REACHING THE NATIONS
ICEJ FINDING OPEN DOORS ON ALL CONTINENTS

PLUS
SYRIA UPDATE  BY DAVID PARSONS
ISAIAH 62 PRAYER CAMPAIGN // IRANIANS AT HAIFA HOME
RUPPIN ACADEMIC CENTER // FEAST OF TABERNACLES
ICEJ NEWS // INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND

SUkkot BIBLE TEACHING
HARVEST: PART III  BY DR. JÜRGEN BÜHLER
LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear friends,

As I write this, the entire Middle East remains in chaos as the Arab uprisings continue to send shock waves throughout the region. The horrific war in Syria is still raging and has cost the lives of at least 100,000 people. Egypt is on the verge of another revolution, while the Kingdom of Jordan also is becoming politically unstable.

We have witnessed even more uncertainties in recent weeks, as Turkey is faced with unexpected riots and Iran’s notorious president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad was replaced by a supposedly more ‘moderate’ figure. If we include the lingering conflicts in Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya, then there does not seem to be much hope for the Middle East.

However, there is one factor of stability and that is knowing there is a God in heaven. The God of the Bible predicts times when everything – even the nations – will be shaken. “For thus says the Lord of hosts: ‘Once more (it is a little while) I will shake heaven and earth, the sea and dry land; and I will shake all nations, and they shall come to the Desire of All Nations, and I will fill this temple with glory’, says the Lord of hosts.” (Haggai 2:6-7)

The end result will be that the nations will “come to the Desire of All Nations” and that God will fill His temple with His glory. The ultimate desire of all nations is no one else than the one who gave his life on behalf of all peoples. “Christ the most desirable”, as John Wesley called him.

This thought should be our prayer for the Middle East. We might not understand all the political turmoil and complexities of the Middle East, but we know God promised that one day “the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea”. (Habakkuk 2:14)

This is the hope we also want to share in this magazine with you as we focus especially on what God is doing in the nations. I pray that it will be a a source of encouragement for you.

May the Lord bless you out of Zion!

DR. JÜRGEN BÜHLER
ICEJ Executive Director
Focus on Arise

Arise seeks to raise up a new generation of Christian Zionists who will comprehend God’s everlasting covenant and redemptive purposes for the nation of Israel; take an active part in what God is doing as they engage their roles as young adults in this unique time in history; and rejoice over the Jewish roots of their faith as they visit and tour the land of the Bible.

Arise aims at mobilizing an army of young Christians who are uncompromisingly committed to following God’s plan for their lives.

Through an interactive website, bi-monthly newsletter and various tours and programs, Arise informs young adults about Israel and offers them opportunities to take an active role in blessing the Jewish people.

To find out more about upcoming ICEJ events in your area visit us online at www.icejusa.org
THE LORD JESUS has given us a message to take forth from Jerusalem that nourishes the worldwide Body of Christ and builds up the spirits of individual believers everywhere. This word from the Lord lifts up discouraged hearts, fills lonely souls with hope, and raises glorious expectations concerning the wonderful future awaiting those who believe! At the same time, it also carries an urgency to be spiritually alert, to work in the here-and-now for the Kingdom of God, and to pursue our calling on this earth to its fullest!

As we pursue this mission through the ICEJ’s vast global network of national branches, I often describe our message as being “two horses – one chariot”. God has plans both for His Church and for Israel!

It is all about Jesus
The Bible is all about Jesus (Luke 24:27, 44-47; Revelation 19:10). However, he never came into a vacuum but into a certain context, which was the Jewish people and their historic homeland.

The Bible explains how God appeared to Abraham four thousand years ago and promised him that the Savior of the world would come through him (Genesis 12:1-7). He would be one of Abraham’s offspring, born among his descendants – through Isaac and Jacob – and in the very land God gave to him. He made a covenant with Abraham backed by a sworn oath that all this would surely happen (Genesis chapters 15, 22). And happen it did! God patiently worked out His plan over a period of two thousand years – and Jesus was born in Bethlehem!
Grafted in
After Jesus’ resurrection from the dead and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon His followers, the message of the Gospel went forth – first to the Jews and then to the Gentile nations. The message was clear: not only the Jews, but also the Gentiles now had access to the Father through Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:11-18). We as Gentiles were grafted in to the family of God as His fully adopted sons and daughters (Romans 11:17-21; Galatians 3:26-29; Ephesians 3:6!)

Ingathering of the Jews
After the tragic destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple by the Romans in 70 AD, the Jewish people were exiled to the four corners of the world – just like the prophet Ezekiel, and Jesus Himself through tears, had foretold (Ezekiel 12:15; Luke 19:41-44; 21:20-24). But the same figures also have said the Jewish people would return – based on the covenant promises God gave to Abraham (Ezekiel 36:22-28, Luke 21:24).

And they have returned! God has brought the Jewish people back from among the nations to their ancient homeland after two thousand years of wanderings. The modern-day physical restoration of Israel has become an established fact before our very eyes! His plans for the Church, to spread the Gospel to all nations, and His plans to bring Israel back, have both happened! God is forever faithful and true! And He has brought Israel back for a reason. God’s plans concerning the Church and Israel will lead to the very same glorious end result – the return of His beloved Son to rule over this world!

The Second Coming of Jesus
Just as the first coming of Jesus did not happen in a vacuum, neither will his second coming. Again, the setting and context will be the same Jewish people and their historic homeland!

God made a covenant not only with Abraham, but also with King David and promised that His seed would rule and reign from Jerusalem over both a restored Israel back in her land and the Gentile nations around the world! (2 Samuel 7:1-17; Psalm 2; Isaiah 2:1-4; Jeremiah 3:17; Zechariah 14:16)

The Jewish people have returned physically to their homeland as a nation, and now will also be restored spiritually to their God as a nation (Ezekiel 36:22-28; 37). Indeed, they shall one day welcome their King back to Jerusalem! (Matthew 23:37-39)

Two horses, one chariot
Our message of God’s complementary plans concerning Israel and the Church thus nourishes the soul and awakens the spirit of the believers, by declaring how God has been faithful and true to His Word! We have been called to share the Gospel everywhere while also holding on to the glorious promise of the King’s return. We should be waiting for Him like a bride waits for her groom – with joy, in full faith, hope and expectancy!

The King has said that when Israel is back in her land, His followers should lift up their heads, for their redemption is drawing near (Luke 21:24-28). In other words, the Church should rejoice when the Jews are back in their land. Jesus is coming! On the other hand, Jesus also said that this Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world as a witness to all nations, and then the end will come (Matthew 24:14).

One of our eyes should then be constantly looking on Israel, on Jerusalem and on the Jewish people worldwide – for their good, for their blessing and for their protection! And we should actively take part in God’s doings and dealings with her. And the other eye should be on the nations – for their good, blessing and protection!

That is, we should be driving with two horses but standing in one chariot! Because these horses are running parallel, going in the same direction and both are part of that larger redemptive process which ends with the return of the King and the restoration of justice on the earth – and He will be the same King over both horses!
THE NEED IS $200,000

THE DOORS are wide open to us not only in Africa. Countries in Latin America and Asia are waiting as well! China has opened for us and soon we will have a Chinese language website!
AT THIS TIME, the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem is experiencing a huge open door in front of us, inviting us to come into the nations and share our message. And for this we would need partners!

AFRICA

In our recent publications, we have written of a prophetic word which we received three years ago, that the Lord would open ten new Arab/Muslim countries for our ministry – even though Israel at that time was “an abomination” to those nations. Today seven of these nations have already been opened!

We have opened a branch in an Arab nation in North Africa that is 99% Muslim, we have gone into Niger, Senegal, Mali, Guinea (all roughly 90% Muslim), Sierra Leone (60% Muslim) and Burkina Faso (50% Muslim). But we need partners to fund these open doors and for our message to penetrate those nations and reach their leaders, both the spiritual leaders and the national decision-makers!

In some of these countries we have been able to mobilize the whole Body of Christ to work together with us and they are fully behind our ministry. We also have met with the political leadership of those nations – but we need to do more to keep up the good work that has begun!

Other open countries in Africa, where the Church is eagerly waiting for us to come in to minister and share our message on Israel, are Benin, Togo, Liberia and Congo. In fact, at the moment we have open doors to minister in more than 20 different nations in Africa! Clearly, now is the Lord’s timing for Christians in Africa to get connected to Israel and God’s purposes for her! And we are poised to be used mightily in this calling – together with you!

Latin America & Asia

The doors are wide open to us not only in Africa. Countries in Latin America and Asia are waiting as well! China has opened for us and soon we will have a Chinese language website! All this is beyond our human powers and capabilities – as it should be! Because this is the Lord’s doing and must be done in His power and with His resources!

There are also countries not mentioned by name here, but would need your partnership to really make a difference for Israel in the lives of their citizens.

International Development Fund

In the light of these promising developments within our ministry worldwide, we really need to take heed to the word we have received from the Lord, that we may fulfill it! For this purpose, we have established an “International Development Fund” for those who would partner with us in this great cause to be a blessing to Israel and to connect more of the Lord’s body worldwide to Israel!

Partnership

The Apostle Paul, in his letter to the Corinthians, reveals how anyone through his or her financial gift becomes a partaker of the very cause where the gift is given (2 Corinthians 8-9).

By contributing towards our ministry efforts in the nations you will not only be enabling us to meet spiritual needs, but also to become an active partner of these dear saints who so strongly desire to bless Israel! So please prayerfully consider what you could do to further this outreach into many new nations and God’s people there! And remember: whoever blesses Israel shall be blessed! (Genesis 12:1-3)

THE NEED IS $200,000

DONATE

Please consider donating to the International Development Fund. May the Lord Jesus be glorified and Israel blessed through this “International Development Fund” and through your generous gifts towards the cause! You may give today online at: www.us.icej.org/international
EXCITING REPORTS FROM THE NATIONS

BY REV. JUHA KETOLA
ICEJ INTERNATIONAL DIRECTOR

OUR MESSAGE OF GOD’S PLANS concerning Israel and the Church – ‘driving two horses but standing in one chariot’ – has spread out in the last three decades to all the continents of the world and has been heard in more than 140 nations! In recent weeks we have seen more very exciting developments in the nations. We are truly in a fresh new season!

I recently travelled to Slovenia to officially inaugurate our latest European branch and set apart our new national directors there, Pastors Marcos and Letticia Tavares. Marcos has a powerful calling on his life and it is amazing to see how God is using him!

Together with his wife, they planted a church in Maribor, Slovenia two years ago. Today, they have people in their congregation from all walks of life who have been won from the world of sin into the saving knowledge of Jesus. This local church has grown as new people were called by God to come out from the world – not by transfers from other churches!

Marcos is also a professional soccer player and the captain of his team NK Maribor, which won both the League and Cup championships of Slovenia again this year! He was also the top scorer in the league. Marcos is a living testimony for God not only in his city, but in the whole country, as he uses every opportunity to give forth a very public witness of Jesus. Truly in his personal and family life, and in his church, the message of ‘two horses and one chariot’ is being lived, experienced and practiced! Whoever blesses Israel shall be blessed!

During a ministry visit to Italy in May, my wife Kati and I saw first-hand how the ICEJ’s impact and influence has grown among the Evangelical churches, thanks to the leadership of our Italian national director, Rev. Tony Rozzini. One of the bright and clear signs of this was when close to 20 local church leaders from the area around Tony’s home city of Bergamo, in northern Italy, came for a dinner and pastors’ briefing on the ministry of ICEJ. As a result, many of the leaders have welcomed our ministry into their churches!

Tony’s own church in Bergamo is one of the largest in the area. The current church building was newly built, but plans are already under way to make it larger in order to have more needed space for various activities and outreaches. His church also has a talented group of singers and musicians, and thus one of the ICEJ ministry engagements he organized in the area was a special musical concert to honor Israel.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 15)
ICEJ-Brazil mass rally stands with Israel

By REV. JUHA KETOLA

Brazil is one of the prime examples today of a nation where the Christians are supporting and blessing Israel. The number of evangelical Christians is rapidly growing in this vast and populous Portuguese-speaking country, as nearly 30% of the people are now born-again believers. And they are really standing with Israel! One of the most influential leaders in the growing Church in Brazil is our national director there, Apostle Rene Terra Nova.

For many years, Dr. Terra Nova has been raising up spiritual leaders – not just in his native country but also throughout Latin America. They are being taught the importance of Jerusalem and the Jewish people for our Christian faith TODAY, and not only for yesterday! And his labors in the Lord have not been in vain, as he now leads a network of churches in South America that together have more than six million members!

In June, Apostle Terra Nova and the ICEJ-Brazil branch organized a gathering in the city of Manaus of over 7,000 pastors and ministry leaders at which I was able to deliver a teaching on Israel. Afterwards, close to 100,000 Christians gathered for a mass rally in the city’s large Samba Stadium to glorify Jesus, to worship and celebrate – and to bless Israel! To see thousands of Israeli flags, including one huge flag covering a whole section of the arena, was truly amazing! People were waving their flags and praying for the nation of Israel and the city of Jerusalem unashamedly! The Church in Brazil is truly standing with Israel – God’s chosen people!

ICEJ-Latvia sponsors Yad Vashem exhibit ‘No Child’s Play’

By ILZE SAULITE

THE ICEJ-LATVIA BRANCH recently joined with the Embassy of Israel in Latvia and Lithuania to sponsor a nationwide tour of Yad Vashem’s traveling exhibition “No Child’s Play”, a poignant display of photos and archives of life for Jewish children during the Holocaust.

The tour’s grand opening was held in April at the Latvian Museum of War in Riga, and was attended by representatives of the Latvian government, the diplomatic corps, the Jewish community, public figures from the educational and cultural fields, historians, clergy, journalists and many others.

In his welcoming remarks, Israeli Ambassador Hagit Ben-Yaakov stated: “It is not easy to find the right words when we speak about approximately 1.5 million children murdered in the Holocaust just because they were Jewish... The Holocaust is a universal tragedy and it is our duty to remember what happened and to educate the younger generation to ensure that something like that never happens again.

We have to teach moral values... This is an overall human tragedy.”

The Ambassador of Germany, Andrea Wiktorn, remarked that: “Even though there is an extensive teaching about the Holocaust in German schools, one problem still exists. In many families parents and grandparents never talk about what they saw, what they did or what they didn’t do... Unfortunately some danger still exists under this blanket of silence – prejudices flourish, negation of this unforgivable crime is encouraged, and sometimes anti-Semitism sprouts again from the fertile soil... As an historian and also in my capacity as Ambassador of Germany, I see it as a part of my task to openly address the crimes of the Holocaust so that we never forget them.”

The idea of bringing the “No Child’s Play” exhibit to Latvia came from the director of Christian Friends of Yad Vashem, Dr. Susanna Kokkonen, who spoke in Riga in 2011. The Christian Desk at Yad Vashem was founded in partnership with the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem in 2006 to bring the universal lessons of the Holocaust to the Christian world.

The opening of the exhibition was well covered by the local media. The exhibit will go on display in museums, culture centers, churches and other institutions over the summer months, but the main target audience will be schools all over Latvia after the re-start of classes in September.

Funding for the traveling exhibit, which was translated into the Latvian language, was also provided by the Ministry of Education and Science in Latvia, the American, Austrian, German, Hungarian and Swedish embassies in Riga, and the local European Commission representative, among others.
**RUSSIA**

**MOSCOW PRO-ISRAEL RALLY**

*BY HOWARD FLOWER

The International Christian Embassy Jerusalem initiated an historic event in Moscow in May, when a delegation of Israeli Knesset members addressed the largest-ever pro-Israel rally in Russia and plans were formulated to establish a caucus in the Russian parliament to support Israel.

More than 800 Christian supporters of Israel and dozens of high-level Jewish dignitaries attended the landmark event, which sought to build closer bonds between Israel and Russia and also celebrated Israel’s 65th anniversary.

The day-long activities began with a working session between members of the Israeli delegation and Bishop Konstantin Bendas, who serves as senior administrator of the Pentecostal church in Russia and an advisor to the State Duma – the lower house of the Russian parliament. At the meeting, Bishop Bendas agreed to present a formal proposal from the KCAC to the government of the Russian Federation to initiate the establishment an Israel Allies’ Caucus in the Duma.

Afterwards, the KCAC and WJC delegations met with senior pastors and Christian leaders from all over Russia and the former Soviet republics. The meeting focused on increasing Christian support for Israel at the grassroots level throughout Russia and other neighboring countries.

Then in the evening, the church hall was filled as Jewish and Christian leaders offered inspiring messages affirming their solidarity with Israel and the importance of Russia’s Evangelical community in building bridges between the two nations. The speeches were interspersed with a celebration of Israeli history and culture, featuring Israeli music and dance and including a selection of Jewish songs by Birgitta Veksler.

The ICEJ’s Russian branch took the lead in bringing the various representatives together and arranging the entire gathering.

Some of the other respected Jewish figures involved in the rally included: Adolf Shaevich, Chief Orthodox Rabbi of the Russia Federation; Alla Gerber of the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation and President of the

Holocaust Foundation; Yuri Dombrowski, chairman of the Russian Jewish Congress; Ilona Hilkovskaya, chief emissary of the Jewish Agency for Israel in Russia; and Alex Kagalsky of the Israeli Embassy in Moscow.

Among the Christian leaders and speakers at the rally was the host pastor, Mats Ola Ishoel of the Moscow Word of Life Church, and Sergei Zolotarevsky, senior pastor of the Moscow Central Baptist Church.

“The World Jewish Congress is committed to strengthening ties between Christians around the world who share our commitment to Israel”, Shai Hermesh told the audience.

“Our visit to Moscow has strengthened the bond between our people, and we also want to assure Christians in Russia that Israel will help protect their communities and holy places in the Middle East.”

More than 800 Christian supporters of Israel and dozens of high-level Jewish dignitaries attended the largest ever pro-Israel rally in Russia, organized by the ICEJ...
BRANCHES

CANADA

Busy season for ICEJ-Canada

The ICEJ-Canada branch has been very active in recent months both in Canada and in Israel. While National Director Donna Holbrook was leading a tour group on a solidarity visit to Israel in May, some 50 members of ICEJ-Canada took part in the annual “Walk for Israel” in Toronto. Besides demonstrating public support for Israel, the march raises funds for charitable causes in Israel supported by the Jewish Federation of Greater Toronto. Dressed in Mountie-red T-shirts with the ICEJ logo and Isaiah 40:1 mandate, the Christian Embassy marchers drew much interest and words of appreciation from Jewish participants.

Meanwhile, the Canadian branch also co-sponsored a speaking tour through Canada of a group of 17 Israeli students and soldiers who came to share a positive message about Israel’s vibrant democracy and rich cultural mosaic just ahead of the annual anti-Israel hate-fest on North American campuses known as Apartheid Week.

The young Israelis, which included not just Jews but also Bedouin, Druze and other Arabs, joined local Canadian students on various campuses to talk about life, culture and politics in Israel. The new initiative, called “Wordswap”, was meant to counter attempts by anti-Israel activists to promote the boycott, divestment and sanctions campaign against Israel.

“Israel is not perfect. Canada is not perfect”, Maimun Azmi, a 33-year-old Druze Muslim from a village near Mt. Carmel, told The Catholic Register. He acknowledged some levels of discrimination against minorities in Israeli society, but he insisted the country as a whole values and protects all its citizens.

“We (Druze) want to be in Israel,” added the former IDF officer who is now a young lawyer in the Israeli civil service.

UNITED KINGDOM

ICEJ-UK hosts annual conferences

BY MARK STARBUCK

This spring, the ICEJ-UK branch held its annual conferences in the North and South of England. In late April, the Millbrook Christian Centre in Southampton hosted the ‘Southern Conference’, which was attended by about 180 delegates from the city and surrounding region. The theme was “For Such a Time as This” and keynote speaker Rev. David Pawson spoke on “The End Times - Are we there yet?” His ministry was challenging, inspiring and thought-provoking, providing answers to many questions on how the Church should be responding to the season that we are in.

The worship team was joined by Ray Sidney, a well-known Gospel artist from America who performs regularly as part of the Feast vocal team in Jerusalem, as well as by Paul and Jess Parkhouse and a number of other local musicians. The worship was vibrant and passionate, with moments of toe-tapping and joyous hands waving in the air, as well as times of just quietly soaking in the powerful presence of the Lord.

One session that was of particular interest was a talk by Howard Stern and his colleague ‘Christy’ from Amadeus EU. Christy is a young Palestinian Christian convert who had to flee persecution in her hometown of Bethlehem to seek refugee status in the United Kingdom. She is a bold and capable speaker who shared candidly about her journey to faith in Christ, as well as of her experiences as she began to read the Scriptures and ask questions about Israel’s place within the purposes of God. A significant observation by her was that many Palestinian Christians found Israel’s former presence in places like Bethlehem a source of protection and safety for them.

The on-going work of the Christian Embassy was highlighted, ICEJ International Director Rev. Juha Ketola delivered a video greeting, and many were encouraged to come visit Israel, including to attend the Feast of Tabernacles this fall.
THE LAST of the THREE GREAT HARVEST FEASTS of the Bible is Sukkot, or the Feast of Tabernacles. Sukkot is celebrated in early autumn and marks the end of the annual harvest cycle. This final and biggest harvest season of the agricultural year brought in the fruits of the various trees and vines (olive, dates, figs, grapes and many others). Israel gave thanks for another year of provision. God had been faithful from spring to autumn, exactly as He promised Noah: “While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, winter and summer, and day and night shall not cease.” (Genesis 8:22)

The Feast of Increase
During the harvest cycle, Israel experienced the Lord as a God of increase. At Passover, the first feast in the first month, an offering of the first fruits was waved before the Lord in a prophetic declaration that God would provide in the coming year. This offering was accompanied with a burnt offering of one male lamb (Leviticus 23:12).

Fifty days later at Pentecost, in the third month, the barley and wheat harvest were brought in. Two leavened loaves of bread were waved before the Lord accompanied with a sacrifice of seven lambs (Leviticus 23:17-18).

Then after the long and dry summer, the rest of the harvest ripened around Sukkot. This last harvest was vital, as it produced the olive oil and wine. A great variety of fruits fed the nation during the coming winter. God commanded seven days of rejoicing with generous sacrifices of thanksgiving. The “four species” were waved before the Lord (Leviticus 23:40), accompanied by daily sacrifices totalling 70 bulls, 98 lambs and 14 rams. It was a week of joyous thanksgiving as God had provided His blessing and increase again (Deuteronomy 30:9).

A final harvest of souls
In recent months, we noted how Jesus fulfilled in great detail the first two harvest feasts. Exactly on the day of the first fruit, on the day after the Sabbath of
Europe may be emptying, but churches can still save thousands each day. The cathedrals of their millions. Evangelistic outreaches see people flock to churches in their millions. Today, we are witness to what many consider the greatest harvest in church history. 

More people are coming to faith today than in any period of history. The Gospel is currently impacting nations which were still unreached one hundred years ago. In places like Lagos, Manaus and Manila, Sunday traffic is at almost the same level as weekdays as people flock to churches in their millions. Evangelistic outreaches see thousands saved each day. The cathedrals of Europe may be emptying, but churches can be found thriving today in Kampala, Seoul and Sao Paolo.

The completion of the Temple
There is another important aspect of the Feast of Tabernacles. It was not just a celebration of harvest, but Sukkot was also the time when the Temple in Jerusalem was completed and dedicated by Solomon (2 Chronicles 5:11ff). So it was during these days that the shekinah glory of God filled the Temple, so that the priests could not stand to minister. It became a "house of prayer for all nations", where God’s people could seek His presence (Isaiah 56:7).

The Apostle Peter likens the building of the Church to the building of a holy Temple of believers worldwide. It is a Temple not built with dead blocks of stone but with "living stones" of men and women regenerated by the Spirit of God.

The prophet Zechariah saw a vision of the rebuilding of the Temple despite great difficulties. He sees two olive trees (two anointed ones) which provide a continuous flow of pure, golden olive oil into the seven-branch Temple menorah. The prophet marvelled at the vision, and an angel answered: "Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit," says the Lord of hosts... And he shall bring forth the capstone with shouts of 'Grace, grace to it!' ... The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house, and his hands will finish it." (Zechariah 4:6-9)

Jesus refers to himself as the cornerstone, rejected by the builders (Matthew 21:42). It is he who laid the foundation of the Church (Ephesians 2:19-22). Yet as the Temple nears completion, the prophet sees the one who started the temple also placing the capstone as the finishing touch. Christ will ensure that the Church he established two thousand years ago will come to its glorious completion.

If you consider the incredible revivals around the world today, you cannot help but shout as Zechariah: "Grace, grace to it!" The Church of the living God is not a work of man. And it cannot be explained outside the move of His Spirit, which is a spirit of grace.

The nations worship God

Another unique aspect of Sukkot is that the gentle nations are able to join the people of Israel in worshipping the God of Israel. A few years ago, the Chief Rabbi of Haifa shared with us his understanding regarding the sacrifice of seventy bulls at the Temple during Sukkot. He said they represented the 70 nations of the world at that time, according to biblical tradition, and they signified to the Jewish people that God had a plan for the gentle nations as well. The Temple in Jerusalem was to be a house of prayer for all nations.

Again, it is the prophet Zechariah who foresees a time when all the nations will come up to Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles (Zechariah 14:16). This Feast which we celebrate each year is a wonderful foretaste of that great day. It is always a miracle to see pilgrims from the furthest parts of the world arriving in Jerusalem for Sukkot. What a glorious celebration that will be when the King himself returns to Jerusalem to establish his Kingdom in this city.

The great restoration

Finally, the Feast of Tabernacles is the time when Jewish tradition expects the Messiah will arrive to set up his Kingdom. John 7 alludes to this. That is why the Feast of Tabernacles is considered the greatest of the three pilgrimage feasts. It is the feast which anticipates the restoration of all things (Acts 3:21). The Messiah’s Kingdom will be established in a restored Israel.

A global harvest of saints from all tribes and nations will represent a spiritual Temple made of Jews and gentiles. And Jerusalem, the city of the great king, will be the seat of this kingdom of righteousness and peace. His dwelling place will again be Jerusalem.

"Thus says the Lord: 'I will return to Zion, and dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. Jerusalem shall be called the City of Truth, The Mountain of the Lord of hosts, The Holy Mountain.'" (Zechariah 8:3)

What a glorious expectation! 😊

Please join us in Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles 2013!

Find out more at www.icejusa.org/Feast
Offering Shameless Requests

BY DR. JÜRGEN BÜHLER

TO BE SHAMELESS TOWARDS GOD is something none of us would want. Yet this is exactly the attitude which Jesus encourages in the parable in Luke 11:5-10. It is the story of a man who is surprised at midnight by unexpected visitors. Middle Eastern hospitality directs him to provide for his guests even at such a late hour. So he decides to wake his neighbor and ask: “Lend me three loaves.” His neighbor is obviously annoyed. “Leave me alone! you are waking up the kids!” But the man will not let go and finally sees his request met.

In this unusual parable, Jesus teaches an important lesson about prayer. The answer to the man’s request for bread has nothing to do with friendship, but is due to “his persistence” (Luke 11:8). The Greek word anaideia, which the New King James Version translates as ‘persistence’, occurs only here in the Bible. Yet its usage in ancient Greek literature normally means a “lack of sensitivity to what is proper - insolence, impudence, shamelessness”. Thus it is a request which is totally out of order. In Hebrew today, this would be called chutzpa – or “audacity”.

This might leave you uneasy. No one wants to show impudence towards God. However, the key to this parable lies in the nature of the request. The insistent neighbor did not ask anything for himself but for needy people who had suddenly arrived at his doorstep.

Jesus is saying that when you encounter others with needs, your prayers can even be out of place. When you seek God regarding matters He called you to, it’s okay to have a courageous ‘chutzpah’ and expect Him to answer.

In the context of our ministry in Jerusalem, this emboldens my prayers for Israel and the ICEJ. I understood that God even expects me to ask for the unusual.

Here are a few guidelines on how you can pray boldly for Israel and the region.

1) Pray for spiritual revival in Israel.

This surely is the greatest gift God could bestow upon His people. Many Old Testament prophets foretold this would happen one day. Jesus encourages us to expect revival now! “Do you not say, ‘There are still four months and then comes the harvest?’ Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!” (John 4:35)

2) Pray for revival among the Arabs in Israel and Palestinian areas.

What is true for Israel is also true for the Palestinians. God’s heart beats for them as well. He wants them redeemed today rather than tomorrow. Jesus said: “I came to send fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled!” (Luke 12:49)

3) Pray for peace between Israel and the Arab nations.

Isaiah forewarned an incredible era of peace and blessing in a region torn today by crises and war, when “Israel will be one of three with Egypt and Assyria – a blessing in the midst of the land...” (Isaiah 19:23-25)

4) Pray for a release of greater resources for the ICEJ.

Too many times, real needs come to us and we have to turn them away due to a lack of funds as our money has been spent on other vital projects. Let us ask the Lord together for an increase so that His name might be glorified in the Land!

The next global day of prayer and fasting in our Isaiah 62 Prayer Campaign will be on Wednesday, August 7, 2013. Please join us! ☬

us.icej.org/isaiah-62-prayer-initiative
The Board of Trustees for the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem met recently and elected new officers. The current slate of Board members include the following:

**ICEJ BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Over the past year, the leadership of the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem has established a global Board of Advisors to give guidance and counsel. Made up of respected servants of God with years of wisdom and ministry experience to offer, the Advisory Board currently consists of the following:

**ICEJ BOARD OF ADVISORS**

The Board of Trustees for the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem met recently and elected new officers. The current slate of Board members include the following:

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9)

**TAIWAN**

During a visit to Taiwan in June, I found the Church is very much awake and moving forward! It was delightful to see and taste the spiritual freshness and openness towards God and our message among the believers. The Church is praying, witnessing, winning souls and expecting to experience revival in the land! I met people with a vision and clear direction from the Lord, as well as a marketplace mentality. That is, we should influence people everywhere for God with the Gospel and see our jobs, businesses, positions and educations as opportunities and gifts and responsibilities from God to make a difference in the lives of those around us daily and in society at large.

In Taiwan, you can find business people who are giving even more than half of their business profits to advance the Kingdom of God! In this kind of life-filled spiritual atmosphere our message is completely ‘at home’, and it was wonderful to share about God’s plans concerning Israel, the Church and the nations! ICEJ-Taiwan had organized a lot of different ministry activities with preaching, teaching and meetings with key spiritual leaders.

Our national director, Deborah Chou, now has in place a wonderful team, with excellent Board members who are all active in the Kingdom of God! It truly is so that wherever the Holy Spirit is being received and honored, there Israel and God’s plans for her are welcomed and understood! Now is the time for Taiwan! 🇹🇼
Usually, Every Group That Visits the Haifa Home for Holocaust Survivors is uniquely touched by the home’s very special set of residents. Yet in early June, an unusual group of visitors stopped by for what was a truly exceptional encounter.

The visitors were a group of young Iranians who came face-to-face, for the first time in their lives, with the reality of the Holocaust. Most of the group were born in Iran as Muslims, but today they are Christian converts living in Britain. They were in Israel to visit Bible sites but also to meet Israelis.

While passing through Haifa, the fifteen young Iranians were invited to visit the home, which cares solely for needy Holocaust survivors and is funded by the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem. There, they heard first-hand stories about life in the ghettos and Nazi death camps.

With an ICEJ AID team helping to translate, survivor Shoshana Kolmer shared her story of being taken from her home in Hungary to Auschwitz, where most of her family perished. She told as much as she could remember and showed the group the number tattooed on her arm. Listening to her moving testimony, the Iranian visitors all welled up with tears.

“I just don’t understand”, said a shaken Morad (real names withheld due to relatives still in Iran). “How could a neighbor do that to a neighbor?”

“We used to be good neighbors”, one of the survivors responded. “Now we wait until we’re good neighbors again. Like here, like right now.”

As Kolmer finished, the group’s leader, Darius, approached and knelt at her feet. “It is difficult to understand what happened to you, probably only God can”, he said. “But we want to listen to you, and we pray for you.”

He added that as a child, he was raised to hate Israel. “Every morning at school the day was opened with the shout, ‘Death to Israel.’ Only years later when I became a Christian, I realized it was the land of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob”, said Darius. “I’m very happy we came here.”

The survivors and Iranian visitors began mingling one-on-one. There were more stories, and more tears to be wiped away.

“Coming here was the most important part of our trip”, Jannat told the survivors. “Your stories will live with us, and in us... We will never forget you, and

ICEJ AID

Iranians come face-to-face with the Holocaust

BY ESTERA WIEJA
we will tell all our friends about you."

During the visit, the subject of former Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad’s denial of the Holocaust came up. The survivors said they were outraged by his claims.

“I would like Ahmadinejad to look me in the eyes and say to my face that it did not happen”, insisted Esti Lieber, who as a small child watched the Germans burn her family’s house and kill her parents.

“I have not been able to call ‘Mama’ or ‘Papa’ since I was five years old... I want Ahmadinejad to explain to me how that didn’t happen!”

The Iranian visitors felt embarrassed by their native country’s leaders and the way the world sees Iran.

“It’s humiliating”, one young girl related. “Iranians don’t think that. Most of us realize the Holocaust happened and what a horror it was.”

Shimon Sabag, director of the home, noted that the survivor's greatest fear is that one day no one will remember them or the horrors they endured.

“This meeting was outside the box”, he said. “There is great significance to the fact that Iranian expatriates will now tell their stories.”

Please help us support and expand the work of the Haifa Home for Holocaust Survivors. Give today at: www.us.icej.org/expanding-haifa-home

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Please help us support our educational work with Ethiopian Jewish students in Israel. Give to ICEJ AID today at: www.us.icej.org/learning-all

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**ICEJ FUNDS STUDY PROGRAM FOR YOUNG ETHIOPIANS**

**THE INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN EMBASSY JERUSALEM** is currently funding a special studies program for Ethiopian Jewish students enrolled at the Ruppin Academic Center near Netanya. In May, ICEJ staff visited students at the college and also met a group of 120 IDF soldiers attending a special recruitment event for Ethiopians nearing the end of their military service.

The Ruppin studies program is uniquely geared to the needs of Ethiopian Jewish students, enabling them to earn marketable degrees and also teaching them to become cultural mediators within the Ethiopian community in Israel.

“The community leadership program teaches about your identity and the history of Ethiopian aliyah”, program coordinator Takele Mekonen told the soldiers. “You will learn how to read and write Amharic and you will volunteer in your community. You will spend time in boarding schools and serve as mentors for kids on the verge of dropping out of school. You are the ones who can help your brothers and sisters.”

Many in the Ethiopian Jewish community are still struggling to integrate into Israeli society. About 60 percent of Ethiopian immigrant families live below the poverty line. Many of the young people grow up in large families, often with illiterate parents. Thus they need extra tutoring as well as help with finances, to keep them from leaving school early. Mekonen’s own story is encouraging. He left Ethiopia at 16 years old and managed to reach Israel after time in a Sudanese refugee camp. Once in Israel, he learned Hebrew, studied engineering and served in the army. For eleven years he worked in a hi-tech company and made a good salary, but one day he quit his job.

“My wife thought I was crazy, but I wanted to help my own people”, Mekonen told the Ethiopian soldiers. “Anyone who wants to study can do so. Don’t be afraid to dream big! With hard work and discipline, it will happen.”

Liat is a first-year participant in the program who was inspired to join by her sister, who had two children but still made time to study. “It is hard but I love it”, she said. “I want to become a nurse.”

Students in the program receive a support package that includes tuition, a dorm room, living expenses, tutors, transportation and study excursions. The Christian Embassy is helping to cover the boarding costs for 22 Ethiopian Jewish students, without which many would not be able to participate.

Please support our educational work with Ethiopian Jewish students in Israel. Give to ICEJ AID today at: www.us.icej.org/learning-all
SYRIA’S BRUTAL CIVIL WAR and Iran’s renegade nuclear program pose serious threats to countries near and far. Yet Israel is the only nation truly stepping forward to confront these challenges, as the West still seems to be shell-shocked by the fallout of the 2003 Iraq war.

The US intelligence community in particular has been perilously slow at deciphering the obvious - that Iran is on the threshold of nuclear weapons capabilities and the Syrian regime has used chemical agents against its own citizens. This has given the Obama administration cover for its very hesitant approach to these threats.

Ten years ago, the US-led invasion of Iraq was driven by concerns over Iraq’s development of weapons of mass destruction and its involvement in sponsoring global terror, including a suspected role in the September 11 terror attacks. For instance, there were those reported mobile gas labs and Baghdad’s attempts to acquire uranium ore in central Africa.

Much of this intelligence was questioned at the time as being cooked up by “Zionist” elements in Washington. But then CIA chief George Tenet suggested Iraq’s WMDs were a “slam dunk” case and Secretary of State Colin Powell held up a five-pound bag of sugar at the UN Security Council to underline the seriousness of the anthrax threat.

And so the invasion of Iraq ensued. Yet significant stockpiles of WMDs were never located and the death toll began to mount. Although Saddam Hussein was swiftly toppled, both al-Qaida and Iran prolonged the bloodshed by deliberately turning Iraq into the main battlefield against the Crusader West.

Now no one today pines away for Saddam’s return and much of his chemical and biological arsenals likely wound up in Syria. But the war fatigue from Iraq and the intelligence failures associated with that conflict are still impacting us, as the West seems handicapped in dealing with the growing Syrian and Iranian threats.

In the case of Iran, there has been a persistent gap between US and Israeli estimates on Tehran’s progress towards developing atomic weapons. But that intelligence gap is now closing simply because Iran has drawn so near to the nuclear threshold. Thus, US President Barack Obama recently acknowledged that Tehran is less than a year away from being able to construct the Bomb.

At the UN Opening Assembly last September, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu famously set a red line for stopping Iran’s atomic quest, insisting the Ayatollahs must not be allowed to accumulate 250 kilos of uranium enriched to 20% purity - the amount needed to make one bomb. Iran is now perilously close to Netanyahu’s red line and thus we have reached the moment of truth on whether the US administration will keep its promise to confront Iran militarily, if necessary, or opt for containment.

Meantime, the bloodbath in Syria has claimed nearly 100,000 lives in the past two years, but the NATO countries have been
loath to get involved, as the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have soured the West on such interventions.

Obama did draw a red line in Syria, warning the US would act if Bashar al-Assad used his deadly arsenal of chemical weapons in his fight to stay in power. Yet in the face of credible reports that Assad loyalists indeed have used chemical agents on rebel forces, the White House now wants to establish a “chain of custody” back to the Assad regime.

As with Iran, this is a decision borne of a lack of Western political will to confront the rising dangers in Syria, and an intelligence community still gun-shy from the failures in Iraq.

Israel, on the other hand, has trusted its intelligence and acted decisively to reinforce its own red lines in Syria. Jerusalem does not want to get entangled in the civil war between Assad and the Sunni Arab majority, in part because the rebel forces are teeming with jihadists who hate Israel as well. But Netanyahu has warned that any attempt to funnel advanced weapons or WMDs to Hizbullah or al-Qaida militias would be thwarted.

The IDF has now backed up that warning with precision air strikes on at least three occasions in recent months. This includes twice targeting missile convoys headed for Hizbullah in Lebanon, as well as destroying a military research factory near Damascus.

These bold actions carried great risks, but they also sent a strong message to Iran that Israel means business when it comes to weapons of mass annihilation.

So far Syria has not retaliated for the Israeli attacks, most likely due to the Assad regime’s current preoccupation with survival. But it also failed to directly respond to the IAF’s reported strikes on the secret al-Kibar nuclear reactor in September 2006.

At that time, Israel had ample proof it was a nuclear plant based on a North Korean model and shared its hard evidence with the Bush administration. Yet the Bush team - still smarting from Iraq - questioned whether the plant was truly part of a nuclear weapons program and instead urged that the matter be handed over to the UN.

But not Israel! The Olmert government trusted its intelligence and courageously ordered air strikes on al-Kibar, which succeeded without drawing any Syrian military response.

No doubt Syria and its allies Iran and Hizbullah will now try to retaliate for the latest air strikes near Damascus through terror attacks on Israeli and Jewish ‘soft targets’ abroad. The Golan border is also becoming an active front again after 40 years of relative quiet.

All this has left Israel feeling it alone has the pluck to face the mounting threats from Syria and Iran, while the West remains handcuffed by the mistakes of yesteryear.

The problem is that Iran was and remains a much bigger threat to the region and the world than Iraq was ten years ago. In fact, then-prime minister Ariel Sharon paid two separate visits to Washington in the lead-up to the Iraq war specifically to warn president Bush that Iran was the greater threat.

So how did we wind up in this difficult place, where the West is so wearied of war and hamstrung by lingering doubts that it cannot deal with the real threat posed by Iran and its proxies? I believe all this negative fallout is because the US was seduced into Iraq.

Now Saddam is thankfully gone and our intelligence was not that far off. But something lured us into a fight in Iraq that dragged on way too long and handcuffed the West in dealing with the more serious menace in Tehran. I believe that something was what the Bible describes as seducing or deceiving spirits, which we are told will operate on a global scale in the “last days” (2 Thessalonians 2; 2 Timothy 3:13).

The West must defend our freedoms, but we are being slowly seduced into an endless war with Islam. It is a spirit that wants to destroy Israel but will never succeed. Yet it will seek to drain our resolve and stir up excuses for demonizing Israel and the West. It also seeks to provoke us into a massive military response that would result in the deaths of multitudes of Muslims. And that perhaps is what the devil wants most of all.

So how did we wind up in this difficult place, where the West is so wearied of war and hamstrung by lingering doubts that it cannot deal with the real threat posed by Iran and its proxies? I believe all this negative fallout is because the US was seduced into Iraq.

DAVID PARSONS is media director for the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem; www.icejusa.org
I CAN STILL REMEMBER the first time I met Michael Hines in the year 2002. It was in a noisy banquet room in the Jerusalem Crowne Plaza hotel where the ICEJ was frantically trying to register hundreds of participants for its annual Feast of Tabernacles celebration. Michael stuck out immediately, his tall thin frame, piercing blue eyes, spikey black hair and upper-crust British accent somewhat out of place in the midst of all the mayhem.

None of that seemed to concern Michael. His stoic, “stay calm and carry on” English demeanor could not, however, totally disguise the somewhat serious look in his eye that gave away a much deeper realization that was dawning upon him as he slowly took stock of his life. You see, he had come to Jerusalem as a newlywed, at the behest of his wife, who thought it would be fun to honeymoon in the Holy Land.

A couple of months down the road, and they were still honeymooning, albeit with their first child on the way and an offer to join the ICEJ’s media team in Jerusalem. Something special was about to be born for sure. One look at Michael, and you knew he knew it.

Did I mention that his wife, Bonni, had hauled him to Jerusalem? Indeed, for not only was Michael of the more liberal evangelical persuasion, not given to too much rar-rarring for Israel, but he had previously been in the employ of the Liberal Democrats in the U.K. before getting wed and leaving all, and I mean all, of that behind.

Thus, Michael found himself transformed from a raving liberal political hack to a staunch Christian Zionist journalist in the employ of the ICEJ. God has a great sense of humor. Not only that, He knows how to bless those who bless His people. I’m not talking about material blessings per se. No, I mean the real stuff. Five years after joining the ICEJ, Michael relocated to the ICEJ-USA office with Bonni, 4 healthy young kids (all Jerusalemites, i.e. born in Zion), and a deep understanding of God’s covenant with the Jewish people that had not only been well thought through in their minds, but literally written on their hearts.

Had Michael and his family gone a little native in Israel? Probably. Adjusting to life back in America was quite a challenge for them, never mind the expanded role Michael assumed at the US Branch as US Media Director. But, not only did Michael and his family flourish, overcoming the struggles of cross-continental migration, they harnessed all that they had taken to heart in Jerusalem and started pouring that out into the lives of others as opportunities were presented. For several summers, they even gave up the usual American summer vacation in exchange for a cross-country family road trip, engaging churches on behalf of the ICEJ and imparting the wonderful understanding that they had received about God’s amazing plans and purposes for Israel.

God had birthed something in their lives that would not and could not be suppressed. In a funny way, that’s why, when Michael first told me that he believed the Lord was leading him and his family into full-time ministry in a local church, I was not surprised. Michael’s passion for the local church and the noticeable anointing upon his preaching tipped us all off that one day he would take a pastoral position.

The ICEJ deeply appreciates the impact Michael had on our global ministry, both from Jerusalem and then the USA. His exceptional writing and graphic design presented the ministry of the ICEJ as one of excellence. But none of these skills could supersede the gifting God had been quietly developing through all those years of service.

It is with much sadness that we release Michael, knowing the unique talent and key team member that the US Branch and indeed the ICEJ globally will be losing. But, ultimately, we release him in great joy, knowing the benefit this will surely bring the Kingdom of God, which Jesus Himself commanded us to serve first.

The ICEJ wishes Michael, Bonni and their four Jerusalemites the very best in the Lord and thanks Michael for his many years of faithful and productive service not only to the ICEJ, but to Israel and the Jewish people worldwide.

Michael Hines is leaving the ICEJ at the end of July to join a church in Virginia as an Associate Pastor. If you would like to send him a farewell message, please email us at mail@icejusa.org and we will be sure to pass it on to him and his family.
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FEAST OF TABERNACLES 2013

YOUR 'APPOINTED TIME' IN JERUSALEM

The ICEJ's Annual Christian Celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem is an event unlike any other. The Feast is Israel's largest annual tourist event, with thousands of Christians coming from more than 100 nations for a common purpose - to worship the Lord, celebrate in His presence, and bless the people of Israel.

The Feast of Tabernacles was declared by God to be one of the “appointed times” when the Israelites were to gather for a sacred assembly before Him (Leviticus 23:33-37).

The Book of Zechariah (14:16) also speaks of a future time when all nations will come up to Jerusalem, “from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles”. So celebrating the Feast of Tabernacles has a unique significance in God’s calendar.

It is our continual prayer that pilgrims who ascend to Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast 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, seeing so many Christians from around the world in Jerusalem during the Feast touches the Jewish people immensely, stirring their faith in the God of Israel.

Let this year’s Feast be an “appointed time” in your life, to deepen your walk with the Lord and empower you for ministry. Be sure to join us from September 20 to 25 for a week of dynamic worship, teaching, ministry and prayer. You don’t want to miss it!

This year in Jerusalem!

COME TO THE FEAST WITH US!

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Tips ($150)
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ICEJ EXPANSION
Partnering with Pastor Jack Hayford and the Foursquare Denomination

The ministry of the ICEJ is entering a new season of growth internationally and the US Branch is no exception to that trend. In recent months we have been expanding our presence regionally in order to serve more local communities, with particular emphasis on South Florida where many amazing doors are opening to us.

While our Jerusalem leadership was welcoming Pastor Jack Hayford onto the ministry’s International Advisory Board in May, USA Director, Susan Michael, was meeting leaders of the Foursquare denomination at their Orlando convention. We are excited over this deepening relationship and thank Jonathan Hall, former VP for Global Operations with the Foursquare, for acting as the ICEJ’s liaison to this network of 70,000 churches worldwide. Jonathan is pictured above with Susan Michael and his two daughters.

MEMPHIS OUTREACH
Understanding Israel at GMPA

In May, the USA Branch was pleased to hold a groundbreaking Understanding Israel seminar at the Greater Memphis Pentecostal Assembly, reaching out to the predominantly African-American community of Southeast Memphis. In addition to a series of pastors’ lunches and home meetings in the weeks leading up to the event, we were featured on a local television panel of pastors discussing Christian support of Israel.

For more details on upcoming ICEJ events, or to request a speaker in your area call: (615) 895-9830
WWW.ICEJUSA.ORG/EVENTS

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