in his first year as chairman of the Jewish Agency, Natan Sharansky - himself a former prisoner of conscience in the Soviet Union - presided over the biggest increase in aliyah in 10 years. Over the course of 2009, more than 16,000 Jews relocated to Israel, a 17 percent increase in immigration from the previous year.

For nearly 20 years, the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem has been at the forefront of Christian efforts to assist Jews coming home to Israel from all corners of the globe. During that time, we’ve helped well over 100,000 Jews at some point on their life-changing journey to their ancient homeland.

This past autumn was no different with ICEJ grants helping over 300 Jews from Russia make the journey on flights from St. Petersburg and Moscow.

In addition the Embassy responded to appeals for aliyah assistance from Jews in Scandanavia, fearful of mounting anti-Semitism among the growing Muslim population in Sweden.

In late December, the Jewish Agency held a ceremony at the Ramada Renaissance Hotel in Jerusalem to welcome flights of new immigrants who had just arrived in Israel. These olim (newcomers) included 85 Jews from South Africa, 75 from France, and 50 from the United Kingdom.

The ICEJ covered the overnight accommodations at the hotel for the South African arrivals so they could attend the welcome ceremonies and an Aliyah Fair to learn more about job opportunities, language classes, health care programs, opening bank accounts, and other information needed to ease the absorption process. Most of the newcomers were exhausted from the long journey but excited to receive their Israeli identity cards.

“I feel that if it was not for the Christian Embassy we would not be here today”

“It’s a wonderful day. We waited a long, long time for this document,” said Mandi Herman from Johannesburg. “We have children and grandchildren here in Israel, and we decided to spend our remaining years with them.”

“I feel that if it was not for the Christian Embassy we would not be here today,” said Sari Genzler from the Jewish Agency. “They give us a lot of support to help do all this for the olim, who have never had these opportunities before.”

>> CONTINUED ON BACK PAGE
Lessons from the Holocaust • Those Who Dared Be Rescuers • Anti-Semitism Today
Modern Threats of Genocide • The Importance of Israel

Thursday, April 8th, 2010
9:00 AM & 6:00 PM
Hosted by Jewish Community Center of Albuquerque
5520 Wyoming Blvd. NE, Albuquerque, NM 87109

Register online at: www.icejusa.org/events or call (615) 895-9830

Be like the sons of Issachar
“who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do...”
1 Chronicles 12:32

Saturday, April 10th
11:00 am - 2:30 pm
Jericho Center
2878 Warren Meadville Rd • Cortland, OH. 44410

Speakers include: Susan Michael (Director, ICEJ USA)
and Mike Mott (former Producer, Front Page Jerusalem Radio)

Saturday Registration: $10 per person.
A light lunch will be provided

Sunday, April 11th
10:30 am
Church at Warren
3179, Hoaglandblackstub Rd • Cortland, OH. 44410

More Information: www.icejusa.org/events or call: (615) 895-9830

...and YOUR place in what God is doing today.
For almost three decades the ICEJ has reached out to impoverished Israelis at Passover. Each year we receive requests to help in pressing, sometimes heartbreaking, situations of need, providing traditional Passover meals to needy new immigrants, single-parent families, elderly widows and Holocaust survivors.

Even among secular Jews in Israel, the annual observance of the Passover meal is considered sacrosanct with 95% of the population taking part. For many, it is their only routine link to more than three thousand years of religious and cultural history.

Yet, with one-third of Israelis living below the poverty line, local charities estimate that more than 250,000 families will need help buying the specialized ingredients for the traditional Passover Seder when the festival begins on the evening of March 29.

The ICEJ is committed to enable Israelis to celebrate their festival of freedom with dignity. We distribute Passover gift baskets, to remind them of the faithfulness of the God of Israel and to demonstrate the love of millions of Christians around the world. We do this thanks to your prayers and financial support, believing that this Passover we can touch more lives than ever before.

Help us help them this Passover: www.icejusa.org/passover
Understanding Israel

God has not forgotten His people, He promises them a glorious future

By Rev. Malcolm Hedding

In Romans 9-11, the Apostle Paul deals extensively with the Gentile Christian’s response to Israel. While the passage has been debated by the best theological minds through the centuries, Paul still exhorts us to accept certain clear facts. The failure of the Church historically to do this sadly has allowed anti-Semitism to grow and flourish in many churches and traditions. We should examine these again in light of the following:

1. The God of the Bible has never “cast away His people” (Romans 11:1). This means He has a redemptive plan for national Israel. He has not forgotten them and has a surprise in store for all of us. Just as Elijah thought that all was lost and hopeless, so even today the Lord is allowing a remarkable miracle to unfold in Israel. He is more than active in Israel’s present journey.

2. God has used Israel’s unbelief to bring salvation to the Gentiles (Romans 11:11). This has an element of mystery in it, yet the passage is clear that there is a Church in the world because of Israel’s rejection of Jesus. Paul encourages us to view this fact with gratitude and not disdain. Their fall, he says, “is riches for the world.” The Church should have shown kindness and appreciation to Israel. That is, we should have been a provocation to jealousy.

3. God requires that we desist from arrogantly boasting against the Jewish people, because we have been grafted into their spiritual tree (Romans 11:17-19). That is, our spiritual heritage is Jewish. Jesus said, “Salvation is of the Jews” (John 4:22). Ours is essentially a Jewish faith built on the great lives of Moses, Joshua, Esther, David, Isaiah, Daniel, the Apostles and our wonderful Messiah Jesus.

4. God calls us to fear Him; to show reverence and awe (Romans 11:19-20). The Jewish world can easily be grafted back into their tree because they are “natural branches,” whereas we are “wild branches.” That is, we are in a way misfits and it is easier for God to graft His people back into their own tree than to place us there. We should therefore fear God and thank Him by showing love to the Jewish people. Our arrogance against them incurs His displeasure and He warns that this can lead to spiritual death (Romans 11:21-22).

5. God calls us to embrace mystery (Romans 11:25-26). There is a glorious future for Israel. That is, her failure is only partial and one day all Israel will be saved. Her journey is fully bound up in the sovereign plan of God. His ways are past finding out but they are clear to the extent that out of Zion a deliverer will come and bring great blessing to Israel. This vision of Israel’s future will not fail. There is thus an “irrevocable” national destiny for Israel that began with Abraham and will conclude with the Holy Spirit being poured out upon them (Romans 11:29).

All this means that God has not forgotten Israel and we should be a people filled with love and gratitude as we engage them. Though centuries of Christian anti-Semitism heap shame upon us, it is true that in recent decades a revolution in Jewish/Christian relations has taken place, with the ICEJ at the forefront.

Rev. Malcolm Hedding serves as ICEJ Executive Director in Jerusalem.
Saturday, April 17, 2010
9:00 am - 12:30 pm
$10 Registration

Mount Paran Church of God
2055 Mount Paran Rd NW
Atlanta, GA 30327

Register online at: www.icejusa.org/events. For more information call: (615) 895-9830

2010 SPRING TEACHING CONFERENCE
Israel, the Church & the Nations
May 21-23
Murfreesboro TN

World Outreach Church
1921 New Salem Hwy, Murfreesboro, TN 37128
www.icejusa.org/conference
The Battle for Silwan

By David Parsons

The ‘City of David’ is at the heart of an archaeological tussle that cuts to the very core of the Middle East conflict.

Is the biblical record true? And if so, what then...?

It seems every week another flashpoint in Jerusalem is making headlines – Sheikh Jarrah, Gilo, Har Homa...

The latest neighbourhood in the spotlight is Silwan, just south of the Old City. Known in the Bible as Siloam, this area is the subject of a prolonged turf fight that has actually been flying under the radar given its enormous significance. It is probably the second most hotly contested site in Jerusalem after the Temple Mount.

The manner in which Silwan came to the fore again was actually a bizarre legal tussle between Jerusalem Mayor Nir Barkat and a municipal judge over homes illegally built on a tract known as Gan Hamelech or “King’s Garden”. This is the traditional site where Solomon is believed to have written his “Song of Songs” and had been set aside for preservation as a national park.

But the underlying struggle for control of the area carries huge implications not only in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, but also in the wider cultural clash over the veracity of the Bible.

Silwan today is home to hundreds of Arabs who live atop the ruins of the “City of David”– the ancient fortress which King David captured from the Jebusites and made into his capital. It is an area rich with historic artefacts confirming the existence of an Israelite kingdom in the land 3,000 years ago.

For several decades now, Jews have been trying to reclaim lost lands and buy up new properties in the area in order to facilitate proper archaeological excavations of this treasure trove of Israel’s regal past. Some Arab families have sold out at exorbitant prices; others have refused to budge and are now well funded by Arab petrodollars in their effort to stay put.

The Jews engaged in the battle over Silwan ultimately are seeking to prove the ancient connection of their people to this land in the very place where David and Solomon solidified their rule over the unified kingdom of Israel. The Palestinians generally deny any such historic Jewish link.

Meanwhile, certain scholars and archaeologists - many for ideological reasons - have challenged the biblical account of King David extending his monarchy to all the land. They contend the archaeological record so far only indicates that Jerusalem was “a poor village” in 1000 BCE and David, if he existed at all, was merely a “hill-country chieftain”. This revisionist camp simply wants to dismiss the Bible as fables.

Yet the digs being conducted at “David’s City” have been uncovering impressive evidence that the biblical narrative is accurate, including the discovery of a large Phoenician-style palace in the upper city that fits the description of David’s expansion of the city.

The stakes are high in this “dance of the two camps.” But the Jewish people have every right to reclaim their past glory, especially when it is so coldly assailed.

David Parsons serves as ICEJ Media Director and lives with his family in Jerusalem.
Projecting the Kingdom of God in a challenging and broken world...

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July 2-9, 2010: Galilee, Jerusalem

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www.icejusa.org/pastors or call: 1-800 379-3897

FEAST OF TABERNACLES XXXI
Sept 23rd-29th, 2010

www.icejusa.org/feast

TO JOIN THE OFFICIAL 2010 FEAST OF TABERNACLES TOUR CALL TOLL FREE: 1-800 379-3897

Come and Experience a taste of the Feast of Tabernacles in Florida with Rev. Malcolm Hedding and members of the Feast dance team
Call: (615) 895-9830 for more details
The past two years, the ICEJ’s South African branch also made generous donations to sponsor Jews on aliyah flights from their country. The South African Jewish community has declined to approximately 75,000 today, and the increased wave of emigration is comprised of both “pull” factors – Zionist ideology and strong opportunities – and “push” factors – including economic and political developments that have heightened uncertainty about their future in their native homeland.

ICEJ-South Africa also joined other national branches in assisting with funds to pay for aliyah flights from Belarus and the Baltic countries, areas where much of South Africa’s current Jewish community originated. Jewish emigration from this region of the former Soviet Union is increasing as a result of the repressive regime in Belarus and the acute economic crisis in Latvia and Lithuania. In each case the ICEJ is stepping in to help the Jewish Agency respond.

For 2010, the ICEJ currently has plans to sponsor seats on more than a dozen aliyah flights departing from a wide variety of locations, including Britain, France, South Africa, Mexico, Brazil and Argentina, South Africa, and of course areas of the former Soviet Union.

Needless to say, none of this would be possible without your ongoing prayers and financial support. It is this that enables us to impact so many lives in Israel and around the world. Thank you for your faithfulness.

Get Involved. Support Aliyah: www.icejusa.org/aliyah

>> CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

"I decided to make aliyah a long time ago, but wanted to finish my studies at Uppsala University in Sweden. I completed a Master’s degree in biology and am still looking for a job suited to my degree. But I have a part-time job coordinating research grants with the European Union, which is enough for now due to my Hebrew classes.”

"Looking back, it would have been easier to come five years ago when I was younger. I always had a dream to come to Israel and now I’m glad I finally came.”

“I came in part because I was concerned with radical Muslims in Sweden. It is a real concern right now. Anti-Semitism is very taboo, but anti-Zionism is working against the Jews. We’re always presented as the bad guys. It’s wearing having to defend ourselves. I think there is no future for Jews there. It’s not felt so much in Stockholm, but in areas where Muslims have settled. The problem is that they are not integrating.”

“There are many riots, extreme riots like during the Davis Cup matches when Israel played Sweden in Malmo. The far Left joined with the neo-Nazis and radical Muslims for first time. It was very scary! That is not normal in Sweden, and yet we were told to keep quiet. Many young Jews are working as security guards in the Jewish community and everyone is installing security cameras. You don’t wear a kippa or a prayer shawl in the streets.”

“I can confirm that there are better job opportunities here in Israel. It seems the business community here is more creative, and less rigid than in Sweden.”