THE GREAT INGATHERING

BY DAVID PARSONS
LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

The prophet Isaiah proclaimed long ago...

“It shall come to pass in that day that the LORD shall set His hand again the second time to recover the remnant of His people who are left, ...He will set up a banner for the nations, and will assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth” (Isaiah 11:11–12).

In recent weeks, we have witnessed Jews from Ukraine and India returning home to Israel. In the case of India, the Bnei Menashe have lived in exile for more than 2700 years. Yet Isaiah spoke even 100 years before that time about the day when God would “set up a banner for the nations” in order to bring back the remnant of His people from the four corners of the world.

Note that while the banner is directed towards the Gentiles, it is the Jewish people who will return. A banner in biblical times was usually a communication device which drew people together for some common cause or to convey a vital message. Many times it was to rally people to war (Isaiah 5:26). But, today, God is raising such a banner in order to communicate a message to the nations regarding the restoration of His people.

This banner has a threefold message:

1) God is a covenant-keeping God. He never forgot His ancient people but remembers the covenant which He made with Abraham and his descendants (Psalm 105:8ff).

2) Now is the time of restoration. God is dealing with Israel with blessing and goodness (Zechariah 8:11-15), for the appointed time to favor Zion has come (Psalm 102:13).

3) God is calling for action. He is not just informing the nations about what He is doing, but He is calling for our action and cooperation.

This issue of the Word From Jerusalem focuses on the return of the Jewish people to their homeland. I pray that these pages will serve as a banner to encourage you about God’s covenant faithfulness with Israel. I also pray that many will act like the sons of Issachar, “who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do…” (1 Chronicles 12:32). This magazine is a call to action for all to get involved with God’s prophetic Ingathering of the Jewish people in these last days.

May the Lord bless you richly!

Dr. Jürgen Bühler
ICEJ Executive Director
CONTENTS

10 ALIYAH TIMELINE

16 ICEJ BRANCHES REFOCUS IN ROME

4 THE GREAT INGATHERING
BY DAVID PARSONS

Next month we will focus on the main mission of the church towards Israel. We will also visit the core vision and mission of the ICEJ in Israel and around the world. You also will hear exciting reports on what God is doing in Bolivia, the Baltic States, and other nations.

Learn more about our upcoming events at: www.icejusa.org

NEXT ISSUE
COMING UP IN JULY’S WORD FROM JERUSALEM
THE GREAT INGATHERING

BY DAVID PARSONS

The Jews are a remarkable people. Consider, for instance, that they are the only people who have been violently uprooted from their homeland not once but twice, only to return to that land each time to re-establish their national sovereignty. You could search far and wide and still not find another people who have managed to do this even once, and yet the Jews have done it twice!

Now what makes the Jews all the more remarkable is that they have given us a book which tells us all that this was going to happen even before it started to take place. The Bible declares beforehand that there would be two scatterings and two returns of the Jewish people - the first from Babylon and the second from the ends of the earth.

Indeed, this has been the testimony of history. The ancient Israelites were first exiled to Babylon and began to return home some two generations later. Then, the Romans forced a second Jewish dispersion out into all nations, where they wandered for nearly 2,000 years before their second return to Eretz Israel in modern times. Over the past 120 years or so, more than 3.5 million Jews have immigrated to the land of Israel from all over the world - from the north, south, east and west, in literal fulfillment of God’s promises like those found in Isaiah 43:5-6:

"Fear not, for I am with you; I will bring your descendants from the east, and My daughters from the ends of the earth."

So, the Bible is a truly amazing book which tells the story of a truly remarkable people. It is not a collection of fables and fairy tales. Rather, the Bible is the proven Word of God! And the modern-day return of Israel is proof of its reliability, as well as of God’s faithfulness to His promises and His sovereignty over the affairs of men.

PRECISE PROMISES

Now when we look at some of the prophetic passages in Scripture about the great Ingathering of the Jewish people in the last days, we see that it is being fulfilled with great accuracy and detail.

For instance, Jews have come home from more than 100 nations speaking dozens of languages, but in Zephaniah 3:9 we have the promise of God to restore to them their ancient Hebrew language. This revival of a dead language by a once-dispersed nation is unique in human history.

"Who are these who fly like a cloud, and like doves to their roosts? Surely the coastlands shall wait for Me; And the ships of Tarshish will come first, to bring your sons from afar..."

(Isaiah 60:8-9)

The very next verse in Zephaniah specifically mentions Jews coming home from Ethiopia, while Isaiah 49:12 foretells of Jews coming back from “the land of Sinim,” or China. Incredibly, no Jews lived in either country when these words were written 2700 years ago, yet both are happening in our day.

In Jeremiah 31:8-9, it says that among the returnees would be “the woman with child and the one who labors with child, together.” Interestingly, during the emergency airlift of nearly 15,000 Ethiopian Jews in May 1991, there were five mothers who gave birth while abroad the planes on their way to Israel.

The Bible also tells us exactly how the Jews would return in the last days. Isaiah says they would come home first by sea and then by air...

"Who are these who fly like a cloud, and like doves to their roosts? Surely the coastlands shall wait for Me; And the ships of Tarshish will come first, to bring your sons from afar..."

(Isaiah 60:8-9).

THE AGE OF SHIPS

In context, Isaiah chapter 60 speaks of the great Ingathering of Israel at the end of days and the central role it plays in ushering in the Messianic kingdom. We see this clearly in verse 4, which states: "Lift up your eyes all around, and see: They all gather together, they come to you; Your sons shall come from afar, and your daughters shall be nursed at your side."

Then Isaiah 60:9 says, “the ships of Tarshish will come first.” (Some translations say “the ships of Tarshish are in the lead.”)

The phrase "ships of Tarshish" is a reference to the ancient Phoenicians, who were considered a great seafaring
people. They built ships which could ply not only the entire length of the Mediterranean Sea but also beyond. Their expertly-crafted boats would stop at the port of Tarshish in southern Spain before venturing past the Straits of Gibraltar into the mighty Atlantic Ocean. So, the phrase simply means, large seaworthy vessels.

And indeed, as the great Jewish Ingathering has taken place over the past 120 years, for the first 60 years or so the majority came home by ship. In the beginning many came through the old port of Jaffa, the same small harbour from antiquity where Jonah set sail while running from the Lord. Most were being driven out by pogroms in Russia and Eastern Europe and sailed to Israel via the Black Sea. Later, the British developed a larger port in Haifa and more Jews continued to stream home from all parts of the earth.

But, to appease the local Arabs, Britain eventually imposed a strict quota on the number of Jews that could enter Mandate Palestine each year; and later enforced it with a naval blockade just as many Jews were trying to escape the rising Nazi threat in Europe.

In response, ships laden with Jews fleeing Hitler’s genocide would dash for shore under cover of darkness, deliberately shipwreck on the rocks and sandbars, and then would desperately swim for land. So the era of Jews returning mostly by ship winds down in this dramatic fashion, just as the nation is about to be reborn.

THE JET AGE
Once Israel won its independence in 1948, the nation was free to bring back as many Jews as it could. And for the past 60 years or so of the great Ingathering, the majority of Jews have come home by airplane... just as the prophet Isaiah foresaw when he asked: “Who are these who fly like a cloud, and like doves to their roosts?”

The main port of entry during this time has been Ben-Gurion Airport, and thousands of Jewish olim (newcomers) pass through it every year. In addition, there have been several distinct waves over recent decades when tens of thousands of Jews returned at once. This has included many of the 800,000 Jews expelled from Arab lands in the early 1950s, the Ethiopian mass airlifts, and the one million Russian-speaking Jews who have arrived since Soviet communism fell in 1989.

There has been the “quiet return” of Jews from sensitive nations like Iran, Yemen, and Cuba. Today, there is also an increase of Jews coming from Europe due to rising anti-Semitism and Muslim agitation. Jewish return from some Western countries is also being spurred on by the global economic downturn and the prospects of better jobs in Israel.

Finally, the Jews of the East have also started to return, such as the Bnei
Menasha from India and the Kaifeng Jews from China.

Members of all these diverse Jewish communities worldwide are landing at Ben-Gurion year round. Nearly every single day, friends and relatives are waiting in the Arrivals Hall to welcome them back to the land of their forefathers.

So, how astounding it is that the Bible says the last-days return of the Jews would straddle the transition from the great age of travel on the high seas to today’s jet age. No one travels by ship anymore; we just hop on a plane and fly wherever we want in a matter of hours. So God has been precise even in His timing of the great Ingathering of Israel.

THE HEART OF ALiyAH

Israelis have adopted a special term from the Hebrew Bible to describe this process of returning to the Land. They call it Aliyah, which means “to ascend.” It was used in ancient times in reference to Jewish pilgrims ascending to Jerusalem for the three great biblical Feasts of Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles.

Thus, the process of making Aliyah is seen by many Jews as having spiritual meaning as well, beyond just the physical act of returning to their homeland. Many also view it as an act of teshuva (repentance) and returning to God. They truly believe He is drawing them back to the land and to Himself.

CONCLUSION

The great Ingathering of the Jewish people in modern times holds great promise for Israel and the world, as it heralds the soon coming of the Messianic kingdom. It also is irrefutable proof of the veracity of God’s word. It shows God’s faithfulness to His promises, which are being fulfilled with great accuracy and precision. And, we see in it His goodness and favor, as described in passages like Isaiah 54:7-8:

"For a mere moment I have forsaken you, but with great mercies I will gather you. With a little wrath I hid My face from you for a moment; But with everlasting kindness I will have mercy on you,’ says the Lord, your Redeemer."

Finally, the great Ingathering demonstrates that He is the God of history and He remains sovereign over the affairs of men. Even when much of the world has resisted the return of the Jews to their homeland, it is still coming to pass just as He said:

“Hear the word of the Lord, O nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, ‘He who scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him as a shepherd does his flock’” (Jeremiah 31:10).

This means we live in amazing times. It is both exciting and rewarding to be engaged in the great Ingathering of the Jewish people in our day. God invites us to be involved, to help bring the Jews home.

The International Christian Embassy Jerusalem has been doing just that for over three decades now. In that time, we have assisted more than 115,000 Jews in making their way home to Israel.

Right now, we are helping to bring Jews to Israel from Europe to escape anti-Semitism and Muslim agitation. We are currently sponsoring flights for Jews from Ukraine seeking to flee the growing crisis there. And, we are bringing home the Bnei Menashe from India and the Kaifeng Jews from China, in fulfilment of their deep longing to reunite with their land and people.

So, please join with us as we work to gather the Jews back to their land and their God! Today, it is as simple as sponsoring an airline seat for a Jew to fly home "like a dove to its nest."
Over recent months, the world has watched the political crisis in Ukraine descend into armed conflict with Russia and its allies inside the troubled country. The Ukrainian Jewish community, numbering over 300,000, is especially alarmed by the slide towards war, as there are anti-Semitic elements on both sides that have become more active amid the societal chaos.

Recently, the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem received an urgent request from the Jewish Agency for funds to help them bring an expected increase of Jews from Ukraine to Israel this year. In response, the ICEJ has been raising funds from Christians worldwide and has already collected enough donations to cover the flights for an initial 250 Ukrainian Jews.

In early May, an ICEJ team joined Jewish Agency officials at Ben-Gurion Airport to welcome home a group of 19 Ukrainian Jews who were making Aliyah due to the worsening crisis. The group included five families and three single women anxious to reach safety in Israel.

"The unfolding crisis in Ukraine has meant an even more uncertain future for the Jewish community there, and we are acting swiftly once again to bring needy and endangered Jews home from this troubled region. It was a privilege for our staff to welcome this first group home," said Dr. Jürgen Bühler, ICEJ Executive Director.

The timing of the group’s arrival had added drama due to the dozens of Ukrainians killed in clashes one day earlier – the bloodiest day yet in the six month stand-off. One newcomer expressed relief at finally being in Israel for good.

"I have been to Israel several times to study and visit with family and friends, but I knew it was time to come to stay. And I’m very happy to be here now because of the growing crisis in Ukraine," said newcomer Daria Granovsky, a Jewish single woman working on a marketing degree. "There has not been much violence yet where I live in Kiev, but the troubles are getting worse and worse every day and you could sense it was coming our way."

Anti-Semitic and neo-Nazi groups were already on the rise in Ukraine even before the current political crisis erupted, and both sides are now trying to use the “Jew card” to their advantage. Russian President Vladimir Putin even cited anti-Semitism to justify his invasion of the Crimea. Ukrainian officials, in turn, have accused pro-Russian separatists of staging anti-Semitic attacks to discredit the Ukrainian revolution.

As a result, many Jews no longer feel safe there and are preparing to leave for Israel. The Jewish Agency recently reported that the number of Jews making Aliyah from Ukraine has nearly doubled so far this year compared to 2013.

"Our general feeling is that the winds of war are blowing," one Jewish Agency emissary recently reported. "Suddenly, Israel is again seen as a real security alternative to what is taking place in Ukraine."

Over recent decades the Christian Embassy has assisted more than 115,000 Jews in making Aliyah to Israel, including at least 42,000 Jews from Ukraine.

You can help endangered Jews in Ukraine make Aliyah to Israel today. The cost for bringing home one Ukrainian Jew is currently $600, including domestic and international travel, extra baggage fees, and other needed expenses.

Please give your best gift today by visiting us at: www.icejusa.org/aliyah
IN LATE MAY, another group of some 250 Bnei Menashe from India began arriving in Israel on flights sponsored by the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem. This will bring to nearly 700 the number of these new immigrants which the ICEJ has assisted in making Aliyah over the past 18 months. That leaves another 7,000 members of the community still waiting in northeast India to re-unite with family, faith and homeland after 2700 years of exile.

The Bnei Menashe, or "sons of Manasseh," claim descent from one of the lost tribes of Israel. Their tradition holds that their ancestors were exiled from the Land of Israel by the Assyrian Empire some 27 centuries ago and that they wandered throughout the Orient until they reached what is now northeast India, between Burma and Bangladesh.

The Christian Embassy has been partnering in this special Aliyah operation over recent years with Michael Freund, Chairman of Shavei Israel. Michael has worked hard lobbying government and rabbinic authorities to pave the way for the remainder of the Bnei Menashe community to come home, and the ICEJ has been funding their flights to Israel.
The Bnei Menashe have a very strong spiritual draw back to their ancient homeland that simply cannot be denied, yet the cost and great distance remains an obstacle for them. For $1,000, you can sponsor the flight home for a member of a Bnei Menashe family.

Become part of this historic, prophetic return of the sons of Israel from the East. Give today to the ICEJ’s Aliyah operations to bring more Bnei Menashe home.

Make your donation on-line today at: www.icejusa.org/aliyah

Freund explains that “some of the first Westerns to encounter the Bnei Menashe in modern times were British missionaries more than 100 years ago. They were surprised at their belief in the one true God, whom they referred to as ‘Yah.’ They also had a communal ban on pork and were familiar with biblical stories, even though their holy books had been taken and burned long ago.”

“Despite their wanderings for so many centuries, the Bnei Menashe never forgot who they are and where they came from. And they never stopped dreaming of one day returning to Zion,” insists Freund.

“They kept the Sabbath, they kept kosher, they kept the laws of family purity, they kept faith alive in their hearts, and they held firmly onto that dream. And now I believe their faithfulness is being rewarded as God is gathering them in,” Freund adds.

Based on such evidence, the Chief Rabbinate of Israel officially recognized the Bnei Menashe community as descendants of Israel a decade ago.

While greeting the Bnei Menashe flights as they arrive at Ben-Gurion Airport, one notices how many are simply overcome with emotion at finally being here.

“It’s a very moving experience to accompany them on an Aliyah flight from India,” says Freund. “As we approach the shores of Israel, many burst into tears when the coastline first becomes visible out of their windows. Once they land, they immediately bend down and kiss the ground.”

“They are extremely grateful to be in Israel and have much to contribute to the nation,” Freund contends.

“Most of the Bnei Menashe immigrants have a high school education and many have university degrees. They all surf the Internet and are somewhat familiar with Western ways so their absorption is relatively smooth. They also work hard to support themselves. Only about 4 to 5 percent of the Bnei Menashe live off social welfare, which is about half the national average. They have many beautiful children, they volunteer to serve in the Army, and go on to attend college. And they are also rapidly becoming absorbed into the fabric of Israeli life.”

Freund notes that, “The Hebrew prophets even spoke of the ‘offspring’ of Israel coming from the East, in Isaiah 43 and elsewhere.” In addition, he stresses that “Isaiah also foretold of Gentiles helping in the great Ingathering of Israel in the last days.”

“I have to say what a blessing it is for us to be able to partner with the Christian Embassy,” says Freund. “I think that 50 years ago if someone had said that Jews and Christians would be working together to bring the exiles home to Israel, he would have been dismissed as a lunatic. And, yet, we are blessed to live in a generation where that is coming true, where what Isaiah foretold about Jews and Christians working together in the Ingathering of the exiles is actually happening.”

“The prophet Isaiah said that the nations will carry us on their shoulders back to the land. Now carrying on your shoulders can also mean through your love, your prayers, and your support. That is also a way to carry us back here and I think that is exactly what you are doing.”

With the help of Christians worldwide, more than 2,200 members of the Bnei Menashe community are now living in Israel. But there are another 7,000 still waiting to come. By the end of this year, Shavei Israel expects another 750 immigrants to arrive to Israel. This means families long separated will soon be reunited, and the dreams of generations will be realized.

They cannot do it alone. They need our help!
Most scholars date the large-scale immigration of Jews back to the Land of Israel in modern times to the early 1880s, when Jews escaping pogroms in Russia began arriving to establish such communities as Petah Tikva and Rishon LeZion. Around the same time, Jews from Yemen also made the long journey home and settled near the Old City of Jerusalem.

Since then, as many as 3.5 million Jews have returned to Israel from more than 100 nations worldwide. Some came voluntarily, drawn by the biblical hope of rebuilding their nation once again in their ancient homeland. Others were fleeing anti-Semitism and other perils, such as the Nazi genocide campaign in Europe. Still others were refugees, forced from their homes following Israel’s rebirth in 1948.

**ALYAH TIMELINE**

1882 - The Hovevei Zion (Lovers of Zion) arrive from southern Russia and settle Rishon LeZion (First in Zion).

1904 - A second wave of Aliyah begins as pogroms in Czarist Russia escalate.

1924 - Large numbers of Jews begin arriving from Poland in the wake of the government’s anti-Semitic policies.

1933 - The Nazis begin their ascent to power, forcing many German Jews to flee to Mandate Palestine.

1945 - As World War II ends, as many as 400,000 European Jews who survived the Holocaust begin making their way to Israel, some via underground Aliyah operations.

1948 - After Israel wins its independence, some 800,000 Jews expelled from Arab lands begin streaming home.

1949 - In Operation Magic Carpet, Yemen agrees to let 45,000 Jews quietly leave on a series of 380 flights on Israeli, British and American planes.

1984 - In Operation Moses, Israel launches an emergency airlift under a strict news blackout of some 8,000 Ethiopian Jews from make-shift camps in Ethiopia and Sudan.

1989 - With the collapse of Soviet communism, over one million Russian-speaking Jews begin arriving in a massive Aliyah from the former Soviet Union.

1991 - In Operation Solomon, Israel airlifts, in one weekend, nearly 15,000 Ethiopian Jews endangered by civil war, using 34 flights with the seats taken out to accommodate more passengers. The operation still holds the world record for most passengers on a single flight when 1,122 people were packed onto a Boeing 747 aircraft.

2005 - The first flights of the Bnei Menashe community in India arrive in Israel.

2008 – Economic woes and rising anti-Semitism stirs an up-tick in Aliyah from the west.

2014 - Unrest in Ukraine appears to be stirring a fresh wave of Aliyah from the north.

**LEARN MORE AT:** us.icejusa.org/old/aliyah

**MODERN-DAY ALIYAH HIGHLIGHTS // 1882-2014**
ICEJ: A VITAL PARTNER IN THE GREAT ALIYAH

BY DAVID PARSONS

The International Christian Embassy Jerusalem has been extensively involved in the great Aliyah since our founding over three decades ago. Since 1989, the Christian Embassy has assisted over 115,000 Jews in making the journey home to Israel, including our sponsorship of over 75 chartered Aliyah flights.

We also have been active in major fishing and transportation efforts in many countries, as well as sponsoring absorption programs once Jews arrive in Israel.

The ICEJ has worked closely with the Jewish Agency for Israel in all these efforts. However, we have always preferred to fund and carry out our own Aliyah operations, so that those Jews we are assisting know that Christians are helping them return to Israel.

Nonetheless, it has been vital to maintain close working relations with the Jewish Agency and its fund-raising arm, Keren HaYesod, also known as the United Israel Appeal. And we have contributed on numerous occasions to their Aliyah and absorption activities, often at critical times when Jews were in peril, such as now in the developing crisis in Ukraine.

Recently, we spoke with Eliezer "Moody" Sandberg, World Chairman of Keren HaYesod, about his organization’s central role in the Aliyah and absorption process. Sandberg explained that Keren HaYesod, together with the Jewish Agency, form an important link between the state of Israel and the Jewish community worldwide.

"In 1920, Keren HaYesod was founded to collect funds for supporting the pioneers in the Land of Israel, so they could buy their first tractor or build their first home," stated Sandberg. "They understood the importance of investing in the infrastructure of the land. Think of the national water carrier from the Galilee to the southern deserts - we did that!"

"At the very same time, Keren HaYesod also was involved in bringing the Jewish people back to their homeland. Everything you can imagine in assisting Jews who want to come here, we have done. We have sponsored every Aliyah operation from every country imaginable. Whenever the door opened, we were there to bring Jews home. Wherever Jews are at risk, we will be there to help them come home as well."

"And it is not only about immigration to Israel, but also about absorption," he added. "We want those who come to Israel to stay here as well. We have made significant efforts to this end from even before the state was founded."

"I always explain what we do in one sentence: 'We fulfil the biblical prophecies'. God promised to bring the Jews back to their homeland. It took 2000 years of prayers but it is happening in our time," insisted Sandberg.

"God said they would be coming from all four corners of the world. And, here they are, Jews from India and China to the east, from Ethiopia to our south, from North America and Latin America in the west, and from Europe and Russia to the north. I feel so privileged to live in these times when the biblical promises are being realized and to be at the center of all this in my position with Keren HaYesod."

"I have also made it a point to expand our outreach and partnerships with our Christian friends. It is exciting to work together in this way," he concluded.

Please support the on-going Aliyah efforts of the ICEJ. Make your donation on-line today at: www.icejusa.org/aliyah
For example, several years ago Edwin arrived from Peru with his wife and two children. He had decided to come due to rising anti-Semitism in his native country. Like so many others before them, the family arrived full of hope mixed with some apprehension. Within a very short time, they found themselves in serious financial debt. Edwin was so discouraged that he was ready to give up and return to Peru.

However, they decided to seek assistance just in time and the ICEJ was able to offer a helping hand. Today, Edwin and his wife are both working, the children have adjusted well at school, and he has someone to consult with when he needs advice.

For several years, the ICEJ has been helping poorer immigrants in partnership with Shoulder-to-Shoulder, a mentoring program that matches struggling new immigrant families with native Israelis trained to help them adapt to Israel. For immigrants faced with the many challenges of integration, this help is essential to their economic success.

Currently, this mentoring program is assisting some 100 new immigrant families in Beersheva, Ashdod, Ashkelon, and Jerusalem. Many more families are on a waiting list to join the project, and due to its tremendous success rate Israeli authorities want to expand this mentoring model nationwide.

YOU CAN BE A PART OF THIS SUCCESS STORY!

Donate to ICEJ AID today to support our special mentoring program for new Jewish immigrants to Israel. Learn more at: www.icejusa.org/aid/immigrant-assistance

Besides, assisting tens of thousands of Jews in making the journey home to Israel, the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem has also been very active in helping Jewish newcomers get settled in the land. The “absorption phase” is a critical stage of the immigration process, and our efforts in this area really accelerated when Soviet Communism fell in 1989 and more than one million Russian-speaking Jews began streaming into Israel.

In those peak years of the Soviet-Jewish Aliyah, the ICEJ had a special department just to help Russian Jews adjust to their new land. We provided immigrants with vouchers for school books, dental care, eye glasses, and other areas of need that the government’s basket of assistance did not cover. In those days, there were often long lines of Russian Jews outside our Jerusalem headquarters waiting to receive assistance from us.

This assistance was also extended to scores of Ethiopian Jews coming into the country at that same time. The ICEJ has invested much effort and funding in giving Ethiopian Jews an equal chance to make it in Israeli society, by sponsoring educational scholarships, job training, therapeutic counseling, sports leagues, and many other beneficial projects.

Over recent decades our absorption efforts have expanded to aid Jews from many other nations, including those coming on “quiet Aliyah” from sensitive countries like Iran, Yemen, and Cuba.

Without our help, many of these new citizens of Israel fall into financial difficulties and some become welfare families. Even worse, some are tempted to give up and return to their old country.

In more recent years, one area of concern has been the high percentage of Jewish families from Latin American countries who arrive here with little means to survive financially. The ICEJ has been extending help to many of these Hispanic Jewish immigrants.
Join the Isaiah 62 Movement

Join the Isaiah 62 Movement

ISAIAH
62
PRAYER INITIATIVE

Isaiah 62 Prayer Groups in the USA

We now have 50 Isaiah 62 prayer groups in 17 states in the USA. Our goal is to have groups in all 50 states. Get your state on the map as one praying for Israel! To start an Isaiah 62 prayer group, or register your existing group with us, please contact isaiah62@icejusa.org

Help us get all 50 states praying for Israel!

ICEJ
INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN EMBASSY JERUSALEM

www.icejusa.org/Isaiah-62-prayer-group
US Navy Visits Haifa Home

RESIDENTS of the ICEJ’s unique home for Holocaust survivors are accustomed to getting surprise visitors. In April, a group of British Christians came by to meet the residents and ask forgiveness for the callous treatment Britain gave Holocaust survivors trying to make it to the land of Israel after World War II. Some of the residents knew that treatment all too well. Arriving on the shores of their homeland as orphaned children, they were sent by the British to the Atlit detention center, after the concentration camps of Europe, a move that only added to their trauma and uncertainty. The time of reconciliation between Holocaust survivors and British visitors was cherished by all.

Meanwhile, a group of 30 staff from the American naval vessel USS Valle Gulf paid a recent visit while docked in the Haifa port. The group’s chaplain explained that they like to volunteer their services for a day at each port-of-call. Tamar, the Haifa Home secretary, was taken by their enthusiasm. “They were wonderful,” she said. “They cleaned up debris and trash from the new renovation site. It was so helpful.”

Remembering the Holocaust

AS ISRAEL MARKED its annual Holocaust Remembrance Day in late April, the Haifa Home residents were the special invited guests to a public concert by the Haifa Symphony Orchestra. Before the performance began, resident Shoshanna Kalmer, a 94-year old survivor of Auschwitz, shared her story of suffering and courage with the audience. There was also an emotional memorial service at the Haifa Home, with many Holocaust survivors, soldiers, and guests in attendance. One day earlier, school children and scout troop members visited the Haifa Home, bringing flowers as a gesture to say “We will not forget you.”

Get Involved!

Can you partner with us in funding urgent needs at the Haifa Home for Holocaust Survivors? The Home’s main dining hall also serves as a community room for lectures, recreational activities, and occupational therapy. However, with the increase in residents, a more suitable place is required for these other group activities. Plans are now underway to turn space between two buildings into a new community center. Please consider donating towards this project and to the many other needs at the Haifa Home for Holocaust Survivors!

YOU CAN GIVE ON-LINE TODAY BY VISITING www.icejusa.org/expanding-haifa-home
FINNISH CABINET MINISTER VISITS EMBASSY

IN APRIL, at our stately building in Jerusalem, the Christian Embassy had the privilege of hosting Finnish, Minister of Interior Mrs. Päivi Räsänen.

Well known in Finland not only as a member of the cabinet, Minister Räsänen is also an outspoken Christian who does not shrink back from her convictions. During the discussions with Embassy leaders Dr. Jürgen Bühler and Rev. Juha Ketola, she expressed a clear understanding of Israel’s place in the Bible and in the plan of God among the nations, and also her unwavering support for Israel. Mrs. Räsänen has been a member of the Finnish parliament for the past 20 years. She has chaired and led her own Christian Democratic Party since 2004, and has been serving as the Minister of Interior since 2011.

ICEJ STAFF PAYS SPECIAL VISIT TO ISRAELI KNESSET

THE STAFF of the International Christian Embassy in Jerusalem, which comes from some 18 nations worldwide, enjoyed a guided tour of the Knesset recently at the special invitation of Mr. Ronen Plot, Director General of Israel’s parliament. He hosted our staff in one of the main Knesset committee rooms, shared about Israel’s history and form of government, and answered questions on a variety of issues. That same day, the staff visited the nearby Bible Lands Museum, where we were warmly welcomed by the Director, Amanda Weiss. There, we were given a tour of not only the permanent historical displays at the museum, which are of great interest to Christians, but also of the special exhibition currently on site of the history of the Bible. The “Book of Books” traveling exhibition, which includes a scale replica of the Gutenberg Bible press, will eventually become part of the planned Museum on the Bible to be located on the mall in Washington, DC. Ms. Weiss, has managed to extend its stay at the Bible Lands Museum until the end of October, so that pilgrims at the ICEJ’s Feast of Tabernacles can enjoy it when they are in Jerusalem this autumn.
EVERY YEAR, National Directors from the ICEJ’s network of branches worldwide come together for a leadership conference, and last month we met in Rome under the theme “In One Accord.”

More than 100 ICEJ representatives from 40 countries came from Asia, Africa, Europe, the Americas, and Oceania. They hailed from a variety of Evangelical backgrounds, thus making it a truly international, cross-cultural, and cross-denominational gathering.

The ICEJ leadership from Jerusalem gave priority to communicating once again the vision and mission of the Christian Embassy from our outset. This mission was refocused on two main objectives:

1) To reach every segment of Israel’s society with a Christian testimony of comfort and love, and

2) To reach out to and actively represent in Israel denominations, churches, and believers from every single nation of our planet.

That is, we seek to establish an ICEJ presence in every nation while also reaching all of Israel. That’s the vision and the goal! It is biblical and prophetic! And everything the ICEJ does is geared toward those ends.

ICEJ Executive Director Dr. Jürgen Bühler was very encouraged by the unique sense of unity and purpose during the conference. He said, “This year’s conference was the largest ever. This underlines that a new sense of dedication and excitement is being felt from our worldwide constituency. It is an enormous privilege to work with such dedicated men and women of God from around the world. It is humbling but at the same time gives us great hope that the best and most exciting times are still ahead of us.”

Those of us who gathered in the ancient city of Rome sensed the goodness and grace of God as we set about to discuss Kingdom business.

Amid all the serious work, we also enjoyed a day of touring the Coliseum, the Vatican, and other historic sites in Rome. Visiting the ancient Arch of Titus was a clear reminder of God’s dealings with Israel, and of the fate of those nations which turn on Israel.
STANDING WITH ISRAEL IN MEXICO
BY REV. JUHA KETOLA

In late April, I traveled with my colleague Dr. Jürgen Bühler to Mexico City to take part in a large conference of nearly 2,000 Evangelical pastors and church leaders. Our host was Dr. Carlos Quiroa, the new National Director of ICEJ-Mexico, who will also be connecting us to his extensive ministry contacts throughout the Spanish-speaking world.

We were given several speaking sessions to share from the Word of God and also met with many ministry leaders, including noted evangelist Reinhard Bonnke, the featured speaker at the conference along with Morris Cerullo.

During the conference, we re-dedicated our Mexican branch and set apart Dr. Quiroa as our new National Director. We also met with several of our Central American representatives, including Costa Rica Director, Teresita Torres, and Nicaragua Director, Keila Ortega, to discuss the future of our ministry in the Hispanic world.

The grand finale was the "March of Glory," which drew more than 40,000 evangelical Christians to a grand parade through the streets of Mexico City to proclaim their faith in Jesus. The crowd then gathered in a central plaza to celebrate, worship, sing and dance, and listen to preaching all through the night until the next morning!

Jürgen and I also preached at this final gathering and it was a great joy to see hundreds of Mexican believers waving Israeli flags in the air! The flags gave a strong signal that the Body of Christ in Mexico wants to bless Israel.

MEXICO BRANCHES

The ICEJ-Mexico National Director Carlos Quiroa, Jürgen Bühler, Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke, Juha Ketola and New ICEJ Leader from Argentina Pastor Hernan Avarez

ICEJ IMPACTING CANADA

Canada

In early April, ICEJ International Spokesman, Rev. Malcolm Hedding, ventured to Canada for a series of speaking engagements organized by Donna Holbrook and her energetic ICEJ-Canada team.

In the first meeting, Malcolm shared the platform with an Egyptian believer, and the two spoke on the purposes of God for Israel and Egypt at this crucial time in history.

Finally, he spoke at the "Friends of Jesus Christ" a fellowship of mainly Filipino Christians in Toronto. Pastor Teck, a strong supporter of Israel, serves on the board of ICEJ-Canada, and faithfully brings a tour group to our Feast of Tabernacles every year.

The ICEJ-Canada branch is very active in support of Israel and they are having a real impact in their nation, especially since they began broadcasting their own show on Canadian Christian television last year.

In the next day, Malcolm was one of the opening speakers at the annual Toronto Mission Fest, a large gathering of missionary groups from across Canada. The ICEJ-Canada team also had designed an attractive and prominent booth shaped in the form of a succa or tabernacle, where many were eager to buy Malcolm's new book, Understanding Revelation.

The next day, Malcolm was one of the opening speakers at the annual Toronto Mission Fest, a large gathering of missionary groups from across Canada. The ICEJ-Canada team also had designed an attractive and prominent booth shaped in the form of a succa or tabernacle, where many were eager to buy Malcolm's new book, Understanding Revelation.

The grand finale was the "March of Glory," which drew more than 40,000 evangelical Christians to a grand parade through the streets of Mexico City to proclaim their faith in Jesus. The crowd then gathered in a central plaza to celebrate, worship, sing and dance, and listen to preaching all through the night until the next morning!

Jürgen and I also preached at this final gathering and it was a great joy to see hundreds of Mexican believers waving Israeli flags in the air! The flags gave a strong signal that the Body of Christ in Mexico wants to bless Israel.

Finally, he spoke at the "Friends of Jesus Christ" a fellowship of mainly Filipino Christians in Toronto. Pastor Teck, a strong supporter of Israel, serves on the board of ICEJ-Canada, and faithfully brings a tour group to our Feast of Tabernacles every year.

The ICEJ-Canada branch is very active in support of Israel and they are having a real impact in their nation, especially since they began broadcasting their own show on Canadian Christian television last year.

Finally, he spoke at the "Friends of Jesus Christ" a fellowship of mainly Filipino Christians in Toronto. Pastor Teck, a strong supporter of Israel, serves on the board of ICEJ-Canada, and faithfully brings a tour group to our Feast of Tabernacles every year.

The ICEJ-Canada branch is very active in support of Israel and they are having a real impact in their nation, especially since they began broadcasting their own show on Canadian Christian television last year.
ICEJ JOINS 'MARCH OF THE LIVING' IN AUSCHWITZ
BY LISA SCHMID

AS ISRAEL MARKED Holocaust Remembrance Day in late April, several ICEJ branches in central Europe brought groups of students to take part in the annual "March of the Living" at Auschwitz in Poland.

Held each spring on Yom HaShoah, the march from the Auschwitz to Birkenau death camps drew more than 10,000 people this year, mostly young Jews, who all came to honour the memories of the 1.5 million Jews murdered there by the Nazis.

The ICEJ branches in Germany, Czech Republic, and Slovakia worked together to organize a special program at the March for 250 high school students and teachers from these three nations. In a new twist at the March, the ICEJ participants carried the national flags of Israel and of their own countries, prompting many fruitful discussions with young Jewish participants and Holocaust survivors.

"Some questioned why we were carrying German flags, but we wanted to set a clear example that we take on responsibility for our German history," said Gottfried Bühler, National Director of ICEJ-Germany. "I believe that this message was well received."

This year’s march also focused on commemorating the mass deportation of Hungarian Jews to Auschwitz exactly 70 years ago, where most of them perished. To mark the occasion, 600 Hungarian Jews arrived from Budapest on what was called the “Train of the Living”. A group of 60 German Christians were there to greet them with roses and a written declaration of solidarity in Hungarian, English, and German.

"In humbleness and with awareness of how painful this commemoration must be for many of you we especially welcome you today cordially at the train station of Oswiecim. We assure you that we are standing firm alongside the Jewish people and Israel," read the declaration, which was received favorably by many travelers.

"There were many touching moments," said Stephan Lehnert, the ICEJ-Germany administrator. "It was important that we were there. Later in the March we saw our roses everywhere."

HÄNDEL'S MESSIAH IN HEBREW

FOR THE FIRST TIME ever Händel's famous biblical oratorio "The Messiah" was performed in Hebrew, during a special concert tour through southern Germany by a group of Israeli and German singers and musicians. Organized by ICEJ-Germany, the tour was launched by Dr. Dan Shaham Ben-Hayun, the Israeli consul general in Munich. He stated that, "These performances of 'The Messiah' in Hebrew are a sign of hope, reconciliation and friendship."

GERMAN YOUTH LEARN ABOUT ISRAEL

LAST MONTH, ICEJ international speaker Doron Schneider spoke to a gathering of over 4,000 Christian youths in Salzgitter, Germany, bringing a powerful message about God’s enduring calling over Israel. Many of the youths informed him afterwards that they were glad to hear about God’s plans for Israel, since most had never heard anything about Israel in their churches.

IF YOU WANT TO JOIN WITH A SCHOOL CLASS OR YOUTH GROUP FOR THE MARCH OF THE LIVING NEXT YEAR PLEASE CONTACT THE ICEJ USA: ICEJUSA@ICEJUSA.ORG

IF YOU WANT TO JOIN WITH A SCHOOL CLASS OR YOUTH GROUP FOR THE MARCH OF THE LIVING NEXT YEAR PLEASE CONTACT THE ICEJ USA: ICEJUSA@ICEJUSA.ORG

18 | JUNE 2014
The ICEJ national branch in South Africa has always contributed much to our global work, especially in terms of leadership and personnel in our Jerusalem headquarters. As of this year, the branch has a dynamic new National Director, Luba Mayekiso, who along with his wife Lydia, is a rising voice for biblical values and support for Israel in his native land and across Africa.

Luba’s father was a black school principal who stressed education and sent Luba and his brother to predominantly white Anglican schools with good academics. But, it was still the apartheid era and he experienced much first-hand discrimination.

“Being one of only two black kids in my school, I had my share of racism. The racial abuse came from the other kids, and even from their parents,” he recently recalled. “It was especially challenging going on field trips with the school. When the bus stopped at a service station I couldn’t go to the toilet with the white kids, I was forced to go into the bush.”

He eventually concluded that, “Racism either breaks you, or it develops and strengthens your will power.”

Luba was also raised in a Christian home, but once in boarding school and university he seldom attended church. Yet after finishing his law studies, Luba and his wife visited a church one day and he answered an altar call to rededicate his life to the Lord.

While working as a banker, Luba also began to study and preach as a lay minister. Though he considered pursuing ordination, he felt God clearly leading him into public advocacy. At the same time, he and his wife began to explore the biblical roots of their faith.

“We always had a heart for Israel, but we could never find any information about it. Whenever you spoke to people in South Africa about Israel it was negative. Nobody had anything praiseworthy to say and you could sense the information was not balanced,” Luba explained.

So the couple decided to educate themselves and begin proclaiming the truth about Israel.

“We shared a hunger to learn more about Israel, and started to get involved in various groups around Cape Town where we learned about the Jewish community and Israel,” he said.

Today, Luba is a well-known speaker and advocate on behalf of Israel across South Africa. He addresses both church and government leaders who are often surprised by the solid biblical basis of his message in support of Israel.

Luba noted that many ANC politicians also profess to be Christians, and he is able to use sound biblical arguments to show them why standing with Israel is the right thing to do.

Luba claimed that, “Africa today is in a really bad place when it comes to everything from poverty to agriculture and health, and he knows where to find help.”

“We are trying to say to our government that we need to accept the help from Israel and work with them. There is an amazing thirst from people to know about Israel, and God is stirring people to pray for Israel.”

“So much has gone wrong in the Israeli-South African relationship, but the time has come to reset that relationship,” he said. “There is a huge desire for Africans to connect to Israel. The potential is there and we need to exploit it. This is the time for action!”

Luba is also eager to expand the reach of the ICEJ-South African Branch into the huge black Christian community, and to develop more educational tools on Israel for this largely untapped constituency.
"It was very powerful to hear the survivors tell their stories. Each one was taken from their parents at a young age," noted Cynthia Douthitt, a pastor from Arkansas.

"Anti-Semitism is repeating itself and nothing seems to have changed," Cynthia continued. "I recently saw a letter published in our local paper with scathing criticism of Israel and the Jews, that they were displacing the Palestinians and killing innocent people. It needs to be stopped and I want to take what I’ve learned here and use it to answer back to this hostility."

Rev. Karl White, a pastor from Iowa, said his first visit to Yad Vashem in 1984 gave him a whole new perspective on life.

"My love for the Jewish people and the Land of Israel has grown ever since," he said. "But, oh my, to be here for these ceremonies, to learn about all the Jewish children who perished, to be in the presence of so many survivors, and to hear the sounding of the siren, it is something I’ve always wanted to be here for."

"I want to use Yad Vashem’s resources to develop a curriculum for our local school districts to teach this in northwest Iowa," he enthused.

Rev. Todd Salzwedel, a Methodist pastor from New Mexico, was honored to be at Yad Vashem for this special occasion and sensed the reverence for those being remembered.

"Listening to these survivors has been life changing for me," he assured. "I’m especially eager to tell young people they need to come to Israel and visit Yad Vashem now, not to put it off for later, because it will change their lives, their views on Scripture, and how they view humanity."

CORRECTION

In the April 2014 issue of Word From Jerusalem, we incorrectly reported that Dimitar Peshev was recognized by Yad Vashem for saving 48,000 Jews in Thrace and Macedonia from deportation to Nazi death camps. The Jews he rescued were all from Bulgaria proper and not these occupied regions.

"It was quite an awesome experience to hear from Holocaust survivors who flashed back over their lives," said David Scott, a church elder from Scotland. "I was especially touched by the gentleman who recalled losing his mother too early to even remember her."
SINCE 1980, thousands of Christians from around the globe have ascended to Jerusalem year after year to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles. The ICEJ's annual Christian celebration of this biblical Feast is Israel's largest annual tourist event, with people coming from more than 100 nations for a common purpose – to worship the Lord, celebrate in His presence, and bless the people of Israel.

In his prayer of Psalm 86, King David says in verse 9: “All the nations You have made will come and bow down before You, Lord, and will honor Your name.”

Notice that David does not merely state in this Psalm that the nations will bow down and honor the name of the Lord in some unspecified location, but he specifically says that they “will come.” This passage was most likely written in Jerusalem, the city of the great King — so David was envisioning a day when all nations would come to Jerusalem to worship the Lord. We also see this same vision expressed by the prophet Zechariah:

“And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles” (Zechariah 14:16).

It is our continual prayer that pilgrims who come up to Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles with us will encounter God in a life-changing way, be transformed by His presence, and empowered to return home and impact their churches, communities, and nations. In addition, the sight of Christians from around the world in Jerusalem during the Feast touches the people of Israel immensely, stirring their faith in the God of their fathers.

This year, join the stream of nations that will ascend to Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast from October 10 - 15. It will surely be a week of dynamic teaching, ministry, prayer, and worship to Lord! And we have an exciting new home for our gathering this year at the brand new Jerusalem arena so you will not want to miss it!

This year in Jerusalem! 🙌

REGISTER TODAY FOR THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES BY VISITING: http://feast.icej.org/register
Land (Deuteronomy 11:11-12). He had cut a covenant with them!

It is no wonder, then, that the God of Israel actually says: “and they (all the males) shall not appear before the Lord empty-handed” (Deuteronomy 16:16). He expected gifts! They were supposed to give as they were able, and according to the blessing of the Lord which He had promised to provide them.

No where does the Lord give an impression that they could just show up with empty hands – just the opposite. He was the Lord their God, and all His words to them were clearly geared towards lifting their expectations that they should come to the Feast of Weeks rejoicing, and gladly bringing gifts to their God, whom they loved, worshipped and served! These gifts they would actually give to God ‘of His own’ (1 Chronicles 29:14).

Have you ever stopped to think about it? God has set certain times and holy festivals of the Lord, so that His own people could come before Him giving, rejoicing, celebrating His goodness and worshipping Him with great gladness! Giving was part of the Feasts of the Lord, because it increases joy; this is why clear instructions – and promises – were given concerning this.

We are in the season of celebrating Pentecost and the coming of the Holy Spirit! Why not consider giving a special gift to the Lord during this time? You may be doing it for the very first time ever at Pentecost. But, give a freewill offering, a real praise offering, for His divine providence and care over your life.

If you are a pastor, please consider dedicating this year’s Pentecost offering of your church to the prophetic return of the Jewish people back to their homeland. By giving towards our Aliyah operations, you can also help Jewish people in coming back to Zion to present themselves before the Lord!
ICEJ-USA TOURS

www.iceusa.org/tours  |  iceusa@iceusa.org  |  888-772-7732 ext 735

JULY 15 - 25, 2014

OCTOBER 8 - 18, 2014

PICTURE YOURSELF IN ISRAEL THIS YEAR!

ARISE YOUNG ADULT TOUR

FEAST OF TABERNACLES TOUR

Reserve your place now! Deadline to sign up is approaching fast!

PASTOR’S AND MINISTRY LEADER’S JANUARY 2015
TOUR OF ISRAEL & FEAST • October 8 - 18, 2014

call: 800-772-7732 x735 • email: icejusa@icejusa.org • online: www.icejusa.org

EXPERIENCE
October 10 - 15, 2014
A LIFE-CHANGING EVENT
REGISTER TODAY
IN ISRAEL
FEAST.ICEJ.ORG

RESTORATION

FEAST of TABERNACLES 2014
PRESENTED BY THE INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN EMBASSY JERUSALEM