ISRAEL AT 70
SURPRISING DEVELOPMENTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

WHY SHOULD CHRISTIANS GIVE TO BLESS ISRAEL?

GIFT IDEA FOR PASTOR APPRECIATION MONTH
Dear Friends,

Israel at 70 faces a totally different situation today than at its inception in 1948. While Israel still has to deal with various threats and challenges around the world, there are also many positive changes that would have seemed unimaginable just 10 years ago. God is truly restoring Zion and surpassing the hopes and dreams many of the Zionist pioneers had in the 1940s and ’50s. My feature article in this magazine will cover some of these transformative developments.

The tiny State of Israel continues to occupy center stage of the world’s attention. Her biblical calling and modern achievements have made her truly unique amongst the nations. ICEJ USA Director Susan Michael expounds upon some of the reasons for this in her Israel Answers article on page 14.

Israel is also frequently in the news due to reoccurring crises such as the recent terror attacks emanating from Gaza. We are so grateful for the way our worldwide family has responded to the recent avalanche of rockets and incendiary devices starting over 1,000 fires inside Israel. Your donations have enabled us to purchase over 15 all-terrain fire trailers as well as additional bomb shelters.

While we will always respond out of compassion to the needs of Israel, we have a biblical mandate to bless Israel practically irrespective of the people’s needs. The apostle Paul was clear that we gentiles owe a debt to the Jewish people, and we have a duty to minister to them in material things. ICEJ VP of Operations Barry Denison writes about this on page 7 of the magazine.

In that regard, I want to express a big thank you to our American Branch for two unusually large donations in the past couple of months for our AID and Aliyah projects. They will enable us to impact more lives in Israel with Christian love and support. Thank you.

I hope you are inspired as you read this month’s magazine. Please pray for us and continue to stand with us through your support.

Many blessings from Jerusalem,

Dr Jürgen Bühler
ICEJ President

Cover Photo:
Aerial Photo of the Middle East

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Israel at 70 is one of the greatest miracle stories of our time. The Jewish nation literally rose like a phoenix from the ashes of the Holocaust, and today Israel’s story surpasses the dreams of most of the early pioneers. Israel’s high-tech industry, patents, and research positively impact the majority of people in today’s world. At the same time, the political landscape around Israel is shifting in ways that were unpredictable even five years ago. Today, Israel’s Arab neighbors realize that it is downright foolish to attack Israel because the Jewish state has one of the most advanced, battle-ready armies in the world. They have also discovered that Israel has become a blessing for the entire region, and we are seeing a major thaw taking place in Arab-Israeli relations.

I would like to highlight some of these areas of change and development—both spiritually and physically—as I see God moving in the region more than ever before!

I. The Growth of the Messianic Body in Israel

The Messianic body in Israel is for many evangelicals their strongest connection to the State of Israel. They consider Messianic believers as brothers and sisters in faith who still represent the Jewish people with all their history and God’s direct promises. The term “Messianic believer” refers to people of Jewish origin who believe in Jesus (Yeshua) as their Messiah.

The pioneers of the Messianic movement often refer to the first 12 believers who existed in 1948—when the State of Israel was established—as the “first fruits” in the land. Until the 1980s, the Messianic community in Israel had only grown to a few congregations (less than 20, in fact). By 1994, this number had more than doubled to some 40 congregations across Israel, with approximately 2,000–3,000 members in total. Today the Messianic body, according to a recent survey, is around 20,000–30,000 strong with some 300 congregations throughout Israel.

While Messianic Jews are still considered today as one of the least liked people groups in Israel, their image here is changing. The Messianic youth serve in the Israeli army and are an integral part of Israeli society. Also, the Israeli media has recently started to publish favorable reports on the Messianic movement in Israel.

For example, the life of Israeli evangelist Yacov Damkani recently received unprecedented media attention through a documentary produced by an Israeli television channel and a full cinematic movie that was played in most cinemas across the country. The Jerusalem Post shared a series of articles on Messianic Judaism that was highly positive. Also, the Israeli news recently reported that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu hired an openly confessing Messianic Jew as his main social media advisor.

In addition, we are observing a strong increase around the world in the number of churches and believers who embrace and stand with God’s work with the body of Christ in Israel (both Jewish and Arab). Please pray for the young congregations that are being formed in Israel.

II. The Spiritual Shift in the Arab/Islamic World

A major spiritual shift is taking place in the Arab world. While historical churches lost countless members to ISIS, evangelical churches in western countries have seen an unprecedented growth through Muslims discovering Jesus as their Messiah. It seems that for the first time in 1,300 years of Islamic conquest and domination, the body of Christ is growing again. One interesting fact is that many new “Muslim background believers” (MBBs) understand God’s purposes with Israel. Today, many Arab nations report historic numbers of new believers finding Jesus. This is often triggered by their disillusionment with Islam, caused by ISIS and other radical expressions of the Muslim faith. In addition, countless reports of visions and dreams from all around the Middle East help lead them to Christ.

Some of the nations with the fastest church growth today are found in the Middle East. The same is increasingly true in the Palestinian territories. A pastor of a major town in the West Bank recently reported church growth of 10–15 percent. The largest work of God can be seen in Iran, which saw strong growth from a starting base of a few thousand evangelical believers to several million today.

The growing body of Christ in the region urgently needs the prayer and support of the global church. In recent years, the ICEJ has established encouraging ties to a number of leaders in the region, and we are determined to stand with them in their often-difficult stand for Christ.

III. The Geopolitical Shift

As we celebrate Israel’s 70th anniversary, it is true to say that the Middle East has changed in dramatic ways that went unpredicted by any intelligence agency. The cards of the Middle East have been totally reshuffled, and much of what was true just a few years ago is not true anymore. Here are a few of the areas that have seen the most radical changes:

1) The Recognition of Jerusalem

On May 14, 2018, the United States opened its embassy in Jerusalem after decades of rejection from the nations of the world. This landmark decision has already impacted many nations. Guatemala followed as the second nation on May 16 with President Jimmy Morales coming to Jerusalem to open the new Guatemalan Embassy in Jerusalem. In May, President
Cortez made his move, making Paraguay the third nation to relocate its embassy to Jerusalem.

The ambassador of Guatemala shared an interesting detail about the day the embassy moved to Jerusalem. “Guatemala is a nation with a relatively high crime rate, but on the very day our embassy was opened in Jerusalem, there was not a single crime recorded for the first day in Guatemalan history.”

Today numerous nations are actively contemplating following suit. Among them are Honduras, the Czech Republic, and Hungary. Please pray that more “Cyrus Nations” will be inspired to follow the example of the biblical King Cyrus: “He will rebuild my city” (Isaiah 45:13).

2) Israel Established as a Global Player

In recent decades, Israel has become a global player that is contributing much to the region and to the world. Israel today is an international leader in research and high-tech. Most leading tech companies in the world have R&D centers in Israel. Microsoft, Apple, Oracle, Intel, and Google are just a few of the IT companies in Israel. Israel is also the leader in medicine, and every 16th drug used in the USA is produced in Israel. The latest companies flocking to Israel are the leading German car manufacturing companies who are looking for Israeli leadership to develop their self-driving cars.

The same is true for security questions. Israel today trains security units from many nations and provides security solutions around the world. It is no secret that even neighboring Arab countries depend on Israel for security to protect them from the Islamic terrorism in their own nations. Economically, Israel is thriving; the New Israeli Shekel has become one of the most stable currencies in the world. While the Boycott Divest Sanction (BDS) movement is an evil and demonic initiative, and while we need to challenge it, BDS cannot achieve its goals because no nation today can survive without Israeli technology.

3) Arab Alliances with Israel

One of the most significant developments in the Middle East is the Arab world’s radical shift in attitude toward Israel. This is nothing short of miraculous. Saudi Arabia, in particular, is undergoing a major transformation in its attitude toward Israel. Saudi Crown Prince Mohamed Bin Salman is taking his country through radical reforms. He sees Israel as an asset to the region rather than a threat.

The reasons that triggered this development are twofold: The so-called “Arab spring” brought a thirst for more freedom, not only to limited segments of the population but also unleashed forces of Islamic terror that were hitherto unknown in the Arab world. Some Arab church leaders claim that ISIS has become a major force in driving people away from Islam. ISIS claims to be the purest expression of Islam, causing more and more people to feel disenfranchised from their religion and to turn to alternatives, including the Christian faith. In addition, Arab nations subscribing to Sunni Islam fear a militant takeover of the region by the Shiite branch of Islam led by a nuclear Iran. Today, these Sunni nations see Israel more as an ally to help them fight against the common enemy (Iran) rather than as the traditional “little Satan” they have wanted to destroy. These new changes have engendered many unexpected facets, leading some Arab media to be more pro-Israel than their European counterparts.

This means that some Christian friends of Israel need to say farewell to their belief that “Arabs are the archenemies of Israel.” The reality today is far more complex than this. This certainly means that the church needs to cover the region more in prayer. God has His own vision for the region, as described in Isaiah 19, for example. His heavenly plan is to reach a state where Israel and its Arab neighbors become a “blessing in the earth” (Isaiah 19:24). Let this be our prayer and let us give Him no rest until we see His will done on earth as it is in heaven.

The above can help us understand that in the midst of hostilities, God is restoring Zion and is even starting to do a new work in the Arab world. Please continue to pray for Israel’s restoration, for the Jewish and Arab believers in the region, and for God to continue to unfold His plan in the Arab world.
Israel is known today as a high-tech powerhouse—even to the point of having coined the term “Start-up Nation.” The Israeli Shekel was recently ranked the second-strongest currency in the world, and in 2017, Israel’s exports to the world exceeded $100 billion.

With these indications of a strong economy one might ask, “Why should Christians still give to bless Israel?” While this is a valid question, it is based on a faulty assumption—namely, that we are giving out of human compassion rather than a biblical mandate.

In Romans 15:27, Paul says, “If the Gentiles have been partakers of their (the Jews) spiritual things, their duty is also to minister to them in material things.” Paul is clear that salvation through Jesus came to the gentiles, who were aliens separated from God’s covenants, but who have been brought near by the blood of Christ (Ephesians 2:11–13). Therefore, Christians are spiritually indebted to the Jewish people, and we must share material blessings with them.

Our motivation to bless the Jewish people and the nation of Israel is to obey the Word of God. The verses above tell us that because of this great spiritual blessing, our salvation, redemption, forgiveness purchased through Jesus, and freedom through Jesus’ death and resurrection has caused us forever and always—this side of heaven—to be debtors to the Jewish people. That debt can only be met through material blessings.

The ICEJ was founded upon the Lord’s command in Isaiah 40:1: “Comfort ye, comfort ye my people.” This has been our guiding principle and mission statement since 1980. For almost 40 years, the ICEJ has received donations from Christians, like you, to meet the needs of the Jewish people and bless the nation of Israel.

In the midst of this high-tech, start-up nation, with exports on the rise and a strong global currency, there are significant segments of society that are being left behind. The ICEJ AID department is diligent to ensure that your gift goes to meet real needs. They speak Hebrew with the people, research government statistics on the segments of society at risk, and personally interact with donation recipients. They monitor where your donation goes and verify it is being used as designated: to help abandoned children, youth-at-risk, and people who have fallen into addiction, as well as assist new immigrants, and much more. One of the ICEJ’s main areas of support is to Holocaust Survivors living in poverty, and we help them live out their last days in dignity with great love and care.

We are all familiar with the promises God made to Abraham in Genesis 12:3: “Those that bless you and your descendants, I will bless, and those that curse you and your descendants, I will curse.” Just because God is blessing this nation with positive economic growth does not mean he is canceling His command to us. Therefore, we give to bless the Jewish people out of a position of humility. God in His divine wisdom chose to reveal His covenants and His faithfulness to us through Israel. As Paul says in Romans 11, we are grafted into those covenants and promises, so we can give out of gratitude.

When you give through the ICEJ, remember three things:
1. Blessing Israel and the Jewish people is a biblical mandate.
2. The ICEJ verifies that the recipients of your gift genuinely need help!
3. The recipients are aware that the help we give them comes from Christians around the world.

When you bless Israel through the ICEJ, your financial gift clearly communicates a testimony of Christian love to the people of Israel who need it most. We invite you to bless the Jewish people today!

Donate at: www.icejusa.org/donate
Blessing Holocaust Survivors

THE HAIFA HOME CONTINUES TO GROW

BY ICEJ AID

The ICEJ is thrilled to announce further expansion of the Haifa Home for Holocaust Survivors through the generous gifts of the ICEJ family worldwide, and particularly the German Branch.

As the advancing age of Holocaust Survivors brings more challenges, the Haifa Home is expanding to offer Survivors a place of loving comfort. The purchase of another building in the area will provide the space for extra residential apartments that allow for a live-in, full-time caregiver. Some residents who require full-time assistance will move into the new premises, leaving their apartments available for other Survivors.

The new building is a short distance from the main complex, so the less mobile residents will have their own community space for health-appropriate activities. Excitingly, an office on the ground floor of the building used by a local business will be the ICEJ’s new northern branch office. ICEJ AID’s Yudit Setz will oversee the role of ICEJ in the life of the Home, which includes coordinating ICEJ teams and local Israeli companies who will contribute to renovations of the new building.

We are excited about what God is doing and how this home has continued to grow and embrace Israel’s precious Holocaust Survivors. (☞)

Join us in completing this beautiful work of providing more space and care for Holocaust Survivors!
www.icejusa.org/haifa-home-building-project

A NEW ICEJ OFFICE IN HAIFA

BY ICEJ AID

Last year, ICEJ AID’s Yudit Setz realized with growing excitement and certainty that God was directing her to open a northern branch of ICEJ AID in Haifa. This move allows her to more closely coordinate the significant role ICEJ plays in the life of the Haifa Home for Holocaust Survivors.

The new ICEJ office will be connected to the Haifa Home building, and it will be the base from which Yudit can arrange for, supervise, and coordinate long- and short-term volunteers to fill a variety of vital roles. Her presence will provide more opportunities to connect people from the nations to the Survivors, to hear their painful but important stories, and also to understand the deep emotional wounds that the Holocaust seared into the heart of the nation. The exciting development of placing an ICEJ office in Haifa will result in Christian visitors and local Israelis knowing more about the service and purpose of the ICEJ in Israel.

The ICEJ’s support of the Haifa Home for Holocaust Survivors has been one of adventure, poignancy, laughter, and some tears, all while looking urgently to God for funds and rejoicing at God’s supply through the ICEJ family.

As Yudit and her husband leave behind 30 years of residence in Jerusalem, Yudit says, “This is a huge step in our lives, but this amazing project has a special place in my heart. I look forward to increasing its potential to connect the church to Israel, and [for the Haifa Home] residents to receive hope and healing from that connection.” (☞)
This summer the ICEJ Haifa Home for Holocaust Survivors was greatly impacted by six families from Switzerland consisting of 15 adults and 17 children. Every year these families serve together somewhere in the world, and this year they chose Israel.

The women and children made crafts with the residents, the older children learned karate from a resident, and the men and boys mended walls, painted, and fixed windows. The families listened to the Survivors’ firsthand testimonies about the horrors of the Holocaust, as well as their resilience in building new lives, families, and the nation of Israel. They also played games, sang, and danced together. After a whole week of joy and entertainment, the departure was difficult for everyone.

The residents had nothing but great things to say about this family. Esti said, “This group is so special. Beautiful families came during their holidays to be with us. Unbelievable. They fill my heart with love.”

Donate at: www.icejusa.org/Haifa-home-needs

“There bring an atmosphere of peace and rest. I am so glad that they came to us— not only for the help that they gave, but also with the[ir] children so that they will never forget what happened during WWII.”

– Rita
In Israel’s northern countryside, there is a children’s boarding school called Beit Singer that the ICEJ has partnered with for decades. Recently, the school and its neighbors were in great need of a safe place for children to play.

Playing is a time for a child to enjoy, laugh, discover, create, and use his or her imagination. Therefore, the ICEJ (specifically ICEJ Canada), along with other donors, helped build a wonderful new playground for the children. This playground uniquely connects Beit Singer children without families to neighborhood children living with their families. It also creates new friendships and a greater unity within the area.

The CEO of Beit Singer, Yehuda Amsalem, expressed his gratitude to the ICEJ and Christians around the world for their continued support: “Together with the children, we sincerely thank you for your generosity and warm heart, and wish you continued success with your blessed endeavors in support of at-risk children and youth. We look forward to your continued participation in future projects.”

Join us in continuing to support the youth of Israel:
www.icejusa.org/youth

The Jewish festivals can evoke difficult memories among some elderly in Israel. It is often a lonely time when reality sinks in that the person has no one to celebrate with. This is where Homecare steps in to ensure that Holocaust Survivors, many from the Ukraine where Nazi killing squads hunted Jews, are not forgotten during Jewish holidays.

A handmade gift, a pot of honey, or a supermarket coupon are much-appreciated gifts. However, there is a greater gift that touches hearts more deeply—the greeting card accompanying the gift.

When Noam—a survivor of a ghetto and concentration camp—received a supermarket voucher and a card last year, he looked at it carefully and said, “The voucher is help for me, but the card touches my heart.” Homecare provided nursing care for an elderly woman for 20 years and connected with her family as well. The son, with tears in his eyes, shared that his mother treasured all the cards Homecare gave her for the holidays, carefully storing them in her cupboard.

Other Survivors like Elena said, “You are the only people who remember me at the Jewish holidays.” When feeling down, Tania said she reads her cards to remember she is not alone. A simple greeting card with a Bible verse and a message of love on behalf of Christians around the world is a gesture that brings hope and life.

Join us in touching many hearts with God’s love during this holiday season:
www.icejusa.org/homecare
How do you change the future of the Palestinian people? One way is to reach out to their youth. Changing attitudes among young Palestinians is one of the cardinal goals for achieving better prospects for the Palestinians as a people and for their relations with Israel. The ICEJ recognizes this, and that’s why we support a Christian scout troop in Bethlehem.

This scout troop plays not only a prominent role in participants’ lives but it is also an active part of community life. The scouts’ main activity is their marching band, which performs and participates in marches and parades each year for Christmas, Easter, and other national meets throughout Israel. Counselors are also scraping together funds for a four-day summer camp for the kids.

Real Bible Study and Real Loud Band Practice
Three important dimensions of children’s character are being built in their time spent with the scouts, whose meetings take place in a Baptist church in Bethlehem. After an initial tumbling period, the children sit down for a Bible lesson. When we were there, a youth leader read and taught the story of Lazarus in an engaging manner, with all the kids sitting and listening attentively. This builds the spiritual dimension of the youth who participate.

Second, social fellowship and interaction with other youth in a positive atmosphere along with the pursuit of musical skills builds social ability for the youth who participate. It’s pleasant and encouraging to see the joy of life and energy when these kids get to run free on the church grounds.

Third, the kids are having fun banging away at drums and cymbals while they are pursuing a joint, meaningful goal. Their energies are steered in a positive direction.

Beyond Christian Circles
Even youth from a Muslim background are being attracted to the Christian scouts’ activities. This strategic outreach, however, does not have the means to buy the new equipment and uniforms needed to take in more youth. With your help the ICEJ can help more Palestinian youth get off the street and benefit from this Christian program of music, study, and fun.

Donate at: www.icejusa.org/minorities
MILLIONS PRAY FOR ISRAEL IN SAO PAULO

Brazil has many impressive features, but in the spiritual realm, the blockbuster has got to be Sao Paulo’s annual March for Jesus. Millions of Christians took to the streets this year; 2018 was particularly memorable because a special invitation was extended to the city’s Israeli consulate to participate in prayer for Israel. Amen and hallelujah.

SLOVAKIAN CELEBRATION OF ISRAEL’S FOUNDING

BY ICEJ SLOVAKIA

Slovak Christians marked the historic event of Israel’s founding by organizing public gatherings in May. One prominent gathering was sponsored by ICEJ’s Slovakia. The event drew the general public to the central part of Bratislava, Slovakia’s capital in the evening hours of May 10. It was a privilege for ICEJ Slovakia and dozens of Christians from different denominational backgrounds to rally publicly in support of Israel.

Guest speakers consisted of various high-profile public personalities and recognized activists. One was a well-known blogger who had been honored with a special award for fighting against extremism and anti-Semitism by his insightful analyses of the growth of neo-Nazism in Slovakia. Among other guests were Mr. Marek Krajci, a member of the Slovak Parliament and currently the chairman of the Allies of Israel Caucus in the Slovak Parliament; Mr. Zvi Aviner Vapni, the Israeli ambassador in Slovakia; and Professor Pavel Traubner, the honorable chairman of the Federation of Jewish Communities in Slovakia.

The program also included interactive elements. Seven volunteers were asked to read 70 remarkable facts about modern Israel, from the stage. The celebration concluded with a spectacular formation of David’s hexagonal star made out of 300 burning candles. Everyone could join in and put a candle on the pavement of the Hviezdoslav Square in the Bratislava city center. The event was a worthy public contribution of ICEJ Slovakia to modern Israel’s 70th birthday celebrations.
NEW SWEDISH BRANCH IS OFF TO A STRONG START

BY GITTEN ÖHOLM

In my capacity as national director for ICEJ Sweden, I recently had the opportunity to attend Almedalen Week (the most important political forum in Swedish society). In an instant, I realized this was my open door to launch a petition for moving the Swedish embassy to Jerusalem.

When I visited the morning prayer at our headquarters in Jerusalem last June, Mojmir Kallus mentioned that nations will be called to give an account on this matter. I understood that there is no excuse for Sweden. I sensed it deep down in my heart, and I felt that now is the time of fulfilled prophecy. As national director, I want to do my part and add one missing piece to the puzzle.

With three other organizations to support the petition, we created an online sign-up list, printed postcards to hand out, and started to make phone calls. The response from the three other organizations (one of them a political party) was promising. They plan to link up with us and encourage their members to sign up.

We are now devising a strategy for initiatives during the autumn and winter seasons to encourage the Swedish nation to move its embassy to Jerusalem. We have an election in September, and our plan is to hand over this petition to the incoming foreign minister. Please stand with us in prayer for these elections and Sweden’s stance on the issue of Jerusalem.

BREAKING NEW GROUND IN SOUTH EAST ASIA

BY MOJMIR KALLUS

At the end of July, the ICEJ came to Singapore for its first regional conference in Asia. To highlight the importance of the continent with its rising economic power and millions of Bible-believing Christians, two ICEJ members of the top leadership participated in the conference: VP of International Affairs Mojmir Kallus and VP of Operations Barry Denison.

The conference was well organized by a group of dedicated volunteers from our local Singapore office led by Jehu Chan. Among more than 20 participants were not only ICEJ directors or staff from Singapore, Malaysia, the Philippines, the Russian Far East, and India, but also guests from Korea, Vietnam, Myanmar, and Indonesia, countries where there is no ICEJ representation so far.

Christian brothers and sisters spent time in worship and prayer and engaged in meaningful sharing of experiences. The DNA of our ministry was presented and there was enough time to answer questions and discuss specific challenges. The highlight of the three-day conference was a networking dinner with more than 200 guests from Singapore who came to hear about the biblical significance of Israel. The guest of honor was the Israeli Ambassador to Singapore, HE Simona Halperin. In her speech, she mentioned her previous experience with ICEJ when she worked with us on voluntary repatriation of South Sudanese refugees, and she spared no words of praise about our organization. The dinner made a fitting conclusion to a successful conference.

The regional conference confirmed that there is great potential in Asia. Not encumbered by Replacement Theology, like some brothers in the West, Christians are eager to support God’s plan for Israel. We expect that as a result of the conference, we will soon be able to appoint ICEJ representatives for Indonesia, Myanmar, Vietnam, and South Korea. Please pray for more countries from this part of the world to be open to our message and be blessed by blessing Israel.

Raising Support For Israel

Simona Halperin, Israel’s Ambassador to Singapore, speaks at the ICEJ networking event

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Israel, a nation as small as the state of New Jersey, occupies center stage of the world’s attention. While vilified by some circles, the Jewish State is also admired by many for a story that is unique from that of all other nations. Having defied the odds against the survival of this tiny people group—no more than 14 million worldwide—the Jewish people have built a nation that is thriving and is leading the world in many ways. Here are a few of the things that make her story not only unique but remarkable.

A Biblical Mandate
The Bible tells the unusual story of the miraculous inception of the Jewish people some 4,000 years ago and their calling to be God’s instrument of blessing in the world. Their role was to “bless all the families of the earth” (Genesis 12:3) by being the vehicle of God’s redemptive plan. This calling required that they follow certain laws and practices that marked them as His and caused them to stand out as different from other peoples. This uniqueness was also dangerous and made them an easy prey of cruel leaders who sought conformity to ideologies and practices at odds with Judaism. But God promised the Jewish people would survive, and one day, would return to their God-given land. Their story is unfolding just as the Bible foretold.

An Ancient Language Revived
Israel still holds the distinction as the only success story in world history where an ancient language achieved modern usage. The Hebrew language was preserved in sacred, written form, yet as a spoken language it had become extinct in the Diaspora. That is, until 2,000 years later when lexicographer Eliezer Ben Yehuda set out to resuscitate Hebrew in the late nineteenth century. Ben Yehuda immigrated to then-called Palestine in 1881 and lived in Jerusalem where he began his arduous task. Gabriel Birnbaum, a senior researcher at the Academy of Hebrew Language, said, “By 1914, Hebrew as a spoken language in the land of Israel was a fact.” Ben Yehuda’s legacy continues every time new immigrants of any age enroll in Israel’s free intensive Hebrew classes.

Israel and Innovations
Following are just a few of the thousands of examples of how Israel is leading the world in innovation and problem-solving: IDE Technologies is recycling salt water into fresh, drinkable water; Netafim’s smart drip and micro-irrigation have improved crop production worldwide; Mobile Eye has helped reduce auto accidents; ReWalk is helping paraplegics walk; and WoundClot bandages are saving lives. These innovations have made possible 65 Israeli companies on the NASDAQ. Only the United States and Canada have more.

Jewish Nobels
Looking at the worldwide Jewish population outside Israel itself, here’s a remarkable statistic: According to the Jewish Virtual Library, approximately 195 of the 900 Nobel prize honorees since 1901 have been Jewish (22%). It’s especially amazing since Jewish people make up less than 0.2% of the world’s population currently estimated at 7.6 billion people. These numbers reveal not just intelligence but a commitment to education and innovation that helps to explain Israel’s leadership in so many fields today.
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.

JANUARY 21–FEBRUARY 1

To download a brochure or register go to: www.icejusa.org/envisiontour2019 or call (866) 393-5890.

Envision tour leader Pastor Michael Hines, ICEJ Outreach Director

Pastor Appreciation Month

This itinerary is perfect for pastors and leaders who are looking for a tour to Israel that offers something more in-depth.
WHEN THE LORD RESTORED THE FORTUNES OF ZION,
WE WERE LIKE THOSE WHO DREAM.
PSALM 126:1

Watch Live Online:
www.icejfeast.org

Send your offering to the Feast at: www.icejusa.org/feast-gift

September 23 – 27, 2018