VANDALISM AS WARFARE
ICEJ Steps in to Help
FUTURE PROOFING ISRAEL
Dear Friends,

Israel’s southern border to Gaza continues to be a troubled region. Its residents have had to cope with many threats over the past decade, whether tunnels dug by Hamas underneath Jewish communities, rocket or mortar attacks, or as of recent, daily waves of fiery kites and explosive balloons. These seemingly harmless toys carry torches or incendiary devices that cause great destruction to the arid region of Israel’s south.

The ICEJ is on the ground in Israel to show our friendship during difficult times. Recently, we delivered a mobile fire extinguisher unit suited for tough terrain that is inaccessible to regular fire engines, and we are sending more help. On our recent visit to the area, our team was astonished to see the resilience of the local inhabitants. Personally, I was concerned that many people would begin to leave the area, but I was surprised to hear that most communities along Gaza are growing! Kfar Aza, for example, is building housing units for 40 more families to join the community. This represents an increase of 30 percent, a remarkable growth rate for a small border Kibbutz in the midst of troublesome times.

Our presence and support means a lot. Whether through fire equipment or bomb shelters supplied by the ICEJ, the region has become safer. I will never forget the trip I took to Europe several years ago when I picked up the phone from an unknown caller. The man, sounding very excited, said: “Is this Jürgen Bühler from the Christian Embassy?” I replied “Yes.” Then the man shouted, “You just saved my life! I am sitting in a shelter in Kfar Aza and a rocket landed just a few meters from us. Thank you so much!” In the shelter was a sign that said: “Donated by the ICEJ on behalf of Christians from around the world.” The caller was Shai Hermesh, a then-member of the Israeli Knesset who has lived in Kfar Aza since he helped found this border community in 1965. We have become good friends since then, and the ICEJ has continued to provide many more bomb shelters to protect the lives of the Jewish people.

Today, I ask you to help us continue to increase our help in this troubled region. The Word of God says: “A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity” (Proverbs 17:17). Join us in being a loving friend to the people in Israel!

May God bless you richly out of Zion,

Dr. Jürgen Bühler
ICEJ President

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THE BATTLE FOR TRUTH

BY DR. JÜRGEN BÜHLER
ICEJ PRESIDENT
The Coming Deception
When the disciples asked Jesus on the Mount of Olives about the signs of His coming, His first reply was, “Take heed that no one deceives you!” This answer is reported in all three synoptic Gospels. Jesus made clear to His disciples that a major battlefield of the last days will be the battle for truth. This battle will take place in society as well as within the church. The effect will be great, and Jesus says, “many will be led astray” (Matt. 24:5).

Also, the apostle Paul warns Timothy that deception of demonic origin will emerge within the church (1 Tim. 4:1). Paul alerts the church in Thessalonica that the antichrist will appear through lying signs and wonders and through wicked deception (1 Thess. 2:9–12). The people are going to willingly accept these lies because “they refused to love the truth” and because “they did not believe the truth” (vs. 10, 12).

Man’s Nature Gravitates Toward the Lie
These Scriptures indicate that man’s fallen nature gravitates toward deception and lies rather than truth. This also reveals that many deceptions do not just originate from misunderstanding, lack of education, or a false approach to the Scriptures, but come straight from hell and are of demonic origin. This makes these deceptions particularly dangerous as they carry with them a “demonic anointing” impacting men beyond their reasoning or education.

Their Power Is in Their Mouth
The book of Revelation portrays the eschatological battle between Satan’s system and the kingdom of God as a battle about who controls the airwaves. He who speaks the loudest and can influence and manipulate the best seems to have the upper hand. Here are a few examples:

- When the sixth trumpet sounds, John the apostle sees a gigantic army of horsemen; the horses have heads of lions. Their purpose is to kill. The most dangerous weapon is what comes out of the horses’ mouths—fire, smoke, and sulfur. John summarizes it this way: “The power of the horses is in their mouth” (Rev. 9:19). Interestingly, Jesus places the idea of Satan purposing to kill in direct relation to Satan also being the father of lies (John 8:44).

- In Revelation 12, the dragon (Satan) attacks the woman (Israel) who brought forth a male child (Jesus). The dragon hates the woman, and John sees the “serpent pouring out water like a river out of his mouth after the woman” (vs. 15). History gives ample evidence that since the coming of Messiah, there have been almost 2,000 years of demonic onslaught against the Jewish people. This flood of lies has had many shades from “Jews are Christ killers” to “they plot to control the world” to “they are a degenerate race that needs to be exterminated.” The list of wicked and demonic accusations is as long as the history of the Jewish people’s suffering.

- The beast that rises out of the sea is “given a mouth to speak great things and blasphemies” (Rev. 13:5), and the prophet of the beast looks like a lamb, but it speaks “like a dragon.” He gives breath to the image “to speak” (Rev. 13:11, 15). Again, a main capability of the anti-Christian system is described as powerful demonic deception that will not only target “those who dwell on earth,” but also it was given to the beast “to make war with the saints.”

- When the sixth bowl is poured out on the earth (Rev. 16:12), the consequence is that out of the mouth of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet, three unclean spirits emerge that look like frogs that deceive “the kings of the whole earth.” This means the deceptive spirits will not only impact the man on the street but explicitly target government leaders and rulers.

- Even at the very last battle in Revelation (Rev. 20:8), Satan mobilizes the world by “deceiving the nations that are at the four corners of the world.” Their target again is the city of Jerusalem, the capital of the Jewish people.

THE BOOK OF REVELATION PORTRAYS
THE ESCHATOLOGICAL BATTLE BETWEEN
SATAN’S SYSTEM AND
THE KINGDOM OF GOD
AS A BATTLE ABOUT
WHO CONTROLS THE
AIR WAVES

The Arsenal of Satan
The art of communication (or miscommunication) seems to be the cornerstone of Satan’s power. His mouth is his main weapon. The arsenal that he wields is prideful talk, temptations, lies and half-truths, deception, blasphemy, doubt, and so much more. Jesus therefore calls him the father of lies.

Demonic Seduction
The history of anti-Semitism is a history of lies and false accusations against the Jews. It is no wonder that one of the most essential government ministries in Adolf Hitler’s Nazi regime was the “Propaganda Ministry,” led by the notorious Joseph Goebbels, a master of modern communication in his own time. Why Germany—one of the most educated countries of the world at the time—gave in to Hitler’s propaganda is still a mystery to many. However, it helps to understand it as an onslaught of demonic nature. I remember a great aunt telling me that whenever the “Führer” Hitler spoke on the radio, everybody was pulled in as if by a magnet. “There was something like magic when he spoke,” she said.

Satan’s lies and half-truths have been in operation since the Garden of Eden. Already “the serpent, more cunning than all the other animals of Eden,” poured out a flow of doubt and temptation against mankind: “Has God really said?” to “No way you will die” to “You will be like him” (Gen. 3:1). Giving in to these lies set the course of history on a path of rebellion and destruction.

Today, the values of truth and justice are turned upside down. The
Orwellian “doublethink” and “newspeak” seem to be all around us in today’s politically correct discourse. It has reached such a level that in many countries people seem to be waking up to the fact that “fake news” and “political correctness” increasingly form a smokescreen to hide the real facts and actual reality of our world.

While George Orwell’s imaginary government in 1984 proclaimed, “War is peace! Freedom is slavery! Ignorance is strength!” the lies of today similarly proclaim, “Terrorists are freedom fighters,” “Molotov-cocktail-throwing rioters are peaceful demonstrators,” “An army defending its citizens and its borders is an army of war criminals,” and of course, “The Jews today are worse than the Nazis of the past.”

It is difficult to understand how systematically and unreasonably the world sides against Israel and rather favors terror-supporting regimes in the Middle East. Even the kings of this world are caught in an unreasonable and wicked stand against Israel and the Jewish people. It is inexplicable why United Nation bodies are more obsessed with Israel as the only free democracy in the Middle East than with rogue regimes like Iran, North Korea, or Venezuela. It is inexplicable why Israel is the only nation of the world that cannot choose the seat of its capital, or why the UN Security Council wanted to investigate only Israel in the recent Gaza clashes and not the terrorist organization Hamas, which called upon its youth, women, and children to storm the border fence to Israel. The list goes on and on.

Solidarity in Persecution

The same assault goes on against the church of God. In Revelation 12 when the dragon persecutes the woman (Israel), he does not succeed because “the earth came to help her.” As a result, the dragon is enraged and “went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ” (Rev. 12:17). This means that we are called upon to be more alert than ever to uphold the truth of the Word and to know it.

Four Pieces of Advice

Let us remember the warning Jesus gave His disciples on the Mount of Olives: “Take heed that no one deceives you!” Here are a few suggestions to help us navigate through these complex times in which we are living:

We need to be a people of truth. One reason deception is entering the world is because Scripture says, “they refused to love the truth” (2 Thess. 2:10). For us as believers, knowing the truth is essential to escape the assaults of the enemy.

We need to be a people of prayer. In Ephesians 6, we are reminded that, “Our battle is not against flesh and blood.” One of the weapons the Word of God gives us is “praying always (. . .) in the Spirit” (Eph. 6:18).

We need to be a people of testimony. Knowing the truth is sometimes not enough. Situations will arise when we are called upon to speak up. Truth defuses lies like light chases darkness away. The book of Revelation sees a victorious army that has overcome the accuser “by the word of their testimony” (Rev. 12:11). Ask God for courage to stand up for the truth of our faith and for God’s chosen people, the Jews.

We need to be a prophetic people. Prophecy is more than just seeing the future. It is also feeling God’s heart for the current generation. It was the heart of God for their generation with which the prophets of old challenged their people. This also lies at the very heart of Jesus: “Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy” (Rev. 19:10).

Finally, be encouraged with the Word of John: “I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth” (3 John 4).
For years, Israelis in Gaza’s border region, known as the Gaza Envelope, have reacted to the high-pitched whistle of incoming mortar rounds or the sirens from red alerts, warning Israeli residents to take cover from rockets. This threat remains, but a new one has materialized—a threat that demands the use of other senses. The smell of fire and the sight of smoke is what raises this alarm. The response likewise requires speed, but not to take cover; rather, residents need to charge out to fight and contain the fire.

The grit of local Israelis is impressive, but they need our help in the form of all-terrain firefighting trailers to limit the damages from the hundreds of fires ignited by incendiary kites and explosive balloons floating in from the Gaza Strip. The Israelis in the Gaza Envelope are literally fighting for their livelihood as they try to contain upwards of 20-30 fires each day.

Help Israel Respond In 15 Minutes

The ICEJ promptly donated a firefighter trailer (total cost per unit 15,500 USD) when the call came out for specialized firefighting equipment. Elan Isaacson explained that this is the most urgent need: “I want to thank our friends at the Christian Embassy for your swift response in providing us with firefighting trailers. These trailers are the greatest current need we have to respond to the incendiary balloons coming across the border. Your support, not just now in times of crisis, but throughout the years is very important to us and strengthens us. I want to express my heartfelt thanks to all of our Christian friends.”

The new firefighting trailer donated by the ICEJ has already seen action. You can also be on the frontline with Israelis. They will know that Christians like you from around the world helped put the right equipment into their hands at the time of their great need.

The ICEJ Steps in to Help

When the ICEJ visited Kibbutz Kissufim in July, a short distance from the Gaza border, smoke from a fire was billowing upward in the background. The cry for all-terrain firefighting equipment had first sounded from local security officials struggling to protect their areas, such as Elan Isaacson, Head of Security for the Eshkol Region.

Elan Isaacson’s Eshkol Region has the longest border with Gaza, and his main effort has been to reduce response times to ignited fires. When our team was in the area, three fires broke out in our immediate vicinity. Isaacson shared:

“The crucial time frame for controlling a field or brush fire is the first 15 minutes. If a fire is not extinguished within 15 minutes, it will spread out exponentially and can cause significant damage to crops, animals, and homes, and could result in injury or death. The only vehicle that can get to a fire within 15 minutes guaranteed is a mobile firefighter trailer.”

The ICEJ AId
The Israelis love their land and they want to defend it. We can help fight the fires if we put the right equipment into the hands of local Israelis.

One farmer showed us new saplings he has planted to replace a loss of 180 avocado trees. He has managed to replant relatively quickly, but an avocado tree takes an initial 5–6 years before it begins to yield fruit, a significant setback. The approximately 8,000 acres lost to fires ignited by the kites and balloons is very real and quantifiable in monetary terms, but their destructive effect goes deeper as local Israelis see the destruction imposed on the leafy beauty and ecological health of an otherwise prosperous agricultural community. Let’s do something to protect this beautiful and precious land.

Your help enables the ICEJ to provide timely aid as soon as crises arise in Israel. Because we are quick and nimble, your help actually acts as a first-responder on the scene of disaster. This was the case when Israel faced a brush-fire crisis in November 2016. The ICEJ provided immediate relief and helped families recover from the ordeal, which involved 1,773 fires nationwide, necessitating the evacuation of 75,000 residents in Haifa alone. The household items a family needs to cook, the blanket a child needs to stay warm, or the immediate cash infusion a parent needs to restart family life is a result of your direct help to Israel and only possible because you care. Let’s be the first to help Israelis when they face a crisis.
Sheltering Israel’s Gaza Frontier Communities

Do you know how important you are to Israel’s frontline communities? Christians like you play a crucial role in keeping Israelis safe from Gaza’s rockets and mortar shells. When a mother and her children hear the high-pitched whistle of an incoming mortar round, they have somewhere to run because of you. When the siren blares in warning of a rocket’s imminent impact, they can quickly find secure shelter because of you.

Since the terrorist organization Hamas took control of the Gaza Strip in 2007, the ICEJ has continuously worked to put in shelters to secure threatened communities in Israel’s vulnerable south-west region. With the determined support from Christians like you, we have constructed a total of 61 shelters.

You are important for the staying power of Jewish communities in Israel’s south.

1. Your help boosts the confidence and resilience of local Israelis.
2. Your help frustrates the enemy’s attempt to terrorize civilians.
3. Your help saves lives and brings Israel a step closer to victory!

The strength of the home front directly influences whether Israel is viable as a country or not. When you help the ICEJ put in new shelters, you are tending to the viability of Jewish communities and providing the staying power they need.

And they notice! And they say thank you! Remarkably, when we spoke with Elan Isaacson, he thanked us for more than our current crisis help; he thanked us for standing with Israel all year round! You are a great testimony to men and women on the frontlines. Please continue to strengthen Israel’s communities, because your help matters!

SEND YOUR GIFT

Thanks to Christian support like yours, Israelis remain confident and determined to face down the menacing threats from their neighbors in the Gaza Strip. They even look forward to a future peace. Help them stay strong until that day comes. You can send your vital support to the ICEJ:

Visit www.icejusa.org/aid/israel_in_crisis and click on the DONATE NOW button!

Thank you for your generous support.

Over 174 rockets and mortar shells fired on Israel on July 14

GAZA STRIP

ISRAEL
The history of a people can be likened to a fabric made up of many individual threads. This illustration fits both the Jewish people as a whole and the many individuals who together form its constituent parts. The Bnei Menashe, the sons of Menashe, are recognized by the Israeli rabbinate as one of Israel’s lost tribes. They are now being woven into the colorful tapestry of the Jewish nation with support from the ICEJ.

The distance they have to travel from north-eastern India is as great as their longing for Zion. This longing reflects God’s command and promise: “Fear not: for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east” (Isaiah 43:5). This promise is why the ICEJ continues to stand with the Bnei Menashe and has recently committed additional funds for their return to Zion. Here are some of their enthusiastic expressions of gratitude in response to the ICEJ’s support:

Ginjamang Singson
“I am from the Beit Shalom community of Monglenphai in Manipur, India. I thank God for making this happen. I cannot wait to meet my relatives who already made Aliyah. It has been more than ten years since we last met! The expectation is especially great for my wife, who will be meeting her niece and nephew for the first time since they were born. It is truly a blessing for us to be united and meet with our loved ones in Eretz Israel after a long separation. Thank you once again, and long live (the) ICEJ!”

Seingul Lotjem (Hebrew name: Obed)
“I am from the Beit Shalom community in the village of Churachandpur in Manipur, India. I am very excited about the upcoming Aliyah to Israel; it has always been my dream to return to Zion. It is especially emotional for me because my beloved father and mother made Aliyah back in the year 2000, and we have not seen each other since then, so of course I miss them very much. My brothers have already made Aliyah, so I am overwhelmed to think that I will be able to meet them again and be reunited with my family thanks to Hashem and His kindness. Thank you to ICEJ for helping our lost tribe return home.”

Ethiopian Aliyah Documentary
“To have a big change . . . you have to dream big” are the words of an Israeli community leader of Ethiopian descent. He spent his teenage years serving his people in a refugee camp, all the while dreaming of a future in Israel. Today, his dream and that of many others has come true, in large part thanks to the efforts of the ICEJ and its supporters.

Ethiopian Olim (immigrants) have the same big dream inside of them to come to Israel that every other Jew does, and yet their journey has and continues to be unique in terms of hardship and ultimate triumph. While they have battled centuries of exile and persecution, they also have a variety of unique cultural barriers to overcome as they look to the Promised Land.

The ICEJ has latched on to their dream and has made it part of its vision: “It’s a part of the DNA of ICEJ to work to fulfil these biblical prophesies to help the Jews come home to their biblical homeland,” said ICEJ’s VP of Operations Barry Denison in the forthcoming documentary on the historic immigration process of the Ethiopian Jews. The personal stories you will hear are stories of heartbreak and devastation, courage, growth, and triumph as the ICEJ explores not only the biblical significance of Ethiopian Aliyah, but also the personal dreams of Ethiopian Olim to reunite with their families, thrive, and contribute to Israeli society. We hope that you will dare to dream bigger as you are inspired and encouraged by the testimony of God’s people coming home.

Please help the ICEJ bring more Jews home to Israel.
Give to: www.icejusa.org/aliyah
Good parents naturally concern themselves with preparing and enabling their children’s education and careers. But what if you find yourself in a country where you don’t know the ins and outs? And where competition is particularly fierce? This is where the ICEJ steps in as a partner for new immigrants. We are key sponsors of “Immigrants Together,” a unique program and a true success story.

Coming from the African continent to Israel’s highly competitive labor market is no easy leap. Even if you manage to obtain a college degree from an Israeli university, cultural challenges persist for new graduates, and their networks are much less developed. “Immigrants Together” fully compensates for these shortcomings, and enjoys a high completion rate with program participants who subsequently find professional, suitable jobs.

Moreover, this job-placement program produces positive spillover effects because it is a cooperative endeavour, inspiring and drawing in all walks of Israeli professionals. This means that participants benefit from an extensive network incorporating 2,500 mentors and volunteers, a crucial help for new arrivals. In this way, graduates have landed jobs such as section head in the Ministry of Justice and police attorney in the Israeli Police force. In the private sector, a business school graduate became the assistant to the humanitarian committee and administrative council at the Bank of Israel, while an engineering student qualified for a position at Israel Aerospace Industries.

In joining this effort, you will help knit together the fibres and sinews of a strong Israeli society and be a blessing to new arrivals and their children.

ICEJ SPONSORED ALIYAH SUMMER CAMPS IN LATVIA

The ICEJ Aliyah department helped sponsor two Jewish Summer camps in cooperation with the Jewish Agency. The first camp was for children ages 6–11 with a great attendance of 65 children and 20 leaders. They received an introduction to the geography of Israel and learned the Hebrew alphabet.

The second camp was for students, ages 17–18. They learned about Israel’s Naale program, a Youth Aliyah program allowing students to complete high school in Israel at boarding schools, and about the Selah program, which prepares students for University in Israel. Almost all Naale and Selah graduates make Aliyah to Israel, and more than 60 percent of their parents join them in the land.

We expect great things for what God will do in the lives of these youth, and we need your help and support to make these camps a possibility again next summer! Send your gift today: www.icejusa.org/aliyah
Many of Israel’s first Jewish pioneers in the 1800s came out of eastern Europe and Russia. Today, Aliyah from these regions continues to be strong and urgent. Last year, more than half of worldwide Aliyah (53 percent) was from three former Soviet states: Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus.

In eastern Ukraine, the protracted conflict with Russian-backed separatists simmers on and continues to heavily affect life. So far, 10,000 have died and 1.7 million people have been internally displaced with an estimated 3.8 million in need of urgent assistance. Aliyah from Ukraine has surged as thousands of Jewish refugees from eastern Ukraine have decided that they must finally move to Israel. There is no future for them in Ukraine, because the nation is experiencing a difficult economic situation.

The ICEJ continues to prioritize Aliyah work from this distressed country, where we also assist the Jewish Agency by sponsoring fast-track Aliyah seminars to help the Jewish people get ready for their new lives in Israel. These seminars are pivotal because they give potential immigrants a chance to discuss their future in a free atmosphere.

Of particular importance are weekend seminars for families (ages 25–50) and young adults (ages 18–30) that help prospective new immigrants ensure the best possible absorption process. Examples of topics covered at the seminars include: Israeli current events, Jewish holidays and the Jewish life cycle, the history of Israel and the Jewish people, the absorption process in Israel and the rights of new immigrants, the Israeli education and health systems, higher education, professional/vocational training programs, and the ins and outs of the Israeli job market.

The ICEJ sponsors these seminars because the preparation is vital for giving newcomers a good start in Israel and ensures that new immigrants become net contributors to the Israeli economy early on. Help make Israel stronger by investing in solid fundamentals for new immigrants.

Help prepare more families for a successful Aliyah at: www.icejusa.org/Ukraine

ICEJ Finland and ICEJ Russia held an event in Finland to celebrate Israel’s 70th anniversary, May 12–13. A choir and dance troupe from the Jewish community in St. Petersburg called “Eva” gave two concerts in Tampere and Helsinki where they received standing ovations from the Finnish audience for their impressive and professional performances. The Eva foundation has been a partner with the ICEJ for 28 years, and its founder, Lev Mendelevitch, helped establish the Finnish Aliyah route that began after the fall of the Soviet Union.

Eighty members of the Eva Foundation, comprising singers, dancers, artists, choreographers, composers, and musicians participated in this remarkable three-day event, which also included art exhibitions dedicated to the memory of the Holocaust and the Finnish book launch about two little girls who lived through the Holocaust. The prints and books can now go to Finnish schools to promote Holocaust awareness among young people and their teachers.
2019 ENVISION PASTORS AND LEADERS TOUR TO ISRAEL
JANUARY 21–FEBRUARY 1

The ICEJ invites you to a unique Israel tour for pastors and leaders that includes the four-day international Envision Pastors and Leaders Conference in Jerusalem. Join pastors and leaders from around the world for this inspiring conference where you will hear from key Israeli leaders, visit the Israeli Knesset, attend a special ceremony at Yad Vashem, and meet leading local Jewish and Arab pastors.

This itinerary is perfect for pastors and leaders who are looking for a tour to Israel that offers something more in-depth.

To download brochure or register go to: www.icejusa.org/envisionsetour2019
or call (866) 393-5890.
There are many major Israeli achievements to celebrate this year as Israel turns 70, but you might be surprised. There’s a shadow hanging over future generations in Israel. Although Israel is known for its smarts and definitely has the inventions and technology to show for it, there is an ongoing fight for Israel’s future. Israel’s future is at risk because some school-aged children are falling between the cracks.

All Israelis know that the key concept in Israel’s national security has always been the nation’s qualitative edge. How else do you deter and defeat enemies 100 times your size and strength? But here is the problem. Despite its many high-performance teams, Israel is currently struggling to equip a significant part of its school children to deliver that crucial qualitative edge in the future. And that is why your help is needed today.

If Israel were under attack, wouldn’t you want to step into the gap and help? I know I would, but I think it might be too late if we wait for the news to hit the headlines. The effective time to act is now before too many slip through the cracks.

When each young person is guided in the right direction, they have the capability of unleashing powerful creativity and a dynamic drive to move Israel forward. Your act of foresight is sure to bring decisive blessings to God’s people. Our acts as gentile believers help demonstrate God’s continued faithfulness and covenant love for Israel.
Make the Turn-Around Story Happen

Take Ilya’s case, for example. What do you think his life would have looked like today without the ICEJ’s mentorship program, Touching the Horizon? Ilya’s immigrant parents struggled to get by, leaving him to himself much of the time. At age 12, Ilya had his first run-in with the police and was placed under house arrest, a type of semi-permanent grounding. The friends available to him were even more lost and broken than he was. Sadly, one of his childhood friends is currently serving a long prison sentence for a serious crime.

Who would want to touch a kid like Ilya? The bleak future awaiting him and his surroundings was pretty clear: a life of crime and poverty. But then grace happened. In the 10th grade Ilya enrolled in Touching the Horizon, and this began his turn-around story. Meeting with a personal advisor and joining group sessions with other students was exactly what Ilya needed. He was no longer facing his challenges alone but had someone to lean on.

He graduated from the program and went on to serve as a combat soldier in the IDF’s border police, standing guard over Israel. Can you imagine? We are very proud of him. Today at age 21 he is enrolled at Be’er Sheva University studying toward a bachelor’s degree in government and diplomacy. Ilya went from a life of crime and poverty onward to pursue his talents and happiness instead. Now he promises to be a future leader in Israel. Ilya is already returning the blessing and grace he received. In his free time, he volunteers with and mentors youth at risk. He encourages them to take responsibility for their own lives, to join the Army, and to succeed. He wants to transfer what he learned and help save other youths from destroying themselves.

A nation is no stronger nor more able than its citizens. Securing Israel’s youth and future brain power is where the fight begins. Help keep Israel strong by donating today to help transform many more lives of young Israelis like Ilya!

Turnarounds are our favorite kind of story. It’s about beating the odds and letting God-given talents shine. On a national level this is definitely Israel’s story, but for many young people in Israel, it is just too hard to catch up after a tough beginning. Turnarounds don’t just happen. It takes a nudge in the right direction, or a pat on the shoulder at the right time. When a person is at a low point in their life, it is only those souls with the eyes of the Creator that can still see the potential and value to invest in that person. Thank you because you care, and thank you for considering financial support for this vital national cause to secure Israel’s future and keep the flow of surprising and life-changing innovation going strong.

Thanks to Christian support, Ilya’s life has been changed through the ICEJ-sponsored Touching the Horizon program. You can help more troubled youth at: www.icejusa.org/future_hope
Reaching the Younger Generation

By Jani Salokangas

As Arise Director, I had the privilege to speak at the “U-Turn Young Adults Conference” held in southern Finland in the city of Kerava. The conference was uplifting and drew a great crowd of young adults who were hungry for God and His Word. “Today I learned things about the Bible that I have never heard before. The Bible is truly a living book!” said Mikko. “I think today I understood that Jesus had to be Jewish and it was no random thing, but it was for a specific purpose,” said Sonja. Many young adults came asking questions about what is happening in Israel, Gaza, and the Middle East. The interest is there, but often the full picture and reality of these complicated matters are missing. Therefore, the ICEJ wants to continue connecting with the young generation across the world to teach and inspire them about God, Israel, their calling, and how they fit into the picture in accordance to the Bible.

“How can a young person stay on the path of purity? By living according to your word.” (Psalm 119:9)

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE ICEJ’S OUTREACH TO YOUNG ADULTS AT WWW.ICEJUSA.ORG/ARISE

Generation Z

By Kayla Ellingsworth

Each generation has a unique set of characteristics, gifts, and downfalls. Ossie Mills, the vice president of global communications and marketing at Oral Roberts University, shared his findings at chapel at the ICEJ Headquarters about “Generation Z.” This generation is born from 1997–2014, and is known to be smart, creative, strategic, fun, and curious risk-takers. Technology makes them feel like anything is possible. Generation Z’s main downfall is that their excessive amount of exposure to media easily influences them in many different directions.

Generation Z spends 74 percent of their free time online, and therefore, the most effective way to reach them with the truth of the gospel is through social media. Generation Z values truth, so sharing the raw Word of God will bear much fruit in their lives! A great way to connect with and disciple Generation Z is through genuine relationships both in one-on-one and group settings.

Please join us in prayer for this promising but vulnerable generation!

1. PRAY for Generation Z to stand firm in the truth of Jesus and not be swayed by worldly influence in the media.
2. PRAY that the older generations will reach out to Generation Z by taking the time to understand and disciple them.
3. PRAY for God to pour out His Spirit over Generation Z to inspire their creative and fearless hearts to impact the world for His glory!

Joel 2:28: “And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, and your young men will see visions.”

TO SEND A GENERATION Z TO ISRAEL WITH ICEJ GO TO: WWW.ICEJUSA.ORG/YOUNG-ADULT-TOURS
Join the ICEJ’s
Shomer Society
(Keeper of Israel Society)

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How Should Christians Respond to Israel’s Calling?

By Rev. Malcolm Hedding, Former Executive Director, ICEJ

In Romans 9:11, the apostle Paul deals extensively with the gentle Christian’s response to Israel. While the passage has been debated by the best theological minds through the centuries, Paul still exhorts us to accept certain clear facts. Sadly, the failure of the church historically to do this has allowed anti-Semitism to grow and flourish in many churches and traditions. We should examine these again in light of the following:

1. The God of the Bible has never “cast away His people” (Romans 11:1). This in turn means that He has a redemptive plan for Israel that will surprise us all. Elijah, the great prophet of Israel, lamented Israel’s spiritual condition and consequently thought that there was no hope and that he was the “last man standing.” It was then that God surprised him by affirming that indeed seven thousand people had not “bowed the knee to Baal” and were actually faithfully serving Him. So, indeed the Lord is allowing a remarkable miracle to unfold in Israel today because He is active in her present journey.

2. God has used Israel’s unbelief to bring salvation to the gentiles (Romans 11:11). This has an element of mystery in it, yet the passage is clear that there is a church in the world because of Israel’s rejection of Jesus. Paul encourages us to view this fact with gratitude and not disdain. Their fall, he says, “is riches for the world.” The church should have shown kindness and appreciation to Israel—that is, we should have been a provocation to jealousy.

3. God requires that we desist from arrogantly boasting against the Jewish people because we have been grafted into their spiritual tree (Romans 11:17–19). Our spiritual heritage is Jewish. Jesus said, “Salvation is of the Jews” (John 4:22). Ours is essentially a Jewish faith built on the great lives of Moses, Joshua, Esther, David, Isaiah, Daniel, the apostles, and our wonderful Messiah Jesus.

4. God calls us to fear Him—to show reverence and awe (Romans 11:19–20). The Jewish world can easily be grafted back into their tree because they are “natural branches,” whereas gentiles are “wild branches.” We are, in a way, misfits. And it is easier for God to graft His people back into their own tree than to place us there. We should therefore fear God and thank Him by showing love to the Jewish people. Our arrogance against them incurs His displeasure and He warns that this can lead to spiritual death (Romans 11:21–22).

5. God calls us to embrace mystery (Romans 11:25–26). There is a glorious future for Israel. Her failure is only partial, and one day all Israel will be saved. Her journey is fully bound up in the sovereign plan of God. His ways are past finding out but they are clear to the extent that out of Zion a deliverer will come and bring great blessing to Israel. This vision of Israel’s future will not fail. There is thus an “irrevocable” national destiny for Israel that began with Abraham and will conclude with the Holy Spirit being poured out upon them (Romans 11:29).

All this means that God has not forgotten Israel, and we should be a people filled with love and gratitude as we engage them. Though centuries of Christian anti-Semitism heap shame upon us, it is true that in recent decades a revolution in Jewish/Christian relations has taken place, with the ICEJ at the forefront.

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Marking the beginning of the Jewish new year, the High Holy Days and Festivals were the time of first fruits in Israel, and each year, Jews would travel up to Jerusalem for worship and celebration. In Deuteronomy 16:16, they were commanded to bring their offerings to Jerusalem during the Feast of Tabernacles and not to appear before their God empty-handed. This was so that His hand of blessing could be open over their lives.

Many pilgrims, therefore, bring a special offering from their church or family to the Feast. If you are unable to join us for the 2018 Feast of Tabernacles, you can still partake in this opportunity to prophetically join all the nations gathered in Jerusalem and make a special offering before the Lord on behalf of your family, church, and nation.

It will be my honor to present your offering before the Lord during the Feast as I pray for God’s blessing on your family, and on the United States of America. To make your donation go to: www.icejusa.org/feast-gift

For Zion’s Sake,

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