JERUSALEM JUBILEE
This is a year of Jubilee celebrations for Jerusalem!

ALIYAH
Jews return from Ethiopia to Israel
Dear Friends,

We are overjoyed to have recently welcomed a flight of 72 Ethiopian Jews to their home in Israel. There was a significant delay in the approval for their immigration, but it seems the final bureaucratic hurdles have been overcome and the long-awaited wave of Ethiopian Aliyah is in full swing. We are delighted that we have been able to raise enough money to fund their flights so far.

However, an Israeli official has assured us their arrival is only the first of many steps to fully integrate them into Israeli society. Many of them come from rural areas, and life in Israel comes with major cultural and educational challenges. These new immigrants need to transition from a third-world context into one of the most modern societies in the world.

At the ICEJ we are fully committed to helping Israel with this process and have already pledged assistance to some of the absorption projects for the Ethiopian Jews. Remember that God promised to “plant them in the land and not to uproot them again” (Jeremiah 24:6). Please join us in this unique and prophetic vision of bringing them to the land and helping to plant them in such a way that their return will become a great blessing for Israeli society.

The annual Feast of Tabernacles celebration is approaching, and we are sensing a growing excitement from the nations. Registrations are increasing, and it seems that many are coming to celebrate the 50th anniversary of a reunited Jerusalem under Israeli sovereignty. Time is short, but you can still join the USA Branch’s tour to the Feast by calling 866-393-5890.

Many blessings from Jerusalem!

Yours in Christ,

Dr. Jürgen Bühler
ICEJ President

FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESIDENT
ATTRACTING EXTRAORDINARY BLESSING

BY DR. JÜRGEN BÜHLER
I Know You from Jerusalem!
In the last issue of our magazine, we shared the story of the miraculous healing of Danny Meka, ICEJ’s director in India. After he was severely burned from a gas explosion, an angel appeared to Danny in a dream and the Lord supernaturally touched his body. Doctors allowed Danny to leave the hospital after eight days when they said it should have taken months. His story reminds us that our God is the same God from the days of the apostles—and nothing is impossible for Him!

As you may recall from Danny’s story, when the angel appeared in his dream he asked Danny, “What do you want me to do for you?” Danny questioned the angel, “Who are you?” The angel answered him, “I know you from Jerusalem!”

That remarkable response reminded me of three stories in the New Testament. Each story is about a gentile singled out to receive a special blessing: A Roman centurion (Luke 7:1–10); a Phoenician woman (Matthew 15:21–28); and Cornelius, the centurion from Caesarea (Acts 10–11). All three experienced an unusual touch of God—in many ways out of season—since Jesus repeatedly made it clear during His earthly ministry He was sent only to the Jews (Matthew 15:23). When Jesus sent His disciples out, He likewise commanded them to avoid gentiles and focus only on the “lost sheep of the house of Israel” (Matthew 10:6). Just a few days before Christ’s crucifixion, a group of Greeks wanted to see Jesus, but He would not see them (John 12:20).

Yes, Lord, Yet Even the Dogs
When the Phoenician woman approached Jesus begging Him to heal her sick, demonized daughter, Jesus first ignored her and then rather abruptly rejected her. “I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel,” He said, and then added, “It is not right to take the children’s bread and throw it to the dogs” (Matthew 15:24, 26).

It must have been extremely humiliating for the woman to be addressed like that by Jesus. As He said, healing was God’s gift, His daily bread, for the sons of God—the Jews—who, according to Paul, were adopted (Romans 9:4). Jesus equated giving this same gift to the gentile woman with throwing a child’s bread to dogs. Jesus was using a seemingly harsh rabbinic approach, also found in Midrash Tillim, which states: “The nations of the world are like dogs.”

But this did not stop the Phoenician woman. Her reply demonstrated both relentless faith and extreme humility, not only toward Jesus but also toward her standing within God’s economy of that time: “Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters’ table” (Matthew 15:27). Of this woman, German theologian Albrecht Bengel noted, “She does not ask to be admitted to the table, but implies that she was not far distant from it.” In the new covenant, gentiles would soon be allowed to sit at the table as children and have full access to all the heavenly goods, but in this early stage, Jesus marveled at the woman’s humble faith. He answered her, “O woman, great is your faith! Be it done for you as you desire.” And her daughter was healed instantly” (Matthew 15:28).

For He Loves our Nation
Another gentile to experience Jesus’ untimely touch was a Roman centurion from Capernaum. Like the Phoenician woman, he did not ask for himself but needed a miracle for one of his servants. However, instead of approaching Jesus directly, he sent the elders of the local Jewish community to put in a good word with Jesus. Luke reported, “And when they came to Jesus, they pleaded with him earnestly, saying, ‘He is worthy to have you do this for him, for he loves our nation, and he is the one who built us our synagogue’” (Luke 7:4–5). Archaeologists have found the basalt foundation of an ancient synagogue in Capernaum, which could be the one mentioned in this passage.
The argument the elders brought to Jesus is striking, as is Jesus’ subsequent reaction. They recognized that dealing with a gentile would be an exception for Jesus. Nevertheless, they argued that Jesus should still heal the servant since the centurion was a “worthy” gentile. He loved their nation, they argued, and demonstrated it practically by building a synagogue. Jesus did not oppose them like He opposed the Phoenician woman, and immediately followed the elders to heal the centurion’s servant.

Well Spoken of by the Whole Jewish Nation
The third prominent gentile highlighted in the New Testament is Cornelius, the centurion of Caesarea. The Phoenician woman and the centurion from Capernaum experienced Jesus’ touch before the times of the gentiles had begun. Cornelius, however, represents the very watershed that opened the doors to the gentile world.

His testimony became a sign not only for Peter but also for the entire early church that “also to the Gentiles, God has granted repentance that leads to life” (Acts 11:18). The person of Cornelius thus represents a paradigm shift for the early church.

From that moment on, it was clear that the gentiles would be allowed to sit at God’s table as sons. They would not receive merely the crumbs of blessings that had fallen from the table of God’s people Israel but would become full partakers of God’s nature and His most powerful promises.

The questions I used to ask myself were: Why did Cornelius become the prototype, the first fruit of a gentile believer? Of all the gentiles living in Israel at that time, why did God choose him? Again, it is Luke who answered these questions. The disciple reported that the centurion sent two of his (probably Jewish) servants to Peter’s home in Joppa (today’s Jaffa) to come to Caesarea and share God’s Word in his house. They must have known that an observant Jew like Peter would not defile himself by visiting a gentile’s home—especially if he was a leader of the Roman occupying force.

The servants gave a testimony about Cornelius reminiscent of the story of the centurion of Capernaum: “Cornelius, a centurion, an upright and God-fearing man, who is well spoken of by the whole Jewish nation, was directed by a holy angel to send for you” (Acts 10:22). This Roman, they argued, was different from the other Romans Peter knew. The Jewish nation spoke well of Cornelius. The Jews loved him.

The angel who had appeared to Cornelius explained the reason the Jews loved him: “Cornelius, your prayer has been heard and your alms have been remembered before God” (Acts 10:31). Cornelius was a spiritual man who prayed and whom the Jews considered to be “God-fearing.” He expressed his faith practically through his love and care of the Jewish nation by giving alms. Therefore, the Jews held him in high regard, and more importantly, his alms were noted in heaven.

Candidates for Extraordinary Blessing
These three stories are connected by each person’s relentless faith and unique relationship with the Jewish people. The Phoenician woman showed incredible humility in God’s seemingly preferential treatment of the Jews. Both centurions showed active signs of love and support for the Jewish people by giving alms and even building a synagogue. The Word of God indicates their faith and attitude toward the Jews marked each for extraordinary treatment by God—a touch of God before the gospel would officially launch into the gentile world. One of them, Cornelius, became the first gentile Christian to receive the Spirit of God.

Their stories confirm that God is indeed watching how we relate to Israel and the Jews. Our relationship to Israel is surely not a precondition for salvation or eternal life, but it marks us as possible candidates for an extraordinary blessing.

The angel’s words to Cornelius, “Your alms have been remembered before God,” remind me of the angel’s words to our ICEJ India director in the hospital: “I know you from Jerusalem!” I have often asked myself: What would have happened if Danny hadn’t devoted some of his time to bless the Jewish people? He visits Israel several times a year and works tirelessly in India to bless the Jewish nation. Somehow this must have attracted the attention of heaven. God’s Word makes it crystal clear that blessing Israel attracts the blessing of God on our own life (Genesis 12:3).

Blessing Israel is surely no quick fix for getting rich, but it marks us for times when we need an extraordinary touch from God. I have experienced it personally, and many others have, too. I know you will, as well, as you seek ways to bless the people of God. Even if you should never experience it here on earth, you are marked in heaven. And one day you too will hear, “I know you from Jerusalem. Your alms have been remembered.”

May the Lord bless you mightily as you bless the Jewish people. ☪
The ICEJ sponsors Ethiopian Jews approved by the Israeli government to make Aliyah

The next wave of Aliyah from Ethiopia began in May. The ICEJ is committed to standing with these families every step of the way. Now that they are back in Israel, we will help them settle in their promised land.

Most Ethiopian Jews returned to Israel in the early 1990s. However, some remained in their small community in this poor African country, caring for their elders and waiting for a future opportunity to make Aliyah. They longed to come home to Israel. In November 2015, the Israeli government announced its intention to bring up to 9,000 Ethiopian Jews home by 2020. On October 9, 2016, the first wave of 63 Ethiopian Jews arrived in Israel, thanks to Christian support through the ICEJ.

We are grateful for every gift dedicated to this special endeavor! By sponsoring the return of the Ethiopian Jews to Israel, we become part of God’s fulfillment of His promise, recorded in Isaiah 43:5–7. As Christians, we can carry the sons and daughters of God’s chosen nation back to the land of their fathers (Isaiah 49:22). We will be blessed for it in return.

What a joy it is to see these Jewish families make their home in their promised land! It is not too late, as more will return and it is our honor to play a part in their journey.

Join the ICEJ today and pave the way for more Ethiopian Jews to return to Israel! Send your gift to www.icejusa.org/ethiopia

Pray for Aliyah flights from Ethiopia!
Shouts of joy echoed through Ben Gurion Airport’s arrival hall on June 6 as 70 Ethiopian Jews were hugged, kissed, and joyfully welcomed home to Israel. tears flowed down the faces of many family members as they embraced for the first time after years of separation. Proverbs 13:12 says, “Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a longing fulfilled is a tree of life” (NIV). The longings of these families were finally fulfilled that night! Two Ethiopian women stood with large bouquets of flowers in their hands. “We have been waiting for our brother to come to Israel for 19 years, and we finally get to see him today!” one woman said.

Another man in the crowd, Ayana, made Aliyah with his family 10 years ago. His brother, however, was about to be married at the time, which hindered his return to Israel. Stirred to help Ethiopian Jews make Aliyah, Ayana started an organization which helps prepare Israel for them. The initiative employs 150 people who oversee many projects, including lobbying in the Knesset to help bring Ethiopian Jews to Israel. Ayana’s motivation is simple: “I want to bring my family home.” Finally, after 10 years of waiting, Ayana was reunited with his brother and welcomed him home!

Last year, the Israeli government decided to resume Aliyah operations to bring the remaining 9,000 Ethiopian Jews to Israel. There have been many delays and challenges, yet the first flights were a success. The ICEJ has committed to sponsor hundreds of Ethiopian Jews to make Aliyah and find a home in Israel. Rebecca, a representative from the Jewish Agency, expressed, “The ICEJ has not only helped us bring these Jews to Israel but also helped reunite them with their families after many years. It is so important for the Jewish Agency to have partners like the ICEJ to strengthen the land and the people of Israel.”
In May, a team from the ICEJ traveled to Ethiopia to meet with those in the Jewish communities of Addis Ababa and Gondar who were preparing to make Aliyah. After the first waves of Ethiopian Aliyah two decades ago, many left their homes to prepare for the trip to Israel, only to discover that the government of Ethiopia had put a halt to their journey. They were forced to live in small temporary homes while waiting for the doors to open again. After meeting the Ethiopian families in Gondar, ICEJ Vice President of Operations Barry Denison said, “They’ve been waiting 14, 16, or 19 years to go to Israel. They were just asking us for help!” Their feet have finally touched their promised land. The many years of waiting are over, and they are home. The next step is to help these new immigrants integrate into Israeli society. Specially-designed absorption centers introduce the Ethiopian people to modern, advanced Israeli society.

As Ethiopian Jews make Aliyah today, along with many other Jews dispersed around the world, we get to witness God fulfilling His promise made many centuries ago: “In that day the Lord will reach out his hand a second time to bring back the remnant of his people—those who remain in Assyria and northern Egypt; in southern Egypt, Ethiopia, and Elam; in Babylonia, Hamath, and all the distant coastlands. He will raise a flag among the nations and assemble the exiles of Israel. He will gather the scattered people of Judah from the ends of the earth” (Isaiah 11:11–12 NLT, emphasis added).

Thank you for participating in this modern-day miracle! About 300 Ethiopian Jews made Aliyah during the month of June. When you give to the work and ministry of the ICEJ, you are ensuring that we welcome these Jews in Israel with Christian love!

Send your gift here: www.icejusa.org/ethiopia
Aliyah numbers have increased rapidly over the past few years due to wars and anti-Semitic aggression around the world. The ICEJ is leading the way in helping many more Jews come home to the land of their fathers. Please join the ICEJ in responding to this urgent need!

www.icejusa.org/aliyah
Ukraine
When the civil war broke out in Ukraine in the spring of 2014, the ICEJ reacted quickly to raise money for flights and flight-related expenses to help Jews caught in the crossfire. Although Aliyah from Ukraine has recently slowed, the ICEJ expanded its work to sponsor absorption programs in Israel which help these new immigrants learn Hebrew and gain job skills to integrate into society. Since the crisis began, the ICEJ has rescued 1,318 Ukrainian Jews from the war zone—and the work continues.

France
Since Islamic terror reached France in 2001, more than 50,000 French Jews have made Aliyah to Israel. In 2008, the ICEJ began assisting them upon arrival in Israel with immediate absorption needs and, in 2010, we began sponsoring flights. In 2015, a new program was designed to help Jewish families in France who live in impoverished—and thus dangerous—neighborhoods surrounded by Muslim immigrants from North Africa, where they are often victims of hate crimes. The safety situation in France is not improving. Riots and acts of terrorism are frequent, and many await their chance to come home to Israel. Since 2010, ICEJ has assisted more than 4,000 French Jews in their journey to come home.

Belarus
The weak economy in Belarus is a strong argument for local Jewry to pursue Aliyah. Last year, Aliyah numbers from Belarus increased by 90 percent from the previous year. Since 2006, the ICEJ has helped some 4,000 Belarusian Jews with their trip to Israel. This work is coordinated through ICEJ offices in Helsinki (Finland) and St. Petersburg (Russia). Currently, the tensions between Russia, Belarus, and NATO are sparking major regional concerns, and the interest in and pursuit of Aliyah is expected to rise even more. So far in 2017, Belarusian Aliyah is already up by 88 percent from the same period in 2016.

Russia
In 1986, ICEJ began helping the Jews of the Soviet Union who returned to Israel through Vienna. Since 1989, ICEJ has been assisting the Russian Jews in the northwest region to make Aliyah through Finland. In the 1990s, Jewry from all over the former Soviet Union attempted Aliyah by the northern route—through Finland—because the southern routes were much longer and slower. After a stagnant period, Aliyah from the former Soviet Union has doubled since the world economic crisis in 2008. Today the economy in Russia is again fragile. Last year, the ICEJ assisted about a thousand Russian Jews in their return to Israel. Aliyah has risen 34 percent in the first months of 2017.

Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, and Uzbekistan
The ICEJ also assists Jewish people to make Aliyah from other former Soviet Republics, like Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, and Uzbekistan. Although these numbers are not as great as Russia or Ukraine, there are still Jewish communities in these nations. This work is also supervised by the ICEJ Finland Branch and the St. Petersburg office.

India
The unique tribe of Bnei Menashe is one of the youngest to start making Aliyah to Israel. Since 2012, the ICEJ has been sponsoring most of the flights for the Bnei Menashe who are coming to Israel from Northeast India. More than 1,000 have immigrated with our assistance during the past four years.

China
In 2000, the ICEJ brought the first family of Kaifeng Jews to Israel through Finland, and we have actively helped nearly two dozen who have come since then. Five young ladies from Kaifeng, China, are living in Israel today and are pursuing their Jewish studies at Jerusalem’s Center for Advanced Torah Study for Women. Although these numbers are small, Aliyah from China is particularly interesting. 

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GOODBYE AND THANK-YOU TO HARLEY

ICEJ staff gathered to say thank-you and farewell to a longtime friend and Feast volunteer, Harley Henson. Harley and his late wife Vida were first introduced to the ICEJ when volunteering with the costume department during the Feast of Tabernacles in 1998. They became Feast “regulars,” always helping wherever needed. Even after Vida’s passing, Harley faithfully pitched in wherever help was needed both during the Feast and throughout the year. Due to declining health, Harley returned to the United States earlier this month. He is currently in rehab and doing well. Our love and prayers go with him.

CELEBRATING WIM AT RETIREMENT

Wim Van der Zande, one of the longest serving ICEJ staff members in Jerusalem, recently retired—promising to visit and support the Embassy headquarters whenever needed. Wim and Petra first came to Jerusalem in 1988, served at the Feast, and felt God was calling them to serve long-term. Petra joined the Social Assistance Department (now ICEJ AID) and Wim, a jack-of-all-trades, was soon brought on staff to handle administrative work, make sure the offices were well-equipped, and manage daily and ever-increasing mass mailings. He managed the mailing office until his retirement this January and coordinated headsets and translators during each Feast of Tabernacles.

VISIT FROM BROTHER YUN

The ICEJ head office staff was blessed to meet Brother Yun in March of this year. “The Heavenly Man” shared the story of God’s faithfulness throughout his years of imprisonment in China for the gospel. Through much suffering and torture, the Lord used Brother Yun mightily, supernaturally leading him out from a locked-down prison to freedom. Now a German citizen, Brother Yun travels the world testifying of the Lord’s grace and power to “set the captives free.”
On the morning of February 16, a group of 10 government workers from the Ministry of Public Security visited the ICEJ headquarters and met some of the staff for breakfast to learn more about the ministry of the ICEJ. Dr. Mordechai Zaken, who oversees the Desk of Minority Affairs for the Israeli government, brought the group to help government officials learn more about the work of Christians who love and support Israel and the Jewish people. Dr. Zaken was impressed with the reception at the Embassy and promised to bring other groups of government officials to the Embassy soon.

The ICEJ was blessed by a recent visit from Ulla Jarvilehto, a former Finnish cabinet member and the founder of ICEJ Finland. The ICEJ Finland Branch has participated in ICEJ’s Aliyah efforts throughout the years and played a key role assisting Jews from the former Soviet Union—specifically those from Russia—to make their journey to Israel. Ulla was one of the pioneers of this work. In 1989, Ulla received official permission from both the Israeli and Finnish governments to start Aliyah work through Finland, and thus the ICEJ was one of the first Christian ministries to be involved in Aliyah. Ulla and her husband Carlo visited the ICEJ while traveling around Israel and shared with our staff what the Lord has put on their hearts.

In March, ICEJ staff spent a day traveling through the Binyamin Region of Israel, often referred to as the “land of biblical heroes.” The first stop was Shechem, the high place where Abraham received the Lord’s promise to inherit the land stretched out before him. The entire staff prayed for the nation and her people as they gazed on Mounts Gerizim and Ebal, where blessings and curses were recited over the children of Israel as recorded in Deuteronomy 27. Next, the staff visited ancient Shiloh, where the tabernacle and the ark of the covenant resided for 369 years, and where Hannah prayed for a child. Later, that son—the prophet Samuel—ministered and served the kings of Israel at Shiloh. The day concluded with a meal at Psagot Winery, overlooking the pass between Gibeah and Michmash—the location of Jonathan’s stunning victory over the Philistines (1 Samuel 14) and the modern-day victory of General Allenby in WWI against the Turks.

The ICEJ Jerusalem staff was honored to host a luncheon for a large delegation of pastors and church leaders from the United States on the Embassy property at the end of March. Pastor Jerry Dirmann, founder and senior pastor of The Rock Church in Anaheim, California, and ICEJ USA board member, shared an exciting message about Israel and introduced the visitors to the ministry of the ICEJ.

Worship Leader Rory Comtois from Bethel Harvest Church in Lexington, Kentucky, filled the venue at World Outreach Church as he and his team led attendees in joyful praise throughout the summit.

Ambassador Ayalon inspired the audience by chronicling the years since the First Zionist Congress in 1897 and culminating with June 7, 1967, when Israeli paratroopers liberated and unified Jerusalem placing its capital under Israeli sovereignty. The ambassador wholeheartedly commended the ICEJ for almost four decades of supporting Israel and the Jewish people worldwide. He noted ICEJ is still the only embassy located in Jerusalem.

While the theme of this year’s conference was Jerusalem’s Jubilee, the ICEJ is also focused on the plight of persecuted Christians in the Middle East and beyond. On Saturday morning, Ugandan Pastor Umar Mulinde, a Muslim convert, related his transformative encounter with the Lord Jesus. Because of his repeated refusals to renounce his new-found faith, Muslim terrorists targeted him on Christmas Eve 2011 in a life-threatening attack when they threw acid on his face and back. The acid burned him to near death, yet God intervened providing two years of specialized treatment in Israel. The ICEJ was instrumental in his recovery.

Prior to the Celebrate Jerusalem conference, the USA Branch hosted partners, staff, and volunteers for USA leadership meetings. ICEJ USA Director Susan Michael, Deputy Director Daryl Hedding, and International Spokesman Rev. Malcolm Hedding shared encouraging updates about ICEJ’s numerous ministries, tours, and its strategic growth. Rev. Malcolm Hedding offered a stirring account of the ICEJ’s miraculous founding in 1980 with its first Jerusalem location in a bare office with one telephone. ICEJ now has offices in 91 nations worldwide!

The blend of celebration, ICEJ ministry updates, and Pastor Mulinde’s testimony resulted in a memorable, motivating weekend.
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They shall never hold their peace day or night.
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And He makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth.

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How Does Israel Treat Palestinians?

By Susan Michael

Ride around Israel with an Arab taxi driver, and he will readily tell you he prefers to live under an Israeli government. Various polls indicate that 60 to 78 percent of Arabs in East Jerusalem share the same opinion. How can it be that most Arab residents of Jerusalem would choose to live under Israeli governance rather than Palestinian?

West Bank Under Israeli Rule

A few facts will supply insights. At the time of the 1967 Six-Day War waged by five Arab nations against Israel, Arab residents of the West Bank—biblical Judea and Samaria—lived a third-world life. Although Jordan had occupied the area for 20 years, low life expectancy, malnutrition, poor education, infectious diseases, and child mortality were widespread. Fewer than 60 percent of all male adults were employed.

During the 1970s, under Israeli administration, the West Bank and Gaza then grew into the fourth fastest-growing economy in the world. By 1986, 92.8 percent of the population had electricity around the clock compared to 20.5 percent in 1967; 85 percent had running water compared to 16 percent in 1967. Not one university had existed in the territories, but by the early 1990s, seven such institutions were in operation boasting 16,500 students.

Under Israeli governance the adult illiteracy rate had plummeted to 14 percent. More than 100,000 Palestinians worked in Israel, and many more worked in the 2,000 industrial plants that Israel built in the West Bank. Mortality rates fell significantly and life expectancy rose from 48 to 72 years by 2000. Childhood diseases like polio, whooping cough, tetanus, and measles were eradicated.

Palestinian Government Corruption

Since 1995 the Palestinian people have been ruled by the Palestinian Authority (PA) government. Whereas Israel had spent millions of dollars dramatically improving public services like electricity, water, roads, universities, and clinics, Palestinian leaders are lining their own pockets with donations from many nations designated to help the Palestinian people. When Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat died in 2004, he was worth some $1 billion. Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas is said to be worth around $100 million.

The PA’s corruption, embedded in Palestinian society, is one reason the Palestinian population prefers living in Israel. An egregious example of government corruption hurting the Palestinian people is found in the PA’s health care program where medical services are often supplied to the one who pays the largest bribe.

Even in recent years when 95 percent of Palestinians have been ruled by their own government, Israel has built a new regional business center in the West Bank which serves Israeli and PA personnel. In 2015, 190,000 Palestinians entered Israel for medical treatment, and trucks filled with humanitarian aid and goods for Gaza increased by 108 percent. A designated medical unit in the Israel Defense Force offers on-site medical care to Palestinians in cooperation with Palestinian hospitals.

Israeli Checkpoints

Although various outbreaks of violence have marred the relationship between Jews and Arabs since the 1920s, the Second Intifada from 2000–2005 marked a dreadful turning point. More than a thousand Israelis died at the hands of suicide bombers detonating themselves on buses and in restaurants. The Israeli government finally implemented a passive solution by building security fences to hinder or slow down terrorists. This resulted in a 95 percent reduction of Jewish deaths, but necessitated checkpoints manned by the IDF.

The checkpoints remain a burden on both the Palestinians and the Israelis. The Palestinians feel trapped and inconvenienced. The Israelis don’t know who is going to wield a knife or a gun, or wear a bomb belt, to kill more Jewish people if allowed through the checkpoint.

Protecting the Palestinian Authority

One benefit of Israel’s security apparatus, including the wall and checkpoints, is that it has kept the PA government in power. The PA’s number one existential threat is the Hamas terror organization that would like to take over the West Bank just as it did Gaza. While growing disenchantment with the PA government may eventually give way to a Hamas takeover from within, Israeli security has been doing all it can to prevent a hostile takeover from without.

Summary

Despite these complex political problems, Israel has done much to better the lives of the Palestinian people over the last 50 years. They should demand as much from their own leaders.
Join the ICEJ’s Shomer Society
(Keeper of Israel Society)

Consider the ICEJ in Your Will or Estate Plans

With proper foresight and planning, it is possible for you to leave a legacy of blessing Israel. The ICEJ has worked tirelessly on behalf of the people of Israel for over 37 years and with your help 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.

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