JOURNEY OF DREAMS
ICEJ DOCUMENTARY
ALIYAH UPDATE

SURPRISING DEVELOPMENTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

PRAYER WAVE

NEW ICEJ OFFICE IN HAIFA

ARISE SUMMER TOUR
“You have to see it with your own eyes!”
PRESIDENT'S DESK

Dear friends,

Israel at 70 faces a totally different situation today than at its inception in 1948. While Israel still has to deal with various threats and challenges around the world, there are also many positive changes that would have seemed unimaginable just ten years ago. God is truly restoring Zion and surpassing the hopes and dreams many of the Zionist pioneers had in the ’40s and ’50s. The feature articles in this magazine will cover some of these transformative developments.

In the meantime, Israel is confronted with challenges on two different fronts. While these are not existential threats, they provide us with the opportunity to show our support and the love of Jesus to the Jewish people. One present challenge is Israel’s southern border with Gaza. Kites, balloons and birds, such as hawks and falcons, are misused to send fiery seeds to ignite Israel’s dry south, causing hundreds of fires and destroying thousands of acres of precious farmland. Thousands of trees that took many years to grow have been burned. Through your help, we are now able to deliver six firefighting trailers and six more bomb shelters to these embattled communities. We were touched to see the impact our aid had on the farmers in these remote regions. Please continue to stand with us in this area.

On Israel’s northern border, a humanitarian crisis is in the making. The Syrian regime is cracking down on many communities close to Israel’s border and is causing an unceasing flow of refugees, who are amassing in the no man’s land between the Syrian and Israeli frontiers. The ICEJ has been partnering with the IDF and a Christian partner organisation to establish a field hospital in the no man’s land that is served by Christian doctors and medics from around the world. It is an amazing partnership where Jews and Christians work hand in hand to help their Muslim neighbours. Israel’s government calls it the “Good Neighbor Project”. The situation is fluid as the Syrian army nears the Israeli border fence. As of this writing, the project has been put on hold. But the need is great, so please join us in your prayers for renewed calm and further opportunity to reach out to Israel’s beleaguered neighbours in this unique joint effort by Jews and Christians to serve the suffering refugees.

I hope you are inspired as you read this magazine. Please pray for us and continue to stand with us through your support.

Many blessings from Jerusalem,

Dr Jürgen Bühler
ICEJ President

COVER PHOTO: Ethiopian making Aliyah to Israel

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FROM THE

PRESIDENT'S DESK

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Israel at 70 is one of the greatest miracle stories of our time. The Jewish nation literally rose like a phoenix from the ashes of the Holocaust, and today Israel’s story surpasses the dreams of most of the early pioneers. Israel’s high-tech industry, patents and research positively impact the majority of people in today’s world. At the same time, the political landscape around Israel is shifting in ways that were unpredictable even five years ago. Today, Israel’s Arab neighbours realise that it is downright foolish to attack Israel because the Jewish state has one of the most advanced, battle-ready armies in the world. They have also discovered that Israel has become a blessing for the entire region, and we are seeing a major thaw taking place in Arab-Israeli relations.

We would like to highlight some of these areas of change and development – both spiritually and physically – as we see God moving in the region more than ever before!

I. The growth of the Messianic Body in Israel
The Messianic Body in Israel is, for many evangelicals, the strongest connection to the State of Israel. They consider Messianic believers as brothers and sisters in faith, who still represent the Jewish people with all their history and God’s direct promises. The term ‘Messianic believer’ refers to people of Jewish origin who believe in Jesus (Yeshua) as their Messiah.

When the state of Israel was established, the pioneers of the Messianic movement often refer to the first 12 believers who existed in 1948 as the ‘first fruits’ in the land. Until the 1980s, the Messianic community in Israel only grew to a few congregations (less than 20, in fact). By 1994, this number had more than doubled to some 40 congregations across Israel, with approximately 2,300 members in total. Today the Messianic Body, according to a recent survey, is around 20-30,000 strong with some 300 congregations throughout Israel.

While Messianic Jews today are still considered as one of the least liked people groups in Israel, their image here is changing. The Messianic youth serve in the Israeli army and are an integral part of Israeli society. Also, the Israeli media has recently started to publish favourable reports on the Messianic movement in Israel.

For example, the life of Israeli evangelist Yaacov Damkani just recently received unprecedented media attention through a documentary produced by an Israeli television channel, and a full cinematic movie that was played in most cinemas across the country. The Jerusalem Post shared a series of articles on Messianic Judaism that has been highly positive. Also, the Israeli news reported recently that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu hired an openly confessing Messianic Jew as his main social media advisor.

In addition, we observe around the world a strong increase in the number of churches and believers who embrace and stand with God’s work with the Body of Christ in Israel (both Jewish and Arab). Please pray for the young congregations that are being formed in Israel.

II. The Spiritual Shift in the Arab/Islamic world
There is a major spiritual shift taking place in the Arab world. While the historical churches lost countless members to ISIS, the evangelical churches in the western countries have seen an unprecedented growth through Muslims discovering Jesus as their Messiah. It seems that for the first time in 1,300 years of Islamic conquest and domination, the Body of Christ is growing again. One interesting fact is that many new ‘Muslim background believers’ (MBBs) understand God’s purposes with Israel. Today, many Arab nations report historic numbers of new believers finding Jesus. This is often triggered by their disillusionment with Islam, caused by ISIS and other radical expressions of the Muslim faith. In addition, countless reports of visions and dreams from all around the Middle East help lead them to Christ.

Some of the nations with the fastest church growth today are found in the Middle East. The same is increasingly true in the Palestinian territories. A pastor of a major town in the West Bank recently reported church growth of 10-15%. The largest work of God can be seen in Iran, which saw strong growth from a starting base of a few thousand evangelical believers to several million today.

The growing Body of Christ in the region urgently needs the prayer and support of the global church. In recent years, the ICEJ has established encouraging ties to a number of leaders in the region, and we are determined to stand with them in their often difficult stand for Christ.

III. The geopolitical shift
As we celebrate Israel’s 70th anniversary, it is true to say that the Middle East has changed in dramatic ways that went unpredicted by any intelligence agency.

Some of the areas of change include:

1) The Recognition of Jerusalem
On 14 May 2018, the US opened its embassy in Jerusalem after decades of rejection from the nations of the world. This landmark decision has already impacted many nations. Guatemala followed as the second nation on 16 May, with President Jimmy Morales coming to Jerusalem to open the new Guatemalan Embassy in

AS WE CELEBRATE ISRAEL’S 70TH ANNIVERSARY, IT IS TRUE TO SAY THAT THE MIDDLE EAST HAS CHANGED IN DRAMATIC WAYS THAT WENT UNPREDICTED BY ANY INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

The Middle East has changed in dramatic ways that went unpredicted by any intelligence agency. The cards of the Middle East have gone from any intelligence agency. The cards of the Middle East have been totally reshuffled, and much of what was true just a few years ago is not true anymore. Here are a few of the areas that have seen the most radical changes:

1) The Recognition of Jerusalem
On 14 May 2018, the US opened its embassy in Jerusalem after decades of rejection from the nations of the world. This landmark decision has already impacted many nations. Guatemala followed as the second nation on 16 May, with President Jimmy Morales coming to Jerusalem to open the new Guatemalan Embassy in
Jerusalem. Later in May, President Cortez made his move, making Paraguay the third nation to relocate its embassy to Jerusalem.

The ambassador of Guatemala shared an interesting detail about the day the embassy moved to Jerusalem. “Guatemala is a nation with a relatively high crime rate, but on the very day our embassy was opened in Jerusalem, there was not a single crime recorded for the first day in Guatemalan history.”

Today numerous nations are actively contemplating to follow suit. Among them are Honduras, the Czech Republic, Hungary and other nations around the world. Please pray that more “Cyrus Nations” will be inspired to follow the example of the biblical King Cyrus: “He will rebuild my city.” (Isa 45:13)

2) Israel established as a global player

In recent decades, Israel has become a global player that is contributing much to the region and to the world. Israel today is an international leader in research and high-tech. Most leading tech companies in the world have R&D centres in Israel. Microsoft, Apple, Oracle, Intel and Google are just a few of the IT companies in Israel. Israel also leads in medicine and every 16th drug used in the USA is produced in Israel. The latest companies flocking to Israel are the leading German car manufacturing companies who look for Israeli leadership to develop their self-driving cars.

The same is true for security questions. Israel today trains security units from many nations and provides security solutions around the world. It is no secret that even neighbouring Arab countries depend on Israel for security to protect them from the Islamic terrorism in their own nations. Economically, Israel is thriving with the New Israeli Shekel now having become one of the most stable currencies in the world. While the BDS movement is an evil and demonic initiative, and while we need to challenge it, BDS cannot achieve its goals because no nation today can survive without Israeli technology.

3) Arab alliances with Israel

One of the most significant developments in the Middle East is the Arab world’s radical shift in attitude towards Israel. This is nothing short of miraculous. Saudi Arabia, in particular, is undergoing a major transformation in its attitude toward Israel. Saudi Crown Prince Mohamed Bin Salman is taking his country through radical reforms. He sees Israel as an asset to the region rather than a threat.

The reasons that triggered this development are twofold: The so-called “Arab spring” brought a thirst for more freedom, not only to limited segments of the population, but also unleashed forces of Islamic terror that were hitherto unknown in the Arab world. Some Arab church leaders claim that ISIS has become a major force in driving people away from Islam. ISIS claims to be the purest expression of Islam, causing more and more people to feel disenfranchised from their religion and to turn to alternatives, including the Christian faith. In addition, Arab nations subscribing to Sunni Islam fear a militant takeover of the region by the Shiite branch of Islam led by a nuclear Iran. Today they see Israel more as an ally to help them fight against the common enemy, Iran, rather than as the traditional “Little Satan” they have wanted to destroy. These new changes have engendered many unexpected facets, leading some Arab media to be more pro-Israel than their European counterparts.

This means that some Christian friends of Israel need to say farewell to their belief that ‘Arabs are the archenemies of Israel’. The reality today is far more complex than this. This certainly means that the church needs to cover the region more in prayer. God has His own vision for the region, as described in Isaiah 19, for example. His heavenly plan is to reach a state where Israel and its Arab neighbours become a “praise on the earth”. Let this be our prayer and let us give Him no rest until we see His will done on earth as it is in Heaven.

The above can help us understand that in the midst of hostilities, God is restoring Zion and is even starting to do a new work in the Arab world. Please continue to pray for Israel’s restoration, for the Jewish and Arab believers in the region, and for God to continue to unfold His plan in the Arab world.
The Middle East is known as a very turbulent area. For decades, the international community has sought to maintain stability in the region through a policy forged by US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. But I believe we are now witnessing the demise of “Kissingerism”.

In the Yom Kippur War of 1973, Kissinger brought the world back from the brink of nuclear war. Once Israeli forces recovered from the surprise Arab invasion and started advancing on Cairo and Damascus, the Soviet Union threatened to intervene militarily, even with nukes. Alarmed, Kissinger rushed to resolve the deepening crisis.

Shuttling between the various capitals, Kissinger halted the IDF advance at Kilometre 101 in the Sinai and thereby positioned Washington as the primary mediator between Israel and the Arabs. His model for Middle East diplomacy was built on the premise that America is the only country which can bring Israel to heel, and thus the Arabs were wise to accept Washington as the main broker of peace between them and Israel.

Largely a product of the Cold War, this approach strengthened the West’s relations with the Arab world and ensured the free flow of Mideast oil going forward. Yet it required that the US (and its allies) adopt an even-handed approach to the Arab-Israeli conflict. Over time, this also meant that Israel’s historical rights and claims to its ancient homeland had to be put on a par with Palestinian nationalist claims to the same land.

This contrived ‘neutrality’ required, for instance, that for every condemnation of Palestinian terrorism, there had to be an equal denunciation of Israeli settlements. Every foreign leader who visited Jerusalem and laid a traditional wreath at Yad Vashem was also obliged to visit Ramallah and lay a wreath at Yasser Arafat’s grave.

But today, the Kissinger paradigm is collapsing! This is especially true under US President Donald Trump, who is not afraid to take sides. For starters, he recognised Jerusalem as Israel’s capital without making any parallel concessions to the Palestinians. Trump also has:

- Distanced himself from the two-state solution,
- Refrained from openly criticising settlement activity,
- Threatened to shut down the PLO office in Washington,
- Cut off more than half the US funding to UNRWA, and
- Supported the Taylor Force Act, which freezes US funding to the Palestinians so long as their “pay-to-slay” policy continues.

Some also are hoping Trump will recognise Israeli sovereignty on the Golan.

The current move away from the Kissinger model is due to a combination of Trump’s unconventional approach to diplomacy, certain regional shifts caused by the Arab Spring, and the growing threat of Iranian hegemony. The ancient Sunni-Shiite rivalry has flared, especially in Syria, and Trump has sided with the Sunni Arab powers, whose interests in containing Iran mesh well with Israel’s interests. Israel also has established a cooperative relationship with Russia without undermining its close ties to Washington. The overall shift is so discernible even Saudi officials are warning that unless the Palestinians learn to compromise, history is about to pass them by. 🇸🇦
Why should Christians give to bless Israel?

BY BARRY R. DENISON - ICEJ VP OPERATIONS

Israel is known today as a high-tech powerhouse, even to the point of having coined the term “Start-up Nation”. The Israeli shekel is now the second-strongest currency in the world, and in 2017, Israel’s exports to the world exceeded $100 billion.

So, with these indications of a strong economy, one might ask, “Why should Christians still give to bless Israel?” While this is a valid question, it is based on a faulty assumption; namely, that we are giving out of human compassion rather than a biblical mandate.

In Romans 15:27, Paul says, “If the Gentiles have been partakers of their (the Jews) spiritual things, their duty is also to minister to them in material things.” Paul is clear that salvation through Jesus came to the Gentiles, who were aliens separated from God’s covenants, but who have been brought near by the blood of Christ. (Eph 2:11-13) Therefore, Christians are spiritually indebted to the Jewish people, to share our own blessings in a spiritual and practical manner.

Our motivation to bless the Jewish people and the nation of Israel is to obey the Word of God. The verses above tell us that because of this great spiritual blessing, our salvation, redemption, forgiveness purchased through Jesus and freedom through Jesus’ death and resurrection has caused us forever and always – this side of Heaven – to be debtors to the Jewish people. That debt can only be met through our deliberate efforts to spiritually and practically bless the Jewish people.

The ICEJ was founded upon the Lord’s command in Isaiah 40:1, “Comfort ye, comfort ye my people.” This has been our guiding principle and mission statement since 1980. For almost 40 years, the ICEJ has received donations from Christians, like you, to meet the needs of the Jewish people and bless the nation of Israel.

In the midst of this high-tech, start-up nation, with exports on the rise and a strong global currency, there are significant segments of society that are being left behind. The ICEJ AID department is diligent to ensure that your gift goes to meet real needs. They speak Hebrew with the people, research government statistics on the segments of society at risk, and personally interact with donation recipients. They monitor where your donation goes and verify it is being used as designated: To help abandoned children, youth at risk, and people who have fallen into addiction, as well as assist new immigrants, and much more. One of the ICEJ’s main areas of support is to Holocaust survivors living in poverty, and we help them live out their last days in dignity with great love and care.

We are all familiar with the promises that God made to Abraham in Genesis that says, “Those that bless you and your descendants, I will bless, and those that curse you and your descendants, I will curse.” Just because God is blessing this nation with positive economic growth, this does not cancel out His command to us. Therefore, we give to bless the Jewish people out of a position of humility. God in His divine wisdom chose to reveal His covenants and His faithfulness to us through Israel. As Paul says in Romans 11, we are grafted into those covenants and promises, so we can give out of gratitude.

When you give through the ICEJ, remember three things:
1. Blessing Israel and the Jewish people is a biblical mandate.
2. The ICEJ verifies that the recipients of your gift genuinely need help!
3. Finally, the recipients are aware that the help we give them comes from Christians all around the world.

When you bless Israel through the ICEJ, your financial gift clearly communicates a testimony of Christian love to the people of Israel who need it most. We invite you to bless the Jewish people today!

Donate at: int.icej.org/about/make-donation
As water builds into waves, so the PrayerWave is rising to greater heights. We now have 350 men and women from 52 nations in 21 time zones across the world, all of whom are earnestly seeking God in the early hours of the morning! These dedicated men and women rise up early to meet the Lord with the rising of sun. Many partnering with the PrayerWave have seen a powerful growth in their relationship with the Lord Jesus.

Sharon from New Zealand shared how her morning times with God have brought her closer to Him. After many years, she was inspired to start journaling during her prayer times again. Since she started these morning times of prayer, the Lord began moving in her close and extended family in greater measure. Jesus spoke to her personally about how to lead her prayer times, giving her new insights, and enriching her prayer life. Through the PrayerWave, people all over the world have given similar testimonies of growth and results in their personal prayer lives.

It is exciting to see how God answers when we pray. Last month we joined Colombia’s Christians in praying for the presidential elections. Ivan Marquez, a Christian who supports Israel, was running against the incumbent Juan Santos. The media had reported that there was no hope for Marquez, yet during the week of the elections, members of the PrayerWave standing with Colombian believers asked God to move during this decisive moment. Against all odds, the following week we saw Ivan Marquez elected as President of Colombia!

Here in Jerusalem on August 1st, we held our monthly sunrise prayer and worship session for the PrayerWave. Watching the sunrise over the city of Jerusalem, we were deeply blessed as we were led into an anointed time of worship by Shilo Ben Hod, an Israeli worship leader from Succat Hallel. We prayed for the restoration and comfort of Jerusalem (Isaiah 40:1-2), and for God to pour out His Spirit over His sons and daughters in Israel like He did in the Book of Acts. We recorded our time via Facebook Live, so others around the world could join us and share their prayer requests. Please join us via Facebook Live for sunrise prayer overlooking the city of Jerusalem on the first Wednesday of each month from 5am-7am Jerusalem time.

The PrayerWave is an invitation to draw closer to God and be a part of what He is doing in this season. If you hear God calling you to take your position as a watchman in your time zone, please go to www.ICEJprayerwave.com and sign up today!
When young people see Israel for the first time with their own eyes, something awakens in them, changing them forever. The Arise summer tour 2018, led by ICEJ Arise Director Jani Salokangas, was one of great impact with many hearts being filled with a greater love for God and Israel.

Some of the adventures throughout the Land of Israel were discovering Jerusalem’s many treasured places, dipping their feet in the Jordan River where Jesus was baptised, going on camel rides in the desert, floating in the Dead Sea, and exploring the Sea of Galilee, where Jesus performed many of His miracles.

This was an unforgettable trip for many, but it was especially so for James, a young man from Canada. Four years ago, James became a born-again believer, and it wasn’t until this trip to Israel that he was baptised for the first time! One memorable service project for the group was picking up loads of trash along the Sea of Galilee. James recounts, “This was not just a small act of service, but it was a great honour for me to use my own two hands to take care of the Land of Israel.”

Another young person that was deeply impacted by this trip to Israel was Destiny, also from Canada. She explained, “It has always been a far-off dream to go to Israel, but God brought me to Israel! Through this trip, God has encouraged me not to be afraid to dream with Him. When I go back home to Canada, I would like to be an advocate for Israel in some way. I have a dream to bring people together to educate them about Israel.”

During their time at the ICEJ headquarters in Jerusalem, they received special briefings on current affairs in Israel. One briefing was given by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s son, Yair Netanyahu. Only his fifth time in a public-speaking setting, Yair Netanyahu addressed these young Christians saying, “You are young people who have influence in your own countries, and you can shape the politics by encouraging your country to support Israel. Israel needs your support.”

After receiving a greater understanding of God’s word and God’s heart for Israel, these young believers will have a big impact on their respective nations. Just as these young people were changed by being here in Israel, we also encourage you with these words from James, “You have to see it with your own eyes!”

Learn more about Arise at: arisegeneration.org
MILLIONS PRAY FOR ISRAEL IN SAO PAULO

Brazil has many impressive features, but in the spiritual realm the blockbuster has got to be Sao Paulo’s annual March for Jesus. Millions of Christians took to the streets this year, and 2018 was particularly memorable because a special invitation was extended to the city’s Israeli consulate to participate in prayer for Israel. Amen and hallelujah.

SLOVAKIA CELEBRATION OF ISRAEL’S FOUNDING

BY ICEJ SLOVAKIA

Slovak Christians marked the historical event of Israel’s founding by organising public gatherings in May. One prominent gathering was sponsored by the ICEJ’s Slovakia branch and drew the general public to the central part of Bratislava, Slovakia’s capital, in the evening hours of May 10th.

Israeli flags waving once again in the city centre
It was a privilege for ICEJ Slovakia and dozens of Christians regardless of their denominational background to rally publicly in support of Israel.

Guest speakers consisted of various high-profile public personalities and recognised activists. One of them was a well-known blogger who had been awarded a special award for fighting against extremism and antisemitism by his insightful analyses of the growth of neo-Nazism in Slovakia. Among other guests were Mr Marek Krajci, Member of the Slovak Parliament and currently also the chairman of the Allies of Israel Caucus in the Slovak Parliament, Mr Zvi Aviner Vapni, Israeli Ambassador in Slovakia and Prof Pavel Traubner, Honourable Chairman of the Federation of Jewish Communities in Slovakia.

The programme also included interactive elements. We asked seven volunteers to read out loud 70 remarkable facts about modern Israel from the stage. The celebration concluded with a spectacular formation of David’s hexagonal star made out of 300 burning candles. Everyone could join in and put a candle on the pavement of the Hviezdoslav Square in the Bratislava city centre. The event was a worthy public contribution of ICEJ Slovakia to the modern Israel’s 70th birthday celebrations.
2017 FEAST HIGHLIGHTS DVD

Inspired by the words of Zechariah, over 6,000 Christian pilgrims from more than 100 nations came up to Jerusalem for the Christian celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles in 2017, presented by the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem. This DVD gives you a front-row seat to the Feast of Tabernacles in the Land of Israel.

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BY PETRA VAN DER ZANDE

This book gives background information on how the festivals and events were celebrated in biblical times, and how they are performed in today’s re-born State of Israel. The guide will help you gain more respect and appreciation for the biblical festivals, the Jewish holidays, and the Word of God.

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ICEJ SHOMER PENDANT

Shomer is the Hebrew word for watchman. The artistically designed replica of the Zion Mule Corps’ insignia includes an engraving on the back with the scripture from Isaiah 62:6 in Hebrew and the initials of the ICEJ, 24K Gold plated.

30 USD

NEW
From Embassy Resources

WHERE ARE WE ON THE PROPHETIC TIMETABLE?

When His disciples asked Jesus for His views on the end times, He pointed to the “days of Noah” as the key to unlock the timing of “the coming of the Son of Man.” But what exactly did He mean by that?

FLOODGATES unravels precisely what happened in the Flood of Noah and explains why this important biblical event is such a fitting analogy for our day. This book offers a clear biblical paradigm for determining where we are on the prophetic timetable, based on the actual teachings of Jesus and the apostles.

“a masterful explanation…of the coming of the Son of Man” – Gordon Robertson, CEO, Christian Broadcasting Network

About the Author

David R. Parsons is an author, attorney, journalist, ordained minister, and Middle East specialist who serves as Vice President and Senior Spokesman for the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem.

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The enduring faith to reach Israel

Dreams are alluring but attaining them can be hard. The road to reach Jerusalem for the remainder of Ethiopia's Jewish community has been a long and hard-fought effort. The ICEJ’s TV Department ventured out to capture and share unique moments of insight and background into the journey of Aliyah for the Jewish community in Ethiopia today. This has resulted in a moving and faith-inspiring documentary.

The last remnant

At present, Israel houses more than 120,000 Jews of Ethiopian descent, who have arrived here through the iconic Aliyah pushes during Operations Moses, Joshua and Solomon; some even wandered on foot to Israel through deserts and warzones. Still, there is a remnant waiting, as approximately 9,000 are left in Ethiopia. Things are moving in the right direction, but obstacles remain due to budgetary constraints in Israel. In principle, the political decision has been made to bring the remaining Ethiopian Jews home, but the funds need to be released.

The long wait

For the remaining communities, families and individuals in Ethiopia, the wait continues to grow longer with great hardship. Yet their endurance and patience to reach the goal of their dreams, a return to their ancestral Israel, is likewise something that is both faith-challenging and faith-inspiring for Christians. These Ethiopians are not waiting in the comfort of their homes, instead they moved into temporary homes in other parts of the country so they could be ready to go to Israel. Unfortunately, they were caught in a limbo when a hiatus to Ethiopian Jewish immigration was introduced.

Ancient Jewish community

When the ICEJ team visited Gondar, they experienced the fascinating scene of an ancient Jewish community praying with 3,000-year-old sighs to return to the Promised Land. Their faith and pure desire to suffer the wait and hardship in Ethiopia for years on end has a profound effect on anyone who witnesses their plight, as you will after watching the documentary. In equal measure, you will see and feel the joy of those who get to cross into Israeli airspace and reunite with loved-ones on the ground at Ben Gurion International Airport.

The pivotal role of the ICEJ

Ethiopian community leaders in Israel testify to ICEJ’s pivotal help for plane tickets and the unique cooperation that this project has fostered between Christians and Jews. The ICEJ’s Ethiopian mission has been an interfaith act, a type of action that deeply impresses Jews without threatening their identity. These acts bring people together and bridge the two faith communities.

In the words of Danielle Mor of The Jewish Agency for Israel, “this special friendship between Christians and Jews” testifies to the fact that “not only are we living in prophetic times” but “blessed times, to be able to take part in that”.

Barry Denison, the ICEJ’s VP for Operations, explains in the documentary that “our Lord Jesus is showing His faithfulness to the nations as He restores Israel”.

Share in the struggles, trials and ultimate joy of Ethiopian immigrants being released to travel to Israel, and see their wonder and humble gratitude as they finally arrive. 😊

To pre-order this exceptional documentary, give your donation at: Int.icej.org/documentary (premiers 23 September)
A splendid summer day in July, El Al chartered planes touch down on the tarmac at Ben Gurion International Airport. The aircraft come from four countries on three different continents, bringing 300 new immigrants from Argentina, Brazil, France and Russia. And they are awaited with great joy and excitement. Israel lives!

A crowd of young Israelis, recent immigrants, and dignitaries are waiting at a large hangar right next to the runway. With bubbling enthusiasm, a funnel of singing Jewish teenagers waving flags usher in the new arrivals into the reception ceremony with Jewish songs and shouts of “Am Israel chai” (The people of Israel live). The new immigrants are visibly touched, and some are brought to tears as they feel the warm embrace into their new homeland.

Defeating past ghosts

The Jewish people are still living with the ghost of the Holocaust and the very present insecurity and challenges Jews face, even in Western societies like France. But today there is no trace of doom and gloom, rather the opposite.

Israel wants to be the home for the Jewish people. For the immigrants and for Israel equally, this arrival event during the 70th year of Israel’s existence is greatly encouraging. It takes place only one day after Tisha B’Av, the date in Jewish history that uncannily marks so many calamities, such as the destruction of both the first and second temples.

Outgoing chairman for The Jewish Agency for Israel, Natan Sharansky shares in his speech, “The 300 immigrants who came from all over the world on the day after Tisha B’Av are a guarantee that there will be no return to the past, and the State of Israel will be even stronger.”

Israel is the safe haven

Israel will offer its own set of struggles, but here the new immigrants will not be struggling simply because of their ethnic background and religious identity. “Here they don’t kill Jews,” as former Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi Yisrael Meir Lau expresses very succinctly, reminding about his first reaction to arriving in Israel after going through the Holocaust. He arrived on Israel’s Mediterranean shore in 1946 in a fishing boat.

The bond of shared experience

There is a special solidarity and ebullience shared by new immigrants to Israel. The proof of this is a Brazilian couple, Luciano and Karen, who just arrived five days earlier and are settling into their new home in Nahariya, in northern Israel. Amazingly, they just up and left Brazil with their three daughters to start a completely new existence in Israel without ever having visited the country! Their adventurous and joyous attitudes are refreshing, and they show no hint of regret. ICEJ’s VP for Operations, Barry Denison, exchanges a few words with the family in Portuguese, delighting the children and making them feel comfortable by speaking their own language.

Making the right choice

Another member of the welcoming party is Lena Chekroun, a 16-year-old immigrant from France, whose family arrived in Israel when she was twelve. Her desire is to help affirm new immigrants in having made the right choice and to make them feel welcome. “Israel is the future of the Jewish people,” she concludes, simultaneously commending her parents for the “amazing” choice they made to settle in Israel four years back.

You are making the right choice, too, when you support Aliyah. Christian support makes new immigrants feel welcome, prepared and eager to build a new life in their Jewish homeland. Please remember the ones who are waiting for an opportunity to come to Israel. Your help can make the difference and put them on the tarmac at Ben Gurion International Airport.

“We live in a time of miracles. What prophets have said thousands of years ago is now happening right before our eyes. Seventy years and now look at the state of Israel. Maybe one of you will be a Knesset member one day.”

– MK Avraham Neguise
GAZA TROUBLES
SPECIAL CRISIS REPORT
BY DAN HERRON

Put fires out and bomb shelters in
There are two important victory conditions for Israel when it faces armed conflict: Bring the fight to the enemy and protect the home front. In the past, Israel could more easily protect its home front through offensive action. Today, political realities and new weapons mean that the home front is both more vulnerable and more important. The strength of the home front directly influences whether Israel is viable as a country or not. When you help the ICEJ purchase essential firefighting equipment or put in new bomb shelters, you are tending to the viability of Jewish communities and providing the staying power they need.

1. Your help and prayers boost the confidence and resilience of local Israelis.

2. Your help and prayers frustrate the enemy’s attempt to terrorise civilians.

3. Your help and prayers save lives and brings Israel a step closer to victory!

And Israelis notice your help! And they say thank you! Remarkably, when we spoke with Elan Isaacson, Head of Security for the Eshkol Region, he thanked us for more than our current crisis help; he thanked us for standing with Israel all year round! You are a great testimony to the men and women on the frontlines.

The ICEJ steps in to help
When the ICEJ visited Kibbutz Kissufim in July, a short distance from the Gaza border, smoke from a fire was billowing upward in the background. In our close vicinity a total of three fires had broken out. This type of vandalistic warfare has destroyed more than 7,500 acres of agricultural land and natural habitats along Israel’s border with Gaza.
The cry for all-terrain firefighting equipment first sounded from local security officials struggling to protect their areas, such as Elan Isaacson, “I want to thank our friends at the Christian Embassy for your swift response in providing us with firefighting trailers. These trailers are the greatest current need we have to respond to the incendiary balloons coming across the border. Your support, not just now in times of crisis, but throughout the year, is very important to us and it strengthens us. I want to express my heartfelt thanks to all of our Christian friends.”

The ICEJ has donated a total of six firefighting trailers (total cost per unit 15,500 USD). You can also be on the frontline with Israelis. They will know that Christians like you from around the world helped put the right equipment into their hands at the time of their great need. The trailers are essential because they are the only equipment that can respond quickly and effectively enough in all types of terrain before brush fires turn into blazes.

Sheltering Israel’s Gaza frontier communities
Do you know how important you are to Israel’s frontline communities? Christians like you play a crucial role in keeping Israelis safe from Gaza’s rockets and mortar shells. When a mother and her children hear the high-pitched whistle of an incoming mortar round, they have somewhere to run because of you. When the siren blares in warning of a rocket’s imminent impact, they can quickly find secure shelter because of you.

Since the terrorist organisation Hamas took control of the Gaza Strip in 2007, the ICEJ has continuously worked to put in shelters to secure threatened communities in Israel’s vulnerable south-west region. With the determined support from Christians like you, we have constructed a total of 61 shelters. Thanks to generous help from Helga and Rudolph Frei, a couple from Switzerland, we will shortly be able to place six more steel shelters. These mobile shelters are particularly effective because their 7-ton weight allows crane trucks to move them with relative ease to the locations they are needed most. These shelters are also easy to keep clean and maintain. After intense rocket barrages and exchanges of fire this summer, a relative calm settled over the Gaza Envelope toward the end of July. Yet the arsons continue, and the need for maintaining readiness for and protection from future mortar and rocket attacks persists. You are important for the staying power of Jewish communities in Israel’s south, and we thank you for keeping up the courage of Israel’s border communities.
THE HAIFA HOME CONTINUES TO GROW
BY ICEJ AID

The ICEJ is thrilled to announce further expansion of the Haifa Home for Holocaust Survivors through the generous gifts of the ICEJ family worldwide, and particularly the German Branch.

As the number of Holocaust survivors still living in Israel continues to dwindle as advancing age brings more challenges, the Haifa Home is expanding to offer more survivors a place of loving comfort. The purchase of another building in the area will provide the space for extra residential apartments that allow for a live-in, full-time caregiver. Some residents who require full-time assistance will move into the new premises, leaving their apartments available for other survivors.

The new building is a short distance from the main complex, so the less mobile residents will have their own community space for health-appropriate activities. Excitingly, an office on the ground floor of the building used by a local business will be the ICEJ’s new northern branch office. ICEJ AID’s Yudit Setz will oversee the role of ICEJ in the life of the Home, which includes coordinating ICEJ teams and local Israeli companies who will contribute to renovations of the new building.

We are excited about what God is doing and how this home has continued to grow and embrace Israel’s precious Holocaust survivors.

Join us in completing this beautiful work of providing more space and care for more Holocaust survivors! int.icej.org/haifa-home-building-project

A NEW ICEJ OFFICE IN HAIFA
BY ICEJ AID

Last year ICEJ AID’s Yudit Setz, realised with growing excitement and certainty that God was directing her to relocate to Haifa. This move allows her to more closely coordinate the significant role ICEJ plays in the life of the Haifa Home for Holocaust Survivors.

The new ICEJ office will be connected to the Haifa Home building, and it will be the base from which Yudit can arrange for, supervise and coordinate long and short-term volunteers to fill a variety of vital roles. Her presence will provide more opportunities to connect people from the nations to the survivors, their painful and important stories, and to the deep emotional wounds that the Holocaust seared into the heart of the nation. The exciting development of placing an ICEJ office in Haifa will result in Christian visitors and local Israelis knowing more about the service and purpose of the ICEJ in Israel.

The ICEJ’s support of the Haifa Home for Holocaust Survivors has been one of adventure, poignancy, laughter, some tears, looking urgently to God for funds and rejoicing at God’s supply through the ICEJ family.

As Yudit and her husband leave behind 30 years of residence in Jerusalem, Yudit says, “This is a huge step in our lives, but this amazing project has a special place in my heart. I look forward to increasing its potential to connect the Church to Israel, and its residents to receive hope and healing from that connection.”
This summer the ICEJ Haifa Home for Holocaust Survivors was greatly impacted by six families from Switzerland, consisting of 15 adults and 17 children. Every year these families serve together somewhere in the world, and this year they chose Israel.

The women and children made crafts with the residents, the older children learned karate from a resident, and the men and boys mended walls, painted, and fixed windows. The families listened to the survivors’ first-hand testimonies about the horrors of the Holocaust, as well as their resilience in building new lives, families, and the nation of Israel. They also played games, sang and danced together. After a whole week of joy and entertainment, the departure was difficult for everyone.

The residents had nothing but great things to say about this family. Esti said, “This group is so special. Beautiful families that came during their holidays to be with us. Unbelievable. They fill my heart with love.”

Donate at: int.icej.org/Haifa-home-needs
ICEJ AID

BEIT SINGER
PLAYGROUND
BY KAYLA ELLINGSWORTH

Playing is a time for a child to enjoy, laugh, discover, create, and use its imagination. In Israel’s northern countryside there is a children’s boarding school called Beit Singer, which has partnered with the ICEJ for decades.

Beit Singer and their neighbours were in great need of a safe place for the children to play. Therefore, the ICEJ, specifically ICEJ Canada, along with other donors helped build a wonderful new playground for all of the children. The unique trait about this playground is that it connects children without families with children living with their families. This creates new friendships and a greater unity within the area.

The CEO of Beit Singer, Yehuda Amsalem, expressed his gratitude to the ICEJ and Christians around the world for their continued support. “Together with the children, we sincerely thank you for your generosity and warm heart, and wish you continued success with your blessed endeavours in support of at-risk children and youth. We look forward to your continued participation in future projects.”

Join us in continuing to support the youth of Israel:
int.icej.org/relief-work

A GIFT THAT TOUCHES THE HEART
BY MAXINE CARLILL

The Jewish festivals can evoke difficult memories among some elderly in Israel, as the reality of loneliness settles when there is no one with whom to celebrate. This is where Homecare steps in to ensure that Holocaust survivors, many from the Ukraine where Nazi killing squads hunted Jews, are not forgotten during special Jewish holidays. A handmade gift, a pot of honey or a supermarket coupon are appreciated gifts. However, there is a greater gift that touches hearts more deeply.

When Noam, a survivor of a ghetto and concentration camp, received a supermarket voucher and a card last year, he looked at it carefully and said, “The voucher is help for me, but the card touches my heart.”

Homecare provided nursing care for an elderly woman for 20 years and connected with her family as well. The son, with tears in his eyes, shared that his mother treasured all the cards Homecare gave her for the Holidays, carefully storing them in her cupboard. Other survivors like Elena said, “You are the only people who remember me at the Jewish holidays.” In moments of feeling down, Tania also said that she reads her cards to remember she is not alone. A simple greeting card with a Bible verse and a message of love on behalf of Christians around the world is a gesture that brings hope and life.

Join us in touching many hearts with God’s love during this holiday season: int.icej.org/homecare
How do you change the future of the Palestinian people? One way is to reach out to their youth. Changing attitudes among young Palestinians is one of the cardinal goals for achieving better prospects for the Palestinians as a people and for their relations with Israel. The ICEJ recognises this and that is why we support a Christian scout troop in Bethlehem.

This scout troop plays not only a prominent role in participants’ lives, but it is also an active part of community life. The main activity of the scouts is their marching band, which performs and participates in marches and parades each year for Christmas, Easter and other national meets throughout Israel. Counsellors are also scraping together funds for a four-day summer camp for the kids.

Real Bible study and real loud band practice

Three very important dimensions of the children’s character are being built in their time spent with the scouts, whose meetings take place in a Baptist Church in Bethlehem. After an initial tumbling period, the children sit down for a Bible lesson. When we were there, a youth leader read and taught the story of Lazarus in an engaging manner, with all the kids sitting and listening attentively. This builds the spiritual dimension of the youth who participate.

Secondly, the social fellowship and interaction with other youth in a positive atmosphere and the pursuit of musical skills builds social ability for the youth who participate. It’s just pleasant and encouraging to see the joy of life and energy when these kids get to run free on the church grounds.

Third, the kids are having fun banging away at drums and cymbals while they are pursuing a joint, meaningful goal. Their energies are steered in a positive direction.

Beyond Christian circles

Even youth from a Muslim background are being attracted to the Christian scouts’ activities, yet the Christian scout associations don’t have an easy time getting their allocated funds because of discrimination from Muslim authorities. This impedes them from buying new equipment and uniforms, as well as limiting the types of activities the scouts can undertake. Yet thanks to your help, many Palestinian youth are off the street, on beat and on target.

Donate at: int.icej.org/relief-work
NEW SWEDISH BRANCH IS OFF TO A STRONG START

BY GITTEN ÖHOLM

In my capacity as national director for ICEJ Sweden, I recently had the opportunity to attend Almedalen Week (the most important political forum in Swedish society). In an instant, I realised this was my open door to launch a petition for moving the Swedish embassy to Jerusalem.

When I visited the morning prayer at our headquarters in Jerusalem last June, Mojmir Kallus mentioned that nations will be called to give an account on this matter. I understood that there is no excuse for Sweden. I sensed it deep down in my heart, and I felt that now is the time of fulfilled prophecy. As national director, I want to do my part and add one missing piece to the puzzle.

With three other organisations to support the petition, we created a sign-up list on the internet, printed postcards to hand out and started to make phone calls. The response from the three other organisations (one of them a political party) was very promising. They plan to link up with us and encourage their members to sign up.

We are now devising a strategy for initiatives during the autumn and winter seasons to encourage the Swedish nation to move its embassy to Jerusalem. We have an election in September, and our plan is to hand over this petition to the incoming foreign minister. Please stand with us in prayer for these elections and Sweden’s stance on the issue of Jerusalem.
The Syrian Civil War continues to inflict heavy suffering on the people of Syria. Ever since the ICEJ was approached by the IDF 18 months ago to take part in Operation Good Neighbor, the ICEJ has provided active assistance in multiple ways. We initially provided baby formula, then medical equipment and helped sponsor mobile medical teams that went deep behind Syria's battle lines.

"Throughout the duration of the war, I think all of us have watched the war unfold, and we thought, or we said, 'The international community should do more. The Church should do more. We should do more...,'" says Dalton Thomas, head of a Christian aid organization that partners with the ICEJ.

The ICEJ has sponsored several medical teams under the auspices of the IDF's Operation Good Neighbor, thereby gaining access to Syria through Israel's border to provide humanitarian assistance to these displaced citizens in desperate need of support.

While meeting with Thomas and Marco Morreno, former IDF lieutenant colonel and representative for Operation Good Neighbor, we overlooked hundreds of tents lining the Israeli border from the Golan Heights. The internally displaced people of Syria (IDPs) were seeking refuge in the “No Fly Zone” along Israel's borders to protect themselves from the damage being done by the Syrian regime with Iranian and Russian support.

At the time of writing, the direct ability of the IDF and its partner organisations to assist war victims and refugees has been curtailed by military developments, as government forces move in to reassert control of formerly rebel-held areas.

In the future, Thomas hopes to establish education initiatives and trauma counselling as the next wave of humanitarian aid, but it will not be possible to move forward without an open door. Please pray with us for the plight of Syrian people. 😇
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