Returning Home
Economic Crisis Prompts Israelis Abroad to Look Again to Zion

By Howard Flower

"The phone has been ringing off the hook... People here have had their American dream shattered."

The last few weeks have been crazy," says Tali Naveh who heads New York’s Israel House, a non-profit which gives assistance to Israelis in the US wishing to immigrate back home. “The phone has been ringing off the hook, and not just here, in all of our 10 centers on North America. People here have had their American dream shattered.”

Many Israelis living in the United States have approached the Israeli consulates in North America recently, urgently asking for their help in getting back to Israel.

According to reports, some Israelis who have lost their money in the financial crisis sweeping through the US have been requesting help from the local Israeli organizations to pay for a plane ticket back to Israel.

Just as immigration from the former Soviet Union brought human resources and experience to Israel allowing the economy to expand during the past two decades, Israel could improve its economy by bringing back its citizens from North America.

According to Google Analytics, web searches for the word “Aliyah” spiked several times in the USA during 2008. Once right after the presidential elections in November and most noticeably in the states of California and New York where the Jewish populations are the largest. Interest in growing.

North American Aliyah has been steadily increasing over the past few years. One of the main reasons is that US-based Nefesh b’Nefesh has a systematic and well organized program to help new immigrants every step of the way, even after they make aliyah.

The silver lining: The global financial crisis seems to have one favorable effect as far as Israel is concerned. Thousands of Israelis who have been living abroad for the past few years are moving back to their homeland.

More than 2,000 Israelis have returned home between August and mid-October 2008, a 50% increase on the same period last year.
The International Christian Embassy Jerusalem

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.

An ICEJ Seminar Series Featuring:
Susan Michael with Ron & Carol Cantrell

Discerning the TIMES 2009

Harrison, AR
Saturday April 18, 9:00 AM
Real Ministries
111 South Spring Street
Harrison, AR 72601

Register early at: www.icejusa.org/events
or by calling: (615) 895-9830

Memorial Day Weekend
Israel Teaching Conference
May 22-24, 2009

Rev. Malcolm Hedding (Israel),
Rev. David Pawson (UK), Rev. Allen Jackson (USA)

World Outreach Church
1921 New Salem Hwy, Murfreesboro, TN 37128
www.icejusa.org/events

USA Branch - PO Box 332974
Murfreesboro, TN 37133
(615) 895-9830
www.icejusa.org
The Word of God in our Times

By Malcolm Hedding

“See to it that you do not refuse Him who is speaking for if those did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less will we escape who turn away from Him who warns from heaven. And His voice shook the earth then, but now He has promised, saying, “YET ONCE MORE I WILL SHAKE NOT ONLY THE EARTH, BUT ALSO THE HEAVEN.” This expression, “Yet once more”, denotes the removing of those things which can be shaken, as of created things, so that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.” Hebrews 12:25-27 (NASB)

There is no doubt that the God of Heaven is presently “shaking all things”. However the context of this passage lays stress upon the “speaking of God” and not the shaking. He shakes in order to get the world’s attention so that it can be led to repentance (Revelation 9:20-21).

So, in what ways is God speaking to the world through the current shakings? Consider the following areas:

STRUCTURALLY: All over the world from 9/11 in Manhattan to Madrid, Mumbai, London, Bali, Sudan and more, God is speaking to the world through a process of judgment. We have to ask why a sovereign God has allowed such a breach in our hedges. If the world hardens its heart, this will continue.

NATURALLY: From one part of the world to the other, nature is in uproar! Hurricanes, storms, earthquakes, firestorms and melting ice are sweeping across our globe. Will those on the earth hear or will they refuse the voice from heaven and put everything down to global warming?

FINANCIALLY: The pace of the global financial meltdown has been bewildering to say the least. Billions of Dollars/Euros/Pounds have been lost overnight and great corporations have collapsed taking with them the savings of millions of people. Again, God is reminding the world how fickle and weak our foundations are. The point is: Are we listening? Many Christians have been caught out by these troubles since they too have lived on credit.

SPIRITUALLY: The Bible warns of a form of godliness that has no power (2 Timothy 3:1-5). This is no day to be weak spiritually. We have to know and live in the Will of God for our lives. With man-made foundations collapsing around us, the only safe refuge is the God of the Bible. He represents a foundation that cannot be broken and He is preparing a city for those who love Him that has eternal foundations, because He is its architect and builder.

A casual look at Revelation 6:3-17 reveals that much of this written of there. The seal judgments constitute a final word from heaven. Those who refuse to hear will no doubt be shaken, but those who will listen to the voice from heaven will place their lives on our sure foundation.

Rev. Malcolm Hedding serves as ICEJ Executive Director in Jerusalem and travels extensively across the world teaching Christians about Israel.
Everyone loves to declare victory. But even Jesus’ decisive conquest on the Cross was not the end of the story. The battle against sin continues in our Lives...

By Jürgen Bühler

Here in Israel we are soon going to be celebrating Passover – the great feast which commemorates the deliverance of the children of Israel from Egyptian slavery. It reminds us of God’s judgment on the false gods of Egypt, and of how He invaded history to bring about the redemption of His people. The most potent symbol of that victory is the slaughtered Passover lamb. For the church it remains the most powerful example of Old Testament imagery, pointing towards Jesus’ death on the cross for the sins of the world.

There on Calvary on that old rugged cross God invaded human history. What’s more, the Kingdom of God established a powerful foothold into this present age of darkness. And ever since this heavenly kingdom of love and redemption has been expanding around the globe, penetrating this world as leaven penetrates a lump of dough.

The Lutheran theologian Oscar Cullman described this in a wonderful way, comparing the passover to the invasion of Normandy on D-Day in 1944. From that day on the Allied forces knew that victory was sure even though it took many months and many battles until it was finally won. As Christians we can say the decisive battle has been fought through Christ’s death and Resurrection that Passover 2000 years ago. But V-day - our ‘Victory Day’ - is yet to come.

Israel’s return to the land of promise is a sure sign that ‘V-day’ is near. But there are still many battles that have to be fought before Jesus puts his feet on the Mount of Olives and establishes His rule and reign on earth. Then His glory will cover the world as water covers the sea.

But until then we are called to fight the good fight of faith. Many victories are still to be won, more souls must be brought into His Kingdom and greater transformation needs to take place in our lives so we, in that day, fully reflect His image.

“Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.” (1 Corinthians 5:7)

Let us therefore commit ourselves afresh to fight the good fight this Passover, in the place where God called us to, eagerly awaiting that glorious day and above all, knowing that our redemption draws near.

Dr. Jürgen Bühler serves as ICEJ International Director and lives with his wife Vesna and their four children in Jerusalem
ICEJ Opens Children’s Center in Shomron

Recently, ICEJ AID was invited to the dedication of a new children’s day-care center in the Jewish community of Shavei Shomron that was jointly funded by donations from our faithful supporters. Located in Samaria, an hour north of Jerusalem, the community had absorbed a number of families uprooted in the painful 2005 Disengagement from Jewish communities in Gaza and Northern Samaria. The day care center was intended to help these children and adults make the adjustment to their new surroundings. The ICEJ paid for all the furnishings and equipment in the building, including the kitchen appliances, computers, furniture, a complete entertain center for the youngsters, air conditioners, and plenty of fun toys and games. Dr. Pinchas Gerber, head of social services for the Shomron region, said the facility was already bringing a sense of renewal of community spirit, as both veteran residents and the newcomers were meeting and bonding with one another.

No Better Time

2009 ICEJ Passover Appeal

The holiday of Passover is approaching again this spring, and the Jewish people are already preparing for this highlight of the biblical calendar. But it also means requests are pouring into the AID department here at the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem for assistance in making sure Israeli families can celebrate Pessach with dignity.

Recent figures show that one-third of Israeli families, containing over 40% of the nation’s children, regularly forego essential foods to pay for other needs. Israeli charities feed over 250,000 poorer families each Passover, but trimmed government outlays, the decline of the US dollar, and the recent financial meltdown are all straining their budgets.

Passover celebrations this year begin with the traditional Seder meal on the 8th of April. Your donation now will give us enough leeway to distribute the funds to our partner Israeli charities and social workers in time to reach the neediest families. So please give generously this Passover! There’s no better time for Christians to ‘comfort’ Israel.

Make your secure tax-deductible donation by going online to: www.icejusa.org/passover

Support the Needy in Israel this Passover...

www.icejusa.org/passover
Obama’s Double-Take on Durban II

The ICEJ Joins Growing Opposition to UN Racism Summit as the US Pulls Out

By Michael Hines

late in the afternoon of Friday February 27th the US State Department rushed out the announcement that the Obama administration was not going to participate any further in the United Nations Durban Review Conference in Geneva this April. The move followed a roller-coaster week in which the White House first signaled it would break with President Bush’s long-standing boycott of the Summit, went to Geneva to ‘engage’ with the preparatory process, only to announce that they were pulling out for good.

It was unquestionably good news for Israel and her many allies around the world, concerned that like the first Durban Summit in South Africa on the eve 9/11, the 2009 UN forum has become a platform for some of the world’s worst human rights violators to advance their anti-Semitic, hate-filled agenda under the guise of combating ‘racism.’ All eyes are now on Britain, France and Germany – the ‘big three’ nations of the European Union - all of which have indicated they might consider following suit.

The ICEJ itself was one of a number of organizations calling on President Obama to boycott the conference altogether, gathering nearly 3,000 signatures to our online petition in less than three weeks. We are continuing to take a lead on the issue by organizing our national branches around the world to persuade their governments to do the same. (See petition text opposite).

At an ICEJ Discerning the Times Seminar in Florence Alabama on February 21st, US Financial Controller Daryl Hedding spoke of growing up in the beautiful coastal town of Durban that, “thanks to the UN,” has now become “a dirty word” to fair-minded Christians the world over.

“My father preached against apartheid, so much so that we were eventually forced to leave South Africa for Israel,” said Hedding, son of ICEJ Executive Director Rev. Malcolm Hedding. “I know what racism is,” he continued, “and I know what a racist state looks like. It doesn’t look like Israel!”

Calling on a packed room of some 150 Christians to take the message back to their churches and their elected representatives, Hedding affirmed the ICEJ position that the US should boycott Durban II and its toxic brand of anti-Semitism, Holocaust denial and Islamic ‘blasphemy’ laws.

But the US withdrawal from the Durban II process comes at a price. The State Department made it clear that from now on it will be seeking membership of the discredited UN Human Rights Council to ensure it “focuses on the pressing human rights concerns of our time.”

That’s a tall order. The Human Rights Council has devoted more resolutions concerning Israel than all other nations combined. And whether US participation will positively influence Council proceedings, or just lend credibility to the world’s most hate-filled forum of human rights hypocrisy, remains to be seen.
Have you felt the Call of God to come to Israel?

* God is inviting us to assist Him and be a voice of love, hope and restoration to the people of Israel.
* God is equipping our generation to prepare the way for His return as we take His truth to the Nations.
* God is encouraging us to explore the land of His birth, life, death and resurrection!

"I will search for the lost and bring back the strays. I will bind up the injured and strengthen the weak." Ezekiel 34:16

Accept the invitation to join Grafted as we seek to strengthen, heal and serve on the Summer Hands On Tour 2009!

For young adults 18-30 years old. Land Price: US $1090.00*

* Price includes ten nights accommodation, touring, entrance fees, half board (full breakfast and dinner), all outreach activities and lecture material. Price does not include airfare to and from Israel, lunches, travel insurance, and tips for guides and bus drivers.

For information and online registration visit: www.grafted.org or email at grafted@icej.org.
Statistically there have been surges in aliyah from North America following economic downturns over the past 30 years. Just before and during major recessions aliyah is reduced but springs back after the economy hits the low point. So there will surely be a surge due to the current recession.

In the past 10 years we have seen waves of aliyah during and after economic crisis. There were many who came to Israel after the Argentine economic downturn and before that after the bank crash in Russia in 1998. In Russia Jewish people were blamed for the bank crisis and this fueled anti-Semitism which further encouraged the aliyah. And today in Russia the anti-Semitism is increasing for the same reasons.

In an exit poll in 1999 the Jewish Agency for Israel asked thousands of Jews leaving Russia what their main reasons were. Bad economic condition and anti-Semitism were given as the most important reasons for making aliyah.

In the 1980s before the big wave of aliyah began ICEJ was ready ahead of time to help when it is needed. So we ask that those of you who have a burden to help during the economic crisis to join with us in being there to help as many Jewish families as we can.

The ICEJ has been helping former Soviet Jews in the USA and Canada since 2003 with incentive grants and other assistance. There was a aliyah surge following 9/11 and the economic downturn in 2001. So we expect that in 2009 there will be an increase in our aliyah program as well.

During the time when over 1 million Jews were moving to Israel from the former Soviet Union, another 800,000 were moving to the USA, Germany, and Canada. Starting after the recession of 2001 many began to get ready to move to Israel to join family and friends already there. Young people were also a large part of this group because opportunities for them were often better in Israel.

At one time there were 5 million Jews in the Russian Empire. In North America today there are some 6 million. The potential is huge and this economic downturn presents us with a remarkable opportunity to be part of the next major wave of aliyah, from the West.

Even in the 1980s before the big wave of aliyah began ICEJ was ready ahead of time to help when it is needed. So we ask that those of you who have a burden to help during the economic crisis to join with us in being there to help as many Jewish families as we can.

Donations to our aliyah program can be made simply and securely online at www.icejusa.org/aliyah. Thank you for your ongoing prayers and financial support.

Howard Flower serves as the ICEJ’s Aliyah Director and lives with his wife Lena and son Arthur in St. Petersburg, Russia.