gen. Orde Charles Wingate, among many, many more. There is even a feature on a Prof. George Bush of New York University, a distant relative of the Bush family, who wrote a book in the 1840s predicting the literal return of the Jews to their homeland.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu also gives a presentation on how his own father was befriended by Lt. Col. John Henry Patterson, British commander of the Zion Mule Corps during World War One - the first organized Jewish fighting force in nearly 2000 years.

The standard one-hour tour takes one through a timeline of Israel’s ancient and modern history, and focuses on telling the stories of key non-Jewish friends and their invaluable contributions in protecting the Jewish people and re-establishing the nation of Israel.

Evans is pleased with the early results, especially from the hundreds of Israelis who have already visited the museum. With luminaries like Shimon Peres and Benjamin Netanyahu on board, he is hoping that groups of Israeli school children and IDF soldiers will soon be packing the museum to learn more about their nation’s genuine Christian friends - including the amazing story of Corrie Ten Boom.

TO ARRANGE A TOUR OF
THE MUSEUM, WRITE TO:
info@fozhc.com
Exodus 17 tells how Amalekites, descendants of Esau’s grandson, attacked the children of Israel in the desert of Sinai during their exodus from Egypt. This unprovoked attack was especially serious and the Israelites battled all day, only achieving victory at nightfall.

In response to this demonstration of cruelty, the Lord told Moses that he would blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven. Moses later recounted: “the Lord will have war with Amalek from generation to generation” (Exodus 17:16). Amalek’s attack on the children of Israel was now a perpetual war between him and the God of Israel.

Amalek was not just a foe, but a genocidal one, so in Jewish tradition the Amalekites came to represent the archetypal enemy of the Jews present in generation after generation. It is interesting to note that some one thousand years later, in the book of Esther, the arch villain Haman was an Amalekite who led the plot to kill the Jews.

The Longest Hatred
This evil pursuit of the Jewish people has continued for millennia, which is why historian Robert Wistrich calls anti-Semitism “the longest hatred.” Every time this genocidal hatred seems to be dying out it reinvents itself with a different look and a different name. But the goal is always the same: to rid the world of the Jewish people.

In the ancient world, classical anti-Semitism was a clash between pagan rulers, who demanded obedient homage, and their Jewish subjects, who would only worship and obey the God of Israel. The Jewish people could not bow down to earthly leaders, and were bound by the Sinaitic Law to certain behaviors and observances that set them apart and incurred the wrath of their rulers.

Religious anti-Semitism
After the rise of Christianity the problem did not go away. It is a travesty that anti-Semitism was then found in the heart of Christian Europe. Indeed, in the annals of those who persecuted and hated the Jewish people are professing Christians. Space does not permit a full treatment of this sad story, but centuries of state and church-backed denigration, persecution, forced conversions, and expulsions actually paved the way for the Holocaust.

Proof of this is found in the fact that Martin Luther’s anti-Semitic writings were published and distributed by the Nazis in order to justify their anti-Jewish laws and eventually their extermination
program. Hitler admitted as much when he told two Catholic Bishops who questioned his policy that “he was only putting into effect what Christianity had preached and practiced for 2000 years.”

Racial anti-Semitism
The form of anti-Semitism found in Nazi ideology was not based on religion, however, but on racial theories about the superiority of the Aryan race. Whereas Christianity had sought the conversion of the Jews, and state leaders had sought their expulsion, the Nazis sought the “final solution to the Jewish question,” the murder of all Jews and their eradication from the human race. The good news is that these older forms of anti-Semitism are socially unacceptable in the 21st century. Religious bigotry and racism are frowned upon and are antithetical to the prevailing ideologies of globalism and secularism.

Political anti-Semitism
The bad news is that Israel, a Jewish nation-state, is also antithetical to both globalism and secularism. Therefore, the modern form of anti-Semitism that has found a stronghold and large-scale acceptance today is political. It is against the Jewish state and is called anti-Zionism.

There is still religious anti-Semitism, but this time it is found throughout the Muslim world and is responsible for the genocidal rhetoric emanating from Iran. Muslim anti-Semitism, however, is tolerated by anti-Zionist Western leaders who blame it on Israeli policies.

Not all criticism of Israel can be considered anti-Semitic. However, criticism of Israel becomes anti-Semitic when it delegitimizes the state and questions its right to exist, when it uses anti-Jewish rhetoric and stereotypes or compares Israelis to Nazis, when it judges Israel by a different standard than for any other nation, and when it becomes an excuse to attack local Jewish individuals and institutions.

During the 2014 war in Gaza, a defensive war on Israel’s part to prevent further missile launches from Hamas, there were attacks on synagogues and Jewish citizens in France, refrains such as “Jews to the Gas” in Germany, the use of swastikas at anti-Israel demonstrations, and anti-Semitic caricatures in newspapers and social media.

While America is a safe-haven today for Jews fleeing Europe, low levels of anti-Semitism here should not be taken for granted. As American Christians, we should take every opportunity to stand in solidarity with the Jewish community, attending their Holocaust remembrance events, and teaching our children to recognize anti-Semitism and take a stand against it.

This generation’s battle is not so much with the Amalek of old, and its pagan, Christian or racial anti-Semitism, but with the Amalek of today—the rabid anti-Israel movement that demonizes the Jewish people and nation while excusing Muslim anti-Semitism. This one is on our watch, and it is our responsibility to stand against it.

Susan Michael is the US Director for the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem www.icejusa.org and creator of IsraelAnswers.com. The ICEJ is bringing Holocaust education to Christians worldwide through its partnership with Yad Vashem, Israel’s Holocaust Memorial.
INVITED SPEAKERS
Amb. Ido Aharoni, Consul General of Israel
ICEJ Executive Director, Dr. Jürgen Bühler
ICEJ US Director, Susan Michael
ICEJ Int’l Spokesman, Rev. Malcolm Hedding
Pastor Allen Jackson, World Outreach Church
Dr. Brad Young, Oral Roberts University
Dr. John Swails, Oral Roberts University
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Other National Experts
Special Praise and Worship led by ICEJ Music Director, Ray Ramirez, from Jerusalem

Register your small groups and friends. If ever we need a conference like this, we need it now!

Conference Schedule
Registration Fee $25

Friday, June 5
4:30-7:00 pm  Registration Check-In
7:00-8:30 pm  Conference Worship Celebration,
              Dr. Jürgen Bühler & Ray Ramirez

Sat, June 6
8:30-9:00 am  Registration Check-In
9:00-12:30 pm Break-Out Sessions with Guest Speakers
12:30-2:15 pm Lunch Break
2:30-4:15 pm Break-Out Sessions with Guest Speakers
6:30-7:30 pm Dinner Break
7:30 pm  Conference Finale, Praise and Worship

Conference will be held at the
Embassy Suites Hotel
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Register before May 29 at
www.icejusa.org/summerconf2015 or 615.895.9830

Conference Registration Fee
$25 for all participants.

Special Hotel Rates
$129/night double-occupancy, breakfast & evening lobby reception included.