The International Christian Embassy Jerusalem • Comforting Israel, Educating the Church

Jerusalem United
The World is Seeking to Deny the Ancient Jewish Claim to Jerusalem

By Rev. Malcolm Hedding

Benjamin Disraeli, Britain’s prime minister at the turn of the 20th century, had a special way to take on his detractors who heckled him as a Jew when he rose to speak in parliament. “My people were kings in Jerusalem while you were still scratching around in the fields for mushrooms,” he would say.

The point is, Jerusalem was the Royal House of Israel long before London or Paris had regal palaces, and Berlin or New York even existed. Yet it is these capitals in their arrogance that seek, almost daily, to disinvest the Jewish people from their ancient, biblical claim and connection to Jerusalem.

This is a people who for thousands of years expressed their attachment to and longing for the city by exclaiming every Passover: “Next year in Jerusalem!”

Even the Hebrew Patriarch Abraham, four thousand years ago, travelled to Moriah and the city of Salem to worship God. It is from this divine encounter four millennia ago that the city, even the modern one, takes its name. It is Jerusalem, the City of Peace and of righteousness.

In contrast, when the Ottoman Turks conquered the region and reigned over it for 400 years, they never treated the city as anything more than a backwater provincial town. It was no one else’s capital and remained neglected and broken down.

Even the Islamic legend that Muhammad ascended into heaven from here is doubtful and disputed by Islamic theologians!

Yet the great Israelite kings David and Solomon wrote magnificent eulogies to the city three thousand years ago and these can all be read in the poetry section of the Bible.

The Jews have more claim to Jerusalem than the French have to Paris, the Germans to Berlin or the British to London.”

The city has been the capital of only one people and that is the Jewish people. No other nation can or should lay claim to it. “Jerusalem is not a settlement!” as current Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has recently declared. It is the City of David, Solomon, the great Prophets and Sages of the Bible, and the city that Jesus himself prayed for and recognized as Jewish.

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“Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?” (Esther 4:14)

The International Christian Embassy Jerusalem presents

For Such a Time as This...

Lessons from the Holocaust • Those Who Dared to be Rescuers • Antisemitism Today
Modern Threats of Genocide • The Importance of Israel

Saturday, November 14th
9:00 AM - 12:30 PM
First Assembly of God
801 Materson, Melbourne, FL 32935

When World War II ended and the full horror of Hitler’s ‘Final Solution’ became known, the world made the vow: “Never Again.”

In little over 60 years, anti-Semitism is once again on the rise across Europe, the Middle East and even here in the US.

For Such a Time as This is a new one-day seminar from the ICEJ in which Dr. Carrie Burns & Susie Sandager will examine the historical, political and spiritual implications of the Holocaust and underscore the importance of standing with the Jewish people today.

Registration $10 per person
Call (615) 895-9830 or register online at:
www.icejusa.org/events

Dr. Carrie Burns
From a self-described “feisty little feminist” at graduate school, to the creative services director of Great News Radio in East-Central Illinois, Carrie Burns’ life has been transformed by the gospel. She earned her doctorate in education with a focus on history, discrimination and anti-Semitism and has an inspiring, yet devotional approach to these important issues of faith.

Susie Sandager
Best-known for her powerful one-woman drama of the life of Corrie ten Boom, Susie Sandager and her husband John founded Sandager Presentations in an effort to inspire understanding and friendship between Christians and Jews through drama, education and biblical teaching for the times in which we live.
Keeping the Memory of Truth Alive

Anti-Semitism is not confined to Iran, it is finding acceptance in the West

Dear Friends,

During the annual opening of the United Nations General Assembly at the end of September, the world witnessed two very contrasting messages from two very different leaders.

Shamefully, the international community once again provided a platform for Iran’s president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, to address the gathered nations, even though he is one of the most notorious anti-Semites of our time and the credibility of his recent election is seriously in doubt. Not only has he repeatedly called to “wipe Israel off the map,” he also is an ardent denier of the Holocaust. Just days before his latest UN appearance, he again insisted the Shoah is a “myth” which has been exploited by “Zionist criminals” to manipulate the world into accepting Israel’s existence.

In his speech in New York on September 23rd, Ahmadinejad yet once more assailed Israel, accusing the ‘Zionist entity’ of genocide in Gaza and of racism against Palestinian Arabs.

The following day, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was prepared with a powerful response, complete with dramatic proofs of the tragic reality of the Holocaust. He displayed the original blueprints for the construction of the Auschwitz-Birkenau death camps, signed by Hitler’s deputy Heinrich Himmler. He also held up the original protocol of the infamous Wannsee conference where the Nazi leadership officially decided to implement the “Final Solution,” whose aim was to exterminate the 11 million Jews then residing in Europe.

“Is this all a lie?” Netanyahu pointedly asked world leaders. Then he challenged them to make up their mind. “Either you support Israel or you support the terrorists,” he stated.

Netanyahu commended those countries which had decided to walk out on Ahmadinejad, while scorning those who stayed to listen to and even applaud his tirade. In a very literal sense, the wheat was separated from the chaff. Indeed, the entire world is standing today in this same valley of decision – whether to stand up for truth and historic justice, or to give place to hatred and warped apocalyptic visions?

Most importantly for us is: What will the Christian church decide?

As he returned from New York in September, the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem communicated to Prime Minister Netanyahu our wholehearted congratulations for the powerful message and moral challenge which he placed before the family of nations. In standing up as he did, with such courage and strength of character, it was actually a stand for decent people of goodwill everywhere.

We now want to turn to you, our friends and supporters, in asking that you stand with us as we, too, take a clear stand against the virulent anti-Semitism represented by Ahmadinejad, which unfortunately is finding acceptance and expression even in ‘polite’ Western societies.

The ICEJ has partnered with the one institution which has been entrusted by the Jewish state and people with keeping the memory and truth of the Holocaust alive – Yad Vashem. This revered memorial and museum not only kindles the eternal flame of remembrance for the more than six million Jews brutally murdered by the Nazi regime. Yad Vashem also is a bulwark for the very existence of the state of Israel. For if the veracity of the Holocaust can be successfully denied, then the legitimacy of the modern Jewish State is undermined as well.

Please take a stand with us and support the Christian Desk at Yad Vashem. Help us to ensure that history will not repeat itself. It is decision time!

Sincerely Yours!

Dr. Jürgen Bühler
ICEJ International Director

Rev. Malcolm Hedding
ICEJ Executive Director

Keep the Memory of Truth Alive!

Support our Partnership with Yad Vashem

www.icejusa.org/yadvashem
Israel is currently welcoming home a fresh wave of Russian-speaking Jews from the former Soviet Union, and the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem is stepping in to assist once again by sponsoring flights from Moscow and St. Petersburg for nearly 350 of these olim (newcomers). The latest influx comes as the ICEJ marks 20 years of involvement – in cooperation with the Jewish Agency – in the great Aliyah from the ‘land of the north’ and from all the nations where the Jewish people were scattered worldwide. With these latest returnees to Israel, this brings the total number of Jews assisted by the ICEJ in making aliyah to over 103,000 over the past two decades, since our first sponsored Boeing 747 hit the tarmac in Tel Aviv in May 1990.

There has been an upswing in recent months of Jewish immigration from the FSU, due in large part to economic hardships and the lack of good educational and job opportunities. Many have also decided to finally reunite with family members already in Israel, while others are concerned with the rise of anti-Semitism now plaguing much of Europe.

In response, the Jewish Agency and the Ministry of Immigration and Absorption have launched a special operation called ‘Aliyah on a Red Carpet’, which has included added incentive packages for those making the journey to Israel during August and September – in time for the start of the new school year. Several thousand Russian-speaking Jews took up the offer to come home at this time, adding to the more than one million already here.

As part of this special operation, the Christian Embassy pre-purchased some 350 seats on more than a dozen direct flights from Moscow and St. Petersburg during the past two months. Many of those taking these seats had already been in contact with the ICEJ offices in St. Petersburg over recent years through our “Far Distant Cities” program, which assists Russian Jewish families in remote locations from the very start of their processing by the Agency to document that they are Jewish.

Just a few days before Rosh Hashana – the Jewish New Year – ICEJ international director Dr. Jürgen Büehler led an Embassy team to Ben-Gurion Airport to welcome a flight from Moscow carrying 53 of our sponsored olim. They were greeted with flowers, balloons, ‘welcome home’ signs, and hugs as they took their first steps in their new country.

Many were tired from their travels with all their luggage, but there was a colourful variety of newcomers to greet, from young mothers with babies in strollers to the elderly on canes. Some of the women were also pregnant – just as the prophet Jeremiah foretold!

“Behold, I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the ends of the earth, among them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and the one who labors with child, together; A great throng shall return there.” (Jeremiah 31:8)

Everyone was genuinely surprised and thrilled to have such a warm welcome, which they did not expect. In the special ‘aliyah’ room set up at the airport terminal, the first item of business was for the new immigrants to get their citizenship documents. Many then had time to share their stories before they were transported to the Shalom Hotel in Jerusalem for a gala dinner and an overnight stay.

Elaina, a young mother, wanted a brighter future. ‘So here I am, the answer to so many prayers of the Christians.’

Since 1990 the ICEJ has assisted over 103,000 Jews to return to their ancient homeland. This summer Israel laid out the ‘Red Carpet’ to welcome them.

By Taylor Innes
Valentina, whose husband died a year ago, had waited to make the journey once she had reached retirement age. Her son had immigrated six years ago on a youth aliyah program and has completed his service in the IDF, learned the language and settled down in a job. She still has family in Russia but wanted to be near her son in Israel.

"Today is a day filled with emotions. The love shown by the Christian Embassy welcoming us has warmed my heart. I am amazed to realise that people are paying attention to me and the whole group of immigrants," said Valentina.

Elaina, a young mother, wanted a brighter future. "So here I am," she said, "the answer to so many prayers of the Christians."

In their early 30s, Dennis and Svetlana Kurochkin and their two sons were excited about their future here. She is a bookkeeper and he is a technical engineer. They will first study in ulpan – the Hebrew language schools. Their little family was exhausted from the travels but they were too full of hope and expectations to let it slow them down.

"I have no nostalgic for Russia. I want to forget what has been," said Dennis. "I believe in my heart that everything will be better in Israel. With this step of making aliyah, we want to turn around our lives in Israel for the good, especially for the future of our two children, Roma (12) and Igor (2). Here they will get a good education."

"I have no fear for the unknown or the future," added Svetlana, who is expecting a third child. "I am convinced that we will get the help we need."

They explained they did not know making aliyah was even a possibility until they were told by the Jewish Agency and by Svetlana's father, who made aliyah half a year ago.

The family also mentioned there was a small group of Christians who helped them to travel from their remote city of Nizhniy Novogord to Moscow to make their flight to Israel. "We were amazed by the loving care we got from such people," said Svetlana. "It was not difficult for us to leave Russia. We are in shock from the friendly welcome and feel we are dreaming," she stated. They plan to start their new stage in life at an absorption center near Sderot, in the western Negev.

Lillia, an elderly lady, said her son made aliyah in 1991 and she would visit Israel every year to see him and her five grandchildren, who were all Israeli-born. Previously in the FSU, she faced anti-Semitism because she was Jewish. Her son’s studies there were often hindered by it as well, and he was not even granted the gold medal that usually comes with graduating. Her husband will also make aliyah in a half year when his pension vests.

"I am so satisfied by coming now and reuniting with my family. It is no more a visit but a stay!" Lillia said with relief.

Meanwhile at the welcoming dinner in Jerusalem, the Jewish Agency gave each immigrant a jar of honey, a traditional gift at Rosh HaShanah in hopes of a “sweet” year ahead. The following day, the Agency held an aliyah fair at the hotel for hundreds of new immigrants before they disperse to their homes throughout Israel.

The main goal of the fair was to help provide those coming on operation Red Carpet with a “softer landing” by assisting them with registering for health insurance, Israeli ID cards, banking accounts, cell phones, etc., all at once before they disperse, noted Jewish Agency official Ofer Dahan.

An older brother and sister said they moved to Israel to find the best eye doctors. For them, it was their first time in Israel and they did not have any other family here. He was a security guard in Russia and they will start their lives over in Ashdod and are excited to get the healthcare they need.

Elaina, a young mother, said she decided to come to Israel at this time because she wanted a brighter economic future. When told that Christians worldwide are praying for her safe return to Eretz Israel, she responded joyfully: "So here I am, the answer to so many prayers of the Christians!"

Natan Sharansky, the noted Prisoner of Zion who made his own remarkable journey home from the Soviet Union in 1986 and today heads the Jewish Agency, addressed hundreds of the Russian newcomers and their relatives the next day at a special welcoming ceremony held in an outdoor amphitheatre on the Hebrew University campus on Mt. Scopus.
"I think it's so important and so great to have such wonderful Christian friends in this difficult moment, when there are so many enemies who try to damage and disillusion our faith, who try to launch new campaigns of anti-Semitism, who try to discourage everybody from supporting Israel," he told an ICEJ delegation afterwards. "It's important to have staunch friends who help us build Israel and help us to bring new immigrants. It's great, it's wonderful and we are happy our Christian friends are with us."

Sharansky also expressed hope that under his leadership, the Jewish Agency will mark in the very near future the milestone of having brought more than half the world's Jews home to Israel. Currently there are 5.7 million Jews in Israel and just over six million still in the Diaspora, so that day is not far off.

In the month before Rosh Hashanah, the shofar is blown early every morning in synagogues throughout Israel. The sound is an awakening call to search one's heart, but it is also a reminder for the Jewish people to come home to Israel from all the four corners of earth.

Although many Jews are coming for economic, educational, and health reasons, and not necessarily motivated by religion or Zionism, one can still see the faithfulness of God in their return to their land and people. For Christians worldwide, this offers us a tremendous opportunity and privilege to “gather” with Him, as Jesus said in Luke 11:23. So please consider making your secure tax-deductible donation to the Aliyah work of the ICEJ online at: www.icejusa.org/aliyah.

Taylor Innes is originally from Alabama and works as a journalist for the ICEJ Media team in Jerusalem.
Israel: ‘He who Strives with God’

A Chosen Nation, Tested, Enlarged and Restored to Reflect God’s Name on the Earth

By Malcolm Hedding

A Chosen People

i. Not because of her greatness or unique ability or even strength, but because of God’s great love (Deuteronomy 7:7-8).

ii. To bless the world with ‘redemptive products’. Jesus affirmed that, “Salvation is of the Jews!” (John 4:22; see also Genesis 12:1-3; Romans 9:1-5).

iii. To make known God’s great Name in the earth (Deut. 28:58; Ezekiel 36:21-23).

iv. To inspire and provoke the nations to jealousy. Israel was always called to radiate the light that she gives (Deuteronomy 7:6; Isaiah 43:10).

v. To serve as a warning. Nations that seek the destruction of Israel or the division of her land are putting themselves in conflict with the God of the Bible (Genesis 12:3; Joel 3:2).

A Tested People

In Israel, God’s Name, word, promise and faithfulness are all put to the test. The idea is that we should learn the ways of God from her and walk in the fear of God (Deuteronomy 7:9-11; Malachi 3:16-18; 1 Corinthians 10:11).

ii. The Church’s call was always to be in a loving engagement with the Jewish people (Romans 11:11). Sadly this has not been the case but God will in the end triumph over Israel’s and the church’s failure (Romans 11:32-36).

A Restored People

The drama unfolding in the Middle East today is the “Arm of God” doing what Israel or the Church could not do. That is, restoring the knowledge of God’s existence, presence and Name in the earth. Psalm 2 expresses fully this sovereign work and reminds us that God Himself will place His Son on Jerusalem’s Holy Hill in splendour and glory.

For the remnant who know their God, these are days of great exploits and prayer (Daniel 11:32).

By Malcolm Hedding

Discerning the TIMES

...and your place in what God is doing today.

Saturday, November 7th
9:00am - 12:30pm & 6:00pm - 8:30pm
Christ Chapel • 3051 Cloverdale Rd
Florence, AL 35633

Speakers include ICEJ Executive Director, Rev. Malcolm Hedding, USA Director, Susan Michael & Media Director, Michael Hines

Entrance is free, but space is limited
Register online at: www.icejusa.org/events or call: (615) 895-9830

Sunday, November 8th
Rev. Malcolm Hedding will be speaking at
Christ Chapel, 3051 Cloverdale Rd, Florence, AL.
at 10:30 am and 6:00 pm

Saturday, November 14th
9:00am - 12:30pm
First Baptist Church • 504 W. Main St
Morristown, TN 37816

Speakers include Rev. Malcolm Hedding and Susan Michael, with Special Musical Guests - Roy and Mary Kendall

Registration is only $10 per person
Register online at: www.icejusa.org/events or call: (615) 895-9830

Sunday, November 15th
Rev. Malcolm Hedding will be speaking at 8:00 am and 10:30 am
at First Baptist Church, Morristown, then at 7:00 pm at Fellowship Church 8000 Middlebrook Pk, Knoxville, TN.
The great Hebrew prophets did the same as they called her Jewish inhabitants to account. The Apostle Paul always returned to Zion to worship and had a great longing to be in Jerusalem for the Biblical feasts. Jerusalem has always had a Jewish presence, and a Jewish majority once more ever since the mid-1800s.

How strange it is then that the world believes that the ancient biblical city should not be Jewish. What nonsense is this? The Jews have more claim to Jerusalem than the French have to Paris or the Germans to Berlin or the British to London. It is absurd to think otherwise and yet this is the nature of the global political consensus today. It is nothing short of shameful.

At our annual Feast of Tabernacles celebration this autumn, the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem will mark 30 years of unequivocally standing with and advocating for a united Jerusalem under Israeli sovereignty. Jerusalem is the capital of the Jewish people and those who contest this statement have to either rewrite or totally ignore history. Yet sadly, this they happily do.

The sweet Psalmist of Israel, King David, looked over the walls and ramparts of Jerusalem and wrote, “Pray for the peace of Jerusalem, they shall prosper who love her.” His great prayer was for peace and joy to rain down upon the city as the Jewish worshippers gathered to celebrate their prescribed festivals, and as the nations also came to this “house of prayer for all peoples.”

This is our prayer as well. And as the only Embassy in Jerusalem, representing millions of like-minded Christians around the globe, we gladly take ownership of it. “Jerusalem United” is our heart cry and our rallying cry this Sukkot!

Rev. Hedding serves as ICEJ Executive Director in Jerusalem. For more information about how you can get involved in our online ‘Jerusalem United’ pledge campaign, visit our website at: www.icejusa.org/jerusalem

Show your support for a united Jerusalem under Israel

www.icejusa.org/jerusalem