Every Purim in late winter, the Jewish people remember one of the greatest miracles in their history. It is the story of Esther, the Queen in ancient Persia whose courage and entreaties delivered the Jews from certain destruction.

Esther came from a Jewish family carried into exile in the Babylonian conquest. Young and beautiful, she was chosen to be the bride of the most powerful man in the world at that time – King Ahasuerus of Persia.

But during her time as Queen, things took a turn for the worse. The evil Haman, then prime minister of the realm, was plotting when and how to annihilate all the Jews in the vast Persian Empire. Esther was safely hidden in the royal palace, her Jewish identity yet unknown, but her uncle Mordecai came and pleaded with her to intervene with the king and save her people. His urgent appeal is recorded in the book of Esther:

"And Mordecai told them to answer Esther: 'Do not think in your heart that you will escape in the king’s palace any more than all the other Jews. For if you remain completely silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father’s house will perish. Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?’" (Esther 4:13-14)

Esther heeded his warning, saying “if I perish, I perish!” (Esther 4:16). She made good use of her audience with the king, the Jews were allowed to defend themselves, and their enemy Haman was hung on the very gallows he had prepared for Mordecai. Esther and Mordecai led the Jewish people into a time of great influence and blessing within the provinces of Persia.

This extraordinary appeal of Mordecai still rings powerfully today in light of the new Hamans that are arising, even once again in Persia. It teaches us two very important lessons:

God Wins!

First of all, Mordecai boldly declared, “if you remain completely silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place.” What powerful declaration of faith! It teaches us that Israel and the people of God will never be annihilated but will surely survive. Many evil figures have risen up in the course of history with designs to wipe out Israel. Two generations ago, it was Hitler. Today it is the Iranian president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. Yet God assures us that they will not succeed.

“Many evil figures have risen up in the course of the history with designs to wipe out Israel. Yet God assures us that they will not succeed.”

Dr. Jürgen Bühler
Dear Friends,

These past few weeks have been very busy but also very blessed. You will read about some of our recent activity in this issue of our magazine. One event was an historic visit by a group of Christian pastors and leaders from Germany and Austria who came at our invitation to ceremonies marking the infamous Wannsee Conference which took place 70 years ago in Nazi Germany. Several participants sensed that they felt a spiritual breakthrough during their days in Jerusalem. We fully trust God that He listened to the prayers and confessions during this time.

We then had the exciting opportunity to broadcast our first “ICEJ Report” as part of the Israel Now News program on Daystar TV. Please make sure to watch us on this weekly news show from Israel. Already from the first shows, we have received very encouraging feedback. We also are very thankful to God for the very professional staff who are making this new outreach possible. Please keep this new initiative in your prayers and make sure to view all previous episodes on our website at www.icej.org.

In March, we will again celebrate the festival of Purim here in Israel. This holiday recalls a serious threat to the Jewish people but much more than that, it is the story of a triumphant victory. Many lessons can be drawn from Purim, but the story hinges on Mordecai’s appeal also contains a very sobering message: Deliverance will always come to the Jews from some quarter. But silence in the face of peril to the Jews could come to the kingdom for such a time as this?”

The prophet Isaiah makes this very encouraging statement: “Behold, I Myself have created the smith who blows the fire of coals, and brings out a weapon for its work; and I have created the destroyer to ruin. No weapon that is formed against you shall prosper.” (Isaiah 54:16-17)

All the nuclear scientists and military experts which wish to wipe out Israel were also created by God, and they cannot surprise or outsmart Him! The God of Israel, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, watches over His people. Indeed, Psalm 121:4-5 assures that “He who keeps Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. The Lord is your keeper.”

The Question of Survival

Mordecai’s appeal also contains a very sobering message. Deliverance will always come to the Jews from some quarter. But silence in the face of peril to the Jews could mean “you and your father’s house will perish”. Therefore, to stand up for God’s people has to do with Israel’s survival and more to do with our own survival. If we remain silent, we are endangering ourselves.

Paul echoes this warning in his epistle to the church in Rome: “Do not boast against the branches [the Jews]. But if you do boast, remember that you do not support the root, but the root supports you.” (Romans 11:18)

If Christians fail to recognise the eternal and irrevocable calling of Israel, we are endangering and undermining our very own root system. Nobody can survive without its support.

The greatest lesson from the story of Purim in the book of Esther is that God wins! Whoever it is that plans to annihilate His people and frustrate God’s plans will find himself in a direct collision course with God. Let us together choose to be on God’s side!

Thank you for your faithful support and for standing with us as we stand with God’s people.

Yours in Christ,

Jürgen Bühler
ICEJ Executive Director

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ICEJ Executive Director

Dr. Jürgen Bühler serves as ICEJ Executive Director and lives with his wife Verena and four children in Jerusalem.

The International Christian Embassy Jerusalem

The history of Purim reminds us to stand with the Jewish people. One very practical way to do this is to support our groundbreaking Pastors Conferences at Yad Vashem. Learn more on pages 4-5.


So let us remember that God will surely deliver Israel — even if we are silent. The question is: Will we take a stand for the sake of God’s purposes, and for our own sake? Let us resolve to work together to ensure that the Church will never be silent and passive again.
German Christians recall Wannsee

ICEJ hosts repentance ceremonies at Yad Vashem

By David Parsons

On January 20, 2012, a delegation of prominent German and Austrian Christian leaders gathered under the auspices of the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem for remembrance ceremonies at Yad Vashem marking the 70th anniversary of the Wannsee Conference, the infamous meeting of Nazi officials which plotted the “Final Solution of the Jewish Question”.

The high-ranking Christian delegation included a broad array of 70 pastors and ministry leaders representing all the Protestant and Evangelical movements of Germany and Austria, including Lutherans, Pentecostals, Charismatics, Baptists, Methodists, Mennonites, Pietists, and Adventists.

“We came here to continue the remembrance of our nation for the enormous crime of mass murder of Jews committed in the name of a wicked ideology”, said Dr. Jürgen Bühler, the Executive Director of the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem.

“The Church in Germany still has so much more to do to amend for our deafening silence in those dark days.”

The two-day gathering in Jerusalem culminated with a wreath-laying ceremony at Yad Vashem’s Warsaw Ghetto Square and observances in the Hall of Remembrance to honor the Jewish victims and survivors of the Holocaust. Delegates from 32 major Christian denominations and ministries in Germany and Austria, representing millions of followers, laid wreaths at the event.

“The Christian nation of Germany some two generations ago gives us an example of the evil which can flow when a people turn their back on a God of goodness who loves all humankind”, said Rev. IngoEller, Chairman of the Pentecostal European fellowship. “To remember this causes a deep shaking in our hearts.”

Dr. Uwe Graebe, the German Lutheran Pastor in Jerusalem, noted that “the Nazi officials who met at Wannsee were all well educated. Some were doctors, some were theologians, and one was even the son of a Protestant pastor. They knew the Bible and what it said about the value of every human life. Yet they blocked out the sacred concept that we are all created in God’s image. Instead, they dealt with human lives as mere statistics.”

“Wannsee was one of the darkest days in the history of the German people”, added Gottfried Bühler, National Director of ICEJ-Germany and the initiator of the event. “Seventy years after, we bow down in deep sorrow. And we also pledge to keep this remembrance alive. That is why many of us brought our children along, so the next generation can witness these ceremonies. Yet remembrance alone is not enough; it must go hand-in-hand with responsible deeds of goodness.”

“The Wannsee Conference was held on January 20, 1942 at a lakeside villa outside Berlin and was attended by 15 high-ranking Nazi bureaucrats who set in motion the implementation of a plan to eradicate the Jews of Europe. The meeting was convened by Reinhard Heydrich, assistant to deputy Nazi leader Heinrich Himmler, who led a discussion on methods to be used for the systematic, industrial murder of all Jews within Germany’s reach. A chart compiled by Adolf Eichmann for the Wannsee Conference listed all of the estimated 11 million Jews of Europe and northwest Africa as potential targets.

During their two days in Jerusalem to mark 70 years since Wannsee, the delegation of German and Austrian Christians also paid a visit to the Knesset, met with Israel’s Chief Rabbi (Ashkenazi) Yona Metzger, held special prayer services at the Western Wall and the King of Kings Prayer Tower, and attended a memorial concert featuring performances by the noted German Christian Music Academy of Stuttgart.
ICEJ sponsors Ethiopian soccer league
Helping rising Soccer stars, at-risk teens and hungry families in Rishon LeZion

By Estera Wieja

The International Christian Embassy Jerusalem recently began sponsoring a group of 12 football teams in a special soccer league established for Ethiopian Jewish youths in Israel. The ICEJ has purchased custom-made jerseys in various team colours as well as shoes for all the Ethiopian soccer players in the league. The ICEJ has ‘scored’ with these Ethiopian Jewish youths by sponsoring their soccer team and told them that they were gifts from ICEJ sponsors Ethiopian soccer league

ICEJ AID

T he International Christian Embassy Jerusalem recently began sponsoring a group of 12 football teams in a special soccer league established for Ethiopian Jewish youths in Israel. The ICEJ has purchased custom-made jerseys in various team colours as well as shoes for all the Ethiopian soccer players in the league, which could not afford the items. The bright jerseys carry the logo of the ICEJ and told them that they were gifts from

ICEJ representatives Doron Schneider distributed the uniforms and shoes at a recent gathering of the teams in Rehovot, and told them that they were gifts from Christian friends around the world.

Most of the team members were small children when they made the long difficult journey to Israel as part of the “Operation Moses” emergency airlift in 1984. At a recent ceremony in Rehovot, the teams observed a minute of silence in remembrance of the 4,000 Ethiopian Jews who lost their lives while trying to make it to Israel thru Sudan. Then they opened the season with an all-day soccer tournament in their new team jerseys.

“I was eight years old when I started my journey from Ethiopia to Israel via Sudan”, recalled Erez Dezlin. “My little brother was two years old, my mother was six months pregnant. We walked about 600 miles on foot. We did not have much food with us to eat. Many families lost loved ones on the way, some died from hunger, thirst, diseases and some even were killed by robbers on the way... I am so glad that I finally made it and my dream to live in Israel became real.”

Today Erez is the supervising coach for the twelve youth soccer teams from the Ethiopian community in Rehovot and he has a new dream. He wants to help the Ethiopian Jews to integrate better into Israeli society and to give them hope and life skills through sports.

Helping Israeli youth reach higher
Israeli teenager Idan almost dropped out of school at 16. His mother supported the whole family of seven, and Idan felt pressure to go find a job. But that is when he learned of “Touching the Horizon”, an educational program that encourages at-risk youths to continue their education and have a better future.

Touching the Horizon, which currently serves 75 at-risk teens nationwide that have shown high scholastic potential. This way, promising youths from impoverished families can finish high school and achieve successes that were otherwise out of reach.

Their initial year of Army service presents many challenges, whether physical, social, emotional or intellectual. Touching the Horizon teaches these troubled teens how to cope with the stresses of being away from home, and having to learn discipline and submit to authority.

Touching the Horizon has many success stories and the ICEJ is a proud partner in this program, which is bringing hope for a better future to deserving Israeli youths.

SERVING FAMILIES FIRST-HAND

Several times each year, the ICEJ AID department arranges for the entire staff of the Christian Embassy in Jerusalem to take part in hands-on charitable projects in different parts of Israel. Last month, the ICEJ staff joined with our friends at Pitchon Lev in a unique food drive in Rishon Lezion in the greater Tel Aviv area.

The ICEJ staff arrived on a Thursday morning to set up tables in a mall parking lot for the weekly food bank, and then packaged fruits, loaves of bread and other groceries to take part in hands-on charitable projects in different parts of Israel. Altogether, more than 500 Israeli families living below the poverty line receive several bags of basic food items each week at the Thursday market outside a large shopping mall. For them, there is a sense that they are simply going shopping like their neighbours.

Please consider making a donation to ICEJ AID for our food distribution programs. Go to: www.icej.org/aid

Estera Wieja serves as a staff writer for the ICEJ Media Team in Jerusalem

Knesset Honours Dr. Jürgen Bühler

At a recent ceremony in Jerusalem, members of the Knesset Christian Allies Caucus joined the World Jewish Congress and the Ministry of Tourism in presenting an award to Dr. Jürgen Bühler, the executive director of the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem, for his commitment to Israel.

The Caucus, which has 17 Knesset members, recognised Dr. Bühler at its annual “Night to Honour Our Christian Allies” banquet in January. The special award, given together with the Ministry for Tourism, was presented to Dr. Bühler for his contributions to Israeli tourism, including his efforts to expand the ICEJ’s Feast of Tabernacles gathering, the largest and most popular annual tourist event in Israel.

Bühler served for five years as International Director for the Christian Embassy and recently was appointed its Executive Director.

In his acceptance speech, he highlighted the historic expansion of interfaith cooperation between Israeli officials and the Christian community over recent decades, citing the ICEJ’s unique partnerships with Yad Vashem and The Jerusalem Post as examples of significant progress in Christian-Jewish relations.
Israel's Warning Lights Are On

By David Parsons

In the edgy atmosphere hanging over Israel in 2012, rumours of imminent war with Iran are flying by at supersonic speeds. The New York Times

MISSION CRITICAL

Israel's Warning Lights Are On

In a recent interview in The New York Times, Israeli Defense Minister Ehud Barak claimed that the Netanyahu government has set to order a military operation against Iran but he has concluded that such a decision will have to be made in 2012 to prevent Tehran from entering its “immunity zone.” By that he meant the stage at which Iran's nuclear know-how, enriched uranium stockpiles, missile production lines, and other key facilities can be taken underground and made impervious to military strikes. In essence, Barak just turned on Israel’s warning flashers.

Until now, Israel has cooperated with its global allies on a five-front strategy for stopping Iran’s nuclear program. This has involved political pressure, covert measures, counter-proliferation, sanctions and efforts at regime change. The Ayatollahs are still entrenched as ever, but bans on the purchase of Iranian crude oil are beginning to sink the economy, while mysterious computer viruses and hits on nuclear scientists have also taken a toll.

However, Israel simply would not be able to deal on its own with all the expected fallout from any such pre-emptive strikes. Tehran has threatened to unleash a wave of retaliatory attacks that would include targeting American forces in the region, closing the vital oil shipping lanes in the Persian Gulf, and activating dozens of sleeper terror cells worldwide. World oil markets would shudder, and we all know who would be blamed for the chaos.

Israel itself presently faces 200,000 missiles and rockets of various ranges and payloads in the arsenals of Iran, Syria, Hizbullah and Hamas all aimed at its civilian heartland, and would be too tied up defending the homeland to put out fires elsewhere.

Thus, Jerusalem undoubtedly prefers to be part of a broader coalition to stop Iran. Only time will tell if it can force America’s hand in that regard.

Until then, brace for even more warp speed rumours of war.

David Parsons serves as ICEJ Media Director and Contributing Christian Editor of The Jerusalem Post Christian Edition.
Survivors Museum Dedicated in Haifa
Tribute to European Survivors Held on Holocaust Remembrance Day

By David Parsons

As the world marked Holocaust Remembrance Day on the 27th of January, the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem took part in a special ceremony in Haifa to pay tribute to survivors of the Shoah. The ceremonies were attended by over one hundred Holocaust survivors and included the dedication of a memorial in their honour, as well as the groundbreaking for a new museum which will tell the story of those European Jews who managed to survive the Nazi genocide.

The International Holocaust Day ceremonies in Haifa were held at the Home for Holocaust Survivors funded by the Christian Embassy. Those in attendance included cabinet ministers Daniel Hershkovitz and Yossi Peled, deputy minister Dr. Leah Ness, Deputy Mayor of Haifa Oded Donitz, the Deputy Ambassador from Germany, and other dignitaries.

During the ceremonies, a torch was lit in memory of the six million Jewish victims of the Holocaust, and a “Hand to the Survivor” monument was unveiled. In addition, the cornerstone was laid for the “Hand to the Survivor” Museum, which will house a unique historic collection of exhibits, photographs, and personal memorabilia which tell the story of those who courageously endured the Nazi Holocaust and lived to tell about it.

Over the past two years, the Christian Embassy has been sponsoring a special project to expand an assisted-living facility in Haifa for impoverished Holocaust survivors, operated by Yad Ezer l’Haver (Helping Hands to Friends). The ICEJ has provided funds to purchase and renovate two more apartment buildings on the same street, with the enlarged facility now able to accommodate up to 125 residents, as well as to feed and provide medical and dental care to additional survivors in the Haifa area.

Support the ICEJ’s Haifa Home for Holocaust Survivors: www.icej.org/haifa

Nazi death camp survivor Reuven Bronzberg looks at photographs on display in the new Holocaust Survivors museum in Haifa.

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Event Schedule

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 30
► OUTDOOR DESERT CELEBRATION // 18:30-21:00

MONDAY, OCTOBER 1
► COMMUNION SERVICE - ENGLISH // 10:00-12:00
THE GARDEN TOMB
► COMMUNION SERVICE - ENGLISH/PORTUGUESE // 13:00-15:00
THE GARDEN TOMB
EVENING CELEBRATION // 19:30-21:30
► INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION CENTER JERUSALEM

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 2
► MORNING SESSIONS // 8:00-13:00
► EVENING CELEBRATION // 19:30-21:30

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 3
► MORNING SESSIONS // 8:00-13:00
► EVENING CELEBRATION // 19:30-21:30

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 4
► MORNING SESSIONS // 8:00-13:00
► GRAND FINALE EVENING CELEBRATION // 19:30-21:30

Please Note: Events, times, locations, & speakers are subject to change

For more information visit www.icej.org

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