NO APOLOGIES FOR BALFOUR

100 YEARS LATER
Dear Friends,

The International Christian Embassy Jerusalem participated in several major celebrations in November to mark the 100th anniversary of the Balfour Declaration, the historic document which committed Great Britain to supporting the establishment of a Jewish national home in the Land of Israel.

The ICEJ UK branch, led by Rev. David Elms, organized a historic Balfour 100 gala held in the prestigious Royal Albert Hall in London. With more than 3,500 Jews and Christians attending the celebration, it was a truly amazing event. The ICEJ Ireland branch, led by Brian Silvester, also worked with its local Jewish community to organize a Balfour 100 celebration in Stormont, the ornate parliament building of Northern Ireland in Belfast. Both events demonstrated the leadership and respect of the ICEJ with both Jews and Christians in many nations.

This year also marked exactly 500 years since the start of the Reformation. It was the autumn morning of October 31, 1517, when Martin Luther is said to have nailed his “Ninety-Five Theses” on the doors of All Saints’ Church in Wittenberg, Germany. While Luther’s movement did bring about major reformation in Christianity, there remains one major piece of unfinished business: the church still lacks a universal understanding of the enduring role of the Jewish people in God’s redemptive plans for the world.

The good news is there is a mighty wave of reformation in the church today having to do with Israel. The ICEJ is called to bless and comfort the people of Israel, but we are also called to be part of this great move of God in the church. Your partnership with the ICEJ means that together we can impact the global church and the nations while we bless the people of Israel with our prayers, love, and care.

Bless you and your family for all you do for Him and His people.

Yours in Christ,

Dr. Jürgen Bühler
ICEJ President

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

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 170 countries worldwide, with branch offices in over 90 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 partners 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.

Support our ministry online at: www.icejusa.org
No Apologies for Balfour

The Reformation and Israel

Godd's Favor Upon Israel

Does the United States Benefit from Alliance with Israel?
NO APOLOGIES FOR BALFOUR
100 YEARS LATER

BY DAVID PARSONS
ICEJ VICE PRESIDENT – SENIOR INTERNATIONAL SPOKESMAN
To assail the Balfour Declaration as an act of colonialism is not only historically inaccurate, it also calls into question the claims to sovereignty of several Arab nations.

Many Christians joined with Israel in celebrating the 100th anniversary of the Balfour Declaration on November 2 of this year, and with good reason. The Balfour decree was forged by leading British Christian statesmen who contributed a key link in modern Israel’s legal chain of title to sovereignty in its ancient homeland.

Yet not everyone is hailing the centenary of Balfour. In fact, Palestinian leaders have assailed it as a “criminal injustice” against their people and are demanding that Britain apologize and even pay compensation for what they consider a disgraceful act of colonialism.

Such claims are untenable and even counterproductive. First, Balfour actually represents a self-imposed end to the colonialist era. And second, challenging the Balfour decision actually undermines the claims to sovereignty of numerous Arab states in the region.

Great Britain’s motivation in issuing the Balfour Declaration has always been a subject of much debate. Was it to win Jewish favor during World War I? Was it to repay Zionist leader Chaim Weizmann for his valuable contributions to the war effort? Was it issued in remorse for centuries of Christian anti-Semitism? Was it an act of British imperialism? Or, was it a valid and noble expression of Christian Zionism?

**Christian Zionist Achievement**

The truth is that the Balfour Declaration was the crowning achievement of Britain’s “Restorationist” movement, which had been advocating since the early 1700s for a Jewish return to the Land of Israel according to the divine promises of Scripture. Endorsed by Queen Victoria and other leading figures, Restorationism had become a widely-accepted view even within the Anglican Church by the time the Zionist movement was birthed by Theodor Herzl in 1897.

When it became clear during World War I that Britain and its allies could roll back Ottoman rule in the Middle East, the government of David Lloyd George recognized it had a historic opportunity to help the Jewish Zionists finally regain their homeland. The majority of the people in his war cabinet were avowed Christians with Zionist sympathies. This was especially true of Lloyd George himself, as well as his foreign secretary, Arthur James Balfour, and Jan Smuts, who together pressed the full cabinet to commit to restoring the Jews to Eretz Israel. The resulting Balfour Declaration would later give the League of Nations the basis to grant Britain a mandate to help build a Jewish state in the liberated province of Palestine.

Up until then, the victorious European powers normally would have just claimed the vacated Ottoman territories as part of their own empires. However, American President Woodrow Wilson was pushing for the right of “self-determination” among the native peoples of such liberated lands to spread democracy and secure peace in the post-war era. At the same time, key British Christian statesmen like Jan Smuts and Mark Sykes developed the mandate strategy, arguing that the Western powers had a moral duty to assist these native peoples on their way to independence and self-rule. They viewed the mandate system as a “sacred trust” meant to free foreign lands and peoples from imperial rule.

**Statehood for Jews and Arabs**

These Christian architects of the mandate system supported both Zionism and Arab nationalism as equally valid and mutually reinforcing causes. Sykes even designed the four-colored flag of the Arab revolt—which served as the model for the flags flown by numerous Arab states today. Most importantly, they viewed the Jewish people as indigenous to the Middle East, just as much as the Arabs, and thus entitled the Jews to reconstitute their historic nation back in their former homeland.

The League of Nations would duly adopt its concept of trusteeships in the Middle East and elsewhere as a way of nation-building and granting self-determination to the native peoples of liberated lands. Britain was granted a temporary mandate in Palestine and Iraq, while France was to oversee nation-building in Lebanon and Syria. In fact, every Arab nation in the Middle East today traces its legal claim to independence back to the same series of decisions and decision-makers that created modern Israel. This all started with the Balfour Declaration, when British Christian statesmen began to close the door on the age of colonialism, a self-imposed end by the Western nations themselves.

So, to assail the Balfour Declaration as an act of colonialism is not only historically inaccurate, it would also call into question the claims to sovereignty of a number of Arab nations.

That is not something the Palestinians should really be pursuing.©
The ICEJ Remembers the Balfour Declaration at London, Belfast Celebrations

BY ICEJ STAFF

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“The Balfour Declaration is proof that there has been a special calling on Great Britain, a ‘Cyrus calling’ on your nation,” Dr. Bühler told the largely British audience. Cyrus the Persian king, was foretold centuries before he was born by the great Jewish prophet Isaiah, who said: “Behold Cyrus, my servant, he will say to Jerusalem, ‘Be rebuilt’ ... and your foundations shall be laid” (Isaiah 44:28).

Dr. Bühler continued, saying, “The Balfour Declaration indeed was a decree to the world to rebuild Zion and to rebuild Jerusalem. Out of the Balfour Declaration, the desert has become a green place. Out of the Balfour Declaration, Jewish people have returned from the ends of the earth back to their homeland to rebuild their ancient cities. Your nation did this in modern times, and you should be proud of it.”

The evening also featured dramatic scenes by actors playing such key historic figures as Charles Haddon Spurgeon, Bishop J. C. Ryle, Theodor Herzl, Rev. William Hechler, Dr. Chaim Weizmann, and Lord Arthur James Balfour. Renowned violinist Serguei Popov, soloist Caleb Alalade, and the 300-member Holland Choir were among the musical performers, while a colorful troupe from the Israel Dance Institute performed several rousing dance routines accompanied by a klezmer band.

The same week, the ICEJ Ireland branch, led by Brian Silvester, worked with the local Jewish community to organize a special Balfour 100 celebration in Stormont, the ornate parliament building of Northern Ireland in Belfast. ICEJ Vice President and Senior Spokesman David Parsons was a featured speaker at this event. He noted how remarkable an achievement the Balfour Declaration was, given that Herzl and Weizmann, along with their Christian partners, were still facing much opposition to Zionism even from within the Jewish and Christian communities. Parsons added that their strong faith, foresight, and moral fortitude provide much inspiration for Jews and Christians who are partnering today to secure the reborn nation of Israel they only dreamed about.
This October 31 marked exactly 500 years since the start of the Reformation, which dates to that autumn morning in 1517 when Martin Luther is said to have nailed his “Ninety-Five Theses” on the doors of All Saints’ Church in Wittenberg, Germany. The evangelical movement today could hardly be imagined without the changes wrought by such reformers as Luther, John Calvin, John Wesley, and many others who rediscovered old truths of Scripture and thereby helped revive authentic Christianity.

Ever since, the church has continued to rediscover biblical truths and experience reformation. For example, we have returned to our founding call to world missions contained in the Great Commission. There was a time when most churches did not have a vision for the lost, whether locally or in distant lands around the world. But because of the Moravian brethren and later missionaries like Hudson Taylor and William Carey, nearly every evangelical church today has a budget for missions and other programs that seek to reach the unsaved, both near and far.

Yet there remains one major piece of unfinished business for the Reformation: the church still lacks a universal recognition and acceptance of the enduring role of the Jewish people in God’s redemptive plans for the world. Luther opened the way for this sorely needed change by restoring the Bible to ordinary believers in their native languages, but he also perpetuated traditional Christian anti-Semitism late in his life, hindering the chances for this great reawakening concerning Israel to take root.

The Israel Reformation
Of all the changes triggered by Martin Luther, his greatest and most lasting impact on the church was his translation of the Bible from Latin into the common German tongue. This enabled ordinary Christians to once again read and interpret the Word of God for themselves. Previously, it was considered a sacrilege for uneducated lay people to read the Holy Scriptures. Only the priests and learned could read the Bible, and they often twisted its truths to suit their purposes. But the widespread availability of the Bible would soon transform societies worldwide, as more biblical truths were rediscovered and whole new evangelical church movements were birthed.

As ordinary Christians studied the Bible, they found that one of the great truths of Scripture that had been hidden from them was God’s irrevocable covenant with Israel. With few exceptions, most churches down through history had little understanding or appreciation for the divine calling over Israel and the Jewish people. In fact, they taught that God had abandoned the Jews and even cursed them to endless wandering. They insisted that the church had replaced Israel as God’s redemptive agent in the world, and thus there was no national destiny left for the Jewish people back in their ancient homeland. For centuries, this
was the prevailing view in most of the established churches of Europe. Any contrary outlook was brutally silenced. In 1589, one of the first clergyman to write openly about the promised restoration of Israel was the controversial Francis Kett, who was later burned at the stake for the sake of a number of heretical beliefs.

Today we are amid a mighty wave of reformation in the church, and it has to do with Israel. The early church understood God’s enduring purposes for Israel and of our spiritual connection to the Jewish people, and this understanding is being restored to mainstream Christianity today. I believe in coming decades there will hardly be a church without some connection to Israel, and funding a budget to “bless Israel” will be as natural as having a budget for missions.

This major shift is taking place because Christians are now aware that God has dramatically changed His own approach toward Israel. The restored Jewish nation testifies to this paradigm shift exactly as the prophet Zechariah foretold: “Just as I determined to punish you when your fathers provoked Me to wrath,’ says the LORD of hosts, ‘and I would not relent, so again in these days I am determined to do good to Jerusalem and to the house of Judah” (Zechariah 8:14–15).

In other words, God shifts into different gears or phases in His dealings with His chosen people. Over the past 100 years, God has moved from reverse gear to fast forward. Instead of scattering Israel, He is restoring them, just as the prophets foretold. No one can overlook any longer this incredible alignment of biblical prophecy and today’s events in the Middle East.

This means the teaching of Replacement Theology (often masked these days as Fulfillment Theology) is being proven wrong by realities on the ground. The reborn state of Israel is a prophetic fait accompli that fully demonstrates the Lord is a covenant-keeping God. The church must come to terms with this new reality. For 1900 years, no one asked: “How do we deal with the restoration of the Jews back to their ancient homeland?” Today, we must face this question. This has no parallel in church history, as no prior generation of gentile believers had to deal with it. This means the coming years of continued Jewish restoration, both physically and spiritually, will surely be some of the most exciting times in church history!

**Back to Our Roots**

The good news is that we do not have to invent a new theology. Most of the New Testament was written at a time when there was still a Jewish political entity in the Land of Israel. Therefore, if we look at how the apostles taught gentile churches about their relationship to the Jewish people, we will find that the Scriptures are quite clear on how the church should relate to Israel today.

1. **Remember your pagan past**

The apostle Paul first reminded gentile believers in Ephesus and Rome about their previously hopeless pagan origins. Today, after 2,000 years of Christianity expanding to even the remotest parts of the earth, it sounds strange to view ourselves as pagans. But Paul had to remind the church in Rome that as non-Jews they were like the branch of a wild olive tree. Such wild olive trees produce inedible fruit and thus are little more than a useless shrub.

To the church in Ephesus, Paul appealed: “Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh ... that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world” (Ephesians 2:11–12).

Paul also reminded both churches that only after they put their faith in a Jewish Messiah could they be reconciled to God and become part of His people. Only the book of the Jews—the Bible—gave us hope of knowing a loving God.

This means every gentile church needs to be humble and mindful regarding its own past.

2. **Acknowledge the Hebraic roots of your faith**

Paul declared to the church in Rome: “Do not boast against the branches. But if you do boast, remember that you do not support the root, but the root supports you” (Romans 11:18).

Gentile Christians should not reject or ridicule the Jewish origins of their faith, but nourish them as one would nourish the roots of a tree. Adam Clark stated this concept beautifully, that through the Jewish people “all the blessings and excellencies which you enjoy have been communicated to you.” Or, as Jesus himself declares, “Salvation is of the Jews!” (John 4:22).

This means every New Testament church needs to recognize the role of Israel as a source of “blessing for all the families of the earth,” and to respect the Jewish roots of our faith.

3. **Appreciate the irrevocable calling over Israel**

The New Testament Epistles strongly underline the eternal calling over Israel. Even though the Jewish people might not recognize Jesus as their Messiah and might even be “enemies of the gospel,” Paul still called them “beloved for the sake of the fathers” (Romans 11:18).

If God still loves Israel as is, the church should love her the same. Paul squarely contradicts every replacement theologian...
today: “Will their [the Jews] unbelief make the faithfulness of God without effect? Certainly not! Indeed, let God be true but every man a liar” (Romans 3:3–4).

So, even if Israel is unfaithful, God still is faithful to His covenants as He cannot deny Himself. Anything else would be a lie.

This means every New Testament church needs to uphold and proclaim the enduring call over Israel.

4. Recognize your spiritual debt to Israel
Paul made clear to gentile believers that the Jewish people already provided everything necessary for our relationship with God. The Bible is a Jewish book, we serve a Jewish Messiah, and it was the Jewish apostles who spread the gospel to the gentile world. Paul thus declared that gentile believers are debtors to Israel.

“For it pleased those from Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints who are in Jerusalem. It pleased them indeed, and they are their debtors. For if the Gentiles have been partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister to them in material things” (Romans 15:26–27).

This means every New Testament church needs to be intentional in how it returns the blessings received through the Jewish people.

5. Expect the restoration of Israel
In the New Testament, the apostles not only affirmed the enduring calling over Israel, but they strongly encouraged the hope of Israel's restoration. This is demonstrated in the last question they posed to Jesus before his ascension: “Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” (Acts 1:6).

Paul also conveyed this hope to the church in Rome: “For if their being cast away is the reconciling of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?” (Romans 11:15). In other words, he maintained that a great calling and blessing is still ahead for Israel.

This means every New Testament church should embrace a theology of hope regarding Israel, and support her full restoration.

Connect with Israel!
Just as the vision for world missions was renewed within the church, there needs to be a reformation to reconnect the church with its Jewish roots. In times to come, a healthy church will no longer afford to ignore Israel. This needs to be taught from every pulpit and become an integral part of the activity, prayers, and giving of every church. We see this happening worldwide. Join with pastors and believers from around the globe in this exciting and historic journey. It is time to complete the unfinished Reformation!

Consider the ICEJ in Your Will or Estate Plans
With proper foresight and planning, it is possible for you to bless Israel greatly for many years to come. The ICEJ has worked tirelessly on behalf of the people of Israel for over 37 years and will be doing so for many more to come. Your planned gift of cash, stocks and bonds, mutual funds, life insurance, excess in retirement funds, property, or a gift annuity are excellent ways to help the ICEJ carry on your love for Israel.

Call Us: 800-379-3897
www.icejusa.org
Starting a New Life in the Promised Land

Vasily Abramovich comes from the village of Kamenka, in the Zaporozhye region. His sister Natalia made Aliyah to Israel 17 years ago. She first went to Israel on a program for youth and then she decided to immigrate. Today, she is a proud Israeli and lives in the coastal city of Netanya.

Life in their small Ukrainian village was difficult. There was no work, so with nothing to do everyone tried to get out of the village and into the city. Vasily moved to the nearest city, Zaporozhye.

Life in the city, however, was very hard. Vasily was alone and had rent payments, utility bills, food expenses, and so on. He wanted to marry, but this, too, proved to be very difficult. So, when his sister phoned him and invited him to move to Israel, he said “yes.”

This was all it took for Vasily to make the final decision to make Aliyah to Israel. He decided to change everything and start a new page in his life.

“I have great hope for my future,” he said on the way to the airport. “Israel is the country of technology, with the highest level of medicine, and equal possibilities for everyone who wants to work. I am looking forward to living with my sister in the beautiful city of Netanya.”

ICEJ representative Serguei Popov accompanied Vasily to the airport and chatted with him about his life in Ukraine now coming to an end and his new life ahead in Israel. Upon arrival they hugged and Serguei blessed Vasily, expressing hope that all would go well for him and that one day they would meet again in Israel.

While shaking Serguei’s hand Vasily said, “Thank you and your ministry of the ICEJ, for help and support. It has given me a chance to start a new life in the Promised Land.”

To bring more Jews home to Israel through the ICEJ please make a donation today at www.icejusa.org/aliyah
SEEDS AND SAPLINGS

THE MALES FAMILY SETTLES IN ISRAEL

BY DAN HERRON

We felt the pain and frustration of their 19-year-long wait in Ethiopia. We observed their excitement when they were finally slated to go on an ICEJ-sponsored Aliyah flight to Israel. We rejoiced with them as they crossed into Israeli air space and glided over Tel Aviv’s beautiful nocturnal skyline, where they would be reunited with their loved-ones and family. So, it was a great joy when an ICEJ team reconnected with the Males family in an absorption centre in the historical city of Zfat, perched high on a hill overlooking the Sea of Galilee.

On our visit with the Males family, we delivered a box of toys to the family’s two children, Rediet and Joseph, and blankets for the family before the onset of the cold and damp winter in the Galilean hills. The kids were a great delight. Rediet is blooming into a beautiful young girl with great character and personality. Joseph is a charmingly confident bundle of energy, darting in and out of the family’s small apartment with his bike. As we were leaving, this three-year-old surprised everyone with his soapbox driving skills on a steep incline that would have been daunting for a child four times his age.

The humility and generosity of this affectionate family greatly encouraged us. Mrs. Males conveyed to the ICEJ media team at the end of the interview in Zfat:

“Our message to the ICEJ is that we thank you. May God repay you for what you have done. We do not know God’s plan. It is hard to say that I will study and be successful in life and do what the ICEJ is doing for us. But our kids will learn and grow up to be like you who think for the benefit of the community. Have concern for the community. A good help in times of trouble for the hungry, for the thirsty. I want my kids to follow your steps and be like you, to grow up with good manners. Above all we want to give thanks for the ICEJ. Don't stop your good work, but keep it up because there are lots of people of Beta Israel still living in Ethiopia. Rather, continue working hard and be strong. We do not have anything, but we will pray for you in this regard. We thank you! May God grant you health and bless you.”

Our partners have enabled the ICEJ to sponsor 761 flights within the last 12 months. Please continue to work with us as we bring more Ethiopian Jews home and plant successful new lives in the land of Israel.

Watch the Males family’s touching story and interview online at ICEJ TV
www.icejusa.org/media/icej-tv
NEW WAVES OF ALIYAH AMID GEOPOLITICAL SEA CHANGE

BY HOWARD FLOWER

WAVES OF ALIYAH FROM RUSSIA AND BELARUS

Military exercises and sabre rattling this year have many on the European continent concerned. The scope, size, and signal value of Russia’s exercises ratcheted up tensions and proved menacing in comparison to earlier years. Russian and NATO forces warily observed one another across the frontier between the three Baltic states, Belarus, and Russia.

Internally, Russia is still affected by a serious economic crisis, which struck deep in 2014 when the Rouble lost half of its real value following a fall in oil prices. The crisis first affected the Russian airline companies, and flights to Israel became problematic by 2015. The ICEJ responded with increased Aliyah traffic through Finland to utilize Finnair. Elderly people were severely affected and lost half their purchasing power, so the ICEJ began humanitarian projects for elderly Jews, invalids and Holocaust survivors.

Then the Belarusian Rouble lost more than half its value and Aliyah surged from neighbouring Belarus also. The ICEJ ramped up the work there in 2016.

The ICEJ Fishing Program

In January 2017, the ICEJ embarked on a new “fishing” venture, which is a cooperative effort with the Jewish Agency for Israel. The goal is to reach out to people from the far-flung cities of Russia and provide financial support for them to attend Aliyah seminars to encourage them to move to Israel.

Paving the Way

A successful life in Israel begins with preparation in the origin country. This is why the ICEJ has stepped up to assist young families making Aliyah by providing extra luggage allowance. In addition, getting on that final leg to Israel requires domestic travel assistance in connection with consular checks/interviews, conferences, seminars, and camps. The ICEJ wants to walk beside the new Olim every step of the way.

The ICEJ started working with Aliyah from the Soviet Union in the early 1980s in Vienna, and we estimate that we have helped about 140,000 Jews—most of them from the Former Soviet Union. More than $50 million have gone into our work since 1984. Please join with us in helping with Aliyah from Belarus and Russia. $200 will help bring one person home to Israel.

DONATE ONLINE

You can visit our website to make your life-changing donation today:

www.icejusa.org/aliyah

Aliyah Statistics

• More than half of all Aliyah is now coming from Russia, Ukraine and Belarus. Total Aliyah from the Former Soviet Union makes up 58% of Aliyah overall in 2017.
• During the first eight months of 2017, 11,846 Olim arrived from the FSU.
• This is an increase of 16% over the same period in 2016.
There is much that the church can learn from these anniversaries and a rich blessing to be found in celebrating the amazing hand of God in each event.

The Balfour Declaration
Signed November 2, 1917, the Balfour Declaration was a letter from the British Foreign Secretary, Lord Balfour, to the leader of the British Jewish Community, Lord Rothschild, announcing support for the establishment of a national home for the Jewish people in what was then known as Palestine. This simple, four-lined letter set in motion a series of international agreements that laid the legal basis for the reconstitution of the state of Israel in 1948.

God was on the move. He had already started drawing His people home to their ancient land with Jewish Zionists taking up the call to return and cultivate the barren soil, even establishing a Jewish majority in Jerusalem by the turn of the century.

This was the return He had promised through the prophets of old:

“I will bring back the captives of My people Israel; They shall build the waste cities and inhabit them; They shall plant vineyards and drink wine from them; They shall also make gardens and eat fruit from them. I will plant them in their land, And no longer shall they be pulled up From the land I have given them,” Says the Lord your God.

Amos 9:14–15

Contrary to this, the World Council of Churches (WCC) recently posted a letter on their website from a coalition of Palestinian Christian organizations calling on the WCC to not only condemn the Balfour declaration but to demand the United Kingdom
government apologize for it and publicly repent of it. Make no mistake; this represents a fault line in the church today. Is the body of Christ going to celebrate God’s faithfulness to the Jewish people as we watch these amazing anniversaries unfold, or will she refute the hand of God in Israel’s restoration over the last 100 years?

The stakes are high. UCLA Professor Judea Pearl, the father of slain journalist Daniel Pearl, has given this analogy: ‘Anti-Semitism rejects Jews as equal members of the human race; anti-Zionism rejects Israel as an equal member in the family of nations.” Rejecting the Jewish people’s right to live in the land of their forefathers essentially denies them the right to exist as a unique people. This is the crux of the battle facing the church today. It can accept God’s plan for the Jewish people, or it will be doomed to continue its sad history of anti-Semitism, albeit shrouded in the cloak of anti-Zionism—irrational criticism of Israel.

May 14, 1948
Out of the Jewish people’s darkest moment, the Holocaust, God did something amazing and brought the nation back to life as she was reborn when David Ben Gurion declared her independence in 1948.

We all know the wonderful verse from Isaiah 66:8:

Who has heard such a thing?  
Who has seen such things?  
Shall the earth be made to give birth in one day?  
Or shall a nation be born at once?  
For as soon as Zion was in labor,  
She gave birth to her children.

The Palestinians refer to this day as the Nakba, or “disaster.” How will the church respond next year when this anniversary is celebrated? Will she join with those determined to destroy the Jewish people again in seeking the dismantling of the Jewish state, or will she recognize that the events of Israel’s rebirth could only be God ordained?

The Six-Day War
This year, the ICEJ’s Feast of Tabernacles was essentially a continuation of the celebration that started in June to commemorate Jerusalem’s reunification during the Six-Day War. It was then in June 1967 when Israel liberated the city from the illegal occupation of Jordan and fulfilled Jesus’ prophecy of Luke 21.

Today, much of the world considers Israel’s victory and the resulting acquisition of land to be illegal. It neither understands the legal basis for Israel’s ownership of Judea and Samaria, including so-called East Jerusalem, nor does it remember the unlikely nature of Israel’s victory.

At that time, the United States was only a friend to Israel, not the staunch ally and military supporter she is today. So it was that as Israel found herself alone on June 5, 1967, having been abandoned by her only ally, France, on the eve of the battle, it could only have been a miracle from God that Israel won the war against all odds.

We shouldn’t be surprised though, knowing our God likes to complete His work in six day increments. And the world, because of its access to television, saw in real time this remarkable God-given “Six-Day Miracle” which consequently left an incredible impact on an entire generation that witnessed it.

Replacement Theology
My father, Rev. Malcolm Hedding, explains the church’s theological source of anti-Semitism as follows:

Replacement Theology essentially disinvests the people of Israel of that part of the Abrahamic Covenant that gives to them the land of Canaan as an everlasting possession. It thus asserts that because of their rebellion against God and rejection of Jesus’ messianic credentials, they have forfeited the promises in the Covenant that God made with Abraham.

Like those who call for Britain to repent of the Balfour Declaration, who deem Israel’s rebirth in 1948 a disaster, or who reduce the Six-Day War to an aggressive land grab, peddlers of replacement theology consider the modern state of Israel to be nothing more than a grand mistake. They might recognize the evils of the Holocaust or even that the Jewish people deserved a state of their own, but they deny them any right or connection to the land bequeathed to Abraham as an everlasting possession. They make a mockery of Scripture, and more precisely of Genesis 17 that bequeaths to the Jewish people the land of Canaan as an everlasting possession.

The Extinct Generation
This season offers the church a window of opportunity to delve into some historical and biblical truths as the anniversaries roll around. But, time is not on our side in this battle.

I met a precious Holocaust survivor recently who referred to herself as part of the “extinct generation.” More than a thousand survivors pass away every month, and their memories go with them; so, too, does the living proof of the Holocaust. The world will be an impoverished place in their absence and our battle for the truth, to ensure that “never forget” translates into “never again,” will become that much harder.

Likewise, a generation is coming up today with little or no knowledge of the amazing rebirth of the state of Israel and the miracles God did for her during such incredible events as the Six-Day War. Even in America, where anti-Semitism has not seen the kind of increases over the last two decades as it has in Western Europe, the millennial generation’s support for Israel is falling every year even while it has risen for every other demographic (according to a Pew Research survey of April 2016).

If the church in America is going to overcome anti-Semitism, it must start teaching the truth about Israel in God’s Word alongside the true history of the modern state of Israel—but not just on a Saturday morning meeting for those interested in the “Israel thing.” This needs the attention of the entire church. The focus needs to be on our kids—the next generation who will decide how the church responds to Israel in future. It will take some intentionality and the willingness of pastors and ministers to set aside some of their regular Sunday morning sermon time to address the biblical teaching on Israel and the Jewish people.

God gave us seasons. Let’s make sure we celebrate this one, rejoicing in His faithfulness to the Jewish people and, by extension, all of us who are called by His name. 🙏
First-ever Christian Media Summit in Jerusalem

David Parsons, VP – International Spokesman

In October, the Israeli government hosted its first-ever International Christian Media Summit. This summit gave Christian media professionals access to top Israeli leaders and a closer look at the current situation in the region. More than 130 Christian media figures from over 30 countries attended the summit, including the heads of CBN, TBN, and GOD TV. The summit was addressed by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, President Reuven Rivlin, and Mayor of Jerusalem Nir Barkat. Attendees also heard from other leading cabinet ministers and Knesset members, such as Naftali Bennett, Avi Dichter, Ze’ev Elkin, and Tzipi Hotovely, as well as prominent Israeli scholars and journalists. ICEJ Vice President and Senior International Spokesman David Parsons served a unique role as the primary Christian consultant to the Government Press Office and Ministry of Foreign Affairs in organizing the summit. Vesna Bühler, the wife of ICEJ President Jürgen Bühler, provided music at the prime minister’s opening gala reception at the Israel Museum, along with local Jewish and Arab musicians.

Walking in the Footsteps of Heroes

By Mojmir Kallus – VP – International Affairs

In April 1944, two Slovak Jews, Rudolf Vrba and Alfred Wetzler, escaped from Auschwitz. Their main goal, apart from saving their lives, was to inform the world about the killing of civilians that was taking place on an industrial scale in Auschwitz-Birkenau, and to warn the Hungarian Jews who were to become the next victims.

After escaping the concentration camp, they trekked 87 miles during the night from Auschwitz to Slovakia under extremely difficult conditions. In Zilina, they wrote their report—later known as The Auschwitz Protocols—which was the first accurate account of the mass murders in Auschwitz. Though they could not prevent the deportation of Hungarian Jews from starting, their report put pressure on the Hungarian government that eventually decided to stop the trains. Thus, the heroic act of these two men is believed to have saved more than 200,000 lives.

Seventy years later, the ICEJ spearheaded an exciting educational and commemorative project. Every summer, about 100 people of all ages march in the footsteps of Vrba and Wetzler. Through this joint effort, the Czech and Slovak branches of the ICEJ have managed to reach an audience that would have otherwise remained closed to our message. Participants learn about our ministry and mission and hold it in high esteem. The ICEJ receives broad coverage in the national media and has earned a reputation as an organization which stands at the forefront of the fight against anti-Semitism.

Join us next summer! You don’t have to be afraid of the long walk; accompanying vans escort anyone who cannot walk any further. It is the spirit, not the physical strength, that counts. For more details contact us at icejusa@icejusa.org.
This summer I made ministry trips for the Christian Embassy which led me just below the equator in East Africa to above the Arctic Circle in northern Norway. In every place I visited, the Christians were extremely eager to bless Israel and stand with the Jewish people. It was truly amazing to encounter this growing zeal for Zion in such diverse places, testifying that this global movement can only be the work of the Holy Spirit.

In August, the ICEJ Tanzania branch, led by Stanton Newton, hosted me for two-and-a-half weeks of meetings which took us from one end of the country to the other. Accompanied by a small ministry team, we drove nearly 2,485 miles to visit 20 cities and speak in more than 30 services, both large and small. The speaking tour finished at the second annual ICEJ Tanzania National Conference in the beautiful town of Arusha, which is widely known as the “Geneva of Africa,” and sits near the foot of the majestic Mount Kilimanjaro. More than 3,000 believers from across the nation attended; I was especially blessed by a colorful choir of Masai believers who greeted me with the sweetest melodies to Jesus upon my arrival in Arusha.

The Christians of Tanzania are burning with a passion for Israel that is quite astounding. For about 20 years now, the Lord has been moving in the hearts of pastors and lay people all over the country to stir them to reconnect with Israel. Believers in this growing movement truly believe that if they bless Israel, their nation will be blessed. They have been looking for the right way to make a direct connection with Israel, and they have finally found it through the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem. Remarkably, in only two short years since our Tanzania branch was first formed, nearly every major bishop and church leader in the country has learned about the ICEJ and now welcomes our ministry with open arms. News of our visit filled full-page spreads in national Christian newspapers, and our sermons were carried nationwide on Christian radio.

We do not normally report on the specific amounts collected for Israel during ministry trips abroad, but my sense of awe at what is happening in Tanzania is simply too strong! In 17 days of ministering around the country, we raised $25,000 in gifts for the ICEJ—the bulk of those funds designated for assisting in the Aliyah of Ethiopian Jews longing to come home to Israel. Tanzania is still a developing country, and most of these funds came from simple believers struggling to feed their families. Yet their heart for Israel compelled them to offer their best gifts, and their faith says they will be blessed by God in return. May it be so!

A week after returning from Tanzania I found myself flying to the picturesque port town of Bodø along the rocky coastline of northern Norway, just above the Arctic Circle. The locals there face long, dark winters where the sun disappears entirely for six weeks every year. The Christians in Bodø are extremely warm and friendly, and have the same burning desire to bless Israel. Seven area churches and ministries came together to sponsor a weekend conference where I spoke alongside ICEJ Norway National Director Dag Øyvind Jølulsen. We had powerful times of preaching and prayer for the needs of the people. The local pastors were fully supportive of our efforts to connect their congregations with Israel, and the offerings for the ministry were just as heartfelt and sacrificial as those we received in Equatorial Africa.
Like a diamond with many facets, Israel shines in its value to the United States. Our ally enhances our national security and economy, and improves our quality of life.

National Security
On the national security front, since Israel's expertise in fighting terrorism is second to none, US and Israeli military train in joint exercises with exotic names like Austere Challenge, Juniper Cobra, and Reliant Mermaid. This training includes missile defense training and search and rescue.

Israel’s military intelligence leads the world in its expertise. Former head of the US Air Force Intelligence Maj. Gen. George J. Keegan Jr., estimated back in the 1970s that Israel's intelligence value exceeded “five CIAs.” Today, terrorism challenges have exponentially increased Israel’s worth.

Former NATO Supreme Commander and US Secretary of State Gen. Alexander Haig (deceased) viewed Israel this way: “If there would not be an Israel, the United States would have to deploy real aircraft carriers, along with tens of thousands of US soldiers, which would cost tens of billions of dollars annually, dragging the United States unnecessarily into local, regional, and global conflicts.”

In battlefield medicine, Israel's expertise in combat and development of post-traumatic stress treatment directly helps our American troops. Israel often takes our military hardware and improves it. For example, Israel created an underside reactive armor for our Bradley tanks which has saved more than a thousand US soldiers from IEDs.

In addition, US police commissioners, police chiefs, and sheriffs rely on Israel’s law enforcement practices, and conduct cooperative programs in both countries. Our airline security is effectively increased due to the Transportation Security Administration learning how to improve their proficiency by working closely with experts at Israel’s Ben Gurion International Airport.

Economic
In the economic arena, statistics show that Israel invested more than $25 billion in the United States in 2015. Thirty states have official cooperative agreements with Israel in the fields of technology, agriculture, energy, business, and homeland security.

According to Myron Brilliant, the executive vice president and head of international affairs for the US Chamber of Commerce, our economic relationship with Israel is extensive: the United States has the oldest free-trade agreement with Israel—30 years—which now produces more than $40 billion annually. Israel imports more goods from the United States than any other Middle East nation, even though it is only 2 percent of the region's population. And because Israel excels in innovation, 250 multinational companies have operations in Israel; two-thirds are US companies like Apple, Intel, Microsoft, IBM, and Cisco.

Medical Innovations
Israel's medical innovations are another vast resource for Americans. The list of Israeli medical innovations is extensive, but just a few of their medical advances include: Re-Walk, a robotic exoskeleton that enables paraplegics to walk; Ice Cure, which penetrates benign breast tumors in a ten-minute ultrasound procedure; the Total Lift Bed, which places hospital patients in an upright position; and fingertip monitors, which aid in sleep disorders and cardiac ailments.

Is Israel a benefit to the United States? Facts say a resounding “YES!”

Visit us at www.IsraelAnswers.com and get your question about Israel answered!
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OR CONTACT JAIME FUSCO AT JAIME.FUSCO@ICEJUSA.ORG

American Christian Leaders for Israel (ACLI) is a project of the US Branch of the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem (ICEJ)
Hanukkah is a wonderful celebration of light and freedom and a time to remember the miracles of God in Israel’s past and in her present.

For new immigrants in Israel, it is also a celebration of new-found freedom living in their own country. Many, however, will find it hard to celebrate due to the struggles they face such as learning a new language, finding a job, and starting life all over again.

We want to ask you to please bring light this Hanukkah season to those needing it the most. Together we can help these new immigrants with basic needs such as food, housing, employment counseling, and mentoring.

Let your light shine this Hanukkah and bless a needy family in Israel. Please send a special Hanukkah donation today.

HAPPY HANUKKAH & BLESSED CHRISTMAS
Send in your contribution at www.icejusa.org/hanukkah