HELPING ISRAEL
THROUGH THE CORONAVIRUS CRISIS
Dear Friends,

When Israel first issued strict health rules, we held an emergency meeting on what it could mean for the Christian Embassy. Yet the weeks that followed showed God was in control—not a virus. We quickly found ourselves busier than ever comforting the Jewish people.

Since most volunteers left Israel, we received many new requests for help from across the nation. All of our staff stayed, and we were able to pack thousands of Passover boxes, deliver groceries for the elderly, and at the Haifa Home our Christian staff and volunteers were the only ones allowed to care for the 70 Holocaust Survivors living there.

Meantime, we brought over 550 Russian and Ethiopian Jews to Israel and helped cover the extra costs of their two-week quarantine upon arrival, all in cooperation with the Jewish Agency. This was all noticed by the Israeli media, and 20 TV and newspaper reports told how Christians stayed in Israel to help amid the coronavirus crisis!

We have also found ourselves praying online more often. On Tuesday we hold a global prayer meeting for ICEJ staff and family around the world. Wednesday became an online Global Prayer Gathering with key ministry leaders joining us to pray with tens of thousands of believers worldwide. Every Thursday, Jews and Christians prayerfully read through the Psalms in Hebrew, Arabic, English, Chinese, Spanish, French, German, and many more languages. One Jewish Psalm reader declared: “This feels like heaven.”

Although we were supposed to stay behind closed doors at home, the coronavirus crisis turned into a wide open door for our ministry that not even a deadly virus could shut. “He who opens and no one shuts” (Revelation 3:7).

I was especially touched that China rose to the occasion to generously support us. We even received gifts from Wuhan, the very city where the virus originated. “We want to help Israel overcome the virus through our prayers and practical gifts,” one believer from China said.

I want to thank everyone who faithfully stood with us in this time of crisis. Please continue to support us in the months to come. The doors of ministry are wide open, and we need your help to go through them. Meanwhile, we also pray that the Lord will keep you safe and healthy in this time of trouble.

Yours in Christ,

Dr Jürgen Bühler
ICEJ President

P.S. Please keep planning to join us for the Feast of Tabernacles in October. As of now, we are moving ahead with our Feast plans and look forward to seeing you during Sukkot.

COVER PHOTO: An Orthodox rabbi in Israel reading Torah during the coronavirus crisis (AP photo)

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ICEJ MEETS MOUNTING NEEDS AS ISRAEL IS HIT BY CORONAVIRUS CRISIS

BY DAVID R. PARSONS, ICEJ VICE PRESIDENT & SENIOR SPOKESMAN

As the coronavirus threat spread around the world in late February, it became clear that the strict measures governments were taking to stop the pandemic would impact the ICEJ’s work in Israel just as the Passover season approached—when we are normally quite busy with numerous holiday assistance projects. Despite having to work from home, our staff in Israel rose to the challenge of meeting the needs of thousands of Israeli families even as the coronavirus crisis brought the nation’s economy to a standstill. Thanks to the faithful and generous support of Christians worldwide, the ICEJ helped even more Jewish families than usual over the Passover season.

VIRAL CRISIS PEAKS AT PASSOVER

This was indeed a most difficult Passover in Israel, as life and work were totally disrupted by the coronavirus health crisis. The elderly were told not to leave their homes for their own safety. Incoming flights were banned, and tourism flattened. All non-essential businesses were closed. Unemployment in Israel suddenly jumped to over 25 percent. As Passover neared, the social needs across the country only multiplied. In Ashdod alone, over half the families applied to city social workers for Passover assistance.

With dozens of urgent requests for help flooding into our offices from across Israel, our staff rose to the occasion. Because Christians from around the world also responded to the need, we were able to help thousands of Holocaust Survivors, other elderly citizens, new immigrants, needy families, and many others who were desperately in need of assistance this Passover season.

It turned into a special moment when Christians showed their care and concern for our Israeli friends right when they needed us the most! No doubt, “all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose” (Romans 8:28).

“When the coronavirus began spreading in Israel, it made our work much more difficult, but it did not stop the mandate of the Christian Embassy to comfort the people of Israel. Rather, it provided a unique and timely opportunity...
to expand our ministry to meet critical needs and help many more families as Passover approached,” said ICEJ AID Director Nicole Yoder.

Here is a sampling of what we were able to accomplish together to make the Passover season brighter for thousands of individuals and families under added distress due to the coronavirus crisis. As you can see, we provided timely aid to more people at Passover than ever before, including Holocaust Survivors, other elderly Israelis, and new immigrants and children—while also helping emergency relief teams and community workers in need of special medical equipment remain on the job.

**PASSOVER ASSISTANCE**
The ICEJ began its annual Passover holiday distributions in early March by delivering Pesach packages for dozens of needy families in Netanya. The gift baskets included food vouchers for the holiday season, along with kitchenware, pans, and towels. This was a normal activity for ICEJ AID at this time of year, but soon the Passover needs were multiplying, and nothing remained normal.

Also, ICEJ funds made it possible for the Jewish Agency to run holiday day camps for children of new immigrant families in quarantine. This project included providing games, crafts, and toys for the kids to play at home or in small supervised groups.

Finally, the ICEJ furnished games, art supplies, and help with online learning for 95 at-risk youths in a special children’s home during the Passover season.

**CARE FOR ELDERLY AND HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS**
ICEJ team members at our Haifa Home for Holocaust Survivors were designated the primary caregivers for the 70 residents confined to their apartments due to the coronavirus crisis. This included delivering meals, providing medical checkups, doing handiwork around their homes, and paying daily visits to break their sense of isolation. The Christian volunteers under the direction of veteran ICEJ staffers Yudit and Will Setz also helped pack and deliver meals to hundreds of other Holocaust Survivors and senior citizens all around Haifa.

In Jerusalem, some 12 members of the ICEJ staff were permitted to leave their homes to assist the elderly and other vulnerable people required to stay in their apartments. Many volunteered with Hineni—a Christian-supported Jerusalem soup kitchen—where they helped pack and deliver some 2,000 hot meals to elderly residents of the city over several weeks, as well as 650 Passover food and gift packages.

Despite the stay-at-home orders, the ICEJ also funded and helped with the distribution of Passover gift boxes, including food and hygienic products, as well as daily meals to over 400 elderly and needy Soviet Jewish immigrants—including many Holocaust Survivors, who live in the Jerusalem suburbs of Pisgat Ze’ev and Ma’ale Adumim.

Meantime, we normally sponsor community Passover seders for hundreds of newly-arrived Jewish immigrants. However, since large gatherings were not allowed, the ICEJ provided holiday assistance to more individual immigrant families this year. This included 269 Ethiopian newcomers who were celebrating their first Passover in the Land of Israel. We also assisted these families with extra absorption assistance while they were in a mandated two-week quarantine upon entering the country.

Elsewhere, we worked with the Jewish Agency to assist 50 other newly-arrived families from other countries who had made the trip to Israel despite the coronavirus threat and went straight into quarantine. This extra absorption aid included vouchers to buy food and other basics as they start a new life in Israel under difficult circumstances.

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**EMERGENCY WORKERS**
For families living in southern Israel under the constant threat of rockets from Gaza, life became even harder due to the threat of COVID-19. The ICEJ provided local medical and emergency teams there with sterile gloves, filtration masks, protective suits, disinfectants, and other medical gear to allow them to continue making home visits to treat and care for children traumatized by years of rocket fire. They also arranged food and medicine to those in isolation or unable to shop, while also working with Magen David
Adom to administer blood tests for coronavirus.

Meantime, first responders in the Gaza border area repurposed the special ATV firefighting equipment recently donated by the ICEJ to clean and sanitize public areas from the virus, including playgrounds, schools, and parks.

OTHER DISTRESSED COMMUNITIES

As unemployment rose due to the coronavirus lockdowns, the ICEJ reached out to other communities in need all across Israel.

The ICEJ responded to urgent requests for help on behalf of dozens of Bnei Menashe, Chinese, and Hispanic Jewish families who arrived in Israel within the past year or so and were struggling due to job layoffs and other economic fallout from the coronavirus crisis. We were able to provide them with grants and food vouchers to assist the newly unemployed and those in dire need before the Passover holiday.

The ICEJ also helped sponsor a brand-new emergency hotline for families with disabled and autistic children, which proved timely and effective—especially as anxiety among children and domestic violence began rising across Israel, as elsewhere. With guidance and training from professionals, phone counselors began taking 50–100 calls per day, in both Hebrew and Arabic, to deal with cases of fear and emotional trauma associated with the coronavirus among special-needs children.

Many in Israel’s Arab and Bedouin communities were late in learning about the dangers posed by COVID-19, and when public schools were suddenly closed and many breadwinners in these communities were suspended from their jobs, many families were greatly impacted. In response, the ICEJ provided 100 Arab and Bedouin families with hygiene supplies and culturally sensitive explanatory materials on how to protect your person and home against the virus, how to practice social distancing, and other helpful information.

Lastly, Israel’s Christian Arab community also has been impacted by the coronavirus threat, including many workers who have lost their jobs. In the mixed Christian/Muslim town of Eilaboun, in the Galilee, the ICEJ donated computers to 36 families so that their children could access distance learning. Other families with small children also received games and toys for the little ones to relieve stress in the home during the long school closures.

THE NEEDS CONTINUE

We are most grateful that Christians around the globe responded so quickly and generously over recent weeks, enabling the ICEJ to meet more needs than ever over the Passover season.

But the coronavirus health crisis is not over, and the needs created by this pandemic will continue to mount—both in Israel and in many other nations. We are thankful that so many Christians are so dedicated to helping Israel, even though they have urgent needs in their own families, communities, and nations. May the Lord richly bless you as you continue to comfort Israel in her time of need.
1. Nicole Yoder delivers hot meals to elderly in the Jerusalem suburb of Ma’ale Adumim.

2. Veteran staff member Will Setz administers medical checkups at the Haifa Home for Holocaust Survivors.

3. ICEJ Homecare Nurse Corrie Van Maanen packages a Passover food and gift box for families in need.

4. Volunteer staff member Natalie measures the temperature of one of the Holocaust Survivors at our Haifa Home for Holocaust Survivors.

5. ICEJ staff prepares care packages for families in need in preparation for the Passover holidays, thanks to your generous donations.

Please give to our “Israel in Crisis” fund to help us carry out more urgent aid projects in the days ahead!

DONATE TODAY AT ICEJUSA.ORG/CRISIS
As air travel restrictions were imposed worldwide over recent months due to the coronavirus, the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem still has been able to assist 565 new Jewish immigrants in making Aliyah to Israel.

In early February, various nations began to issue entry bans, which greatly impeded international travel. Yet even as flights were being grounded everywhere, the Christian Embassy still has succeeded in bringing a total of 450 Russian Jewish immigrants on flights from various parts of the former Soviet republics. Most went into an immediate two-week self-quarantine due to the COVID-19 threat. A flight from St. Petersburg with 26 Russian Jewish Olim on March 22 marked the 30th anniversary of the ICEJ’s sponsorship of Jewish Aliyah from the former Soviet Union.

Two days later, the ICEJ sponsored flights for 72 Ethiopian Jews who arrived from Addis Ababa. They were taken to an absorption center in kibbutz Beit Alfa and entered quarantine for 14 days as well. In addition, the ICEJ funded Passover gift baskets with food, games,
Together with an earlier group of Ethiopian immigrants in February, the ICEJ has now assisted 115 Ethiopian Jews in making Aliyah during the coronavirus health crisis.

“Despite all the bad news with the coronavirus, the good news is that Jews are still coming home to Israel,” said ICEJ President Dr. Jürgen Bühler. “It has been amazing to see the strong desire of these Jewish families to make it to Israel, as many even moved up their Aliyah plans despite the requirement of two weeks in self-quarantine. It is our privilege and our calling to help them and all of Israel pull through this difficult time.”

The ICEJ has also responded to urgent requests for help on behalf of a number of Bnei Menashe, Chinese, and Hispanic Jewish families who arrived in Israel within the past year or so and were struggling due to job layoffs and other economic fallout from the coronavirus crisis. We were able to provide them with grants and food vouchers to assist the newly unemployed and those in dire need before the Passover holiday.

With Israel soon hoping to gradually lift travel bans and home lockdowns, Aliyah is expected to quickly resume over coming months. To begin, the Christian Embassy is committed to supporting the ongoing Ethiopian Aliyah, with another 150 Ethiopian Jews already approved and awaiting their turn to journey home to Israel. Meantime, there are many more Aliyah applicants from Russia ready to come as the Russian economy is faltering due to the collapse of the ruble, the coronavirus threat, and the steep drop in world oil prices. Latest reports also indicate a huge wildfire in the forests near Chernobyl is blanketing Kiev in smoke.

Summer is usually the high season for Jewish families moving to Israel so children can start the new school year in Israel in the fall. But the situation for many Jewish families in Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus has become urgent, and they are asking to move up their travel plans to reach Israel as soon as they can.

learning materials, and other items for these and many other recently arrived Ethiopian Jewish families as part of their integration process during the Passover holidays.

The Christian Embassy also helped dozens of other recent immigrant families through the Passover holidays, providing them with food vouchers and vital assistance as they remained isolated in Jewish Agency centers. They would normally attend Hebrew language classes and community events, including day camps for the children. But since they could not gather in large groups, we purchased games, crafts, and toys for the children, while also funding small group activities for them.

Please stand with us by supporting the ICEJ’s Aliyah efforts. Give your best gift today at: ICEJUSA.org/ALIYAH
When it became clear in early March that the coronavirus would severely impact Israel and the entire world, the ICEJ turned to intensified prayer as our most effective response to this global health crisis. Our Jerusalem offices were closed and public meetings were banned across Israel, so we made use of Zoom webinar tools to launch the online Global Prayer Gathering, which brings tens of thousands of Christians from around the world together each week for a time of united prayer concerning this viral threat. This has included many faithful members of our Isaiah 62 Prayer Campaign and the ICEJ PrayerWave, along with many other friends and supporters of Israel and the ICEJ worldwide.

Every Wednesday over recent weeks, ICEJ President Dr Jürgen Bühler has hosted powerful and encouraging times of online prayer, led by such friends in ministry as Angus Buchan, Daniel Kolenda, Paul Wilbur, Mats Ola, Suzette Hattingh, Peter Tsukahira, and many others. ICEJ national directors and representatives from dozens of nations also joined in leading prayers, often in their native language. The weekly prayer gatherings have strengthened and blessed tens of thousands of believers from nearly 100 countries who have joined us so far.

“Don’t focus on the virus. Focus on our Healer. His name is Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior!” exhorted Angus Buchan as he shared about his personal experience with contracting the coronavirus. Both Angus and his wife are recovering from the virus, and yet they are more on fire for the Lord than ever!

Since some of the recent prayer times took place during the Passover season, we also added a special online communion service, officiated by Messianic Jewish and Arab pastors.

You are invited to join us every Wednesday from 9:00–10:00 a.m. (EST) for the Global Prayer Gathering, as we continue to call on God for full deliverance from the coronavirus, and for the Lord to work out His purposes in the earth through this global crisis. Become an Isaiah 62 prayer partner and join us for this call.

icejusa.org/icej-global-prayer-events
The International Christian Embassy Jerusalem recently joined with the Jerusalem Summit to launch an exciting and timely online initiative, “Calling to God Together,” which has brought Christians and Jews together to read through the book of Psalms as a prayerful appeal for Divine intervention in light of the global coronavirus crisis.

Led by ICEJ President Dr. Jürgen Bühler and Jerusalem Summit founder Dimitry Radeshevsky, rabbis, pastors, and other community and ministry leaders from dozens of nations have taken part in the weekly online Zoom meetings. These leaders have read through the Psalms in Hebrew, Arabic, English, Chinese, Russian, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Finnish, Norwegian, and many other languages. Hundreds of viewers from more than 70 countries around the globe participate online each week.

“Given the global coronavirus crisis we are all in, it was a very uplifting moment to join in unity with our Jewish friends to appeal to the God of heaven for help through His holy Word,” said Dr. Bühler. “The Jewish people gave us the most powerful prayer book in the world, the book of Psalms, and Christians cherish [the Psalms’] beauty, majesty, and solace as well.”

So far, the Jewish readers have included MK May Golan, Likud Party; Josh Reinstein, Director of the Knesset Christian Allies Caucus; and other officials, rabbis, scholars, and community leaders from throughout Israel—including many living in the biblical heartland of Judea and Samaria.

Christian readers have included MP Peter Ostman of the Finnish Parliament and Arab pastors from Bethlehem, Nazareth, Egypt, and Lebanon, as well as pastors and ICEJ representatives from Albania, Bolivia, Canada, Denmark, Fiji, Finland, Germany, India, Ireland, Italy, Liberia, Mexico, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Russia, Serbia, Singapore, Slovenia, Taiwan, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

You are invited to join us for the “Calling to God Together” online meetings on Zoom, every Thursday at 9:00 a.m. (EST), until further notice.
Join the
ISAIAH 62 INITIATIVE

I have set watchmen on your walls, O Jerusalem;
They shall never hold their peace day or night.
You who make mention of the Lord, do not keep silent,
And give Him no rest till He establishes
And till He makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth.

— ISAIAH 62:6-7

ISAIAH 62 INITIATIVE

Join intercessors across the United States and some 132 countries who receive the ICEJ’s monthly prayer points, and pray individually or corporately for Israel, the Middle East, and the unique ministry of the ICEJ. Just as the prophet spoke in Isaiah 62, the Lord has placed the mantle upon His followers to pray for Jerusalem.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

- Join as a group or an individual prayer warrior and receive monthly prayer points.
- Join us in fasting and praying on behalf of Israel every month.

TO LEARN MORE VISIT: www.icejusa.org/isaiah62
Be a part of that future generation spoken of in Psalm 102 that is partnering with the Lord in His work to restore Zion, for the set time has come.

PARTNER LEVELS

Covenant Partner
Show your love and support for Israel by partnering with the ICEJ. Become a Covenant Partner at a giving level of at least $30 a month. In appreciation, you will receive the following resources:
- A Partnership Certificate
- The Word From Jerusalem magazine
- A year-end gift of appreciation

Ambassadorial Partner
Partnership in ministry is a gift God gives to strengthen and undergird His work. Become an Ambassadorial Partner with the ICEJ at a giving level of at least $100 a month. In appreciation, you will receive everything in the Covenant Partnership level plus:
- Exclusive access to ICEJ’s quarterly Mid-East ministry update conference call from Jerusalem
- An invitation to attend our ICEJ USA leadership briefing during our national conference

Builder of Zion Partner
Isaiah declared the Lord will call Zion's walls "salvation" and her gates "praise" (60:18). As we walk together side by side, the ICEJ would be honored if you would become a Builder of Zion Partner at a giving level of $2,500 a year or more. In appreciation, you will receive everything in the Ambassadorial Partnership level plus:
- A discount of $200.00 on a pilgrimage tour to Israel during the Feast of Tabernacles or other qualifying tour
- An additional gift acknowledging you as a Builder of Zion Partner

Gateway of Zion Partner
Show compassion for Zion and bless the people of Israel. The ICEJ would be honored if you were to become a Gateway of Zion partner at a giving level of $20,000 a year or more. In appreciation, you will receive everything in the Builder of Zion Partnership level plus:
- The opportunity to meet with ICEJ leadership and/or receive personal briefings on ICEJ projects that are of interest
- Special invites to exclusive events such as pastors' lunches and VIP meetings that are held in your area or community
- An additional gift acknowledging you are a Gateway of Zion Partner

SEND CONTRIBUTIONS TO
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Phone: (615) 895 9830 • Email: info@icejusa.org
Online: www.icejusa.org/partner
In Russia, our St. Petersburg office purchased 1,000 face masks and 2,000 pairs of medical gloves for volunteers to use when delivering daily meals to thousands of Holocaust Survivors and other elderly Jews confined to their homes by the virus threat.

In the United States, ICEJ USA National Director Susan Michael cohosted a special Zoom webinar meeting attended by more than 36,000 Christians and Jews from around the world to learn about Israel’s response to the coronavirus and rising concerns within the Jewish community of a new wave of anti-Semitism, as many are falsely blaming them for the pandemic. The online event was organized by ICEJ USA and the grassroots group Combat Anti-Semitism Movement (CAM) and featured keynote speakers from Israel, inspirational stories of Christian leaders, and a musical concert.

In Liberia, ICEJ National Director J. Aaron Wright Sr. and his nationwide network of pro-Israel Christian volunteers were tasked by the Monrovian government to lead the national effort to educate the public about the coronavirus threat.
In Germany, the ICEJ team in Stuttgart mobilized Christians nationwide for weekly Zoom prayer meetings for Israel through the Isaiah 62 Prayer Initiative, expanding its reach to more than 150 churches. ICEJ Germany also produced a video that repeatedly aired on national Christian television concerning our extra assistance and care for Holocaust Survivors in Haifa during the health crisis and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s warm remarks lauding those efforts.

And in Italy, ICEJ National Director Tony Rozzini—who lives in the heart of the hardest-hit region of Lombardy—had a chance to go on national radio to call for repentance, especially for the country’s mistreatment of Jews during the Fascist period.

These are but a few examples of the special efforts made by many ICEJ branches worldwide over the past few months to meet the unique challenges of this difficult moment, and we in Jerusalem are very grateful for the backing and support of our offices and representatives around the world.
In partnership with the Combat Anti-Semitism Movement (CAM), the US Branch of the ICEJ hosted an impactful online event, featuring keynote speakers working to address the coronavirus pandemic and the rise of anti-Semitism. Reaching over 36,000 Christian and Jewish viewers around the world, we were especially grateful to have with us various speakers from the Israeli government and the medical field, as well as experts on Middle Eastern affairs. The worldwide event was an encouraging reminder of the Lord’s continued work through Israel to be a light to the nations and the importance of Jews and Christians standing together in moments like this.

The invocation for the event was delivered by ICEJ USA Board Member and Senior Pastor of First Baptist Church in Morristown, Tennessee, Dr. Dean Haun. Speakers from Israel included Ambassador Dani Dayan, medical experts including Dr. Osnat Levtzion-Korac and Aviv Shoher, and leading Middle East scholars, including NGO Monitor Vice President Olga Deutsch and Alma Center CEO Sarit Zehavi. The event included inspirational stories from Juliana Taimoorazy and Darion Ouliguian, who, as Christian leaders, lent their support and inspiration to Jews around the world. A wonderful musical concert given by Dove award-winning musician Aaron Shust closed out the 90-minute session.

In light of the coronavirus crisis, the resolve of the Israeli people has caught the attention of leaders and experts from around the world. Ambassador Dani Dayan, Consul General of Israel in New York, spoke of the response of Israeli society to the crisis saying, “As always, in Israel in times of crisis and in times of need, our ingenuity and sense of contribution reaches its apex. As we speak now, dozens and dozens of Israeli firms and researchers, institutions, governmental and private, are working together to find a cure and to find something that will lower the deaths or at least mitigate the suffering.”

In addition, Israeli medical professionals discussed the effects of the pandemic on Israeli society. They gave a behind-the-scenes look at hospital realities and cutting-edge healthcare solutions that are currently being developed and implemented. More than two dozen healthcare technology projects related to COVID-19 have launched within the past three weeks in Israel.

Dr. Osnat Levzion-Korach, Director-General of Assaf Harofeh Medical Center, shared her experience as a hospital executive in preparing for the pandemic. “Once the coronavirus started, healthcare and the government picked up really quickly the magnitude of what’s going to happen. At the Shamir Medical Center, we took three departments—which are a little remote from the rest of the hospital—and made them the coronavirus center. We protect staff by minimizing their exposure, including through robots that can bring patients medication.”

Dr. Levzion-Korach also emphasized the solidarity that has taken place in Israel, citing the tremendous amount of love and support from the people, as well as a nationwide sense of unity in the fight against the virus.
While many new technologies are in experimental stages, Israel is leveraging its innovative thinking to help the world cope with the coronavirus crisis. The impact of these inventions was discussed during the event by Aviv Shoher, CEO of Ichilov Tech at Tel Aviv Medical Center. Shoher told viewers, “We’re seeing two overarching themes with healthcare in Israel during the coronavirus: the first is a collaborative approach amongst all stakeholders in Israel, and the second is the development of a long-term effect on the delivery of care. Things like hospitalization-at-home and telemedicine are taking on quickly, and we will see them after the pandemic.”

Dr. Zvika Slovin, Director of Rafael Development Corporation, further explained Israeli advanced technological solutions to combat the virus. “We have 29 companies in our portfolio in different aspects of the healthcare system.” Dr. Slovin brought to attention the relationship between the entrepreneurial spirit of Israel along with this advanced defense technology in place to better medicine and healthcare on a global scale.

On the call to discuss the rise in anti-Semitism associated with coronavirus around the world was Olga Deutsch, NGO Monitor Vice President. “In the time of the coronavirus pandemic, we’re not surprised but nevertheless shocked to see a sharp spike in anti-Semitic conspiracy theories and narratives that have been inspired by the pandemic. Too many NGO’s—instead of promoting human rights—promote BDS and anti-Semitism against Israel. Different groups are blaming Israel for coronavirus or comparing Israel to coronavirus.”

Speaking of anti-Semitism in the Middle East, Sarit Zehavi, CEO of the Alma Research & Education Center, asserted, “In the Middle East, in general, anti-Semitism has not gotten stronger following the coronavirus crisis, because in the Middle East, anti-Semitism is common and well-rooted already . . . Today, we see an uptick of anti-Semitism . . . by regimes to draw the attention away from their own inadequate responses to the pandemic.”

Christian faith leaders then discussed their personal connections to Israel and their solidarity with the Jewish people during this difficult period. Turning to build interfaith relationships between Jews and Christians, Juliana Taimoorazy, president of the Iraqi Christian Relief Council, shared her personal story as a Chaldean Christian and Darion Ouliguian, and a Christian Zionist student leader at UCLA shared how he came to be a supporter of Israel through his family’s story and his own faith journey.

Following Thursday’s event, Sacha Roytman-Dratwa, the Combat Anti-Semitism Movement Director, said convening these Israeli and Christian leaders together now was crucial, commenting, “The spread of coronavirus is providing fertile ground for the spread of anti-Semitism. Now more than ever, the Jewish people and the Jewish State are grateful for and rely on our Christian and interfaith allies to help defeat anti-Semitism. Israel continues to pursue its mission of making the world a better place for all people and is helping currently to lead the world’s response to the coronavirus through groundbreaking healthcare technology.”

Susan Michael, USA Director of the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem, spoke of the ICEJ’s important work in Israel, commenting that “The ICEJ has been in Israel for over 40 years. We’ve been with them for other crises, and we’re with them during this one. We heard today how the technology in the medical field is going to change the face of medicine in Israel and eventually around the world. As Christians, we should respond to anti-Semitism with acts of love and kindness toward our Jewish brethren in our local communities. It lets the Jewish people know that they are not alone.”

In addition to being hosted by CAM and ICEJ, the event was cosponsored by 12 other partners, including American Christian Leaders for Israel, American Pastors Network, Belgian Friends of Israel, Faith Wins, Forcefield Human Rights, IMPAC, Iraqi Christian Relief Council, the Lawfare Project, the Philos Project, Stand in the Gap, Stand Firm, and Sweden Israel All.
Many Evangelical Christians will argue that there is no such thing as “Christian anti-Semitism.” For them, it is a contradiction of terms—an oxymoron. They do not believe a “true” Christian can be anti-Semitic. Unfortunately, history has proven otherwise.

Jews and Christians have had a history of contentious relations. What started in the first century as an internal squabble among Jews over the messiahship of Jesus became a split into two separate religions, both struggling to differentiate from the other and survive under brutal Roman rule. Once Christianity became the official state religion of the Roman Empire in the fourth century, anti-Jewish theology paved the way for degrading laws and state-sanctioned persecutions, ghettos, and expulsions.

Centuries of this type of religiously motivated and state-empowered anti-Semitism prepared the way for the Nazi Holocaust. While Christianity did not cause the Holocaust, Christian anti-Judaism and the centuries of anti-Semitism it spawned made the Holocaust possible.

**What Is Christian Anti-Semitism?**

Let me be clear that Christianity is not anti-Semitic. Hundreds of millions of Bible-based Christians around the world today love Israel and the Jewish people. They understand that Christianity would not exist were it not for the Jewish people and their everlasting covenant with the God of Israel.

But the Bible can be used by twisted minds to say all sorts of things. Hateful people can interpret and quote Scripture in hateful ways and use it to support their anti-Semitic sentiments. When the Christian Scriptures are used by a professing Christian to denigrate the Jewish people and support anti-Semitic tropes and conspiracy theories, then it is referred to as Christian anti-Semitism.

**What Is It Based On?**

The theological foundation for Christian teaching against the Jewish people is what is known as replacement theology. Replacement theology posits that the Jews were cursed by God for their rejection of Jesus’ messianic credentials and therefore have been replaced by the church in the plans and purposes of God. Historically, this theology often led to the teaching of contempt for the Jews as “Christ-killers” and gave sanction to their maltreatment.

**Where Is It Today?**

Not everyone who holds to a form of replacement theology is anti-Semitic. Some theologians simply interpret the New Testament in this way—and therefore spiritualize much of the Old Testament to support it—but have absolutely no ill intent toward anyone. Many pastors hold replacement views as a theological assumption yet have never been taught the ramifications of such faulty hermeneutics required to support it.

This more benign form of American Evangelical replacement theology may not be the anti-Semitic version of the past that went on to call for the persecution and demonization of the Jews. Nevertheless, it is the same theological foundation from which Christian anti-Semitism sprouts, and we need to correct it in all its variants.

A well-known pastor of one of the largest churches in America has been publishing his concerns about the loss of Christian faith among young people. He blames the influence of Judaism and the Old Testament, which he describes as irrelevant and having been replaced with the “brand-new and different” teachings and ethics of Jesus. He portrays Judaism as hypocritical, self-righteous, and exclusivist, and claims the apostle Paul considered it an eroding influence on the beauty, simplicity, and appeal of the early church. He even goes so far as to blame the sins of the church throughout history on the influence of Judaism and the Old Testament.

Many scholars agree that the Holocaust could never have happened had it not been for the centuries of Christian anti-Semitism rooted in this type of theology. Therefore, we need to be very concerned about its growth and learn to refute it.

Another lesser-known Evangelical Christian preacher has gone further than theology and is espousing anti-Semitic conspiracy theories. Pastor Rick Wiles of the TruNews broadcast has a history of blaming the Jews for everything from the failure of the Iowa Democratic primary app to the impeachment proceedings against President Donald Trump—or what he called a “Jew coup.” He also claimed the coronavirus began at the mostly Jewish AIPAC Policy Conference and is spreading via synagogues because God is dealing with “false religions” and “people who oppose His son, Jesus Christ.”

**Conclusion**

While this generation is privileged to be part of a historic correction in the church’s relations with the Jews, it cannot be taken for granted. Anti-Semitism is on the rise, and dangerous trends within American churches need addressing to protect this budding relationship. It is the American church that can stop anti-Semitism from gaining more ground in the country, but we must begin at home and relegate “Christian anti-Semitism” to the dustbin of history.
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