PREPARE THE WAY IN 2020
Dear Friends,

Israel has become a leading nation in so many areas. A recent visit to the ICEJ-sponsored ARISE Summit of some 500 mostly Evangelical business leaders from around the world underlined this, as these businesspeople sought for new ways to partner with Israeli counterparts. We are excited to see how these businesses and partnerships will blossom in 2020.

Here at the ICEJ there are also plenty of opportunities to grow various aspects of our ministry. The expansion of our Haifa Home is well underway, and we expect the resumption of Ethiopian Aliyah as soon as Israel’s new government is in place.

This year at the Feast of Tabernacles we will celebrate 40 years of the ICEJ. While we look back to remember God’s faithfulness in so many areas we also will look forward to the exciting things God is doing in the land of Israel and in the countries around Israel.

As I write this, I am saddened as we just learned of the passing of Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke who served on the ICEJ Advisory Board. Through his life, millions came to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. His ministry impacted the entire continent of Africa but was also characterized by a deep love for Israel. He was one of the great generals of God in our time and his ministry and testimony will be greatly missed.

I hope you are blessed as you read this month’s Word From Jerusalem.

Yours in Christ,

Dr Jürgen Bühler
ICEJ President

COVER PHOTO:
The Red Canyon in the Eilat Mountains
(Photographed during the Arise Summer Tour 2019)
Photo Credit: ICEJ/Jani Salonkangas

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visit www.icejusa.org/wfj
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One of the Bible’s most tragic figures is the prophet Balaam. He was a hired-guns prophet lured by fame, honor, and money to curse the people of God. Three times the New Testament uses him as a warning and example for similar types of evil prophets who would emerge in the last day’s church (2 Peter 2:15; Jude 1:11; Revelation 2:14). In many ways, Balaam’s story is an example of how Satan tries to attack the people of God—both Israel and the church today. The same strategy is repeated throughout history in the way nations and individuals deal with the Jewish people, and it is also employed by Satan when dealing with the church—through attacks from without and from within.

The story begins at the end of Israel’s 40 years of desert wandering; the nations in and around Canaan increasingly perceived the people of Israel as a major threat. After successfully countering attacks from the Canaanite king of Arad (Numbers 21:1–3) and the Amorites (Numbers 21:21-31), Israel stood at the banks of the Jordan River opposite Jericho, just about to enter into their destiny, the land of Israel. Then the Bible tells us: “Now Balak the son of Zippor saw all that Israel had done to the Amorites. And Moab was exceedingly afraid of the people because they were many, and Moab was sick with dread because of the children of Israel” (Numbers 22:2–3).

Balak, the Moabite king’s name, is best translated as “devastator.” Balak saw his influence shrinking and made a noteworthy decision. Unlike the kings of the Canaanites and the Amorites, he did not resort to his army and military experience but looked instead for a spiritual solution, a curse. He called for Balaam, an expert prophet known to communicate with Jehovah the almighty God. According to Jewish tradition, Balaam’s position among the gentile nations was equal to that of Moses regarding Israel.

While God repeatedly warned Balaam not to engage in that mission, Balaam persisted in looking for a spiritual loophole to still curse the people of Israel, and even a talking donkey could not dissuade him. When Balaam arrived at Moab, ready to fulfill his mission, what happened next is a textbook lesson on Satan’s schemes against God’s people.
him to a place overlooking the people of Israel:

So it was, the next day, that Balak took Balaam and brought him up to the high places of Baal, that from there he might observe the extent of the people. (Numbers 22:41)

But Balak’s scheme did not work, and God ordered Balaam to bless Israel, which he did: “How can I curse what God has not cursed . . . behold a people dwelling alone . . . let my end by like his” (Numbers 23:8–10).

Balak, furious about Balaam’s blessing, repeated the scheme but shifted the perspective: “Please come with me to another place from which you may see them; you shall see only the outer part of them, and shall not see them all; curse them for me from there” (Numbers 23:13). But even there, Balaam could only bless Israel: “God is not a man that he should change his mind . . . he has blessed and I cannot revoke. He has not beheld misfortune in Jacob . . . for there is no enchantment against Jacob” (Numbers 23:19–23).

Note what Balak did: he never gave Balaam the full picture but only showed him the “extent of the people” and “the outer part” of Israel. He only allowed Balaam to see the fringes of Israel and never the entire camp. The question is: What exactly did Balaam see? You might be surprised, but the Bible tells us what he probably saw.

The Fringes of the Camp

The Word of God provides great detail of what happened at the fringes, at the outskirts of the camp. In Leviticus 13:46, God commanded lepers where to live—outside the camp. This is also where criminals and blasphemers were stoned to death (Leviticus 24:14; Numbers 15:35), where the unclean lived (Numbers 5:3), and, in a case of war, where the army’s latrine was located. Imagine what Balaam saw when he looked at the “outer parts of the camp”; unclean people, lepers, stonings—and likely, constant toilet runs. It must have looked awkward and was thus an easy prey to curse.

It must have been even more amazing for Balaam when God was not willing to curse such an awkward-looking people. On the contrary, when Balaam prophesies by the Holy Spirit, “He has not beheld misfortune in Jacob nor has he seen trouble in Israel,” he might have wondered about whom is God speaking. “Is this really the people I see?” Balaam might have asked himself.

The Full Picture

But as Balaam prepared to prophesy a third time, he now understood it was a hopeless endeavor to curse Israel. God was obviously determined to bless Israel, and thus there must have been more to the people of God than what he saw. So Balaam tried to see the full picture:

Now when Balaam saw that it pleased the Lord to bless Israel, he did not go as at other times, to seek to use sorcery . . . And Balaam raised his eyes, and saw Israel encamped according to their tribes; and the Spirit of God came upon him. (Numbers 24:1–2)

What a magnificent view it must have been! The 12 tribes of Israel arranged in perfect order—three tribes each toward the east, south, west, and north, with every tribe’s banner directed toward the center. An inner ring of tents was reserved for the Levitical orders Kehat, Gershon, and Merari, and in the center of it all stood the tabernacle, with the cloud of glory by day and a pillar of fire by night. When Balaam saw this, the Spirit of God came upon him and he cried out: “How lovely are your tents oh Jacob, your encampments oh Israel!” He began to understand the purpose of God for Israel and declared, “Blessed are those who bless you and cursed are those who curse you” (Numbers 24:3–9).

A Spiritual Battlefield

This story has tremendous applications for us as Satan employs exactly the same scheme today. Small incidents in Israel make it with incredible ease into the world media. Just a few weeks ago, the United Nations pointed fingers again at Israel—the only democracy in the Middle East, a nation with a more free and diverse media than most other nations of the world, a nation that provides more international aid in global crisis situations than most other countries and who turned the desert into a garden of Eden.

Israel was not commended by the United Nations for its leadership but instead was condemned eight times that day. In an entire year, countries like North Korea, Syria, Iran, and similar states received only one (1) resolution against them in total. Israel received eight in one day! Surely, Israel is not a perfect country and many issues still need to be solved. But considering they are surrounded by entities and groups that plan 24/7 to annihilate them, the Jewish State is doing remarkably well if not better than many western democracies.
the full picture is so often withheld from decision-makers. Satan also works this way within the church and among believers. We all have our “fringe issues,” areas in our lives that are imperfect. That is true for any individual and for the church. None of us is perfect, and there is no perfect church. On the contrary, John says if we pretend to be perfect, we deceive ourselves and even make God a liar (1 John 1:8–10). But these “fringe issues” in our lives and in the lives of others are exactly the areas Satan likes to bring to our attention. He highlights what is imperfect in our churches, with our pastors, and with brothers and sisters around us. He points out the “fringe areas” of our spouses and our children and encourages a verdict based on them. Dwelling on these “fringe issues” and giving them room in our thinking and judgment can lead to church splits or broken families. Instead of blessing, we declare curses and cause division.

The View of God
What amazes me is the way God declared his view through the Holy Spirit through Balaam: “He has not observed iniquity in Jacob, nor has He seen wickedness in Israel. The Lord his God is with him, and the shout of a King is among them” (Numbers 23:21).

This is an amazing statement, considering Balaam was looking down on the place where leprosy, impurity, and sin ran rampant. Even more astonishing, a review of the preceding chapters does not portray people in which there is no iniquity or wickedness but instead describes a complaining people (Numbers 11). The Bible recounts key tribal leaders attacking Moses (Numbers 16) and even Aaron and Miriam attacking their brother (Numbers 12). It depicts a people refusing to enter the promised land (Numbers 13, 14) and being impatient with God and Moses. Balaam could have found plenty of material to base his curses on. But in spite of all this, God declares: “He has not observed iniquity in Jacob” and “How lovely are . . . your encampments oh Israel!”

This divine view is beyond human logic. I can only explain it by what happened day in and day out in the tabernacle in the center of the camp. Twice a day, the priests would sacrifice a perfect lamb (Exodus 29:38–45), which would provide sanctification and allow God “to dwell among his people.” It is the blood that atones for our sin and covers them before God’s sight (Leviticus 17:11; Hebrews 9:12).

Knowing that we ourselves have received forgiveness in Jesus for all our shortcomings, we need to see our brothers and sisters likewise. Therefore, if you are a believer and have put your faith in Jesus, the Word of God declares that Jesus is your Lamb and we are justified through His blood. This is how heaven looks at us and how we should look at each other. Knowing that we ourselves have received forgiveness in Jesus for all our shortcomings, we need to see our brothers and sisters likewise.

I pray as we look upon each other and Israel that we choose heaven’s perspective and confess with God: How lovely are your encampments oh Israel!

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS TO COMBAT THE ‘DEVASTATOR’S’ SCHEMES:

1. PRAYER

One of our most powerful tools is prayer. Fervent prayer can change the atmosphere of a family, church, and even a nation. Daniel’s 21 days of prayer and fasting affected the heavenly realities in his time (Daniel 10). A believer’s targeted and persistent prayer can change a hostile atmosphere in a country that looks at and highlights the faults and shortcomings of Israel (and the church.) Prayer that perseveres can break the spirit of anti-Semitism and anti-Israelism.

2. SPEAK THE TRUTH

If Israel’s enemies highlight her faults and perceived problematic issues, we need to all the more boldly proclaim the truth. The book of Revelation tells us they overcame the devil “by the word of their testimony.” If you read an unbalanced, one-sided article about Israel, write back to the paper and show the full picture, “the whole camp.” Speak about Israel’s amazing contribution to the world and the Middle East and ask the paper to be more balanced next time.

The same is true with your nation’s political stand. If you live in a country that encourages political dialogue, make your voice heard through letters to your representatives, or join—or even organize—a solidarity initiative in your city.

3. LOVE

This is particularly true within the church. Peter makes an amazing statement: “And above all things have fervent love for one another, for ‘love will cover a multitude of sins’” (1 Peter 4:8). An atmosphere of love and forgiveness will attract God’s favorable look upon his church and thus attract his blessing. Of course, sins need to be called out, and we are encouraged to admonish our brothers and sisters. But it must be done in love and compassion in the same way God is merciful to each one of us.

Balaam’s story is repeatedly used in the New Testament as an example for what will happen in the last days. We do well to heed these warnings and act accordingly. It may not only prevent great harm but release a new blessing upon our lives, churches, nations, and even Israel.

1. Bileam en zijn ezel in (Balaam and his donkey) by Rembrandt. commons.wikimedia.org

I pray as we look upon each other and Israel that we choose heaven’s perspective and confess with God: How lovely are your encampments oh, Israel! 🕊️
CONGRATULATIONS TO NEW VICE PRESIDENT, NICOLE YODER

BY DR JÜRGEN BÜHLER

I am thrilled to announce our senior leadership team will expand with the addition of our long-time staff member, Nicole Yoder. Nicole will serve as Vice President of AID and Aliyah.

Nicole has been faithfully serving our ICEJ AID department for over twenty years now and has been director of the department since 2006. In this vital role for our ministry, she has witnessed first-hand the challenges many Israelis face throughout the Land. Through her leadership, the ICEJ has provided caring, effective solutions for countless Israeli families, minority groups, and individuals. This experience, combined with her language skills in Hebrew and Arabic and the valuable relationships she’s developed with Israeli social workers, more than qualifies her for this new task. Nicole has also recently completed a master’s degree focused on the unique challenges of Ethiopian Jewish Aliyah, which adds to her qualifications.

Most importantly, however, Nicole is a woman who is dedicated to Jesus and His purposes with Israel and the Jewish people. She will thus be a great addition to our leadership team.

Nicole’s new duties will also include overseeing the ICEJ’s Aliyah efforts, which are managed day to day by our energetic Director of Aliyah Howard Flower. She also will oversee our absorption activities for new immigrants, which includes the ICEJ Homecare program, faithfully run by Corrie van Maanen.

The ICEJ board enthusiastically welcomed the decision of Nicole Yoder joining our other vice presidents currently serving with me in Jerusalem:

Barry Denison, Vice President of Jerusalem Operations
Mojmir Kallus, Vice President of International Affairs
David Parsons, Vice President & Senior Spokesman
David van der Walt, Vice President of Finances

Teachers from a Druze School visit the ICEJ

A FUTURE AND A HOPE WITH ICEJ AID

BY NICOLE YODER, VICE PRESIDENT OF AID & ALIYAH

Through ICEJ AID, Christians around the world bless Israel each and every day. Over the years, the ICEJ has carried out social assistance projects throughout Israel in every sector of the society. This ministry of comfort provides essential aid for Holocaust Survivors and immigrants, as well as helping Israel in times of crisis. In addition, ICEJ AID reaches out to give disadvantaged Israelis a future and a hope.

Through the ICEJ AID program A Future and a Hope, we help Israelis struggling to reach a brighter future by providing practical assistance to those who need it most. Offering a future and a hope means providing educational enrichment, vocational training, and other practical assistance to improve the quality of life for Israelis with long-term impact. This benevolent outreach is making a difference in the lives of the disadvantaged, children from broken families, at-risk youth, women in crisis, and minority communities, among others.

We are committed to helping “the least of these” in Israel. In addition to our support of the Jewish people, we assist the Arab, Druze, and Bedouin minorities who make up approximately one-fifth of Israel’s population. Today’s overwhelming social needs give us an unprecedented opportunity to comfort and bless this nation in the name of Christians around the world as an act of reconciliation and love.

This aid wouldn’t be possible without your help! Join us in providing basic needs, loving care, extra-curricular and educational activities, vocational training, and other practical assistance through projects that bring a future and a hope to Israelis who need our help the most.

This year, the ICEJ launched a Giving Tuesday campaign with the aim of providing help to Israeli families living near the Gaza border. The campaign was primarily social media based and was a great success! Thanks to you and numerous other faithful partners of the ICEJ, enough money was raised to provide two bomb shelters to the Sadot Silver Elementary School. The children at the school have 15 seconds or less to run for cover when sirens sound, and now because of

GIVING TUESDAY FUNDS BOMB SHELTERS

BY ICEJ STAFF

Both shelters have now been ordered. Join us on social media for the live installation event scheduled for early February.

Follow ICEJ on Facebook/icejusa Instagram/icejusa1
Any Israeli entrepreneurs have brilliant ideas, which is one reason Israel is often referred to as “the startup nation.” Yet those new to the business world often need assistance to develop an existing business or start a new one. For those living in low-income, multi-cultural, and peripheral communities far from Israel’s center (such as the Negev region), employment opportunities and services are often limited. Therefore, for some, starting an independent business may be their best option.

The Negev makes up 60% of Israel’s land mass yet contains only 9% of the population. In less populated areas, entrepreneurial ventures are blossoming, boosting the economy, and having a positive social impact in their communities. Many of these new ventures are “social” businesses with two purposes: profit-making and creating bottom-up innovative solutions that meet social needs. We at the ICEJ are excited to support Israel’s national development goal for this region by providing a mentoring course for visionary female social entrepreneurs in the Negev, encouraging new social business ventures.

SNAP! Special Needs and Photography (sidebar) is one social business that has benefitted from ICEJ’s assistance. SNAP!’s CEO, Karin Grinberg, had an idea for a business but no business experience or idea where to begin. Fortunately, an ICEJ-sponsored mentoring course provided Karin with the guidance to succeed.

“When I considered starting my own business, I thought, ‘How do I do insurance? And how do I make a business plan, advertise, and manage the business?’” Through this program, Karin was matched with a mentor to partner with her, encourage her, advise her, and even offer initial financial support to get the business off the ground.

With a few successful years behind her, Karin has now become a mentor in the program who helps others follow in her footsteps. With great support and help from the mentors in her life, Karin said, “It is amazing to wake up and work at something you love!”

Menucha Saitowitz, one of the mentor program coordinators and an ICEJ partner, shared, “We are so grateful for Christians around the world helping us support women using their businesses to impact their communities.”

Please join us to support social businesses started by Israeli women that will not only impact the economy and build the nation but also inspire and change lives!

Now Karin and her team see how their social business impacts their students and community. Karin explained, “One of our graduates was recruited by his rabbi to be a photographer for the events at the synagogue.” And one of their clients exclaimed, “It’s a social business, but our photos prove they are very professional. They do everything from their hearts.”

TO HELP SUPPORT PROJECTS LIKE THIS, PLEASE GIVE TO: ICEJUSA.ORG/AID
SMOOTHING THE WAY FOR NEW IMMIGRANTS
THE ICEJ IMPACTS LIVES AT YE’ELIM ABSORPTION CENTER IN BEERSHEVA

BY KAYLA MUCHNIK

For Jewish families making Aliyah (immigrating) to Israel, landing at Ben Gurion Airport and receiving their Israeli identity cards marks the beginning, rather than the end, of a new journey. Smoothing the way for these new arrivals means helping them learn the language, find suitable employment, and understand how daily life in Israel works.

Although Olim (new immigrants) face many challenges in their new lives, gainful employment is sometimes the greatest hurdle. Among the many integration projects funded by ICEJ AID over the years, vocational training and professional recertification within Israel are vital, paving the way to economic independence for families and their successful integration in the Land.

ICEJ AID staff recently visited the Ye’elim Absorption Center in Beersheva to meet new immigrants and bless them with household items. Our staff also spoke with several recent recipients of vocational assistance from ICEJ.

Computer Programmer Gets a Restart
Denise, a computer programmer from Russia, made Aliyah with his wife and young son last year. Employment as a programmer with an Israeli company required a whole new system and language. Fortunately, Denise had the opportunity to study Hebrew, English, and computer programming systems through an ICEJ AID-sponsored vocational program.

Today, equipped with fluency in both languages and new Israel certification, Denise is ready to apply for programming jobs. He is thankful to the ICEJ for the opportunity to study, for teachers who eased his way, and for children’s programs that taught his little boy Hebrew and other essential skills. Laughing to himself, Denise said, “My little boy can speak even better Hebrew than me.”

ICEJ Helps Civil Engineer Build a New Life
We also met Pablo from Venezuela who needed to relearn his civil engineering skills in a completely different language. Accepted to an accelerated Hebrew and vocational training program, Pablo has worked hard to master Hebrew and relearn the engineering terms and systems here in Israel.

“Making Aliyah is not easy, especially at my age of 52,” Pablo explained. “But because the situation in Venezuela became worse, we realized it is better for us to live here in Israel.” We rejoiced with him when he shared some good news: “Thank God, I got two job offers, and today I have to decide and give an answer to the companies,” smiled Pablo.

New immigrants receive blankets and gift bags

Morris Korim, the director of the Ye’elim Absorption Center, expressed his heartfelt gratitude toward the Christian Embassy: “You brought presents to our Olim today, but the biggest gift is your presence. The best present is our long-lasting partnership with the ICEJ and Christian friends around the world. We appreciate your support . . . for Aliyah and integration of new arrivals to Israel. We believe this partnership of 25 years gives us the strength to continue on.”

We rejoice with Denise, Pablo, and many others who have courageously uprooted their lives to start afresh in Israel with a new language, culture, land, people, career, and way of life. Thank you for joining us in helping Jewish families not only make it home to Israel but also to thrive here!

TO DONATE TO THIS VERY WORTHY AND EVEN PROPHETIC CAUSE, VISIT: ICEJUSA.ORG/AID

Therefore say, “Thus says the Lord God: ‘I will gather you from the peoples, assemble you from the countries where you have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel.’”

– Ezekiel 11:17 –
ICEJ JOINS
CHRISTIAN
MEDIA SUMMIT

Recently, a strong contingent of local ICEJ staff led by David Parsons and ICEJ representatives from abroad took part in the third annual Christian Media Summit, sponsored by the Israel Government Press Office.

The four-day event featured a reception and press conference with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and a full day of lectures and briefings by Israeli officials and experts as well as a field trip to the Golan that included a dedication ceremony at Ramat Trump (the new village established in honor of the US president’s recent recognition of Israel’s claim to the Golan Heights).

There was also a special track for young Christian journalists and social media activists, which several of our Jerusalem staff joined. The summit concluded with a reception and audience with Israeli President Reuven Rivlin at his official residence, where the ICEJ delegates came together for a group photo.

ARISE BUSINESS
SUMMIT

ICEJ leadership was honored to recently attend the 2019 ARISE Business Summit in Rishon LeTzion. ARISE founder Calev Myers created the event to introduce believing ministries around the world to Israel’s amazing innovation. Over 600 international investors and Israeli business owners had over 150 one-on-one meetings throughout the course of the event, discussing mutually beneficial investment opportunities. The Summit was a great success and the ICEJ is proud to partner with ARISE in bringing growth to the nation of Israel.

Send A Young Adult To Israel

2 TOURS – Where the Bible comes alive!

You can touch and change a life this summer by sending a young adult on a 10-day tour of Israel. By doing so you’ll give them an opportunity to explore the land of the Bible to see where it all happened. They’ll be able to pray, worship, learn, laugh, and experience Jesus in the Holy Land.

ISRAEL IMPACT TOUR - JUNE 24—JULY 3, 2020
ARISE SUMMER TOUR - JULY 7—17, 2020
Tour Israel and Celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles

September 29 – October 10, 2020

12 Days for $4,569
(includes Feast Registration)

Travel to Israel for the Christian celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles and tour the land of the Bible. Join thousands of Christians from more than 90 nations to worship the King of kings in Jerusalem! There is no better time to visit Israel than during this Feast of the Lord!

For a brochure and more information please contact us at:
www.icejusa.org/feast-tour • (866) 393-5890 • tours@icejusa.org

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$50 off before Feb 28, 2020
Palestinian terrorists in Gaza use an insidious yet effective strategy to traumatize Israeli civilians: they target towns in the border region with rocket fire in the morning when children are on their way to school. Both the shrill warning sirens and explosions of the defensive missiles induce an incredible amount of fear in children's hearts. Over the past five years, almost all of the children in the Eshkol region bordering the Gaza strip have received some kind of support or treatment to help them overcome their trauma.

In mid-September, ICEJ AID Director Nicole Yoder visited the Eshkol Resilience Center. This center, which specializes in trauma therapy and strengthening the psychological resilience of children and their families, was equipped with only an outside shelter that could not be reached quickly. When attacked with missiles, children and their parents could only lie flat on the floor and protect their head with their hands.

In response, the ICEJ sponsored the construction of a protective room inside the center. One of the therapists explained, “You can’t help people with trauma if they don’t feel safe when they come for help.” The director of the center expressed, “Thank you for helping with the basics so that we can go to a shelter and not be harmed.”

The head of security in the Sha’ar HaNegev region, who is a father of three children, stated: “We don’t really have a choice. If we move, they’ll just come closer and take more of the land and we won’t be safer somewhere else. You get used to the reality on the ground. Kids are born into it.” He added: “When the days are ‘normal’ (without alarm), you can practice where to go and what to do when an alarm sounds. That enables children to feel confident and helps them to be able to leave the house.” In the long run, the head of security holds on to another hope: “God willing, there should be peace. Thank you for helping us develop and to succeed to raise our children peacefully.”

Children at Kibbutz Alumim in the vicinity of Gaza had to learn how to react during an alert by singing a song encouraging them to lay low and cover their head with their hands when they hear the rocket alarm. The kindergarten is now completely sheltered, so the children can play and learn in a safe place.

TRAVMA CENTER FOR CHILDREN IN SOUTHERN ISRAEL
ICEJ PROVIDING SHELTER

BY BIRTE SCHOLZ
The United States and Dutch branches of the ICEJ partnered to construct a fortified room in the Eshkol Regional Resilience Center. The Eshkol Region encompasses 60% of the Gaza border area, and the Resilience Center there provides psychological counseling for many residents suffering from the stress of ongoing rocket attacks from Gaza.

About 4,000 school-age children live in that region, and over 25% of them use the psychological services provided at the trauma center, yet it only had one bomb shelter, which was outside and only accessible by a few of the treatment rooms. There was not enough time for kids receiving treatment in other parts of the center to get to the outdoor shelter—children and their families would simply lie on the floor during the rocket alert sirens. This vulnerability led to even greater stress for children and their parents.

Yizhar Sha’ar, the Eshkol Regional Council Educational Psychological Services Director, explained it is not just children that use the center: “The number of therapists, teachers, and other professionals in the Eshkol Regional Council needing and undergoing therapy at the resilience center is larger than it was in previous rounds of fighting.”

“The need for supporting the Resilience Center in Eshkol was critical,” said Shoshi Levi, Educational Psychological Services Administrator, Eshkol Regional Council. “The new fortified room will be the only bomb shelter inside the building, itself. This will significantly add to the peace of mind, comfort . . . and real lifesaving solution for the students and adults utilizing the Center every day.”

Thank you ICEJ USA and Netherlands!

Help ICEJ USA provide more bomb shelters and safe rooms for Israeli children at www.icejusa.org/bombshelter
**WHY CHRISTIANS CELEBRATE THE FEAST**

**BY DR JÜRGEN BÜHLER, ICEJ PRESIDENT**

The presence of believers from around the world in Jerusalem at the Feast of Tabernacles (Sukkot) is a great prophetic sign of the times in which we live. It is a powerful foreshadowing of even more glorious days ahead.

In 1979, as Merv and Merla Watson planned the first Feast of Tabernacles celebration in Jerusalem, they were uncertain about exactly how gentiles should celebrate this biblical feast, so they asked a senior rabbi’s advice here in Israel. After receiving his practical guidance, they were just about to leave when the rabbi called them back.

“Mr. and Mrs. Watson,” he said. “That you, as gentiles, came here to ask me how to celebrate Sukkot is quite unusual. Our prophets declare that in the messianic times, all gentiles will come to Jerusalem to celebrate this Feast with us. When you asked me today how to celebrate Sukkot, I am hearing the footsteps of Messiah, that He is coming.”

And this is what the Feast of Tabernacles is all about. The ICEJ has been privileged to organize this incredibly unique event for 40 years now. And it is indeed not just another Christian conference but a prophetic declaration to Israel and the church that Messiah is coming soon. In the end, it is all about Jesus. It is not about us, nor even about Israel, but about the returning King.

And so, this Feast of Tabernacles 2020, ICEJ “prepares the way” for the return of Jesus, the King above all kings, to His city: Jerusalem.

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**PREPARE THE WAY**

**FEAST OF TABERNACLES 2020**

“Comfort, yes, comfort My people!” says your God . . . The voice of one crying in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord; Make straight in the desert a highway for our God.’” (Isaiah 40:1, 3)

For almost 2000 years, the stones of anti-Semitism blocked the path between Jews and Christians. How do we overcome that?

Forty years ago, Christians from 32 nations gathered in Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles just as the last national embassies were abandoning the city. In response, these Christians stepped out and offered a hand of friendship and solidarity to Israel and the Jewish people. From this pivotal moment, the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem was born.

Today, Christians still come to Israel to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles. Isaiah spoke of a ministry of comfort and a prophetic work to prepare a highway for the Lord—a work of removing the stones and obstacles which have, in the past, separated Jews and Christians.

The prophet Isaiah also foretold of a day when a highway would connect Egypt and Assyria with Israel and become a blessing in the midst of the earth. Today, we see believers from these nations coming together—pages of the Bible coming to life before our very eyes. The ancient division between Arab and Jew is being reconciled.

Every valley shall be exalted and every mountain and hill brought low; The crooked places shall be made straight and the rough places smooth; The glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together; For the mouth of the Lord has spoken. (Isaiah 40:4–5)

At the Feast of Tabernacles 2020, the ICEJ will be marking 40 years of comforting and blessing Israel and working toward reconciliation between the Jewish people and the gentile nations, especially in the Arab world.

We invite you to come up to Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles with us. Come clear the path; remove every hindrance between you and an encounter with the God of Israel.

The Lord just put it in my heart to come to Israel.

LINDA FRANCISCO, CEBU, PHILIPPINES
In the 1940s the German town of Bad Gandersheim housed Adolf Hitler’s special training center for his S.S. officers and troops. This past November, on the 30th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, around 800 people gathered in that same building to celebrate Israel Day with the ICEJ.

In this building, which is now the “Glaubenszentrum” Bible school, ICEJ Germany director Gottfried Bühler welcomed attendees: “In the past, the Nazis were at this site, but today people from Israel sit here. God has won, Israel has won, and by being present here today, you are making a stand for solidarity with Israel and the Jewish people!”

Calev Myers, renowned Israeli lawyer and founder of the Israeli organization ARISE (Alliance to Reinforce Israel’s Security & Economy), reminded the audience that the God of Israel was still doing miracles today—in the Israeli economy, for security challenges, and on an ecological level. He shared about innovative Israeli technologies, which have become a blessing all over the world, and discussed dangers of the BDS Movement (Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions), which harm the Palestinians, putting their well-paid jobs in Israeli companies in the West Bank in jeopardy.

The significance of this event was highlighted when Dariel Myers, Calev’s daughter, closed the meeting with an emotional rendition of Hatikvah, Israel’s national anthem. Myers explained: “As the grandson of a German Jewish family who survived the Holocaust, it is very moving for me to speak, and my daughter to sing, in this place once intended for such evil purposes. Our presence here today tells me that ‘We Won!’ Am Israel Chai (the people of Israel live)!”

STUTTGART: ISRAEL’S FRIENDS RALLY FOR JEWISH LIFE IN GERMANY

Amid growing anti-Semitism in Germany, ICEJ Germany called Christians to the streets of Stuttgart to publicly demonstrate support for the Jews in Germany as well as for the State of Israel. In response, more than 600 friends of Israel gathered on the central square in Stuttgart, Southern Germany.

Gottfried Bühler, National Director of ICEJ Germany, announced in his opening speech that a clear pro-Israel policy of the German Federal Government and good reporting by the German media “would deprive anti-Semitism of its breeding ground.” Addressing the members of the Jewish community present, he said: “You can count on us! We love you, that’s why we are here!”
REGIONAL CONFERENCE IN EUROPE: UNITING THE EAST AND THE WEST

BY CAMILLE TROC

Last November, ICEJ Albania and Director Gentjan Dervishaj hosted ICEJ’s regional conference in Tirana, Albania, which brought together representatives from 15 European nations. The location was selected to highlight an important chapter of Albania’s history—a chapter that is also significant for the Jewish people.

It all started with King Zogu I, the sovereign leader over Albania during the time of the Holocaust, who decided to grant passports to Jews from neighboring countries. He opened the borders of Albania to all Jewish refugees, allowing them to flee the persecutions of Nazi Germany. Even with the invasion of the Nazis in Albania, the local, mostly Muslim population hid the Jews in their homes and refused to turn them in. There were about 200 Jews in Albania at the outbreak of World War II but more than 2,000 when it ended. Today, many Albanians are recognized as “Righteous Among the Nations” by the Jewish people. We believe that God will most certainly release a special blessing over a country that did not hesitate to protect and save His people.

A day before the conference, we were invited for a private audience by the Crowne Prince of Albania, Leka II, who is none other than King Zogu’s grandson! As a Christian, Prince Leka would like to strengthen the moral fabric of this young society and is open to cooperate with the ICEJ in the field of education.

On the eve of the regional conference, we had the pleasure of welcoming the ambassadors of the EU, France, Hungary, Serbia, and Sweden. Pastors from all around the country also attended the event, hence confirming the unity of the church in Albania. Fifteen countries were represented at the conference: Albania, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Slovakia, Spain, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and Israel.

The purpose of the conference was to build strong collaboration between the European countries of the East and West. For three days, our ICEJ leaders gathered together for fellowship, to share experiences and challenges, and to pray. Many ideas were discussed and new media platforms were introduced to build a network of strong and healthy branches. We believe effective communication and simple coordination will produce much fruit. All the leaders went back home after an inspiring weekend encouraged and expectant to see God move in Europe.

ICEJ’s Mojmir Kallus (pictured center right) and team gather for a picture in front of the residence of the Crowne Prince of Albania, Leka II.

Albanian Branch Asks for Prayer

Albania was hit November 26, 2019 with a 6.4 magnitude earthquake. ICEJ Albania Director Gentjan Dervishaj called on Christians around the world to lift up his nation in prayer: “We ask that all of the ICEJ friends around the world will pray for the nation and the people of Albania as well as for the government.” ☪
NEW ICEJ BRANCH OPENS IN UKRAINE

BY MOJMR KALLUS, VP OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

After one year of preparation, we were thrilled to officially open a branch of the ICEJ in Ukraine. Although Ukraine continues to grapple with the legacy of its Communist and Fascist past and is torn by war in the East, the more than 3.5 million Evangelical believers in the country offer great potential for future growth and support for Israel. The main task of this new branch will be to educate the church about Israel and the connection between the Jewish people and the nations.

Branch leadership will continue the work Ukrainian Christians started more than 10 years ago. Repentance meetings for anti-Semitism were held in different cities where Jews had been persecuted and in the capital city of Kiev, a National Day of Prayer for the peace of Jerusalem was held for several years with up to 1,000 people from different denominations coming together. It has been resolved that the new branch will renew the prayer initiative under the banner of the ICEJ.

From the beginning, the Kiev Jewish messianic community has been a key player in all these activities, and the community's leader, Pastor Boris Grisenko, joined the board of ICEJ Ukraine, together with representatives of other large Evangelical denominations. At the branch opening, Pastor Grisenko spoke on the subject of “Israel and the Church,” together with Vitaliy Kozubovskiy, senior pastor of the largest Baptist church, and Mojmir Kallus, ICEJ VP for International Affairs.

Please pray for ICEJ Ukraine’s National Director Valeriy Alymov and his team. The fields in Ukraine are ready for harvest, so may the Lord send the laborers.

RUSSIA

In October, a group of over 120 pastors from Russia visited Israel. They were received at the Knesset and met with ICEJ leadership.

NEW FAVOR FOR ISRAEL IN TANZANIA

On a two-week speaking tour in East Africa, ICEJ Vice President David Parsons was received by the President of Tanzania, the Honorable John Pombe Magufuli, in his hometown of Chato, on Lake Victoria.

Parsons thanked President Magufuli for restoring his nation’s relations with Israel and for voting with Israel more at the United Nations. He also directed the president’s attention to Isaiah 60:10 and encouraged him to show additional favor to Israel by moving Tanzania’s new embassy in Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, adding that the Lord was promising “ten years of the fatted calf” if he would do so.

President Magufuli thanked David for his visit to his country and hometown, gave a personal offering for Israel to the ICEJ, and asked Parsons to pray for his elderly mother Susanna (pictured in wheelchair).
One of the first lessons we learn in the history of anti-Semitism is that hatred makes strange bedfellows. The oddest of partnerships have been formed around a common enemy.

Nazi Alliance with Islam
An example of this friendship between enemies is that of the Nazi regime, which believed in Aryan supremacy, and the Muslim world, which seeks to assert Muslim supremacy. The two worlds would have collided over much of their respective ideologies but found a common bond that overshadowed all points of disagreement.

That unifying bond was their hatred for the Jew. The same paranoid worldview and irrational anti-Semitism that drove the Nazis then drives Islamist terrorism today. While it is true that Islamist ideology has theological foundations found in the Koran, the modern militant and delusional obsession with anti-Semitism was birthed during the Nazi period.

The conduit for this ideology was Haj Amin El-Husseini, the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, and the movement that he helped to lead—the Muslim Brotherhood. Haj Amin El-Husseini’s anti-Semitism pre-dated Nazism, but from 1941 onward, he lived in Berlin, overseeing a staff of 60 Arabs who worked night and day promoting Nazism in the Arabic-speaking world. The German leaders were enamored with the Mufti and provided a steady stream of funds and arms to his followers in Palestine. Scholars debate whether he had the idea first or not, but the Mufti clearly backed the plan to exterminate Europe’s Jews to keep them from fleeing to their ancient homeland.

After the fall of the Nazi regime, El-Husseini found asylum in Egypt where he served in the leadership of the Muslim Brotherhood. Through that organization, he converted Nazi ideology into a militant, Islamic one and took the call for jihad and martyrdom throughout the Muslim world.

Islamic Anti-Semitism
The Muslim Brotherhood was founded in 1928 in Egypt, and by the end of the Nazi regime in 1945, they already had 500,000 sympathizers. Their manifesto is “Allah is our goal, the prophet our model, the Koran our constitution, the Jihad our path, and death for the sake of Allah the loftiest of our wishes.”

They are credited with birthing the jihadist culture of death and the various groups committed to it, including Hamas, Khomeini’s revolution in Iran, and Al-Qaeda. This history explains the Hitler-like rhetoric of Muslim leaders today, for example in Iran, and their espousal of the same delusional and paranoid worldview, dehumanizing of Jews, and calls for their annihilation.

Anti-Semitic Alliances Today
The lesson for us today is hatred makes strange bedfellows indeed! In our own country, we see the illogical alignment of the Progressive, secular left with the religious, Islamic movement led by the Muslim Brotherhood—a union that would be absolutely impossible were it not for their shared hatred of Israel. It is the classic example of the saying, “The enemy of my enemy is my friend.”

We see this alliance in many ways, such as anti-Israel ideologues who blame Israel for security measures but refuse to address the abuse of the Palestinian people by their own corrupt and failed Arab leadership. In the same way, the women’s movement condemns Israel—where women make up 25% of parliament and serve in the military—and ignore the oppression and outright abuse of women in the Muslim world. Secular Human Rights activists do not speak out on behalf of Christians around the world suffering persecution and martyrdom, because most of this takes place in Muslim countries.

This alliance will also never speak out against the rising anti-Semitism in America, so we must. Christians in America are THE voice against anti-Semitism in the United States, and with your help, we intend to make it loud and clear.
Be a part of that future generation spoken of in Psalm 102 that is partnering with the Lord in His work to restore Zion, for the set time has come.

PARTNER LEVELS

Covenant Partner
Show your love and support for Israel by partnering with the ICEJ. Become a Covenant Partner at a giving level of at least $30 a month. In appreciation, you will receive the following resources:

- A Partnership Certificate
- The Word From Jerusalem magazine
- A year-end gift of appreciation

Ambassadorial Partner
Partnership in ministry is a gift God gives to strengthen and undergird His work. Become an Ambassadorial Partner with the ICEJ at a giving level of at least $100 a month. In appreciation, you will receive everything in the Covenant Partnership level plus:

- Exclusive access to ICEJ’s quarterly Mid-East ministry update conference call from Jerusalem
- An invitation to attend our ICEJ USA leadership briefing during our national conference

Builder of Zion Partner
Isaiah declared the Lord will call Zion’s walls “salvation” and her gates “praise” (50:18). As we walk together side by side, the ICEJ would be honored if you would become a Builder of Zion Partner at a giving level of $2,500 a year or more. In appreciation, you will receive everything in the Ambassadorial Partnership level plus:

- A discount of $200.00 on a pilgrimage tour to Israel during the Feast of Tabernacles or other qualifying tour
- An additional gift acknowledging you as a Builder of Zion Partner

Gateway of Zion Partner
Show compassion for Zion and bless the people of Israel. The ICEJ would be honored if you were to become a Gateway of Zion partner at a giving level of $20,000 a year or more. In appreciation, you will receive everything in the Builder of Zion Partnership level plus:

- The opportunity to meet with ICEJ leadership and/or receive personal briefings on ICEJ projects that are of interest
- Special invites to exclusive events such as pastors’ lunches and VIP meetings that are held in your area or community
- An additional gift acknowledging you are a Gateway of Zion Partner

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PREPARE The Way

ICEJ USA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

APRIL 17-18, 2020 | OPELika, AL

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USA Director
International Christian Embassy Jerusalem

Rev. Malcolm Hedding
Associate Pastor
World Outreach Church

Pastor Saleem Shalash
Senior Pastor
Home of Jesus the King Church

Aaron Shust
Worship Leader
Dove Award Worship Artist

Join us at Prepare the Way to celebrate the ICEJ's 40th birthday on April 17-18 in Opelika, AL. With its theme taken from Isaiah 40, the ICEJ's founding scripture, the conference will look back to God's faithfulness in all He has done for the Jewish people in and through the ministry of ICEJ, while looking forward with excitement at how the Lord will use us all as He fulfills His plans and purposes for Israel.

Location: First Baptist Church of Opelika 301 S 8th Street, Opelika, Alabama 36801
For more info visit: www.icejusa.org/icej-usa-annual-conference | Email: info@icejusa.org | Phone: 615-895-9830.