Dear friends,

This new year is, in many ways, a year of new beginnings. For the ICEJ in Jerusalem, 2019 started with thankfulness for the 20+ years we were privileged to be tenants of our beautiful building owned by the Republic of the Ivory Coast. Sadly, this season is now coming to an end.

We ask you to pray with us as we search for a suitable new property: One which will allow us to fulfil our calling to comfort the Nation of Israel according to Isaiah 40:1, as well as expand and develop the ministry according to what the Lord has called us to do. Please also pray for provision of the finances needed to make this move a smooth one.

A Sober Reminder

The recent murder of young Christian missionary, John Chau, on the Sentinel Islands reminds us there are still nations and tribes on our planet which have never heard the good news of Jesus Christ. This event brought Jim Elliot to mind, the missionary who was killed in 1956 by Huaorani tribesmen of Ecuador along with five of his friends, as they tried to reach out to them. It was Jim Elliot’s wife that later found an open door to share the saving grace of Jesus with the Huaorani, including some of the same tribesmen who had murdered her husband.

Jesus declares to his disciples: “And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come” (Matthew 24:14). In addition to the restoration of Israel, the spread of the Gospel of the kingdom “to all the nations” is one of the great signs of the return of Jesus. The restoration of Israel and proclamation of the Gospel are two horses of the same chariot, as Juha Ketola former ICEJ International Director liked to say.

We are living in exciting times: God has an amazing purpose for each one of us. Whether you are called to serve Israel, the nations, or both, I challenge you to give your utmost for His highest. Jim Elliot once said, “He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep, to gain that which he cannot lose.”

Again, please keep the ICEJ in prayer regarding our move to a new building and consider supporting the various projects highlighted in this new issue of the Word from Jerusalem.

Thank you so much for standing with us,
As 2018 came to a close, and the ICEJ began to anticipate the new beginnings which 2019 would bring, we were presented with an unexpected challenge of finding a new home for the head office in Jerusalem!

The ICEJ leadership is currently in the process of looking for a new home and we need your prayers!

Since 1996, the ICEJ has been honoured to be the tenants of one of the most beautiful buildings in Jerusalem. For the past 20 years, our landlord has been the Republic of Ivory Coast and we have enjoyed a very good relationship with them over the years. Unfortunately, our long-term lease of the building has come to an end and the government in Abidjan, due to legal restrictions in Israel, was not able to extend the contract with us for another period.

Therefore, we are currently searching for the ICEJ’s new home, a facility which will allow us to continue – and eventually expand – our ministry here in the Holy City. We know that God has already prepared the right building for us and has placed in the hearts of the ICEJ leadership in Jerusalem and the Board of Directors to eventually own our own property here in Jerusalem.

In recent weeks and months, various people reminded us of Isaiah 54:3-4:

"Enlarge the place of your tent and let the curtains of your habitations be stretched out; do not hold back; lengthen your cords and strengthen your stakes. For you will spread abroad to the right and to the left, and your offspring will possess the nations and will people the desolate cities."

We ask you to stand with us in prayer, believing that 2019 will begin a new season for the ICEJ.

Please pray:

- for God to enlarge ‘the place of our tent’ and ‘strengthen our stakes’ here in Jerusalem.
- for us to find the right location.
- for God’s provision to meet all the needs which will arise as we make this important move.
- for a release of finances to make this an easy move.

Deuteronomy 28:6 – “You will be blessed when you come in and blessed when you go out.”

Please also pray for God to bless the nation of Ivory Coast, for allowing us to use their beautiful property all these years.

Many blessings from Jerusalem and thank you for standing with us.
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As we begin each new year, it is always good to be reminded that God is a God of beginnings. One of the main characteristics of God is his eternal nature. Eternity is a difficult concept for us to grasp. Eternity is a quality that has no end but also has no beginning. It always was and always will be.

‘Eternity’ is thus sometimes a term used to refer to heaven; a place when time as we know it does not exist. One of the greatest scientists who ever lived was the Jewish physicist, Albert Einstein. With his theory of relativity, Einstein radically changed our earthly concept of time. According to this theory, the faster you go, the slower times passes.

For example, if we were to move in a spaceship at very high velocity, close to the speed of light, time would be dilated. If you could watch events on earth while travelling at 99.9% of speed of light, the events you were observing would look like an extreme time-lapse recording on your smartphone, with everything moving 25 times faster. During your year on that spaceship, you would see your family on earth celebrating 25 years’ worth of Christmas, birthdays, anniversaries, etc. When you returned to earth, they would be 25 years older while you would only have aged one year.

Einstein then stated that, should you travel at speed of light (which is impossible) and watch events on earth, you would observe it in a ‘hyper time-lapse’ which would show you everything on earth simultaneously. From your perspective, time as we know it on earth, would no longer exist.

Now all this is hard to imagine and even more difficult to understand but many experiments have proven Einstein’s theory to be correct. To see all human history simultaneously seems impossible; our brain would be overwhelmed by the amount of information.

During World War II, my father had an experience which brought him to the verge of just such a ‘hyper time-lapse’. Lying on his deathbed in a Russian POW camp in winter 1946, weakened by starvation and extreme pneumonia, he overheard the doctors saying “Bühler will die tonight!” In his desperation, he remembered the prayers of his mother and called to God. Then something happened to him that he told us kids many times: “In an instant I saw my entire life, from birth until that day, passing by like a movie. Then a voice came to me saying: ‘If you die now – based on the way you lived – you will be eternally lost!’” That day he gave his life to Jesus.
When God looks at events on earth, He is not confined to our time-space perspective. Augustine, one of the early church fathers, understood that time as we know it was created by God and that He exists outside our time. The best way for me to understand this is to remember that God identifies himself with light (e.g. John 1:9). The Lord, as light, is outside of the restraints of earthly time. That means in His realm, time does not matter.

It makes perfect sense when Jesus stated to the scribes of his time: “Before Abraham was I am” (John 8:58). From our perspective, this makes no sense but, from God’s perspective it was perfectly correct. As the eternal God, He is without end and without beginning.

Therefore, Paul knew and understood that God knows us and called us even before creation (Ephesians 1:9) and before time began (2 Timothy 1:9). What an amazing thought it is: Before the earth and the universe existed God already thought about us. That is why you and I exist today and this gives meaning to our lives.

Another amazing truth is that before time began, God already knew that humanity would need his saving grace in order to get us to our destiny. God perfectly knew that we would fail, make wrong decisions and even rebel against Him. But before time began he already provided an eternal remedy: the blood of Jesus. The book of Revelation describes Jesus as “... the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” (Revelation 13:8). The cross and the church is not a ‘plan B’ or an emergency scheme of God but was on his mind before time began. Jesus is thus the focal point and centre of time and history.

The prophet Isaiah highlights another characteristic of God which stretches our mind: “... I am God, and there is none like Me, Declaring the end from the beginning. And from ancient times things that are not yet done, Saying, 'My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure...’” (Isaiah 46:9-10). Not only did God see the start of our lives but He also knows how we will finish. There is no doubt that at the end of history ‘his council shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.’ What a great encouragement that is.

One of the greatest examples of this timeless and unshakable council of the Lord is the history of the people of Israel. The foundation of Israel’s purpose is found in God’s eternal purpose. Its biblical account starts after the flood.
After Noah’s family left the ark, his sons – Shem, Ham and Japheth – started new families and clans as described in Genesis 10. These families became the starting point of post-flood humanity. The Rabbis count 70 families and clans which originate from the sons of Noah, describing the nations of the world:

- The European clans from Japheth “… everyone according to his language, according to their families, into their nations.” (Genesis 10:5)
- The African and some Middle Eastern tribes from Ham “… according to their families, their languages, in their lands and in their nations.” (Genesis 10:20)
- The sons of Shem as more tribes from the Middle East and the regions of the East “… according to their families, according to their languages, in their lands, according to their nations.” (Genesis 10:31)

Genesis 10:32 summarizes these 70 families of the earth: “These were the families of the sons of Noah, according to their generations, in their nations; and from these the nations were divided on the earth after the flood”. After the flood, God committed to never again destroy these families with a deadly flood (Gen 8:21).

The very next chapter, however, describes that even after such a great judgment as the flood, mankind would still not worship God; pride and their own interests were their primary concerns. This is where Israel’s history began. Since God promised not to destroy mankind anymore by a flood, he decided instead to provide them a way of salvation. He called Abraham and prophesied to him “in you the families of the earth shall be blessed”, and the line of hope for the families of the earth began. Paul later recognizes God’s establishment in the lineage of Abraham was the starting point for God’s salvation story with all the families, all the tribes and languages (Galatians 3:8).

Israel has played a singular role in the salvation story of humanity: They gave us the Word of God and their Messiah brings light even to the furthest part of the world. As the seed of Abraham, Jesus became the center and focal point of time and history. That is why the church will always be indebted to bless the seed of Abraham as God’s chosen vessel to bring salvation to humanity.

Let us now fast forward to the end of history: John the seer was supernaturally taken out of the earthly timeframe and was able to see ‘the end from the beginning’. He was amazed to see all the families of Noah united in heaven worshipping the lamb:

“After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, saying, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!” (Revelation 7:9-10)

What started in Genesis – and even existed before the foundation of the world – now finds its completion. This amazing truth, that God already knew our end before our lives began, should personally give each of us the greatest encouragement. He is the beginning and the end, the Alpha and Omega. There are no surprises or emergency meetings in heaven because our God is the God of history who says not only about Israel but also about your life: ‘My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure.’ This is why Paul could so confidently state to the church in Philippi: “… being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;” (Philippians 1:6)

Even if your new year began with difficulty or unexpected challenges, be assured God will accomplish all that he has purposed for you. He will show you the good works God prepared beforehand for you (Ephesians 2:10). As you stay close to Jesus, spending time with Him and in His Word, He will be the author and finisher of your faith (Hebrews 12:1).

May the Lord bless you as you walk in his eternal purposes in 2019! 🎉
THE BLOOD LIBEL AGAINST ISRAEL
CHRISTIANS MUST CONFRONT THE SPIRITUAL MALADY OF ANTISEMITISM

BY DAVID PARSONS // VICE PRESIDENT & SENIOR SPOKESMAN

The horrific Pittsburgh synagogue massacre in late October left American Jews scrambling to erect new layers of security around their communal lives. Sadly, they are not far behind the Jews of Europe, who have already felt under siege for years. Indeed, there are now metal detectors and armed guards posted outside every Jewish synagogue, day school and community centre across the continent.

The list of recent terror attacks on ‘soft’ Jewish targets is long and far-flung: a Jewish deli in Paris, a day school in Toulouse, a museum in Brussels, a synagogue in Copenhagen. Even as far as Mumbai, India, and the quiet beach resort of Bondi in Australia, violence against Jews is lurking. Whether they are Muslim extremists, radical leftists, or far-right neo-Nazis like the Pittsburgh predator – Jew-haters are on the march everywhere.

No doubt, much of the resurgence in Antisemitism today is fueled by a hatred of Israel. Frustrated by their inability to dent or destroy the Jewish state, many Antisemites lash out at vulnerable Jewish communities nearby. Still, they will never be satisfied until Israel disappears completely. And their latest strategy for achieving this goal is quite cunning.

Haunted by The Hague
At the recent International Christian Media Summit in Jerusalem, Israeli deputy prime minister Michael Oren was asked to identify the primary existential threat to Israel in our day. Referring to the International Criminal Court in The Hague, he responded:

“The existential threat to Israel is to get us accused of war crimes... the battleground is not Lebanon or Gaza, the battleground is The Hague.” - Michael Oren

Hamas and Hizbollah rockets are a threat to Israel, but they’re not an existential threat. They know they cannot destroy us with all their rockets, but what they can do is to get us to shoot back... and they will be hiding in family houses... The existential threat to Israel is to get us accused of war crimes. It’s dragging us into the UN Security Council. It’s dragging us into the International Criminal Court in The Hague, and it’s denying us the right to defend ourselves, and ultimately denying us the right to exist as a sovereign Jewish state.”

“All these groups understand the strategy”, Oren explained. “We have fought this battle already four times... and our narrative has been steadily, irreversibly eroded. Our narrative does not get a fair voice... and we have not internalized the threat. We think it’s about tanks and planes, but we don’t have the right to use them. The Israeli army is bigger than the standing armies of France and the UK combined... But the battleground is not Lebanon or Gaza, the battleground is The Hague.”

Oren’s assessment was astonishingly prescient! The very next day, the Palestinian Authority was elevated in status at the United Nations
when it was appointed to head the G-77 group of non-aligned nations which controls the majority of votes in UN bodies. From this new position, the PA vowed to press on with its campaign to delegitimise Israel on the world stage. That very same day, the special prosecutor for the Middle East region at the Criminal Court in The Hague openly warned Israel that she was watching closely for actions along the Gaza border which could be tried as war crimes.

The Real Thugs
The UN’s abnormal obsession with Israel is well-documented. The Jewish state is repeatedly condemned in UN forums far more than all other members states combined, whilst real atrocities and abuses committed by tyrants and rogue regimes throughout the world are excused or ignored.

For example, consider that the Russian military, ever since it deployed troops inside Syria in 2015, has been responsible for killing an estimated 48,000 Syrians, mostly civilians, over the past three years. Yet, the UN is silent!

Meantime, the Assad regime in Syria has been killing, wounding and dispossessing Palestinians in far greater numbers than Israel ever did. In their brutal siege on the Yarmuk refugee camp alone, Assad loyalists over recent years have left tens of thousands of Palestinians dead, maimed or homeless.

Even the Palestinian Authority and Hamas have just been accused by Human Rights Watch of imposing “parallel police states” on the Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza, where arbitrary arrests and torture are “systematic”. The group even questioned why Western democracies are still funding these repressive regimes.

Yet the campaign to blame Israel alone for all the woes of the Palestinians, and indeed the whole region and even the world, marches on. It is advancing on college campuses and in the entertainment sector through the BDS movement and false apartheid label. The lawfare agenda against Israel is manipulating our court systems. The diplomatic assault on Israel continues to intensify. And the goal is more than just denying Israel the right to exist. Ultimately, it is aimed at convicting Israel of genocide and war crimes in the eyes of the world, in order to justify a final war of extermination against the Jewish state.

Truly, the enemies of Israel all understand this strategy, and it is nothing short of a colossal blood libel against the Jewish state and people.

A Spiritual Disease
Scholars who study Antisemitism have identified three main types of this uniquely persistent hatred – religious, racial and conspiratorial. In the past, Christians were the worst practitioners of the religious form of bigotry towards the Jews, while the Nazis championed racial and conspiratorial theories that slandered and dehumanized them. Today, in the post-Holocaust era, it is all blended together by the hard-right, far-left and radical Islamists.

For instance, they have accused IDF soldiers of killing Palestinians just to sell their organs on the black market. The Mossad was blamed for shark attacks on tourists at Sinai resorts. Israel is purportedly behind all the hurricanes and earthquakes of recent years. And, while Jews are deemed “racially and mentally inferior”, they somehow are “clever enough to control the world”. Some scholars even consider Antisemitism a mental disorder that requires treatment, which shows how irrational Antisemitism is.

At its core, Antisemitism is a spiritual malady; a spirit of jealousy and rejection against the Jewish people and we all must choose whether to agree with it or not! In these darkening times, it is crucial that Christians confront the Antisemites of our day. The forebears of our faith made grave errors when they spread outrageous lies against the Jews, with such destructive results. Thus, we have a special moral duty to tell the Jewish-haters of today that it was wrong then and it is wrong now. We must see to it that they do not repeat our mistakes!

ICEJ PARTICIPATES IN GPO’S CHRISTIAN MEDIA SUMMIT

The ICEJ was well represented at the second annual International Christian Media Summit, held in Jerusalem in mid-October and hosted by the Israel Government Press Office. Over 200 Christian reporters, publishers and broadcasters drawn from some 35 nations were addressed by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, President Reuven Rivlin, Deputy PM Michael Oren, Jerusalem Mayor Nir Barkat, former UN Ambassador Dore Gold and a number of other senior Israeli officials and top scholars and analysts. ICEJ Vice President David Parsons again served as the GPO’s primary Christian consultant for the summit and about a dozen ICEJ national directors and local staff participated in the gathering.

The Christian Media Summit promised once again to be rich in content and well-timed as Israel continued to mark the 70th Anniversary of the nation’s rebirth in 1948. PM Netanyahu was particularly relaxed at a briefing to kick off the summit, as he fielded some 20 questions – far more than he does at regular press conferences with the local and foreign press corps. He also invited US Ambassador David Friedman to bring a greeting, and the American Jewish envoy proceeded to quote Jesus in his remarks about the media battle over Israel, saying “the truth will set you free.”
ICEJ STAFF CAUGHT IN MASSIVE ROCKET BARRAGE

BY DAN HERRON

It started out as a routine visit to some of our aid projects along the Gaza border. On a bright November morning, I joined ICEJ AID director Nicole Yoder for a tour of several initiatives we sponsor in the western Negev. But by noon, nothing was routine about this day, as we got caught in the largest, most concentrated one-day rocket barrage ever to come from Gaza. Over the next 24 hours, nearly 500 rockets and mortars hammered Israeli communities along the border. Nothing could have mentally prepared us for this onslaught of Hamas firepower.

Timely shelters
We were accompanied that day by our partner Shmuel Bowman, director of Operation Lifeshield, who first took us to a new mobile bomb shelter we had just placed in the region. The fact that the ICEJ has been providing bomb shelters all over the Gaza envelope — more than 70 to date — means residents have places of safety to run to when rockets begin to fall. By evening, the beneficiaries of this shelter had called to give thanks for its timely delivery, saying it had been quickly put to good use.

Sweet produce from a hard place
By our next stop, it was still quiet. The iconic Kibbutz Yad Mordechai boasts some of Israel’s best produce, including the best honey. The kibbutz spirit is very much alive at Yad Mordechai with no problem insurmountable. This was clear from hearing about the measures used to counter the arson threat from Gaza. They showed us a specially developed app named ‘Aviva,’ which alerts local security officers with real-time information about threats and their locations.

These threats are often in the form of incendiary balloons, and the kibbutz security team showed us one such device they were able to stop in time. Others were not intercepted, but they still were able to douse the resulting fires with a new firefighting trailer donated by the ICEJ which allows rapid, nimble response to brush fires. The kibbutz leaders could not thank us enough!

Gadi Arkoni – the right spirit
Our next stop was a meeting with Gadi Arkoni, mayor of the Eshkol Regional Council. Having lost both legs in a Hamas rocket strike, Gadi is a living embodiment of the suffering and resilience of the Jewish communities in the Gaza periphery. A kibbutznik through-and-through, he was born and raised in the area and studied agricultural management, which means he is 100% invested in this land. Yet, there is no trace of extremism or bitterness in Gadi. Just as Israelis will not budge from their land, he recognises the Gazans also are “here to stay.” For him, this means some agreement of coexistence eventually must be reached, though it remains a distant dream so long as Hamas rules Gaza. However, relations between Israel and Gaza have not always been this strained. Gadi remembers decades ago, when Gazans actually helped work the kibbutz’s fields. Ever hopeful, Gadi has several projects already in mind for when normalcy returns.
Wounded but not crushed
Gadi’s approach to life is astonishing – not just because of the trauma his region has endured, but also because of his own personal tragedy. In the last hour of Operation Protective Edge, the 50-day rocket war with Hamas in 2014, Gadi was repairing damage to his kibbutz’s electrical grid when several mortars landed on his emergency team. One shell severed Gadi’s legs and killed two of his close friends. A lesser man would have given up on life. Gadi, however reoriented himself and found meaning in public service. His first act was to testify to a UN commission in Geneva, where he was able to explain the very real consequences of Hamas terror tactics on Israel’s citizens. Back in the Negev, his personal commitment to the Eshkol region has helped fuel a 14% growth in population since taking office.

Surviving a war of attrition
Even with such strength and determination, the people of the Eshkol region need us. Gadi laments the tense “non-war” they have faced since the destructive ‘March of Return’ was launched in March 2018. It seems no end is in sight; yet there are fewer emergency funds being released by the government. Israel faces numerous threats everywhere and has no ready fix for the war of attrition waged from Gaza. This means Israelis here must persevere, and our support lifts their spirits immensely.

The Barrage begins
On our third stop of the day, we suddenly found ourselves sequestered in the operational room of the Sdot Negev Regional Council, just three miles from where rockets were being launched from Gaza. We had barely sat down for a briefing with local mayor Tamir Idan when the security chief relayed a report of an RPG strike on a bus with IDF soldiers at a popular vantage point close to the Gaza border fence. Thankfully the bus was mostly empty, though one soldier was severely wounded. Nevertheless, the news really struck home, as just a few months earlier a group of ICEJ staff had stood in that very spot peering over into Gaza.

Shortly after the RPG strike, the first ‘Red Alert’ siren sounded. We had thirty seconds to get to the basement shelter, which served as the region’s situation room. We hurried down the steps with the mayor and watched as he took control.

Under fire
Down in the basement, we saw everyone going about their emergency duties. The atmosphere was tense but these were true professionals. They knew others depended on them. As the sirens kept wailing, we could hear nearby mortar explosions as well as the launch of Iron Dome interceptors, followed by the distant booms of Kassam rockets shattering in mid-air. We counted a dozen or so alarms from our location and about 20 interceptor launches. Well over 400 rockets and mortars were fired from Gaza in about 25 hours – the most intense barrage to date.

Your help matters
Nicole and I experienced first-hand that day the urgent need to find shelter, and we were encouraged by those manning the operations room and their words of thanks for the ICEJ’s assistance. We have placed some 70 life-saving bomb shelters in this volatile region, and donated 17 fire-fighting wagons to douse the flames ignited by incendiary balloons. Yet sadly, Hamas continues to wage war from Gaza. There is still much to do to secure this besieged border area. Thank you for helping us as we stand together with the people of Israel!

Netanyahu tours the Sdot Hanegev Regional Council in southern Israel, October 17, 2018.

BACK FROM THE BRINK
POLITICAL FALLOUT FROM LATEST ROCKET BARRAGE

BY DAVID PARSONS

The massive rocket barrage from Gaza in November not only brought Israel to the brink of war, it also nearly toppled the government. When Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu agreed to an Egyptian-brokered ceasefire with Hamas to end the escalation, Defence Minister Avigdor Liberman resigned in protest. With the ruling coalition now down to a razor-thin 61 MKs, Education Minister Nafhtali Bennett then demanded the defence portfolio, or his party also would bolt the government, triggering early elections by spring. Despite all this, Netanyahu proved once more why he is the master of Israeli politics.

In a brief address to the nation, Netanyahu explained that Israel was in the midst of a complex, ongoing military operation against its enemies, and thus it was “irresponsible” for Liberman or Bennett to force new elections at such a sensitive time. He did not specify the security operations involved – since then we have learned of risky IDF intelligence gathering inside Gaza, while the US reportedly has assumed temporary control of the air space over Syria, giving Israel a continued window of freedom for now to strike Iranian targets there. Bennett backed down and Netanyahu saved his government.

However, Netanyahu was left in a precarious position as just one maverick MK could still topple the government over some outlandish demand. It is likely that he will now look for the right moment – and a reason more to his advantage – to call for new elections. A national ballot is due anyway by November 2019, and the prime minister must factor in possible indictments over a series of scandals he is facing. But should he survive and win re-election – which all the recent polls indicate is likely – he will surpass founding father David Ben-Gurion as the longest-serving and most-often elected prime minister in Israel’s history.
THE PALESTINIANS, MYTHS AND MARTYRS
BY JOHANNES GERLOFF

Besides excellent historical background and insight into the political developments in the Middle East according to International law established between the World Wars and afterward, you will hear real testimony from people on both sides of the Israeli/Palestinian conflict and amazing stories of things that Johannes has experienced himself during his time in the region.

29 USD

HEBREW-ENGLISH BIBLE

This leather-bound Bible features Hebrew and English side by side. The Hebrew in the Old Testament has been taken from the Masoretic text, while the New Testament Hebrew is from the Modern Hebrew translation. The English text is from the NASB.

85 USD

A HISTORY OF ISRAEL FROM THE RISE OF ZIONISM TO OUR TIME
BY HOWARD M. SACHAR

The theorists of Zionism had anticipated that revived nationhood in the land of Israel finally would lift this unique and burdensome affliction from the backs of the Jewish people; for, aside from the religionists among them, the Zionists were animated less by a sense of mission than by a search for normalcy.

59 USD

BEAUTIFUL ISRAEL CALENDAR 2019

Enjoy scenes from Israel with this stunning photo calendar, displaying the beauty of the Promised Land.

7 USD

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Go to: ICEJSTORE.COM and use the discount code: ICEJ2019WFJ – The special 10% discount for your purchases at Embassy Resources is valid throughout 2019.
THROUGH THE FIRE
PASTOR Meka Dany

Your hope will soar as you read of the amazing account of God’s divine intervention in the life of Pastor Meka Dany of India. Since coming to Christ from a Hindu background, Pastor Dany was no stranger to persecution and trials. When his entire home exploded leaving him severely burned and barely alive, even doctors expected that he would surely die. But when it seemed that all was lost, that’s when God stepped in! You will find new courage and faith through this testimony.

6 USD

LOOKING BACK - TO FACE TOMORROW
ELGONDA BRUNKHORST

During the darkest, most difficult, and most painful days of my life - injured at work, loss of job, inability to do the usual work, crisis at home with an injured and aging mother to support, feeling weak and helpless - God reminded me of King David encouraging himself in the Lord. As I looked back over my life, I saw I had a lot to be thankful for, because God is always faithful. He is and will always be the great I AM, and a help in our troubles. He will remain the stability of our times and life, and with that blessed assurance, we can truly face tomorrow without fear but with trust, walk on in obedience, and prepare the way for His return.

18 USD

THE NEW JERUSALEM - ANOINTING OIL
10ML POMEGRANATE, 10ML FRANKENCENS, 10 ML BRIDAL GARDEN

This Premium Anointing Oil has been hand crafted in Israel using Extra Virgin Olive Oil made from Olive Trees around Jerusalem. It has been scented and mixed according to Ancient Hebrew recipes by using Biblical essential oils and fragrances sourced from Middle and Far East. This bottle of Anointing Oil has been dedicated to God and soaked in prayer and it has been officially tested for quality.

7 USD

ISRAEL RISING
DOUG HERSHEY

A unique book sharing the visual story of Israel’s miraculous journey from unforgiving desert land to thriving nation.

40 USD

ISRAEL RISING
MUSIC CD
DOUG HERSHEY

INTRODUCING the Israel Rising - 70th Anniversary Commemorative CD!

This CD contains 14 powerful songs filled with a heart for Israel. The listener will be taken on a musical journey, blending Hebrew and English vocals with ancient and modern music, all celebrating Israel’s 70th Anniversary in song!

15 USD
A NEW SEASON FOR ICEJ PUBLICATIONS

The fall of 2018 signaled a new beginning for ICEJ’s Publications Department as Dan Herron, Director since July 2017, stepped down to pursue academic studies in Jerusalem. During his time at ICEJ, Dan very much enjoyed the international character of the ICEJ Jerusalem staff and took full advantage of the opportunity, often communicating in three to four different languages on a daily basis. According to Dan, “It was a particular privilege for me to serve as Publications Director during the two anniversary milestones for Israel: Jerusalem’s Jubilee and Israel’s 70th anniversary.” These were also milestones for the ICEJ’s service to the Jewish nation and its people, a service in which Dan was both pleased and proud to take part.

Dan intends to pursue academic studies in Jerusalem, currently taking courses in counter-terrorism and Turkish foreign policy at Hebrew University. Alongside his university studies, Dan remains committed to promoting Aliyah and will also be working with youth at risk, as well as lone soldiers serving in the IDF.

As ICEJ said goodbye to Dan and wished him well in his pursuits, Julaine Stark transitioned from her post as Assistant to ICEJ’s Vice President of Operations and stepped in to lead the team. Since her arrival at the ICEJ head office in 2015, Julaine has served as Word from Jerusalem’s Copy Editor. This experience, combined with her background in publishing, editing and design, laid a solid foundation for her new role. “We are thrilled to have Julaine assume this position. Her loyalty and devotion to the ICEJ along with her unique skillset and call is exactly what will help to lead the Publications department into its next season of fulfilling our mandate in the land of Israel,” said Dr Jürgen Bühler, when commenting on the new appointment.

Julaine is a creative, optimistic woman of faith with a sense of adventure and a deep love for the people of Israel. In her words, “It has been a privilege to see first-hand the prophetic restoration of Israel and extend a hand of comfort and friendship to her people. To now speak to the world on their behalf (through ICEJ’s communications) is an honor and gift from the Lord, and I am profoundly grateful for this opportunity.”

As Julaine embraces her new position as the Publications Director, she is eager to add her personal touch to the magazine. Keep your eyes open for new features of the Word from Jerusalem in upcoming issues!
SHELTER ON THE SHEEP FARM

“We are blessed with this shelter. We are using it…unfortunately. We really, really thank you for this.” These were the words of a sheep farmer in the southern Negev. When ICEJ staff from Jerusalem headquarters visited this sheep farm near the border of Gaza to see a recently-installed bomb shelter donated by the ICEJ, the owner told us they had already used it. Several weeks after installation and only days before we arrived, the warning sirens went off and the owner and her family ran to the shelter as they heard rockets exploding in surrounding areas.

As we were hosted for a tour and delicious dairy luncheon prepared by these humble and resilient Israelis, we could feel the sincere gratitude they expressed towards Christians around the world who helped them in their time of need.

As small business owners, they couldn’t afford a shelter which the law requires for every business in the area. Thus, they are even more grateful: Without the support of the ICEJ and provision of this bomb shelter, their restaurant would have been shut down. Thanks to Christians like you, this community will keep their restaurant and provide protection for their guests and family.

WATCHMEN ON THE BORDER

BY DAN HERRON

At Kibbutz Nachal Oz, right on the restive Gaza border, the ICEJ’s Aid Team visited a chapter of an elite volunteer unit, which serves as tactical support for Israel’s police and Border Police forces. The ICEJ has supported these volunteers with necessities, such as winter clothing, as well as more advanced equipment in the form of protective vests.

Before touring the Kibbutz’ perimeter with a clear line of sight to Gaza, we re-saddled from our Skoda sedan to a heavy Land Rover Defender, with windows made from thick slabs of protective glass. The local volunteer officer normally leads 20 men, but because of the increased challenge from Gaza, all-in-all 70 volunteers are currently active in the entire Gaza Envelope. “No way, I’m leaving,” was the determined response from this father of two, when asked of the dangers, “this is my home.” The volunteer officer looks forward to returning to the peace which used to characterise the area, e.g., for Shavuot (Pentecost) when hosts of people would congregate for a farmers’ festival right here on the border.

You help keep these determined volunteers in the field by enabling the ICEJ to supply items like tactical clothing or winter garb. These volunteers help maintain the civilian presence in one of Israel’s hotspots and are part of the comprehensive effort to enable Jewish civilian life to continue next to the menacing neighbour on the other side of the Gaza border fence.
A BEAUTY WHICH ENDURES

BY BIRTE SCHOLZ

True beauty endures over time and continues to shine, regardless of the circumstances. This is the beauty displayed by residents of the ICEJ Haifa Home for Holocaust Survivors, and every year this timeless beauty is celebrated at “Miss Holocaust Survivor,” Israel’s annual gala event.

In October, more than 2,000 Holocaust survivors and their families gathered at Haifa Congress Hall to celebrate “Miss Holocaust Survivor 2018.” The twelve contestants included many residents of the ICEJ Haifa Home; the ladies were dressed up beautifully and received professional treatment from hair stylists and make-up artists. During the pageant, each woman shared part of her story, and the main message to the world was this: “We wish for Shalom in the world, that our beautiful country is taken care of and that you will never forget what we went through.” Israeli TV and international media teams covered the event to share this message with the world.

93-year-old Holocaust survivor Tova Ringer received the crown this year. “I am very happy. It is something special. I wouldn’t believe that at my age I would be a beauty,” remarked Tova, a great grandmother who was born in Poland and lost her parents, four sisters and grandmother in the Auschwitz death camp.

Haifa Home residents were well-represented: Rita Kasimow Brown won Deputy Beauty Queen, and Judith Rosenzweig and Miriam Linial were honored with a special award for their courage. The Haifa Home choir closed the evening with a strong declaration: “We survived!” These women lost their youth during the Holocaust, but on this special evening they celebrated their true beauty. The beauty of life!

A BIRTHDAY TO REMEMBER

BY KAYLA MUCHNIK

Celebrating 100 years of life is quite an accomplishment, especially a life which endured through the unbelievable pain and sorrow of the Holocaust. Shoshana Kolmer, a resident of the ICEJ Haifa Home for Holocaust Survivors, recently celebrated her 100th birthday with great joy.

The birthday festivities were honoured with a special guest, Miri Regev, Israel’s Minister of Culture. Minister Regev joined more than 100 survivors and residents to celebrate Shoshana’s life and addressed the crowd with a message of encouragement.

Live music, dancing, stories, and laughter echoed through the halls of the Haifa Home. The other survivors and guests enjoyed the party just as much as the birthday girl. One of the Survivors said, “What a wonderful evening. I was so happy I came. It was so worth it. Thank you so much!” A daily visitor to the home, Rita Berkowitz, said: “What an amazing evening. You have given me the Garden of Eden. I was so alone and here I have found a loving family who are not only loving me but giving me joy and so much more. I have no words.”
AT HOME IN HAIFA
A NEW OFFICE FOR THE ICEJ
BY YUDIT SETZ

In the summer of 2018, the ICEJ expanded its presence in Haifa. The ICEJ’s Yudit Setz and her husband, Will, moved to Haifa to work more closely with the Haifa Home for Holocaust Survivors, and have been working diligently with the project ever since. Several months into the transition, this new ICEJ office in Haifa has already produced many valuable benefits. The Word from Jerusalem asked Yudit for an update of what God is doing through the ICEJ in Haifa.

Haifa has been our home for three months now, and we are living very close to the Haifa Home (for Holocaust Survivors). This gives us more opportunities to share in the daily lives of the residents, understand their needs and the needs of the home in general. I am also meeting many Israelis who not only read our sign on the building, but also engage with us wanting to know more about what we are doing.

The residents are so happy that we live in Haifa and see us almost every day. Many express that our presence gives them joy! We also meet daily with Shimon Sabag, Director of the Home, to discuss different challenges and solutions. It’s a great privilege to work closely with an Israeli organization who trusts us as Christians and sees us as true partners.

Because of my many years in the land and working to build on this relationship between Jews and Christians, I can see the miracle of this. This is what excites me most.

We are developing a new infrastructure for volunteers for our two current building projects. One project is ongoing maintenance of the old existing buildings, and the other is to renovate the inside of the new buildings. Many volunteers from around the world have and will come to help. Our presence in Haifa plays a vital role of bridging the cultural and language barriers between the Christian volunteers and Israeli staff.

Currently, we have two long-term volunteers from Germany, one short-term volunteer from Canada, and our first two short-term handy men. My husband, Will Setz, with his great experience in building, renovation and fluency in Hebrew, English, and German, is leading the volunteer team of handy men. Our vision is to bring skilled Christian handy men to the Haifa Home to do something practical for Holocaust Survivors and introduce them to the work of the ICEJ.

The renovation of the outside walls of the building is almost finished with all new windows, and we hope to begin renovation on the inside of the building in a couple of months due to permits needed for an elevator and additional floors. In the meantime, many have showed interest in wanting to help renovate the new building, thus we look forward to welcoming many short-term volunteers in the next weeks and months to come.

Now is your opportunity to bless these Holocaust Survivors, whether through finances or your time.

To give financially to the Haifa Home, please visit:
int.icej.org/aid/haifa-home-holocaust-survivors

To volunteer your time as a handy man, please contact:
Yudit.setz@icej.org

A GRAND TRIP TO IRELAND
BY KAYLA MUCHNIK

On a grand adventure to Ireland this fall, ICEJ’s Haifa Home Director Yudit Setz accompanied Judith Rosenzweig, one of our Haifa Home residents, to share her story of the Holocaust. From a Jewish school in Dublin to a synagogue in Belfast, these two women displayed a powerful testimony of friendship and partnership as Yudit, a Christian, translated the stories told by Judith, a Jew, from Hebrew into English.

At each of the meetings, organized by ICEJ-Ireland, the audiences fell silent as they listened to Judith recount the horrors of the Holocaust which she endured as a little girl. One of the Rabbis in attendance explained he had never heard of the ICEJ, and he was thankful for the love and friendship from Christians in a time when Antisemitism is growing everywhere in Europe. The presence of Judith and Yudit at these meetings was an example of God’s restoration and healing work, and served to strengthened ICEJ’s connection to the Jewish communities in Ireland.
Leonit knew tremendous sadness in his young life. He told Homecare that until he met his wife, he had never known that love and joy could be his.

He was born in Belarus, the fifth child of his Jewish parents. When war came, his mother fled with him and his siblings to the Urals, but his father was killed in action. At five years old, Leonit lost his mother to illness, so he joined the ranks of Russia’s many war orphans. Because of a law which placed siblings in different orphanages, he was placed in an institution of 300 children and his sister was placed separately.

There was no affection shown to the children and beatings from the hand of the alcoholic director and older children were the sorrowful norm. From the youngest to the oldest, they had to work hard after school in extreme winter and summer temperatures. Although he remained in the orphanage until he was 17, he could not recall one moment of happiness during that time, except for a rare moment during his 16th year when his sister found him and visited him.

One great treasure that emerged from his painful years at the orphanage was Leonit discovered his passion for art. The children loved the pictures he drew for them. When Leonit finally left this sad home and earned enough to study art at the university, he discovered his passion and skill in sculpting. So much so that he became famous for it!

Perestroika brought previously-unknown freedom for the citizens of the former Soviet Union, but increased Antisemitism for the Jews. Therefore in 1991, Leonit moved to Israel with his beloved wife and a son. Despite the difficulties, Leonit found his home in Israel with his family and became a well-known sculptor. His son also became a prominent artist. ICEJ’s Homecare gave assistance when Leonit’s wife had cancer. After she passed away, Leonit had so much sorrow; the ongoing contact with ICEJ Homecare is an enormous comfort to him.

Leonit is just one of the many stories of immigrants from the former Soviet Union. They each had times of great joy and deep sadness, therefore Homecare is privileged to hear those stories as they offer practical assistance to the immigrants in their new life in Israel.

 عبدالحوكمة - وهي فتاة من الشتات اليهود في أوروبا - كانت تشعر بالوحدة很多时候، حيث لم يكن لديها إصدقاء أو أفراد من عائلتها في إسرائيل. الاختلافات الثقافية والاجتماعية بين شتات اليهود والمجتمع المحلي يجعلها تشعر بالوحدة وتعاني من اضطرابات نفسية.

ولكن مع دعم مؤسسة واحد يعرف الحوكمة، الذي يقدم الرعاية العائلية، وجدت عبدالحوكمة السعادة والرضا في الحياة الإسرائيلية. دعم هذه المؤسسة السريعة في حل مشكلاتها، وساعدتها في التكيف مع الحياة الجديدة.

وهكذا، فإن دعم مؤسسة واحد يعرف الحوكمة يمكن أن يكون أداة فعالة في مساعدة شتات اليهود في شتاتهم في إسرائيل، وتحقيق رؤيتهم لحياة مستقلة وسعيدة. Hence, the support of one knows the wall can be a powerful tool for helping Jewish immigrants in their new lives in Israel, achieving their vision of independent and happy life.
Ebenezer Testimonies
FROM THE ICEJ FEAST OF TABERNACLES

Then Samuel took a stone and set it up between Mizpah and Shen, and called its name Ebenezer, saying, "Thus far the LORD has helped us." (Sam 7:12)

Ebenezer means “stone of help” and was set up by Samuel as a marker and memorial of God’s help and provision. Every year, the ICEJ receives numerous reports of miracles which take place at the ICEJ Feast of Tabernacles; after the 2018 Feast, the ICEJ staff and others personally recounted powerful examples of how the Lord has helped us “thus far” and continues to be our Ebenezer. These are simply a few highlights:

ICEJ VP and Senior Spokesman David Parsons, sick with a head cold and fever during the Feast, was daily strengthened by God, who enabled him to emcee, speak, and connect with people throughout the entire Feast.

ICEJ’s President Jürgen Bühler, still recovering from a recent major surgery, felt God’s continuous provision of strength and energy to serve as the keynote speaker for the opening night in the arena and to attend each day of the Feast.

An 84-year-old pastor from the Philippines came to Israel for the first time; in one of the sessions of the Feast God healed him from a heart disease that he had for several years.

Christine from the USA shared, “My husband changed his opinion about Israel after reading the ICEJ Word from Jerusalem magazine, and he was finally open to come to Israel. I am here with my husband at the conference.”

We want to hear from you! Share your Ebenezer testimony of what God has done in your life at: media@icej.org

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12TH ANNUAL FESTIVAL OF TOLERANCE IN ST. PETERSBURG

BY HOWARD FLOWER, ICEJ ALIYAH DIRECTOR

The 12th annual Festival of Tolerance in St. Petersburg, Russia, was yet again a great success. ICEJ Russia and our longtime partner in the Jewish Community, the “Eva Foundation”, organized this event to raise Holocaust awareness.

The festival began with a Jewish drama group from Bryansk performing the play, “The Diary of Anne Frank.” The program continued with a discussion about the book “The Germans are Hunting us with Dogs”, which is the story of two young sisters who escaped the Holocaust. The book contains a series of drawings done by young Jewish children to illustrate the poem written by Alla Aisensharf, one of the sisters. A video presentation of the story followed, as well as dramatic readings by middle school children.

ICEJ has translated, printed, and distributed the book in Finland as a contribution to this Holocaust awareness campaign. Proceeds from the Finnish book went to purchasing warm bedding for the remaining 68 Holocaust survivors living in St. Petersburg that the ICEJ helps care for, along with other elderly Jewish people and invalids.

The festival was a great success and provided an excellent method of Holocaust education for those that attended.

OFEK – NEW HORIZONS IN ALIYAH

BY DAN HERRON

Ofek Israeli means “Israeli horizon” and is the name of the coordinating body for Jewish Aliyah efforts and initiatives. Since the Israeli government seeks to maximize its resources for the greatest impact possible, Ofek was created to harness the dynamic – but at times disorganized – power of grassroots organisations in 22 nations around the world.

Ofek’s recent annual conference with Jewish leaders was held in Ashkelon, just north of the volatile Gaza strip. This location, a natural choice for Ofek’s CEO Shimon Cohen, a retired general, was chosen to show solidarity with border communities along the Gaza Strip, which currently face challenging, turbulent times.

The theme of Ofek’s recent annual conference was “From Vision to Reality.” Many Aliyah experts and operators from several countries were in attendance, which made it a great honour and privilege for ICEJ’s Barry Denison to deliver a keynote speech during the conference. Barry was warmly welcomed by CEO Shimon Cohen, who stated in a subsequent interview how grateful he was for ICEJ’s engagement and support in Aliyah conferences for Jews in former Soviet republics, where freedoms are often highly restricted. The success rate for these conferences is high, with 70% of participants choosing to make Aliyah.

Barry Denison delivered a well-paced and poignant survey of Evangelical Christians’ Bible-based motivation for wholeheartedly engaging with Israel and Aliyah, clearly demonstrating the shared biblical foundation between the two faiths and thus the natural practical partnership. Using this principle, it is clear that “when we read the Bible text... Israel is there. God’s calling of the Jewish people is without regret. It was His choice.” The audience was captivated as Barry laid out how “God has a plan for the Gentiles to bless the Jewish people.”

The ICEJ’s proud track record of unwavering and effective support for Israel through aid work and advocacy left a strong impression, especially the ICEJ’s assistance of the Gaza border region and the fact that the ICEJ has helped 140,000 Jews return home to Israel. Duly impressed, the audience dispatched Barry from the podium with strong and heartfelt applause.

ICEJ looks forward to continued cooperation with Ofek to help bring more of God’s people back home.
NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN EASTERN EUROPE

BY MOJMR KALLUS
VP INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

In October I visited Ukraine, which is one of the larger countries of the former Soviet Union with a population of 44 million. Evangelical believers make up about 8% of the population or about 3.5 million people. There is complete freedom of worship in the country which provides a great opportunity to develop our work.

I ministered together with Serguei Popov in four churches in Kiev, and our main purpose was to take one our Ukrainian branch to the next level. Pastor Valeriy Alymov was appointed the new Executive Director, taking over from Grigoriy Komendant, a respected father figure in the Ukrainian church and a great champion of Israel. We had a successful meeting with ten senior leaders of the largest evangelical denominations and representing together more than 4500 churches, including the Baptist Union, Pentecostal Union, Charismatic Union and Messianic congregation. They all support the new ICEJ branch which is being formally established.

I found that general awareness of Israel in the church is rather weak but the Lord is stirring the hearts of pastors who want to understand more about God’s plan for Israel. Now that good foundations have been laid, we have a strong and dedicated team on the ground who are ready to run forward. Please pray for continued favor and open doors in Ukraine.

Next, we went to Riga, Latvia, for an ICEJ regional conference with participants from our branches in Finland, Russia, Denmark, Sweden, UK, Ireland, Estonia, the Czech Republic, Romania and Latvia. We presented our DNA statement, and discussed expectations of the branches. Fruitful discussions emerged between representatives of mature and experienced branches and the newcomers who appreciated the opportunity to learn from their experience. We also had a Shabbat dinner together with the Jewish Agency, and they shared about Aliyah to potential olim. ICEJ’s VP of Operations Barry Denison also had the opportunity to introduce our ministry to the Jewish Agency in Latvia.

Hearts of Generosity in Bolivia

BY KAYLA MUCHNIK

When Pastor Alberto Magno Sales de Oliveira was baptized in the Holy Spirit, he received a new vision and love for Israel that not only impacted his life, but also brought a spiritual renewal to his family and congregation. One of his dreams was to bring large groups of Bolivians to the Feast of Tabernacles, and he has seen God fulfill this dream year after year.

He shared, “We dreamed that our people would be a part of this move of God. Step by step, God supported us and confirmed our dream. Today, we not only have a group of pilgrims, but the love of Israel in the hearts of Bolivians.”

As pastor of the First Evangelical Baptist Church in Bolivia, Oliveira witnessed his congregation express their love for Israel, not only in words but in action. The people of Bolivia come every Shabbat with generous and voluntary donations that God miraculously multiplies each year. Pastor Oliveira explained to his church, “This will be for exclusive use of the ICEJ in Jerusalem, because ICEJ is our arm and extension of the church. They can do what we cannot throughout the year. We have decided to be a part of the Christian Embassy, not only during the Feast, but also in everything ICEJ does throughout the year.”

Other churches have seen what God is doing in Oliveira’s church, so today his church brings donations from several of these ministries as well to donate to the ICEJ. As one final comment on their giving, Oliveira said, “When we see the work of the Embassy, we feel very happy. It ensures that our offering of comfort is indeed comforting the people of Israel. The ICEJ can put into practice the generosity of the people of Bolivia. We are glad to know that the money is used in a precious way through the ministry of the ICEJ.”
SHALOM FROM BURUNDI

BY AMANDA GROSS

“We are honouring Israel first, because Israel is God’s firstborn among the nations,” announced the First Lady of Burundi, Her Excellency, Reverend Denise Bucumi Nkurunziza as she introduced our ICEJ delegation from Israel. We were greeted with an enthusiastic “SHALOM”, because “shalom” is a common greeting in Burundi.

Representing ICEJ headquarters, Jo Olsen, Jannie Tolhoek and I were incredibly honoured to take part in the first International Women Leaders’ Conference in Burundi organized under the theme, “Women of Destiny, arise, be courageous and act for the matter concerns you.” The conference was attended by 500 Burundian women and 116 delegates from 24 nations, as well as the First Lady of Zambia, Her Excellency, Esther Nyawa Lungu and the First Lady of Central African Republic, Her Excellency, Brigitte Touadera. The First Lady of Burundi is an ordained minister who has a passion to mobilize the women of Burundi to understand their role as leaders, not only in their homes but also in their nation.

As part of the conference, we travelled three hours north to the province of Ngozi to take part in the launch of the First Lady’s “Free to Shine” campaign, which has a mission to eradicate mother-to-child transmission of HIV. We also visited the “Good Samaritan Orphanage”, which is now caring for 40 orphans. We had the opportunity to pray for the orphans and caretakers, as well as bless them with supplies for the orphanage.

Walking away from this conference, I was inspired by the First Lady’s life and her amazing endeavours. It was also touching to see a genuine love for Israel exuding from the Burundian people. Many conference attendees even came to our Israel delegation to say they pray for Israel and have a dream to one day visit the Holy Land. God moved powerfully during this conference, and we look forward to seeing what the Lord will continue to do through this historic moment in Burundi’s history! 🌍

ICEJ WORLDWIDE

ICEJ ON CHRISTIAN CAMPUSES

BY DAN HERRON

In November, ICEJ Vice President & Senior Spokesman David Parsons visited the USA to spread the word on Christian colleges about the work of the Christian Embassy and discuss his new book Floodgates. At Liberty University, he met with Dr. Ed Hindson, Dean of the Divinity School, and Dr. Randall Price, a popular professor on many Israel-related subjects. Parsons also spoke in the daily chapel service at CBN, as well as the weekly chapel for students at Regent University in Virginia Beach, VA. He challenged the students with a message about the stronghold of atheistic Darwinism in Western societies today and the key prophetic role it plays in the growing rebellion against God in these last days. 🌍
recently, Dr. Susanna Kokkonen decided to end her time as Director of Christian Friends of Yad Vashem, which operates in partnership with the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem. She held the position for ten years, and her daily work and impact at Yad Vashem will be greatly missed. Ms. Sari Granitz, a long-time deputy with the International Relations Division at Yad Vashem, will assume her role.

“For the past decade, Dr. Susanna Kokkonen has provided outstanding leadership to one of the most vital and sensitive aspects of our ministry by overseeing the Christian Desk which we helped establish at Yad Vashem”, said ICEJ President Dr. Juergen Buehler. “Dr. Kokkonen put her academic skills as a Holocaust scholar to full use in such initiatives as the annual Christian Leadership Seminars. She also brought a unique spiritual touch to Holocaust remembrance and education, even by creating a place of prayer in her special corner of this revered institution. Most of all, Susanna was a ‘light’ amidst the painful, dark memories housed at Yad Vashem. She knew her Bible well and had a distinct way of relating its eternal truths to the universal lessons which Yad Vashem teaches on Antisemitism, racism and genocide.”

Originally from Finland, Dr. Kokkonen received her Ph.D. in Holocaust Studies in 2004 from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, where her dissertation focused on Jewish Refugees in Post-War Italy, 1945-1951. She later worked as a pro-Israel Christian lobbyist at the European Parliament in Brussels and as cultural attaché at the Embassy of Finland in Tel Aviv.

In 2008, Dr. Kokkonen was tapped to serve as Director of Christian Friends of Yad Vashem, which was still relatively new. Over the ensuing years, she solidified the work of the Christian Desk as an important facet of the Yad Vashem campus, and expanded its reach to Christian communities on all continents. She hosted scores of Christian dignitaries, addressed hundreds of Christian tours groups, and organised numerous Christian Leadership Seminars that drew participants from over 50 countries. Dr. Kokkonen also successfully launched the CFYV’s Prayer and Study Tour, reliving history in Israel from the times of the Bible until today. In addition, she became known for having a special rapport with Holocaust survivors and turned much-needed attention on the needs of elderly, forgotten Righteous Gentiles in Israel.

Fluent in six languages, Dr. Kokkonen will continue to make appearances for Yad Vashem while also travelling around the world to speak to Christian, Jewish and civic audiences about the Holocaust, genocide, Antisemitism and Israel today, as well as to engage in humanitarian work. To keep up with her activities, please visit: http://susannakokkonen.com/

To support the ongoing work of the Christian Desk at Yad Vashem, please go to: https://int.icej.org/yadvashem

23 | WORD FROM JERUSALEM
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