HISTORIC ETHIOPIAN ALIYAH
The Rescue Mission of Ethiopian Jewry Continues!

THE BEGINNING OF JESUS’ SUFFERING:
BEFORE THE ROOSTER CROWS
The International Christian Embassy Jerusalem was established in 1980 in recognition of the biblical significance of all of Jerusalem and its unique connection to the Jewish people. Today the ICEJ represents millions of Christians, churches, and denominations to the nation and people of Israel. We recognize in the restoration of Israel the faithfulness of God to keep His ancient covenant with the Jewish people. Our main objectives are:

• To stand with Israel in support and friendship;
• To equip and teach the worldwide church regarding God’s purposes with Israel and the nations of the Middle East;
• To be an active voice of reconciliation between Jews, Christians, and Arabs, and to support the churches and congregations in the Holy Land.

From its head offices in Jerusalem, the ICEJ reaches out into more than 140 countries worldwide, with branch offices in over 80 nations.

Our vision is:

• To reach every segment of Israel’s society with a Christian testimony of comfort and love, and
• To reach and actively represent to Israel the support of denominations, churches, and believers from every nation on earth.

The Christian Embassy is a non-denominational faith-based ministry supported by the voluntary contributions of our members and friends across the globe. We invite you to join with us as we minister to Israel and the Jewish people worldwide by donating to the ongoing work and witness of the ICEJ.

CREDITS

President Dr. Jürgen Bühler
Vice President International Affairs Juha Ketola
US Director Susan Michael
Editor/Communications Director Estera Wieja
Graphic Design/Illustrator Peter Eckenroad, Nancy Schimpf
Copy Editor Juliane Stark
Administration David van der Walt
Photography ICEJ Staff & Branches, Istock, AP, Getty Images, Reuters

The New King James Bible is used for all Bible references unless otherwise noted.

Word From Jerusalem is published by the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem. Reproduction in whole or in part without written permission is prohibited. Word From Jerusalem has no subscription price and is supported through contributions worldwide. The ICEJ-USA Branch is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization with offices in Tennessee, Florida, and Washington, DC. All gifts to this ministry are tax-deductible according to United States law.

INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN EMBASSY JERUSALEM - USA
P.O. Box 332974, Murfreesboro, TN 37133 - (615) 895-9830

Support our ministry online at: www.icejusa.org

Order yours today. Call (615) 895-9830.

“... the sons of Issachar who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do ...” – 1 Chronicles 12:32
CONTENTS

4 BEFORE THE ROOSTER CROWS

8 ENVISION PASTORS CONFERENCE

10 POSITIONED FOR GROWTH

12 ALIYAH REPORT

18 IS ABBAS A PEACE PARTNER?
Church of St. Peter in Gallicantu (meaning cock’s-crow) on the eastern slope of Mount Zion in Jerusalem
One of my most memorable experiences in Israel happened many years ago right outside the Old City of Jerusalem. I was living at a school on Mount Zion at the time, pursuing a master’s degree in Judeo-Christian Studies. As students often do, we came up with a bright idea that provided adventure while burning off pent-up energy from days spent in class. Our idea was to hike to the top of the Mount of Olives to watch the sunrise.

Early one morning, while it was still dark outside, a group of about six of us began the hike around Mount Zion, alongside the southern walls of the Old City, down into the Kidron Valley, and then up the Mount of Olives, passing the Garden of Gethsemane along the way. We had only just begun our trek around Mount Zion when we unexpectedly heard a rooster crow.

In the still of the night, the sound of that rooster reverberated off the stone walls and hills of Jerusalem and could be heard throughout the area. I was immediately transported back some 2,000 years. It was in this same vicinity of Jerusalem that Peter had denied knowing Jesus three times before hearing a rooster crow for the second time, just as Jesus had said would happen. I could just imagine how loud it had sounded to Peter, jolting him into the realization of what he had done and how Jesus had predicted that very moment.

A rooster crowing in the middle of Jerusalem was not something I would have expected to hear. “But then again,” I thought to myself, “it is the Middle East.” What I did not know then, but I came to learn some years later, is that we were walking right beside the church that commemorates this story in Scripture—and this church keeps a rooster on the premises. We probably woke the poor bird up!

The Beginning of Jesus’ Sufferings
The church is called St. Peter Gallicantu and is thought to be built over the remains of the High Priest Caiaphas’ palace. Peter’s triple rejection of Jesus “before the rooster crows twice” took place in the courtyard outside of the High Priest’s house (Mark 14:30).

The remains of a first-century aristocratic home can be seen beneath the church, and below the home is a dungeon, chiseled out of the Jerusalem bedrock, that was used to hold prisoners. From the dungeon guards could look down into a deep, dark pit that was used to hold someone in solitary confinement.

This dungeon is always a very moving experience for Christian visitors. Whereas prisoners would have been lowered by rope into the dark pit below, tourists today can walk down a set of stairs and gather inside to pray and read Psalm 88. What a moving place to meditate on the loneliness and rejection Jesus would have felt in the pitch-black darkness of a cold stone pit.

Whether this is truly Caiaphas’ house and where Jesus was held overnight is not known. But his house would have been in this general proximity and would have included a place for holding prisoners—just like this one.

If this house is not that of Caiaphas, then Jesus walked right beside it, because next to the church is a set of first-century stone stairs climbing Mount Zion from the Kidron Valley. We can be certain that Jesus climbed those stairs, bound and guarded by soldiers, as He was taken from the Garden of Gethsemane to be questioned by the Sanhedrin in Caiaphas’ house.

This was the beginning of Jesus’ imprisonment and sufferings leading up to His crucifixion. While Peter stood outside in the courtyard and denied knowing Him, Jesus may have been crying out to God from inside a dark pit:

You have laid me in the lowest pit, in darkness, in the depths ...
You have put away my acquaintances far from me;
You have made me an abomination to them;
I am shut up, and I cannot get out. (Psalm 88:6, 8)

St. Peter Gallicantu is a “must” for any Christian tour group. It allows a small glimpse into the loneliness and abandonment Jesus felt on His final night when He was “despised and rejected by men,” while He bore “our griefs,” and carried “our sorrows” (Isaiah 53:3–4).

Susan M. Michael is US Director of the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem www.icejusa.org and her “Lessons from the Land” articles can be found at www.icejusa.org/susans-blog. For information on the ICEJ’s tours to Israel go to www.icejusa.org/tours.
ICEJ

2 Young Adult TOURS TO ISRAEL

See the Bible come alive! // Tours for ages 18–30

Israel Impact Tour
13 Day Tour // June 19–July 1, 2017
The Israel Impact Tour is our amazing, one-of-a-kind, power-packed 13-day young adult tour to Israel—the land of the Bible.
This longer tour is uniquely designed for maximum spiritual impact on your life while having a tremendous, fun experience in Israel. This tour, that originates with a group flight from the USA, is being led by Pastor Jerry Dirmann of The Rock Church, Anaheim, CA.

Arise Summer Tour
10 Day Tour // July 11–21, 2017
Join an international group of young adults for an amazing cross-cultural young adult tour of Israel.
Travel with us for 10 exciting days of outrageous fun as we explore the land of the Bible and show God’s love for the people through practical outreach projects. This tour, that originates in Israel, is being led by Jani Salokangos, ICEJ Arise Director in Jerusalem.

Contact ICEJ USA Arise Director, Peter Ecenroad at peter.ecenroad@icejusa.org
(888) 772-7732 ext. 742
www.israelimpacttour.com
ISAIAH 62 PRAYER POINTS FOR APRIL 2017

In 2017, Israel is marking 50 years since the reunification of Jerusalem in June 1967. But the Arab states are again challenging Israel’s rule over the city, even in western Jerusalem. This is a year of Jubilee favor over Jerusalem, and while the spiritual battle over the city is intensifying, we believe God wants to release it into its redemptive destiny even more over the coming months.

Please pray that God’s prophetic purposes for Jerusalem will be hastened and that all He intends to accomplish in the city during this year of Jubilee favor would come to pass. Pray that the nations will move their embassies to Jerusalem this year, starting with the United States. Pray that more archaeological evidence from the ancient City of David would be found this year to bolster the Jewish claim and connection to the city. Pray for the sound defeat of any diplomatic efforts to undermine Israeli sovereignty over Jerusalem. Pray with Psalm 102:13–16. Also, pray for God’s purposes to be fulfilled in this year’s Feast of Tabernacles when we celebrate this special city’s reunification. Pray according to Psalm 84:4–7.

Israel and the Jewish people will observe the Passover week in April. This is a special time for family reunions and spiritual reflection.

Pray for a blessed and peaceful Passover season for Jews in Israel and around the world. Pray that their family gatherings and time spent remembering their ancestors’ delivery from Egypt would draw them closer to God and to the true Passover Lamb. Pray with Luke 22:15–16. Also, pray for the ICEJ’s Passover basket distribution to the needy.

The conflict in Syria has claimed an estimated 500,000 lives and there is still no end in sight. There are reports, however, that Russia, Turkey, and the United States are considering a deal which would allow each power to establish security zones inside Syria, while Iranian and Hizbullah forces in the country would be required to leave. Tehran is resisting such a move and wants to maintain its leverage over the weakened Assad regime, while also using Syria as a base to threaten Israel.

Pray that the conflict in Syria would come to an end soon, with the defeat and removal of all Iranian and Hizbullah forces, as well as ISIS and other radical Sunni militias. Pray that Syria would no longer be used as a base for those who would seek to harm Israel. Pray for the millions of Syrian civilians who have suffered and been forced from their homes by this war (Psalm 68:1).

There are reports that the Trump administration is seeking to revive Israeli-Palestinian peace talks by bringing Israel into a wider diplomatic process along with certain other Arab states that have refused until now to engage directly with Israel.

Pray for all Arab and Islamic nations to cooperate more closely and openly with Israel for their own benefit, and to accept Israel as a true neighbor and partner in the region (Isaiah 19:23–25).

More Ethiopian Jews making Aliyah on flights sponsored by the ICEJ were expected to land in Israel before Passover this spring. However, there have been many delays—some involving obstacles on the ground in Ethiopia and some linked to resistance to this historic Aliyah here within Israel. We are now told that flights of Ethiopian Jews should resume soon after the Passover break.

Please pray for our continuing efforts to bring home the last of the Ethiopian Jewish community to Israel. Around 9,000 Jews remain in Gondar and Addis Ababa and need to be cared for, transported to the airport, and flown to Israel. The ICEJ has already paid for the first year of flights, but delays and hindrances keep arising which have set the schedule back and prolonged the separation of and suffering for these families. Pray that they would be kept safe from harm until they are able to fly to Israel, that there would be no more obstacles and delays in their coming, and that they would easily adjust to their new lives in Israel. Pray with Zephaniah 3:10.

Join the Isaiah 62 Prayer Initiative of the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem as we corporately pray for Jerusalem, the nation of Israel, the Middle East, and the work of the ICEJ:

2. Begin an Isaiah 62 prayer group in your community.
3. Join us in fasting and praying on behalf of Israel every month.
Christian Leaders from 18 Countries Attend Envision Conference to Enhance Their Ministry

The ICEJ encourages everyone to visit Israel and study the richness of history encompassed in its land and its people. More importantly, we encourage every believer to go much deeper in their journey of discovery.

To provide Christian leaders an opportunity to go far beyond what any tour can offer, the ICEJ initiated an annual Envision Conference for pastors and leaders, held at the beginning of each year. This past January leaders of churches and ministries from around the world once again gathered in Jerusalem for an intensive and inspiring time of growth.

Dr. Jürgen Bühler, the president of the ICEJ, welcomed attendees with a powerful message of hope pointing to the goodness and sovereignty of God through his personal testimony of healing.

Each day the conference featured an array of speakers including local pastors of both Jewish and Arab backgrounds who taught, answered questions, and connected with attendees from around the world.

“We have been so blessed by the sound biblical teachings delivered here,” said Jon Smith, a pastor from New Orleans. Jon came to Envision with his wife Elizabeth and seven leaders from their church. “We are bombarded with so much confusion in the media. Here in Jerusalem, we gained a whole new perspective,” Jon said.

“Now we can put faces to the stories we’ve heard,” added Elizabeth, also a pastor. “So, we ask God: How can we help? What do You want us to do? People are eager to give support to what they understand. We want to bring these teachings back to our church!”

Pastor Anna Chen was also encouraged by the conference and was looking forward to sharing what she learned with other Chinese believers who, as she mentioned, share the same vision as the ICEJ. “We want to bring unity among believers, also in their support of Israel,” Anna declared. “We need [this conference] to take this vision further! Whatever we learn will return to this land with blessing.”

The leaders were encouraged by the opportunity to network with like-minded individuals from other countries in attendance, and shared valuable insight with one another following some unique features of the conference. One of these activities was a visit to the Knesset—the Israeli parliament—where Envision attendees were greeted by Knesset Member Robert Ilatov and Director of the Knesset Christian Allies Caucus Josh Reinstein.

The conference concluded with a gala banquet, featuring special guests Robert Stearns of Eagles’ Wings and his good friend, a Jewish Rabbi, who encouraged everyone present to walk in integrity and serve as ambassadors of truth for Israel and the Middle East.
“Take a step back from your daily responsibilities and receive a 'bird’s eye view' of what God is doing around the world and in Israel today. It will be a time during which God can strengthen and give you a fresh vision for the calling He has placed upon your life and ministry.” – Dr. Jürgen Bühler

ICEJ President Dr. Jürgen Bühler along with our partnering Israeli pastors invite you to attend the Envision Conference 2018. Experience a time of refreshment in the presence of the Holy Spirit, while standing in God’s holy Land of Israel. Visit: icejusa.org/envision-2018

JOIN US IN JERUSALEM
FOR A LIFE-CHANGING PASTORS AND LEADERS CONFERENCE
PLUS A TOUR OF ISRAEL JANUARY 16-26, 2018

www.icejusa.org/envision-2018

REFRESH YOUR SPIRIT
AND RECEIVE
A RENEWED VISION
A new leadership structure for the Jerusalem headquarters was approved by the International Board of the ICEJ at their latest meeting during the Feast of Tabernacles last fall. This decision is part of a wider strategic plan to better position the global ministry of the ICEJ for the future. It was necessary to accommodate the healthy growth we have seen in recent years both internationally and at the ICEJ headquarters in Jerusalem.
“We all are excited as this provides a transparent and effective structure for the future development and growth of our ministry,” said Ingolf Ellßel, the global chairman of the ICEJ. Jürgen Bühler added that in the end it is not about titles or positions, but that the work of God be carried out in more effective ways to maximize impact for Israel.

Dr. Jürgen Bühler will continue to be the senior leader overseeing the global work of the ICEJ, but his title has been changed from Executive Director to President. He is responsible for developing the general vision of the ministry and will assure the ministry follows the vision and mission approved by the Board. He will focus on implementing new ministry streams and activities within the ICEJ and representing the ministry in Israel and abroad. He will continue to provide general oversight to our global ministry, to ensure its growth and development.

Much of his day-to-day responsibility, however, will be alleviated by delegating it throughout a new senior level of leadership who will share the burden within a tier of vice presidents who give leadership to the following areas:

**Dr. Rev. Juha Ketola, Vice President – International Affairs:** Dr. Rev. Juha Ketola will oversee our expanding network of national branches worldwide, which now consists of offices in almost 90 nations and supporters drawn from more than 160 countries around the globe.

**Rev. Barry Denison, Vice President – Operations:** Rev. Barry Denison will be responsible for Israel operations including ICEJ AID and Aliyah, as well as the functioning of the head office and staff.

**Rev. David Parsons, Vice President – Senior International Spokesman:** Rev. David Parsons will ensure the message and positions of the ICEJ are properly communicated to the media and world at large.

**David van der Walt, Vice President – Finance:** David van der Walt will be in charge of financial accounting and development.

**Howard Flower, Aliyah Director:** Howard Flower oversees all ICEJ initiatives regarding the return of the Jewish people to their homeland, out of St. Petersburg, Russia.

**Amanda Gross, Senior TV Producer:** Amanda Gross is responsible for all video, film, and media broadcasts on the growing list of 12 TV channels worldwide.

**Scott Morgan, Donor Relations and Registration Coordinator:** Scott Morgan oversees registration and coordination of events such as the Feast of Tabernacles and Envision.

**Jani Salokangas, Arise and Marketing Director:** Jani Salokangas is the director for the young adults outreach “Arise” and is responsible for marketing and electronic media.

**Estera Wieja, Interim Communications Director:** Estera Wieja is the senior editor of the *Word from Jerusalem* magazine, and is responsible for all print media.

**Nicole Yoder, ICEJ AID Team Director:** Nicole Yoder oversees all of the ICEJ’s social assistance projects throughout the Land of Israel.

In addition, a team of incredibly gifted and capable department heads will ensure the continued efficient operation of the ministry.

These are necessary structural changes. What will not change is our mission in Israel: “Comfort, yes comfort my people!” says your God” (Isaiah 40:1). These eternal words have defined our mission since 1980 and will continue to do so in the future. The vision which God has given us is simple: ALL ISRAEL AND EVERY NATION. This means we seek to connect Christians and churches from every nation of the world with Israel and extend their blessing to every segment of Israeli society.

“Please stand with us as we pursue this God-given assignment.” – Jürgen Bühler
The time has come for the Jewish people to make Aliyah (Hebrew: ascension) to Israel. Our mandate is to ensure every Jew is able to do so.

To bring Jews home is the greatest investment for the nation of Israel. New immigrants come to Israel not to settle for just anything. They come to Israel with great dreams, and the desire to build up their homeland—their promised land. They are willing to do whatever it takes to advance as individuals and participate in developing this country.

However, not every immigrant can afford this move or knows what to expect once they arrive in their new home country. This is especially true for Ethiopian Olim (immigrants) who face many unique challenges along the way. For this reason the ICEJ made a commitment to support them in their decision to return to Israel, and together with our Christian partners around the world we make their journey possible.
Moodi Sandberg, former minister in the Israeli Knesset and current president of Keren Hayesod which heads some of the biggest Aliyah projects in Israel, is a strong spokesman and advocate for the Ethiopian community.

“We want to give an opportunity to all the Jews, whose fathers and mothers dreamed of the land of Israel for centuries, to fulfill that dream,” shared Moodi with the ICEJ. “And when they arrive [in Israel], we want them to adapt here well.”

As Christians, we can fulfill the prophecy from Isaiah by carrying Jews back to the land of their fathers (Isaiah 49:22), and we will be blessed for it in return according to the spiritual law described in the Bible (Genesis 12:3). Moodi explained it’s already happening today: “Whatever is developed here is for the world.

“The advancements achieved by the immigrants here are not just for Israel, but become a gift to the world. Whenever we have good things in our hands, it will be shared later with the nations! We came to this land to do something new, and to be a blessing.”

Tadeso is an Ethiopian Jew who grew up in a small village in Gondar, Ethiopia. He came to Israel eight years ago and today works at Intel. With pride and joy he shared with us how he received special training in Israel in electronics, and today works in his profession. Nevertheless, many more like him are still in Ethiopia, waiting for their chance at a better life.

Don’t wait any longer! Join the ICEJ today and help pave the way for more Ethiopian Jews to return to Israel! Send your gift at www.icejusa.org/ethiopia
ICEJ – Helping Jews from China and Ukraine

CHINESE JEWS
About 1,000 Jews who traveled the Silk Road for trade settled in Kaifeng, China—establishing a Jewish presence in the city around the 11th century. The ICEJ brought the first family of Kaifeng Jews home to Israel through Finland in the year 2000. We have been actively helping the nearly two-dozen Kaifeng Jews who have come home since then. Although the numbers are small, this Aliyah is fascinating to many people—especially Christians from Asia.

The ICEJ recently helped five young ladies make Aliyah from Kaifeng. We joyfully stepped in and paid for their flights from Kaifeng to Israel, as well as for most of their living expenses for their first year in the Land. These ladies are currently pursuing their Jewish studies at Midreshet Nishmat–The Jeanie Schottenstein Center for Advanced Torah Study for Women in Jerusalem.

LI CHENG JIN FROM KAIFENG
Li Cheng Jin is a Jewish woman from Kaifeng. Li said her father told her she was Jewish ten years ago. “I was surprised at first, and then very happy,” Li said. Today, Li observes the Sabbath and celebrates all the holidays—Rosh Hashana, Passover, Hanukkah, and Sukkot—according to the Jewish precepts. “The more I learn, the more I keep,” Li admitted. Li keeps kosher, which she said her friends respect. “But to truly observe Judaism, I know that I have to be in Israel.”
UKRAINIAN JEWS
The ICEJ is also continuing to help Ukrainian Jews. When the civil war broke out in the spring of 2014 in Ukraine, the ICEJ reacted quickly and raised money for Aliyah flights and flight-related expenses for these Jews. The ICEJ also sponsored “fishermen” (Jeremiah 16:16) on the ground, who accompanied Ukrainian immigrants to the consulate for their visas and brought them and their baggage to the airport. We then expanded the work and sponsored absorption programs to help these new Ukrainian immigrants learn the language and gain job skills to integrate into Israeli society successfully.

Tamara is a Jewish widow from Ukraine whose husband passed away several years ago. Tamara told us her life has “never been easy,” and that she has been in a difficult financial situation with only a small pension. Tamara came to understand that “every Jew has to live in Israel,” and that Israel is in the heart of all Jews. Thanks to the ICEJ, she could finally make Aliyah!

The ICEJ helped Tamara with transportation to the consulate for her visa and the airport, as well as with pre-flight expenses. We then provided her with immediate absorption needs. “My husband always dreamed about Israel, but that was back in a different time,” Tamara reminisced. “Thank you, ICEJ, for assistance and transportation. But mostly many thanks for your love and encouragement. At my age, it is not easy to move!”

Since the crisis began, the ICEJ has rescued 1,318 Ukrainian Jews like Tamara from the war. The ICEJ not only helped to bring them to Israel but to integrate into their new life and culture. Our work continues with more than 4,000 Jews projected to make Aliyah from Ukraine in 2017. Thank you for your prayers and financial support!
Recently, a door opened for the ICEJ to provide humanitarian aid directly to beleaguered towns and villages caught up in the bitter five-year-old civil war in neighbouring Syria.

Details of this effort cannot be released due to the sensitivities involved, but the Christian Embassy is now able to deliver food and medical supplies sorely needed in Syrian towns cut off from the outside world by the Assad regime, Islamic militants, and other warring factions. The first shipments were handed over in early February, with the “ICEJ” logo on the sides of the relief boxes. But now we need your help to continue this new effort.

Since 2011, Syria’s civil war has displaced well over half of the country’s 22 million people from their homes, leaving them refugees inside the country or abroad and sparking the refugee crisis in Europe. However, in the villages we are assisting, many residents have bravely remained in their homes, despite the lack of any electricity and running water due to the repeated regime shelling attacks. These isolated villages also have severe shortages of even the most basic goods needed to live, such as food, clothing, blankets, and medicine.

Israel has done its best to stay out of the fighting taking place in Syria. But for those of us living in Israel, it is impossible to totally close one’s heart to the plight and suffering of millions of innocent civilians trapped in this raging conflict right at our doorstep. It is widely reported that Israeli hospitals have been treating hundreds of wounded Syrian civilians, and as opportunities are opening to help those still inside the country, the ICEJ is reaching out to them with Christian compassion.

By joining us in this urgent humanitarian relief effort, you will be the testimony of Jesus to these struggling villagers ravaged by war, but also help to improve Israel’s image in the eyes of the Syrian population. If our assistance enables villagers to remain in their homes, it will keep them from becoming refugees desperately fleeing to other countries.

If you have been looking for a way to help bring relief to those suffering from the ongoing tragedy in Syria, here is your opportunity—one which comes with multiple benefits. The most urgent needs for help are among children and the elderly, and this is where we are directing our current efforts.

Please consider giving a generous donation to our Syria relief fund today. Your gift will be greatly appreciated! To send your gift, go to: www.icejusa.org/syrian-aid
HOPE FOR NIGER

At the beginning of February, ICEJ President Dr. Jürgen Bühler and ICEJ Vice President – International Affairs Rev. Juha Ketola, along with former Israeli Minister and Knesset Member Moody Sandberg (now the chairman of Keren Hayesod), paid a visit to Niamey, the capital of Niger.

The groundwork for the visit was done by the ICEJ’s West Africa Representative Dr. Abdou Maiga, together with the ICEJ Niger National Director Pastor Moctar Soumana, who hosted the visitors from Israel. High-ranking officials in Niamey warmly received the delegates who visited some of the governmental offices in the Niger capital.

The ICEJ has had a branch in Niger for a few years, and though officially the Christian minority is said to be less than 10 percent of the population, the churches are seeing an increase in numbers and the representation continues to grow. Nevertheless, this mostly Muslim nation, enclosed by the Saharan desert, is one of the poorest countries in the world. One-third of babies born in Niger are malnourished and half of the nation’s children under the age of 14 are forced into labor. About 80 percent of the country is illiterate.

When the Israeli delegation met with the head Imam of the Islamic community in Niger, Sheikh Omar Ismael, he described his country as “a sick man.” This provided Dr. Bühler an opportunity to share his testimony of healing through the power of Jesus, and the ICEJ president assured the leaders in Niger that, as Christians, the ICEJ will pray for their nation.

The ICEJ strongly believes as a ministry we can help improve the social and economic well-being of the Niger people in the future. Thus, this visit was of great importance. We invite Christians around the world to pray with us for the people of Niger—may we become witnesses of their healing as a nation!

AZERBAIJAN BLESSES ISRAEL

BY SERGUEI POPOV

Located in the South Caucasus region, at the crossroads of Southwest Asia and Southeastern Europe, Azerbaijan has historically been a Muslim country. Bordering Iran, Russia, Georgia, and Armenia, this former Soviet country has been involved in many conflicts and to this day reaps the fruit of an extended war with Armenia. The Republic of Azerbaijan has the second highest population percentage-wise of Shia Muslims in the world. For this reason, a special relationship between Azerbaijan and Iran exists where citizens of Azerbaijan can freely travel to Iran without a visa. The small Jewish population, currently estimated between 10 to 20,000, has a long history in the land reaching as far back as 2,500 years.

The ICEJ’s leadership took a bold step to enlarge its influence in the region and recently appointed an official representation in the Republic of Azerbaijan. On Sunday February 5, the Full Gospel Pentecostal Church in Azerbaijan opened its doors for us and expressed a sincere desire to form a lasting relationship with the ICEJ to bless Israel. Rev. Rasim Khalilov, the president of the Bible Society of Azerbaijan, and another spiritual leader in the country, Rev. Aleksander Neretin, agreed to make the ICEJ representation in Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan, go public this spring.

We ask you to pray with us for Azerbaijan today! Please pray for God to open all the right doors in this country, and to give wisdom to the ICEJ to operate effectively in this unique environment.
Mahmoud Abbas became the first prime minister of the Palestinian Authority in 2003 and was elected as its president in 2005 after former leader Yasser Arafat’s death. Abbas belonged to Yasser Arafat’s inner circle for 40 years and still imitates some of his mentor’s policies. Egyptian-born Arafat was a product of the Muslim Brotherhood and is often cited as the godfather of modern terrorism.

In 1982 during Soviet Union communism, Abbas earned his doctorate from Patrice Lumumba University in Moscow (now known as the Peoples’ Friendship University of Russia). His thesis, “The Connection between the Nazis and the Leaders of the Zionist Movement,” was published in Arabic as a book entitled The Other Side: The Secret Relationship Between Nazism and Zionism. Abbas claimed that the 6 million who were killed in the Holocaust was a “fantastic lie” and “a myth,” and the “Jews which were killed by the Nazis were actually the victims of a Zionist-Nazi plot.” Critics of his book view it as Holocaust denial. A decade later, Abbas seemed to abandon some of these tenets after an outcry from the Jewish community.

Abbas was implicated in the financing and planning of the massacre of Israeli Olympic athletes in 1973. Then, in 1985 he was implicated in the hijacking of the Italian Achille Lauro cruise ship by Palestinian terrorists who threw a wheelchair-bound Jewish businessman overboard to his death. Along with the Palestinian terrorists, Italian courts convicted Abbas in absentia for his part in planning the hijacking, but he served no time.

In the ensuing years, Abbas accumulated a mixed record. Western nations generally consider him more of a pragmatist. For example, under international pressure he said he was not in favor of the Palestinian’s violent uprising (Intifada) in 2003. Although he participated in a round of direct peace talks in 2008 with Israel’s then Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, Abbas walked away—even though he was offered 95 percent of his requests.

In negotiations with PM Netanyahu in 2010, Abbas refused to continue discussions citing the “building of settlements” as a hindrance. He called on PM Netanyahu to halt construction for 10 months, promising to restart talks. Netanyahu complied, but direct negotiations have not taken place since.

Instead, Abbas has focused on winning favor in the United Nations. He justifies this move in part because he claims that US-mediated peace negotiations did not put enough pressure on Israel to make concessions. To make matters worse, not only has Abbas refused direct negotiations with PM Netanyahu, but in 2014 he aligned with Hamas, the terrorist government of Gaza.

He and his sons have been accused of corruption with his net worth now estimated to be $100 million. In July 2012 the US Congress called the corruption into question naming it “Chronic Kleptocracy: Corruption Within the Palestinian Political Establishment.”

A true partner for peace? You decide.
Tour Israel and Celebrate the **FEAST of TABERNACLES**

Presented by International Christian Embassy Jerusalem

October 4–15, 2017

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 80 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:
ICEJ USA • PO Box 332974 • Murfreesboro, TN 37133-2974
www.icejusa.org/feast-tour • (866) 393-5890 or email us at tours@icejusa.org
Celebrate Jerusalem!

MAY 26-27, 2017
WORLD OUTREACH CHURCH // MURFREESBORO, TN
FRIDAY NIGHT CELEBRATION AND SATURDAY MORNING SEMINARS

Join us in celebrating the 50th anniversary of a united Jerusalem under Israeli sovereignty! Jesus said that there would come a day in which Jerusalem would no longer be "trampled by the gentiles." Two thousand years later it is the capital of Israel! Join with us as we celebrate this miracle, worship the Lord together, and pray for the peace of Jerusalem!

DANNY AVALON
FORMER ISRAELI DEPUTY MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS & FORMER ISRAELI AMBASSADOR TO THE USA

SUSAN MICHAEL
INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN EMBASSY JERUSALEM (USA)

MALCOLM HEDDING
INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN EMBASSY JERUSALEM

PASTOR ALLEN JACKSON
WORLD OUTREACH CHURCH

RORY COMTOIS
WORSHIP LEADER RORY COMTOIS MUSIC

Register Today! Call 615-895-9830 www.icejusa.org/summerconf2017