April 20 is a day that lives in infamy in Europe. Few would consider Hitler’s birthday an appropriate date for a high-profile global conference against racism and intolerance. Handing over the podium, however, to the world’s most vocal Holocaust denier is simply unconscionable.

Welcome to the Orwellian universe of the United Nations’ second world summit on racism. Hosted in the picturesque Swiss city of Geneva, barely 400 miles from Hitler’s Austrian birthplace, the gathering was called to review the 2001 anti-racism fiasco held in the South African city of Durban on the eve of 9/11.

The US, Australia and Germany were among a handful of western democracies that joined Israel and Canada in boycotting the summit at the last minute. They did so, in part, because the arrival of Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad promised to turn ‘Durban II’ into a farce.

By Michael Hines

They were right.

UN protocol dictated that Ahmadinejad, as the only head-of-state in attendance, was given the platform first. He used it to accuse Israel of having “a racist government” and committing “genocide” against the Palestinians. His speech prompted a mass walkout by European diplomats, and rare condemnation from UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon.

But those same diplomats duly took their seats again once the Iranian leader left the stage and sat through three more days of slander and accusation against Israel as an oppressive, “apartheid” state.

The events in Geneva on the eve of Israel’s annual Holocaust Memorial Day, Yom Hashoah, provided vindication of President Obama’s 11th hour decision to shun the gathering. The ICEJ is proud that we played our part in the chorus of voices that called on him to stay away. Our effort was backed by the grassroots support of more than 5,000 online activists who signed up in support of our ‘Boycott Durban II Petition’ on the popular social networking site, Facebook.

That petition was delivered to the White House on Friday April 17th, together with an impassioned plea from ICEJ Executive Director Rev. Malcolm Hedding for the President to resist the mounting pressure from human rights groups to send a delegation to Durban II.

Meanwhile in Geneva ICEJ National Directors from Switzerland, France and Russia stood with hundreds of Christians and Jews as part of series of city-wide protests against the conference and in memory of millions of fellow Europeans who perished in the Nazi Holocaust.

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Dear Friends,

Last month we celebrated Passover, a reminder of the great acts of God in redeeming Israel from bondage. The lessons of this celebration are numerous and wonderful. It is important to note however that the God of the universe has forever linked His name to the Jewish people. He is the “God of Israel”. This means that her journey through history involves His reputation and faithfulness. That is, He will guard, preserve and watch over her because of His name’s sake.

It was this fact that He reminded Israel of from the very beginning. He did not choose her because she was great and famous, but because she was small and stubborn! Her history would then be a testimony to His grace, power and faithfulness.

Today, Israel faces great challenges, as seen in the assault on her legitimacy at the recent United Nations ‘Durban II’ anti-racism conference in Geneva. She will not overcome these by her own strength and ability, but by His power and intervention. The more difficult the challenges become, the more she needs His grace and love. He is the God of Passover; that is, the God of deliverance. We can rejoice in this and trust in His faithfulness, recognizing all the time that, in the end, all nations will be humbled. This includes Israel, as He “steps in” to deliver Zion. Paul reassures in Romans 11 that the “Deliverer will come out of Zion”. God will do this for His name’s sake.

The International Christian Embassy Jerusalem understands that we all serve by the grace and calling of God. Our task is to live out the commands and injunctions of God’s word. In Israel’s turbulent history we see the marvellous acts of God in human affairs, and the record of these acts has become the inspired word of God. Paul said that great events in Israel’s history serve as examples for us who seek to understand more fully the ways of God in Christ. Also, as we read Israel’s story, we come to appreciate the crucial role she has played in time for our own redemption. “Salvation is of the Jews!” (John 4:22)

We bless, comfort and stand with Israel because God has revealed Himself to us through her and chiefly by the God-man Christ Jesus! All this in spite of her weakness and failure. Truly God is great and in her He has defended His glorious name. This will be true of Israel’s future because the God of the Bible will deliver and bless her. He will not fail her.

Yours in Jesus,

Rev. Malcolm Hedding
ICEJ Executive Director, Jerusalem

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DAYS OF INFAMY: Protestors outside the United Nations headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland on April 20, the first day of the controversial ‘Durban II’ global summit on racism and intolerance. The ICEJ’s national directors from Switzerland, France and Russia were involved in a series of city-wide protests and events organized by the Jewish community during the week of the conference. In Prague, the ICEJ spearheaded a rally at the Czech Senate while here in the US our ‘Boycott Durban II’ petition to President Obama gathered over 5,000 online signatures and preempted the 11th hour US pullout. (Photos courtesy of Matan Safran, Israel).
An ICEJ Teaching Conference
Memorial Day Weekend: May 22-24, 2009
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David Pawson, Allen Jackson & Malcolm Hedding

Come and hear three of the best-loved speakers from the ICEJ’s annual Feast of Tabernacles Celebration in Jerusalem for a timely perspective on God’s heart for Israel, His Church and the Nations in these days. Veteran British Bible teacher, Rev. David Pawson, will join conference host, Pastor Allen Jackson, and ICEJ Executive Director, Rev. Malcolm Hedding, for a weekend of inspiring ministry from the Word of God. Don’t miss it!

Discerning the TIMES
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The Jewish people marked the biblical feast of Passover in April amid a worsening global economic slide that is starting to hit Israel hard.

A record 20,000 Israelis lost their jobs in March. A third of the nation’s families – containing 40% of Israel’s youths – already live below the poverty line. Hunger and nutritional deficiency are growing problems, which stand out even more at holiday times like this.

“Tzippi Friedman, head of the local WIZO chapter (a Jewish women’s charitable organization) in the northern city of Karmiel, explained that many of the elderly and single-parent families she helps live off government stipends of only $500 per month, which must cover rent, food, clothing, utilities and other expenses. “What you are doing is hem poalim b’kdusha. It’s holy work and we thank you very, very much”, she said.

The wide array of different communities assisted through our contacts with local municipalities, social workers and charities included:

Thanks to the faithfulness of our supporters, the ICEJ was able to help nearly 1000 needy Jewish families hold the traditional Passover seder meal with dignity this year.

“If you weren’t giving, we don’t know what we would do to help these families..”

“The need seems to grow every year”, said Nicole Yoder, director of the Embassy’s humanitarian assistance program, ICEJ AID. “We received more requests than usual this year from all over Israel – north, south, east and west.” Yoder adds that many of the social workers she deals with insist they don’t have anywhere else to turn. “If you weren’t giving, we don’t know what we would do to help these families”, they tell her.
• Food baskets and food coupons for over 600 needy families from one end of Israel to the other, including in Ashkelon, Beit Shean, Dimona, Jerusalem, Karmiel, Ramle, and Rosh Ha’ayin, among other towns and cities.

• In Kiryat Gat, we provided food baskets as well as kitchen items to Ethiopian Jewish immigrants; we also provided paint and other supplies to Ethiopian Jewish youths who had volunteered to refurbish the homes of disadvantaged elderly members of their community.

• In Jerusalem, we sponsored a community seder meal for 70 people suffering from mental illness.

• In Katzrin, Pardes Chana and Karkur, some 45 Holocaust survivors and their families were provided with food parcels and community seder meals.

• Embassy staff also volunteered at Passover distribution days for scores of families in Netanya and Karmiel.

• Finally, ICEJ AID provided Easter food baskets and other financial assistance to needy Lebanese Christian families residing in northern Israel.

Many thanks for making all this possible, as we sought to comfort Israel during this special holiday season.

Passover & Pentecost
The Pathway to the Kingdom of God and the Power to Walk in it

BY Malcolm Hedding

Naturally, there is a dynamic connection between Passover and Pentecost – these two great pilgrimage festivals of the Bible. Passover essentially reminds us that the pathway or door to the Kingdom of God is via the spilt blood of a Lamb.

Paul writes that Christ our Passover Lamb has been sacrificed and thus we are delivered from sin and reconciled to God. On the other hand, Pentecost reminds us of the power of the kingdom of God. This is found in God’s word and in the infilling of His Spirit. We are to feed on the Word of God and be clothed with the Spirit of God. (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4-5)

All this means three things:

1. A demanded eschatology
That is, there must be a second appearing of the Messiah to respond to man’s response to His death burial and resurrection. This is what Paul stated as he preached in Athens in that, as he put it... “God will judge the world by the man Christ Jesus who has been raised from the dead”. (Acts 17:30-31; Hebrews 9:28) In short, the world is now without excuse and will have to “square up” to the claims of Jesus of Nazareth.

2. A demanded soteriology
That God in Christ died for His world means that sin in us can and should be overcome by the power of God that works within us. (2 Peter 1:2-3) This power is greater than anything in the world and can overcome our unrighteousness. However it has to be appropriated! This means that we do not wait for God in Christ to work within us, but rather count on the Holy Spirit to do the work as we obey God’s word. Obedience is the doorway to the power of the Holy Spirit. For this reason, Paul says that we should put off the old man and put on Christ. (Ephesians 4:20-24) Victory over sin is not “rubbed off” by praying, etc., but by acting on God’s word.

3. A demanded responsibility
The great pilgrim Feasts of the Bible are given to Israel in their original context. They belong to Israel, or as Paul states in Romans 15:27, we share in Israel’s spiritual things! God has shown us mercy (Romans 15:9) and brought us into His banqueting house of love through the nation of Israel. Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles are all rich in describing how God’s redemptive acts have become ours as well. We rejoice in God’s saving love and also recognise that we are indebted to Israel. (Romans 15:27) Indebtedness means that you have an obligation to the one that has blessed and enriched your life. We should be careful to discharge this obligation, for God will bless those who bless Israel.

Rev. Malcolm Hedding serves as ICEJ Executive Director in Jerusalem
Israel, Their Homeland

Yad Vashem pays tribute to the Holocaust survivors who built modern Israel

By Petra van der Zande

Israel marked its annual Holocaust Day in April with official ceremonies at the Yad VaShem Memorial and Museum in Jerusalem. Over the past year, this revered institution dedicated to the six million Jewish victims of the Nazi genocide has paid tribute to those tens of thousands of survivors of the Shoah who later settled in Israel. Today, some 250,000 Holocaust survivors reside in Israel, and the Yad Vashem exhibit – entitled “My Homeland: Holocaust Survivors in Israel” – sought to honor their many contributions to the State.

According to Yad Vashem, the purpose of the exhibit was to highlight the positive role which Holocaust survivors have played in Israel’s many advancements, in an effort to dispel a wave of recent media reporting on the scores of destitute Holocaust survivors living here in Israel. Many could have moved elsewhere, but they chose to cast their lot with those gathered in their ancient homeland. Not only were they active in the building of Israeli society, but also worked to preserve the collective memory of the Holocaust, an endeavour that took on a greater urgency after the dramatic trial of Nazi war criminal Adolf Eichmann in 1961.

Unfortunately, not all of the survivors were able to rehabilitate their lives. But the majority found an inner strength and went on to shape and influence Israeli life and culture, from building unique new communities to impacting the legal system, economy, military, industry, music, art and literature.

Many survivors, like Yaakov Hollander, brought with them their musical gifts, and took central stage as performers, conductors and composers. Many of the nation’s most popular folksongs were penned by Holocaust survivors.

In 1952, caricaturist Kariel Gardosh, also known as “Dosh”, created the boyish “Srulik” for Israel’s 10th Independence Day, and the image instantly became the indelible symbol for a young, optimistic nation. Even though Israeli society has undergone many changes, his bright persona is as fitting and loved as ever. Usually dressed in a kibbutz hat, biblical sandals and khaki shorts, he remains the enduring symbol of the new, proud, pioneering Jew who farms and defends his homeland.

Many popular writers, such as children’s author Uri Orlev and novelist Aharon Appelfeld, produced some of Israel’s most cherished works of literature.

“I do not find within a feeling of guilt for having stayed alive”, wrote Czech-born author, translator and journalist Ruth Bondy. “Amazement, happiness for every additional day, a will not to waste any of the remaining time, the pain of loss, a debt to those who were less fortunate, but not guilt.”

For so many Holocaust survivors, there was no other option than Israel, and the nation has been better for it.

For booking information call: (615) 895-9830
A day earlier and half a continent away at the Senate building of the Czech Republic, ICEJ national director Dr. Mojmír Kallus spearheaded a public rally against anti-Semitism with Senate Chairman Premysl Sobotka, and Pavel Ben, the Lord Mayor of Prague. Accompanied by ICEJ International Director Dr. Jürgen Bühler, Kallus called on the members of his nation’s UN delegation “to clearly distance themselves from the demonization of Israel in Geneva.”

With the Czech Republic currently occupying the rotating presidency of the European Union, Kallus’ outspoken opposition to Durban II did not go unheard. The following day, the Czech delegation walked out of the UN chamber during President Ahmadinejad’s speech. Unlike the rest of their EU counterparts, however, they did not return to the conference, choosing instead to “withdraw definitively.”

As the dust settles on the UN’s failed attempt to resurrect the Durban process and further discredit Israel in the eyes of the world, the ICEJ was able to reach beyond the petitions and protests of the pro-Israel constituency to battle the lie of Israeli racism on a global stage.

Malcolm Hedding drew on his own experience fighting racism in his native South Africa to combat the myth of Israeli apartheid online (see opposite), while back in Jerusalem Jürgen Bühler took the message to the airwaves in an hour-long debate on the Arabic language satellite channel Alhurra.

But in spite of all these efforts, Durban’s day of infamy lives on. That a Holocaust denier can use an anti-racism conference to promote anti-Semitism on Hitler’s birthday is a chilling reminder that the battle against anti-Semitism goes on.

Join the fight! Lend your financial support to the ongoing witness of the ICEJ. 🤝

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**The Israel–Apartheid Myth**

*By Malcolm Hedding*

**ICEJ Executive Director, Rev. Malcolm Hedding**

**ICEJ Executive Director, Rev. Malcolm Hedding was a pastor in South Africa during the worst days of the Apartheid regime, risking his life to speak out against the dehumanization of South Africa’s majority black population.**

On the eve of Durban II, we produced a 15 minute interview Rev. Hedding in which he leans on his unique experience to dismantle the myth of ‘Israeli Apartheid’

To view this interview in full go to: www.icejusa.org/apartheid

“The first Durban conference in 2001 was nothing more than an attempt to attack Israel by accusing it of racism and of setting up the new Apartheid state. The goal was simple: Discriminate against Israel, delegitimize Israel and, in the end, call for the dismantling of Israel. These voices are already being heard in different parts of the world. Durban II will press forward with this agenda.

“Naturally, the word Apartheid is a very powerful one as it evokes images of racial discrimination and suffering that were all too common in South Africa for decades. Forty million people were robbed of their human dignity, treated like animals and herded into ghettos. It was an evil system that destroyed the lives of countless thousands.

“I lived under the Apartheid State and its vicious machinery and know all too well what it meant. To band the word apartheid about loosely is an insult to the 40 million people who suffered under it.

“Yet this is what Durban II is all about. The goal is sure; if Israel is accused of being an apartheid state then the international community can be called upon to dismantle it. This is the danger that Israel now faces. It is a real danger and not one to be taken lightly.

“Israel is not an Apartheid state. It is a thriving modern day democracy that affords all its peoples dignity and equality under the law. Within its borders are Jews, Christians, Arabs, Druze, Armenians and many other minority groups. All have the same rights and dignity under the law. It enjoys freedom of the press and the right to peaceful protest. Women are respected under the law and allowed into all branches of human endeavour. Israel is a shining light in an Arab world that is largely in the grip of totalitarian governments. Yet it is Israel that the UN is choosing to accuse of apartheid. Nothing could be further from the truth!” 🤝
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