



WORD

FROM JERUSALEM



...

**"BY MY SPIRIT!"
SAYS THE LORD**

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...

SUPPORTING ISRAEL
THROUGH
GRIEF, WAR & RECOVERY



The International Christian Embassy Jerusalem was established in 1980 in recognition of the biblical significance of all of Jerusalem and its unique connection to the Jewish people. Today the ICEJ represents millions of Christians, churches, and denominations to the nation and people of Israel. We recognize in the restoration of Israel the faithfulness of God to keep His ancient covenant with the Jewish people. Our main objectives are:

- To stand with Israel in support and friendship
- To equip and teach the worldwide church regarding God's purposes with Israel and the nations of the Middle East
- To be an active voice of reconciliation between Jews, Christians, and Arabs, and to support the churches and congregations in the Holy Land

From its head offices in Jerusalem, the ICEJ reaches out into more than 170 countries worldwide, with branch offices in over 90 nations.

Our vision is:

- To reach every segment of Israel's society with a Christian testimony of comfort and love
- To reach and actively represent to Israel the support of denominations, churches, and believers from every nation on Earth

The Christian Embassy is a non-denominational faith-based ministry supported by the voluntary contributions of our partners and friends across the globe. We invite you to join with us as we minister to Israel and the Jewish people worldwide by donating to the ongoing work and witness of the ICEJ.



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FROM THE DESK OF THE SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT

Dear friends,

The world is still waiting and watching to see when Iran will attack Israel. Hezbollah has been launching missiles into Israel daily since October 7, and Hamas continues to lob them into Israeli territory and use psychological warfare to terrify the people of Israel—like claiming they have killed or injured hostages. The events of the past 11 months have traumatized an entire nation and reopened wounds that never truly healed from the Holocaust.

Yet the people of Israel remain steadfast despite such unimaginable circumstances, and we at the ICEJ continue to stand with them in prayer and practical support.

In this month's magazine, you'll read about some ways we are doing this—like rushing bomb shelters to Israel's north after rockets shot by Hezbollah from Lebanon into a Druze community killed 12 children in July. You'll also read about a unique trauma "farm" in southern Israel we are sponsoring that is helping adults and children alike deal with deep pain and fear through working with animals and on creative projects.

Despite the threat of war with Iran, Aliyah continues! Our article on a group of South African Jews who recently made Aliyah is incredibly encouraging and evidence of God's faithfulness to His word to bring His people home to the land He promised them centuries ago. And Dr. Juergen Buehler's teaching on "The Coming Israel Reformation in the Church" is a must-read for understanding more about the day and hour in which we live.

Above all, we are committed to prayer for the people of Israel and the Jewish people worldwide. We continue to meet daily at 9:00 a.m. (EST) on our Global Prayer Call (www.icejusa.org/globalprayer), and for the next 50 days, we have special USA prayer at 8:00 a.m. (EST) called "50 States 50 Days of Prayer for Israel" (www.icejusa.org/50states50days). We invite you to join us daily on one or both of these calls.

In His abounding love and grace,

David R. Parsons

Senior Vice President & International Spokesman
International Christian Embassy Jerusalem

COVER PHOTO: Family and friends mourn the loss of IDF Sgt. Ilay Tzair at Mount Herzl in April. (Yonatan Sindel/Flash90)

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“BY MY SPIRIT!” SAYS THE LORD

BY DR. JUERGEN BUEHLER, ICEJ PRESIDENT

The theme of this year’s Feast of Tabernacles is taken from Zechariah 4:6, one of the most prominent prophecies in the Old Testament on what God is planning to accomplish in the end times. It is rich in symbolism and in parallelism to messages found in the New Testament.

The context of the passage is the return of the Jewish people from exile in Babylon. Among the returnees were Zerubbabel, a descendant of King David and ancestor of Jesus, who served as Israel’s political leader; Joshua the high priest; and the prophets Zechariah and Haggai, who assisted Zerubbabel and Joshua in rebuilding the temple (Ezra 5:1–2).

The chapter begins with an angel speaking with Zechariah and awakening him as if from sleep. For me, it sounds like God is waking up the Jewish people in these last days from a long period of sleep while scattered among the nations. He is again bringing them back to the Land of Israel to be awakened to His last days’ purpose for them.

The Menorah

It also is worth noting the symbolism depicted in Zechariah 4 of a menorah and two olive trees or branches remains a key symbol for Israel today. Whether at the Knesset, the president’s residence, the prime minister’s office, or other government buildings, the official emblem of the State of Israel is this very same imagery from Zechariah 4.



The central menorah or golden candlestick with seven arms is a familiar piece of the

furnishings found in the tabernacle of Moses and in the temple in Jerusalem. There is a small difference, however, in that Zechariah saw above the menorah a bowl filled with golden oil that was constantly supplying the seven branches through seven pipes. In a way, it was an upgraded menorah for temple service, made all of gold—reflecting God’s perfect character.

This symbolism of the menorah is also found in Revelation 1:12, where John turns and sees Jesus standing among seven golden candlesticks and receives a powerful message from Him. In verse 20 we learn that the seven candlesticks John saw are the seven churches. This means that the church is called as a prophetic light to shine light in the dark times around it.

The seven churches are to be light givers to the world. In the next chapter, a successful, growing, dynamic church in Ephesus is commended by God, but He also warns if they do not return to their first love, He is going to come take their candlestick away (Revelation 2:5). Despite all their church programs, they have lost their passion for Christ from earlier days. And though they may still exist as a church, they will lose their core calling and ability to shine prophetic light to the world around them.

This is a serious message for each one of us today, and the same calling was placed upon the people of Israel. The most central commandment to Israel, in Deuteronomy 6:4, is: “Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one! You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.” If they diligently follow this command, then Israel also would serve as a light to the nations. What an amazing parallel between Israel and the church!

The Two Olive Trees

The second great symbolism of Zechariah 4 is the two olive trees, or what he later calls the two olive branches (4:12). In the New Testament, we also see two olive trees in Romans 11—one is the natural olive tree of Israel, and the other is the wild olive tree of the gentile church. This dual symbolism of the two olive trees or branches appears in only a few passages in the Bible.

The first one is in Nehemiah 8:15, when Nehemiah led the people of Israel in celebrating the Feast of Tabernacles again for the first time in many generations. He instructed them to build *sukkahs*, or booths, as they celebrated this great, prophetic feast. He also commanded them go to the hillsides and bring back branches “of the olive and the wild olive and the myrtle and palm and other leafy trees to make a booth” (Nehemiah 8:15 ESV).

Nehemiah was referring to God’s commandment concerning this festival in Leviticus 23 with a small deviation. He mentions here not only the natural or cultivated olive tree of Leviticus 23 but also a second type of olive branch. One is called *zayit* in Hebrew, meaning “olive” as it is used today, and the second Hebrew word is *etz shemen*, or the “tree of oil.” The ESV Bible translates these as the olive and wild olive trees, as do the well-known commentaries of Keil and Delitzsch, experts in Jewish culture.

The same symbolism reappears in Romans 11, where Paul compares the natural or cultivated olive branches representing the Jewish people with the wild olive branches of the gentile church. By the grace of God, the wild gentile branches have been grafted contrary to nature into the cultivated olive tree of believing Israel (Romans 11:24).

Another instance of this parallelism is found in Revelation 11, where John fittingly sees a vision of the temple and is directed to “measure” or describe the scene, which he notes includes two prophetic figures: “And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands standing before the God of the earth” (Revelation 11:3–4).

Here, we have the same symbolism of two olive trees as in Zechariah 4, yet he also sees two lampstands instead of one. I believe these prophecies are connected and speak of corporate callings in these last days—but also that God will pick out individual servants like the two witnesses of Revelation 11 that have a unique and specific prophetic calling.

In the days of Zechariah, God used Zerubbabel and Joshua in a specific way, and they were joined by the collective people to rebuild the temple. It seems God is going to use these two witnesses in a similar way in these last days, joined by Israel and the church, to accomplish His end-time purposes.

The Oil

The oil that is filling the bowl over the menorah and then flowing through the seven pipes into the seven branches of the menorah is without doubt a symbol of the Holy Spirit throughout the Bible. The oil, and especially the anointing oil in the temple, represents the empowerment and gifting of God’s people to accomplish the call God has placed upon their lives. And the imagery of the bowl over the menorah with its pipes indicates that there is an endless availability of the Holy Spirit in these last days to accomplish the purposes of God.

Amazingly, Zechariah 4:12 describes how through the two golden pipes the golden oil empties out into the menorah. Interestingly, in the original Hebrew text, the golden oil referred to here is not actually oil but gold itself. Because gold represents God’s character, the imagery means that in this end-time church and work of God among the people of Israel, the Holy Spirit will, in a powerful way, bring forth His character from out of His people. It will be a great testimony and prophetic light to the nations.

Our Feast theme this year focuses our attention on how the anointing of the Holy Spirit is the most essential element for every believer in the church and for the nation of Israel to reach our prophetic destiny. It is not by human

accomplishments, nor by human strategies, nor by human wisdom that God is accomplishing His work but by the power of the Holy Spirit.

This is exactly what Paul wrote to the church in Corinth, where he says that his preaching was not with enticing words or man’s wisdom but in demonstration of the Spirit and power of God (1 Corinthians 2:4). I believe the vision of Zechariah 4 indicates that this will be a main characteristic of the end-time people of God—a people filled with and empowered by the Spirit of God.

Conclusion

We can draw three main lessons from Zechariah 4:

1 A holy church! Without a doubt, God is purifying the true church in these last days. This is a theme found again and again in the Bible. In Ephesians 5:26, it is not just a call for the end-time church, but it is a universal call to God’s people throughout the ages. In Leviticus 11:44, God calls upon the people to be holy as He is holy. God expected from the very beginning that His people would reflect His very nature and character. This is the same message Jesus gave His disciples in the Sermon on the Mount—to be perfect, even as our Father in heaven is perfect (Matthew 5:48). We should

**“Hear, O Israel, the LORD our God, the LORD is one!
You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart,
with all your soul, and with all your strength.”**

DEUTERONOMY 6:4-5

strive to become holy and complete like our Father in heaven. This is a call the end-time church cannot ignore. And again, it can only be accomplished by the power of the Holy Spirit being poured out in these days more than in any other generation.

2 A Spirit-empowered people! These last days are characterized by a church facing many worldly obstacles, be it the moral decay in Western societies or the outright opposition coming from Marxist regimes around the globe. Here, the Word of God gives us great encouragement:

“Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,” says the Lord of hosts. “Who are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain! And he shall bring forth the capstone with shouts of ‘Grace, grace to it!’” (Zechariah 4:6–7)

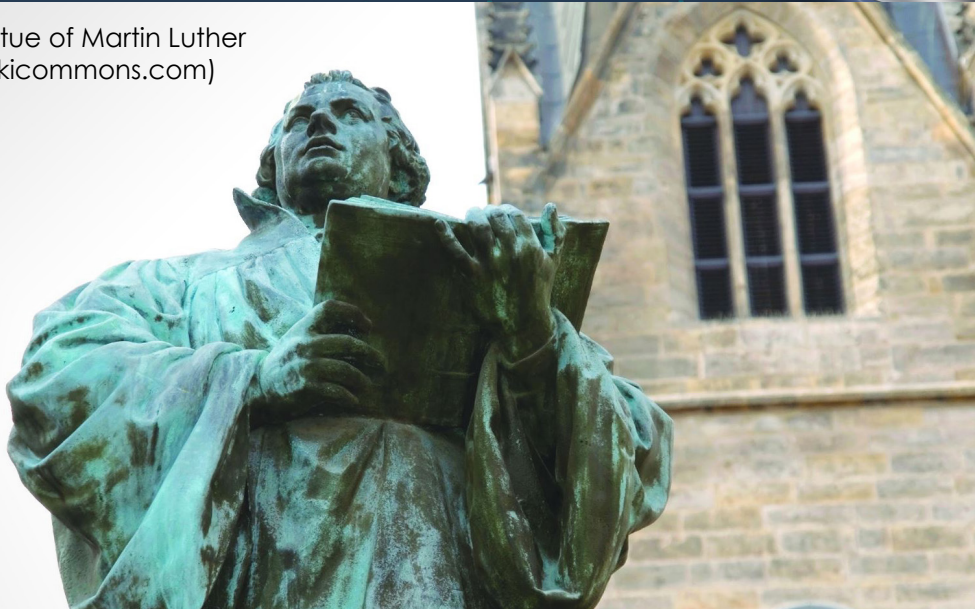
No obstacle in these last days will be too big for the people of God. Every mountain that stands in the way of accomplishing God’s purposes through the power of the Holy Spirit, through prayer and intercession, will have to become a plain, because the grace of God will guarantee its completion. Therefore, we should always ask the Lord to fill us afresh with the Spirit, as the early church did, to accomplish the great tasks ahead.

3 The noble and wild olive branches are coming together! One of the main characteristics of the end-time church is that God is reinserting the natural or cultivated branches back into the olive tree. This move is bringing a major change for the gentile church, as foreseen in Romans 11:24. Any horticulturalist will tell you it is against nature to graft a wild olive branch into a cultivated olive tree. Yet God has been doing it for centuries because He desires for all men to be saved. Paul then asks how much more easily the natural branches—the Jewish people—will be grafted back into their own tree of messianic faith. We must recognize that God is doing something new within the church, as we rediscover the Hebraic roots of our biblical faith and recognize the unique calling God placed upon the Jewish people.

There is a final facet to this powerful passage. Zechariah 4:9 says the hands of Zerubbabel laid the foundation of the house of the Lord, and his hands will also finish it. Without question, it was a believing Jewish remnant who laid the foundation of the church some 2,000 years ago. They laid this foundation by giving us the New Testament, the birth of the church, and most of all, the Jewish Messiah. How church movements have changed over the centuries, forgetting their roots and where they came from! Yet the same hands of the very people who laid the foundation of this temple will also bring forth the capstone—the finished work. That means in the last days, the Jewish people will play a central role in the completion of the temple of God—the universal family of the redeemed, the church.

The times of the gentiles are ending (Luke 21:24). The fullness of the gentiles is coming in (Romans 11:25). And God’s purposes for the gentile nations and the people of Israel is starting to unfold. We must ask God to teach us, to enlighten us on the new things He is doing. This will be a time of great empowerment, where God is going to purify the church as never before to be ready for our bridegroom to return, as we shout: “Even so, come, Lord Jesus!” (Revelation 22:20). 🌿

Statue of Martin Luther
(wikicommons.com)



have a mission's budget or support at least one missionary somewhere in the world.

THE ISRAEL REFORMATION

Today, a new season of reformation is at hand and it has to do with the church's relationship to Israel. I believe in coming decades, there will be few churches that do not have a connection to Israel, and a budget to "bless Israel" will be equally as natural for a church as their missions' budget.

With a few exceptions, most churches in the past had little understanding of Israel or the Jewish people. If they did have an interest in the Jews, it often met opposition similar to those who tried to hinder the outreach to pagan nations.

Many theologians taught that God had abandoned the Jews, who were now an accursed people. They insisted that the church had replaced Israel, and there was no national destiny left for the Jews. For centuries, this was the prevailing view in most of the established churches of Europe. Any contrary outlook was brutally silenced. In 1589, one of the first clergymen to write openly about the promised restoration of Israel, Francis Kett, was burned at the stake for his beliefs.

A PARADIGM SHIFT FOR ISRAEL AND THE CHURCH

Yet in our day, a major shift is taking place concerning Israel. God has dramatically changed His own approach toward Israel, as best described by the prophet Zechariah: "For thus says the Lord of hosts: 'Just as I determined to punish you when your fathers provoked Me to wrath,' says the Lord of hosts, 'and I would not relent. So again in these days I am determined to do good to Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. Do not fear'" (Zechariah 8:14-15).

In other words, God shifts into different gears in His dealings with His chosen people. Over the past 100 years, God has moved from reverse gear to fast forward. Israel is being restored just as the prophets foretold. No one can overlook any longer the dramatic alignment of biblical prophecy and events in today's Middle East.

This means the teaching of Replacement Theology (often masked these days as Fulfillment Theology) is being proven wrong by realities on the ground. The reborn State of Israel is a prophetic *fait accompli*, which demonstrates that God is a covenant-keeping God. And this means the church has to deal with a totally new reality today. For 1,900 years, no one asked: "How do we deal with the restoration of the Jews back to their ancient homeland?" But today this question has to be asked.

Yet tackling this quandary is a task with no

THE COMING "ISRAEL REFORMATION" IN THE CHURCH

BY DR. JUERGEN BUEHLER, ICEJ PRESIDENT

In centuries past, the church underwent dramatic seasons of reformation that altered its very nature. One such era of historic change was even christened by the Reformation—initiated by Martin Luther.

It is hard to underestimate Luther's impact on the church. It was not just his theological reforms that dramatically changed medieval Christianity; far more influential was the fact that he placed the Bible back into the hands of believers in their own native language.

Thanks to Luther's translation of the Bible into the common language of Germans, ordinary Christians could once again read and learn about God for themselves. Previously, it was considered a sacrilege for uneducated lay people to read the Holy Book. But the widespread availability of the Bible would transform everything.

Soon after, other nations translated the Bible into their own languages. King James I authorized an official translation into English a little over 400 years ago, and a French translation would soon follow. Over the ensuing centuries, more biblical truths were rediscovered by the church through subsequent waves of reform.

Today, I see another wave of reformation coming to the church, and it has to do with Israel. The early church's understanding of

God's enduring purposes for Israel and of our connection to the Jewish people must be brought back to mainstream Christianity.

THE "WORLD MISSIONS" REFORMATION

A powerful example of how original apostolic doctrines were rediscovered and consequently reformed the church is that of world missions among unsaved nations. The reformed Protestant churches of Europe did not show much zeal for outreach toward pagan nations but rather focused on reforming the churches of Europe. When leaders of Pietism such as Philip Jacob Spener and Count Nicolaus von Zinsendorf sent out the first missionaries, many Lutheran clergy opposed them.

In his book *Transforming Mission*, author David J. Bosch tells us these opponents of foreign missions claimed "that the office of apostle had vanished; that God's grace no longer worked as powerfully as it did in the beginning; that those who were still pagans were under a curse; that God, if He wished to convert them, would do so without human effort."

But this attitude would change. By the end of the eighteenth century, missionaries like William Carey would leave for India, Hudson Taylor would establish the "China Inland Mission," and David Livingstone would take Christianity to the unmapped heart of Africa. By the mid-nineteenth century, world missions had become part of the orthodoxy of the church. Now there is hardly a church that does not

parallel in church history. No other generation had to deal with it. This means the coming years will surely be some of the most exciting times in church history, as we are in a season of unprecedented restoration for the Jewish people.

BACK TO OUR ROOTS

The good news is that we do not have to invent a new theology. True, for most of church history there was no State of Israel and the Jews were scattered around the world. But in the decades when most of the New Testament was being written, a Jewish political entity still existed in the Land of Israel. Though it was under Roman occupation, most Jews at that time lived in their ancient homeland and they enjoyed a measure of religious autonomy. Therefore, if we look at how the apostles taught gentile churches around the world about their relationship to the Jewish people, we will find that the Scriptures are quite clear in teaching how the church should relate to Israel today.

1) Remember Your Pagan Past

The apostle Paul first reminded gentile believers in Ephesus and Rome about their previously hopeless pagan status. Today, after 2,000 years of Christianity expanding to even the remotest islands on earth, it sounds strange to view ourselves as pagans.

But Paul had to remind the church in Rome that as non-Jews, they were like the branch of a wild olive tree. Such wild olive trees produce inedible fruit and thus are little more than a useless shrub.

To the church in Ephesus, Paul appealed: “Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh ... that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world” (Ephesians 2:11-12).

Paul also reminds both churches that only after they put their faith in a Jewish Messiah could they be reconciled to God and become part of His people. Only the book of the Jews, the Bible, gave us hope of knowing a loving God.

This means every gentile church needs to be humble and mindful regarding its own past.

2) Acknowledge the Hebraic Roots of Your Faith

Paul declares to the church in Rome: “Do not boast against the branches. But if you do boast, remember that you do not support the root, but the root supports you” (Romans 11:18).

That means gentile Christians should not reject or ridicule the Jewish origins of their faith but nourish them as one would nourish the roots of a tree.

Adam Clark states it so beautifully: through the Jewish people “all the blessing and excellencies which you enjoy have been communicated to you.”

Or to quote the Presbyterian theologian Marvin Vincent in his *Word Studies in the New Testament*: “The life-force and the blessing are received by the gentile through the Jew, and not by the Jew through the gentile. The spiritual plan moves from the Abrahamic covenant downward, and from the Israelite nation outward.” Or, as Jesus Himself declares, “Salvation is of the Jews!” (John 4:22).

This means every New Testament church needs to recognize the role of Israel as a source of “blessing for all the families of the earth” and to respect the Jewish roots of our faith.



The church in Wittenberg where Luther was said to have nailed his Ninety-Five Theses (Wikimedia.com)

3) Appreciate the Irrevocable Calling over Israel

The New Testament epistles strongly underline the eternal calling of Israel. Even though the Jewish people might not recognize Jesus as their Messiah and might even be “enemies of the gospel,” Paul still calls them “beloved for the sake of the fathers” (Romans 11:28).

That means if God still loves Israel as is, the church should love her the same. Paul squarely contradicts every Replacement theologian today: “Will [the Jews] unbelief make the faithfulness of God without effect? Certainly not! Indeed, let God be true but every man a liar” (Romans 3:3-4).

So even if they are unfaithful, God still is faithful to His covenants, as He cannot deny Himself. Anything else would be a lie.

This means every New Testament church needs to uphold and proclaim the enduring call over Israel.

4) Recognize Your Spiritual Debt to Israel

Paul made it clear to gentile believers that the Jewish people already provided everything necessary for our relationship with God. The Bible is a Jewish book, we serve a Jewish Messiah, and Jewish apostles spread the gospel to the gentile world. Paul thus declares that gentile believers are debtors to Israel:

For it pleased those from Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints who are in Jerusalem. It pleased them indeed, and they are their debtors. For if the Gentiles have been partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister to them in material things. Romans 15:26-27)

This means every New Testament church needs to be very intentional in how we return the blessings received through the Jewish people.

5) Expect the Restoration of Israel

In the New Testament, the apostles affirm the enduring calling over Israel and strongly establish the hope of Israel’s restoration. This is demonstrated in the last question they posed to Jesus before His ascension: “Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” (Acts 1:6).

Paul also conveys this hope to the church in Rome: “For if their being cast away is the reconciling of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?” (Romans 11:15).

In other words, he maintains the greatest calling and blessings are still ahead for Israel.

This means every church should embrace a theology of hope regarding Israel and support her full restoration.

CONNECT WITH ISRAEL!

Just as the vision for world missions was renewed within the church, there needs to be a reformation that reconnects the church with its Jewish roots. In times to come, a healthy church can no longer afford to ignore Israel. This needs to be taught from every pulpit and become an integral part of the activity, prayers, and giving of every church. We see this happening around the world. It is a time of reformation!

Join with pastors and believers from around the world in this exciting and historic journey! 🌍

WHY YOU SHOULD REGISTER FOR THE ONLINE FEAST OF TABERNACLES 2024

BY ICEJ STAFF

Though you may not be able to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles (*Sukkot* in Hebrew) onsite in Jerusalem, you can join the online Feast celebration—an act that will communicate love and support to the Israeli people still bearing unimaginable grief while fighting for their very existence. Consider what the Bible says about this feast to understand better why it's so crucial for Christians to participate this year more than any other.

What Is the Feast of Tabernacles?

God commanded the children of Israel to dwell in *sukkahs* (“booths” or “tents”) for the 8 days of the Feast set out in Leviticus 23:33–43 to remember and symbolize their 40 years of wandering in the wilderness. During this time, they lived in tents, and God dwelled among them in the tabernacle, faithfully providing for them. The most visible symbols of the Feast today are the fragile, small *sukkahs* the Jewish people construct to celebrate Tabernacles in Israel and around the world.



A Prophetic Promise

Zechariah foresaw a coming time when the nations will come up to Jerusalem every year to “worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles” (14:16). This makes Tabernacles unique—out of all the feasts, it's the only one where God invites the gentile nations to also come to Jerusalem to worship Him (Numbers 29:12–35; 2 Chronicles 6:32–33; Isaiah 56:7; Matthew 21:13). When Christians observe this tradition, whether in

Jerusalem or in spirit from wherever we live, we mirror the character of depending on our promise-keeping God through the toughest of times. Sukkot holds a prophetic call that throughout the messianic age, the entire world will celebrate this grand Feast as it marks the glorious moment when Jesus comes to take up the throne of David in Jerusalem.

Our ICEJ Feast theme this year is from Zechariah 4:6: “Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit, says the Lord of hosts.” It's a most appropriate truth to proclaim to Israel and the nations because victory is sure to come by the Spirit of the Lord!

Celebrate the Feast Online

We are witnessing Israel's most critical hour since its founding in 1948—Israel's very existence is being threatened by enemies who want her wiped from the map. We encourage you to gather a group of friends to watch one or all eight sessions online, dialogue about what you learn from the Feast's excellent speakers, communicate to the Jewish people that they are not alone—and, in spirit, worship the God of Israel in Jerusalem. 🇮🇱



GET TO KNOW YOUR ICEJ USA TEAM



NATALIE ADAMS Director of Development

Natalie joined the ICEJ USA team this year as our Director of Development and brings more than 15 years of nonprofit development experience with her—including managing two foundations, serving as a director of development, and most recently, serving as a university vice president of development and alumni relations. Before working in the nonprofit arena, she worked in marketing and real estate. Natalie oversees all fundraising initiatives at the ICEJ, including building relationships with donors to advance the mission of ICEJ.

“Israel is important to me because, as Christians, we see how past events connect to the present and the future as biblical prophecies about Israel are fulfilled, one after another,” she says.

Natalie enjoys traveling and hiking with her husband, Mike. She is also a chocolatier and loves making and sharing sweet treats. She and her husband are recent empty nesters, live in Tulsa, and see their four grown children regularly.

Natalie's favorite Bible passage is Matthew 16:15–16. “[Jesus] said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” Simon Peter answered and said, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” 🇮🇱

Register online at:
www.icejusa.org/feast-2024-online-registration



Stand with Israel in This Time of Crisis

On Saturday, October 7, Hamas invaded Israel with the intent of cutting her off from being a nation, that her name would be remembered no more (Psalm 83). By killing more than 1,400 men, women, elderly, and even helpless babies in the most horrific ways, and taking hundreds of others hostage, they proved their evil and dark intent.

Israel is at war and needs your help!

Israel needs food, medical supplies, and trauma assistance for victims of terror, as well as ongoing help for evacuees. You can help provide for these needs and join our ICEJ team on the frontlines by donating today.

Please send in a gift today at: www.icejusa.org/crisis



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ICEJ team
on the
frontlines
by donating
today**



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FOR MORE INFORMATION
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Children engage in learning activities at Little Hearts Preschool in Jerusalem

ICEJ FUNDS SCHOLARSHIPS FOR CHILDREN AT SPECIAL JERUSALEM PRESCHOOL

BY NATIVIA SAMUELSEN, ICEJ AID ADMINISTRATOR

An ICEJ team recently visited a special preschool in Jerusalem where we provide scholarships for 25 children from diverse backgrounds, thanks to our Christian donors.

Located near adjacent neighborhoods of Arabs and ultra-Orthodox Jews, one might expect it to be a place of tension. However, as we walked through the streets of central Jerusalem and the Little Hearts Preschool came into view, children of all backgrounds joyfully rushed in with their parents close behind. The school perfectly reflects its mission in such a sensitive locale: to create a safe environment where children from diverse religions and ethnicities can learn together and support one another.

This unique Christian educational center enables children from families of various backgrounds—Muslims, Christians, Jews, and nonreligious—to come together in a nurturing and receptive environment.

When we arrived, we met with Abigail Ro, the preschool's director, who described how this year has seen a reduction in its numbers due to the war. Usually, they would expect 65 children, but currently, they are down to some 45 children enrolled. This drop in students is primarily due to international families being called back home and local families feeling nervous about Jewish-Arab interaction amid the ongoing conflict in Israel. Yet amid this challenge, the unique preschool in Jerusalem remains steadfast in its mission to provide a haven for all its diverse children.

"We believe in advocating for the good of the children," Abigail passionately explained. "It is more important than simply filling up our classes. We [want] to give these children the best foundation they can have."

The school's six classes follow the Montessori method, a child-centered educational approach that emphasizes motor skills, spatial awareness, and mathematical development. Colorful learning materials abound inside the classroom, inviting children to explore and learn through hands-on activities that foster creativity and critical thinking.


Abigail's commitment to their mission is deeply personal. She attended a Christian preschool when she was four years old, an experience that profoundly impacted her life.

"I am grateful for the foundation and environment of that school," she reflected. "It shaped who I am today and instilled in me values that I carry with me always. We often do not see the impact of the work we do here, but I know that these children are like seeds being planted in good soil, destined to grow into strong, compassionate individuals."

Laying a Foundation for Future Harmony

The vision of Little Hearts Preschool in Jerusalem is more than just providing a good start to the children's education. It is about laying the foundation for future harmony in society rather than the divisions we often see among different people groups in Israel and many other lands.

"We have to start with the children," Abigail insisted. "Education is about more than academics. It's about teaching children that 'I know you' and not 'I know these people.'"

The Christian Embassy is grateful to support Little Hearts Preschool with scholarships for over half the children attending the classes, investing in the future harmony of Israel's diverse society. 

Donate today to help ICEJ AID projects like Little Hearts Preschool at:
www.icejusa.org/donate-icej-aid



ICEJ SUPPORTS ISRAELI FARM TREATING WAR TRAUMA VICTIMS

BY NATIVIA SAMUELSEN, ICEJ AID ADMINISTRATOR

In the heart of the parched Negev desert where the stark landscape seems inhospitable, a special place of hope and healing has sprung up amid Israel's current war. The Lahav Farm is transforming the lives of war trauma victims through farming and animal therapy, and the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem (ICEJ) has been there from the start, helping to pioneer this unique place of refuge and recovery from the conflict.

Upon visiting the farm, the serene atmosphere and variety of animals on-site gave the ICEJ team an instant sense of peace and rest. Dogs, sheep, and even a peacock wander freely, each adding to the calming ambience.



The horse that escaped from Gaza and found refuge at Lahav Farm

While touring the farm, we noticed a beautiful horse that we learned had escaped from Gaza and found refuge there. Nir, the farm's director, explained that the horse's initial condition—bloodshot eyes and a swaying neck—mirrored the trauma symptoms seen in people when they first come to the farm. However, given a safe space to relax and rest, the spooked horse soon calmed down. This touching moment resembles the process war

trauma victims often go through in this special place of both solitude and community.

"Coming here has been a lifeline. The peace and support I've found at the farm have helped me start to rebuild my life after the trauma I experienced," said a first responder from Sderot.

The trauma treatment program at Lahav Farm is noted for its innovative and adaptive approach. Nir, a visionary, has not rested for a moment. While still developing Lahav Farm, he already has two similar farms underway in the Gaza border region. Each farm aims to reach specific target groups, such as survivors of the NOVA music festival massacre or kibbutz terror assaults or emergency first responders and security personnel experiencing post-traumatic stress disorder following their heroic actions on and since October 7.

The farms offer various activities designed to help participants reconnect with themselves and their loved ones. Being out in nature and working with the animals, hiking, gardening, and creative projects like building

benches and planting trees become more than just activities. They are pathways to healing, resilience, hope, and recovery.

"We are teaching people how to deal with grief, loss, and anger," explained Amir, the clinical and farm manager. "It's about learning to live life after trauma. They need to learn how to live again after October 7. We've stopped talking about that day, unless they want or need to. We focus on the present and future, helping people move forward."

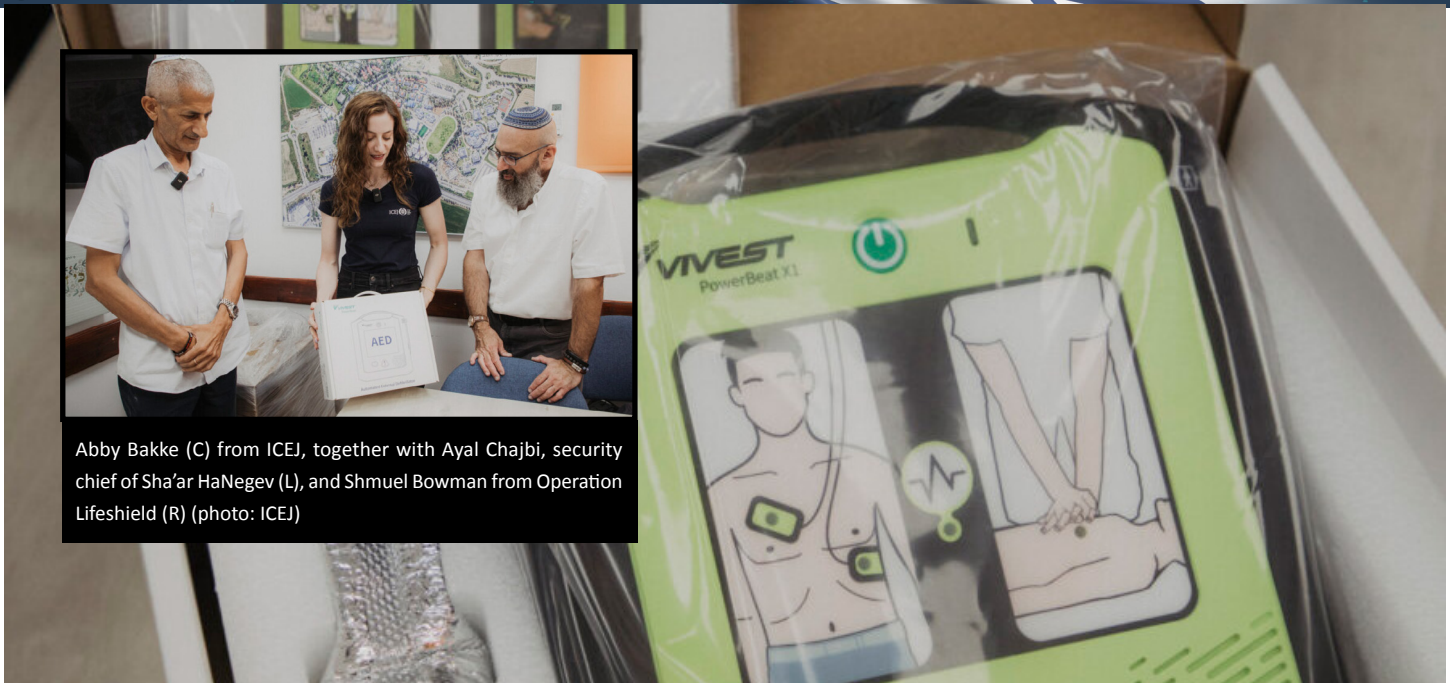
"The most talking we do is by the bonfire at night, with the stars shining above and the sound of a crackling fire," Nir added, pointing to a fire pit surrounded by blankets and pillows left from the night before. "It is there that a unique openness falls, allowing people to share traumatic memories that still linger in their personalities, fears, and struggles." The farms have provided not only immediate relief but also a deep sense of community among participants.

The ICEJ was the first to support therapeutic retreats at Lahav Farm. "Many didn't believe in the original idea, but ICEJ did," said Nir. "You were the first to support us, and much of what's happening here is because of you." 🌍

ICEJ AID assistant Jannie Tolhoek caresses a lamb at Lahav Farm, a sanctuary for traumatized Israelis.



Support the ICEJ's urgent relief projects during this time of crisis for Israel. Donate today at:
www.icejusa.org/crisis



Abby Bakke (C) from ICEJ, together with Ayal Chajbi, security chief of Sha'ar HaNegev (L), and Shmuel Bowman from Operation Lifeshield (R) (photo: ICEJ)

ICEJ-donated defibrillator (photo: Operation Lifeshield)

ISRAELI MEDICAL TEAMS NEAR GAZA RECEIVE 17 DEFIBRILLATORS FROM ICEJ

BY NATIVIA SAMUELSEN, ICEJ AID ADMINISTRATOR



During a recent trip to southern Israel, an ICEJ delegation met with the security chief of the Sha'ar HaNegev region to help bolster their emergency preparedness. We arrived with 17 defibrillators, ready to support medical responders in a region that has experienced immense violence and trauma on and since October 7. Located just a few miles from the border with Gaza, Sha'ar HaNegev is a region in great need of more protective equipment. The Christian Embassy continues its strong commitment to this vulnerable area, which has already received from us dozens of bomb shelters, firefighting equipment, special communication devices, medical gear, and other lifesaving equipment.

Defibrillators are essential in life-threatening situations, especially during cardiac arrest, where every second counts. Studies show that early defibrillation can boost survival rates by up to 70 percent when administered within the first few minutes of a cardiac event. The availability of these lifesaving devices in high-risk areas provides a critical advantage in the sort of dire emergencies this region often faces. Ayal Chajbi, security chief of Sha'ar HaNegev, was extremely grateful when accepting the defibrillators, noting their significance in times of crisis.

"I want to express how incredibly excited I am at this moment," Ayal said. "Why am I so excited? Because as soon as I asked you for defibrillators,

I heard, 'You'll have these defibrillators.' We initially discussed needing 14, but in the end, we received 17.

"You are wonderful people," he continued. "You do things you are not required to do; you do them from the heart and soul. In Israel, saving a single life is like saving an entire world. I experienced this firsthand when I saved someone at an intersection by running to them with a defibrillator.

"Today, I want to say thank you so much for everything you do for us," he added. "You are the good people who go above and beyond. We are a country that often needs to take care of itself, but there are people like you who are always there to support us. For this, I owe you a heartfelt thanks. Your support means the world to us."

The Sha'ar HaNegev Regional Council is now placing these defibrillators in educational institutions and security vehicles to ensure they are readily accessible during emergencies. In a place where every second counts, these devices ensure that the community is prepared for any heart-related medical emergency.

As tensions remain high, the provision of these lifesaving devices underscores the Christian Embassy's dedication to the safety and survival of Israel's vulnerable border communities. 🇮🇱

Give to our Israel in Crisis fund today at: www.icejusa.org/crisis

ICEJ RUSHES BOMB SHELTERS TO ISRAEL'S EMBATTLED NORTH



BY LAURINA DRIESSE, ICEJ MEDIA AND PUBLICATIONS

Israel is bracing for a massive wave of attacks by Iran following the recent deaths of two high-profile leaders from the Hamas and Hezbollah terror militias aligned with the radical clerical regime in Tehran. Tensions are especially high in northern Israel, which could come under heavy rocket barrages from Hezbollah forces in Lebanon. In response, the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem (ICEJ) is rushing to provide more bomb shelters and other means to protect vulnerable Israeli communities near the Lebanese border.

One such community is Hurfeish, a mixed Druze and Christian village located just 2.5 miles from Israel's border with Lebanon. Although its inhabitants are all Arabs, Hurfeish has repeatedly been in Hezbollah's direct line of fire—and when alarm sirens sound, residents have only seconds to seek shelter.

The ICEJ has provided this community with several mobile bomb shelters over recent years. However, with the possibility of war in the North, we recognized its people desperately needed more protection, so the ICEJ is delivering six new shelters to that area. Thanks to support from Christian donors in the United States, the ICEJ USA has purchased four shelters for Hurfeish. Another two shelters are needed.

In a wonderful gesture by the manufacturer, the mural artist Elyasaf is painting beautiful imagery on these shelters to uplift the surroundings. The local Druze community is extremely loyal to Israel and requested that both the Druze and Israeli flags be painted on the shelters. The shelters will be strategically placed in locations where civilians are most vulnerable, such as bus stops, community centers, sports fields, and schools.

The delivery of these bomb shelters in northern Israel could not be timelier, as just last month, a rocket shot from Lebanon by Hezbollah struck the nearby Druze community of Majdal Shams in the Golan, tragically killing 12 children and wounding many more at a soccer field.

Due to the urgency of the current situation, with Iran and Hezbollah vowing to “punish” Israel, the manufacturer is giving top priority to finishing the remaining shelters and delivering them as soon as possible.

In addition, through generous donations from our Christian friends in Canada, a shelter also

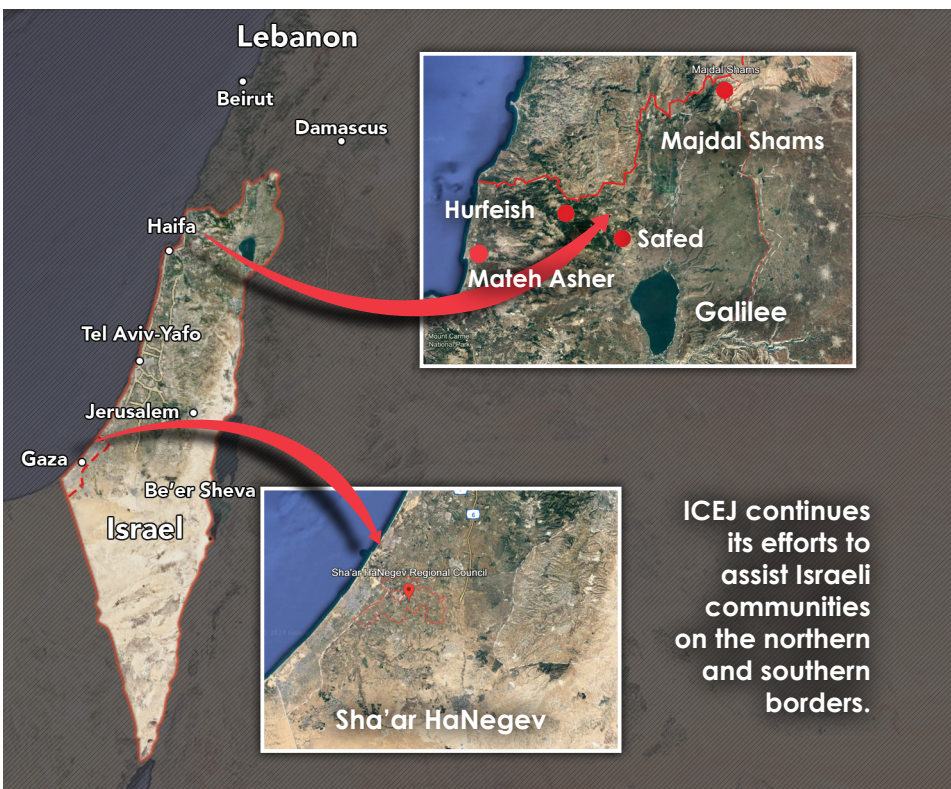


A painted bomb shelter being installed in the local Druze community, Hurfeish (photo: Operation Lifeshield)

has just been placed at a soccer field in the northern town of Safed—a historic religious Jewish town about seven miles from the Lebanese border that Hezbollah frequently targets.

The ICEJ has supplied more than 50 portable bomb shelters over the years to vulnerable communities near Israel's northern border and renovated more than 200 existing underground shelters. This year alone, the ICEJ has placed 17 new bomb shelters in the North, while renovating an additional 10 underground shelters in the Mateh Asher region. Together with our previous shelters, these are providing safety and refuge for residents in times of need.

Many more shelters are urgently needed for the northern border towns during these difficult days. Thank you for partnering with us by supporting our Israel in Crisis fund. Your donations are making a huge difference for vulnerable Israeli communities in the North. 🇮🇸



ICEJ continues its efforts to assist Israeli communities on the northern and southern borders.

Give to our Israel in Crisis fund today at: www.icejusa.org/crisis



THE BIBLICAL FOUNDATION OF MODERN-DAY ALIYAH

The Return of the Jewish People to the Land of Israel

BY KAREN ENGLE, ICEJ USA MANAGING EDITOR

Thus says the Lord GOD: “I will gather you from the peoples, assemble you from the countries where you have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel.” —Ezekiel 11:17

Aliyah means “to ascend” or “to go up” in a spiritual sense and originally described the journey the children of Israel made three times a year to Jerusalem for the biblically mandated feasts (“appointments” or “holy days”) of Passover (Pesach), Pentecost (Shavuot), and Tabernacles (Sukkot). Jerusalem sits on a hill atop Mount Zion, so in ancient times, pilgrims literally went “up to Zion” to celebrate these God-ordained appointments. Psalms 120–134, the “songs of ascent” or “pilgrim songs,” were typically sung by those traveling from near and far to the temple for these festivals. Upon entering Jerusalem, they cried, “Our feet are standing in your gates, Jerusalem” (Psalm 122:2 NIV).

Today, the word “Aliyah” is used to refer to Jewish people returning home to their promised homeland, Israel, from the nations where they have been scattered since Rome destroyed the temple in AD 70. A person who makes Aliyah is, in Hebrew, an Oleh (plural Olim), meaning “one who goes up.” There have been several waves of Aliyah, primarily because of persecution and even genocide, starting from around the late 1880s.

Aliyah is evidence of God’s faithfulness to His Word—His promise to bring His people back from “countries where you were scattered” (Ezekiel 11:17) is evident throughout Scripture. Though there are hundreds of passages promising the return of the Jewish people to the land of Israel in the Bible, what follows is a condensed list.

Deuteronomy 30:1–5
2 Chronicles 30:6–9
Psalm 14:7
Psalm 106:44–48
Psalm 126:1
Isaiah 11:11–12
Isaiah 14:1–2
Isaiah 27:12–13
Isaiah 43:5–6
Isaiah 44:26

Isaiah 49:11–12, 22–23
Isaiah 51:11
Isaiah 56:8
Isaiah 61:4–7
Isaiah 62:1–7
Isaiah 66:8–10
Jeremiah 3:14–18
Jeremiah 7:1–7
Jeremiah 3:14–18
Jeremiah 16:14–16

Jeremiah 23:3–8
Jeremiah 24:4–7
Jeremiah 29:11–14
Jeremiah 31:8–10
Jeremiah 31:16–17, 27–28, 36
Ezekiel 11:16–17
Ezekiel 20:41–42
Ezekiel 28:25
Ezekiel 34:11–13
Ezekiel 36:8–12, 16–28

Ezekiel 37:21–25
Ezekiel 39:25–29
Joel 2:32–3:2
Amos 9:14–15
Micah 2:12–13
Micah 4:6–7, 10
Zephaniah 3:17–20
Zechariah 8:7–8
Zechariah 10:6–12
Zechariah 12:6–10

South African Jews arrive home on an ICEJ South Africa sponsored flight. (credit: Dorron Kline-Telfed)



SOUTH AFRICAN JEWS MAKE ALIYAH DESPITE IRANIAN THREATS

BY MARELINKE VAN DER RIET, ICEJ PUBLICATIONS ASSISTANT

Israel remains braced for potential Iranian retaliatory attacks following its recent targeting of two senior Hamas and Hezbollah leaders, which could rapidly transform the current conflict into a full-scale war. Yet despite this precarious situation, Jewish families from around the world are still moving to Israel, many with assistance from the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem (ICEJ).

In early August, thirteen Jewish immigrants—two from Cape Town and eleven from Johannesburg—arrived in Israel on Aliyah flights sponsored by ICEJ South Africa. Their journey was dramatic, including numerous flight cancellations throughout the region due to the dire warnings of an imminent Iranian attack.

This summer's extraordinary surge in Jewish immigration to Israel speaks volumes about the nation's perceived security and the strong ties that bind Jewish people worldwide to their ancestral homeland. Despite the imminent threat of a wider war, many Jews are still choosing to make Israel their home, viewing it as a safer haven compared to countries where antisemitism is on the rise.

The increased interest in Aliyah is particularly evident in South Africa—a country facing unique challenges—including growing antisemitism, economic instability, and frequent power shortages. These factors are contributing to a rise in the number of South African Jews choosing to immigrate to Israel. According to Israel's Ministry of Immigration and Integration, the number of South African Jewish Olim (newcomers) landing here in the first half of 2024 has reached over 150. The ICEJ's South Africa Branch has raised the funds to sponsor 40 seats for Jewish families on flights from South Africa this year, and with your help, we can sponsor even more.

Osher Amanda Favel, a recent immigrant from South Africa, shared her personal experience with Telfed Aliyah News:

"Although I was a bit hesitant to come to Israel before the war happened (different cultures, a whole new way of life, etc.), the war took that anxiety away and made me want to come to Israel more than ever. Everyone overseas suddenly seemed to be against Israel and spread lies about my beloved country. For this reason, I felt that now more than ever, I need to be in my country, with my people."

She added, "I can truthfully say that even though there's a war going on, I still feel safer here. I am so happy to be surrounded by other Jews and like-minded people as we all stand together and defend our beloved Israel against the world. War or no war, I'm here to stay!"

Favel's sentiments reflect a broader trend among Diaspora Jews considering Aliyah. Indeed, the wider picture reveals that over 16,000 Jewish immigrants have arrived in Israel in the first half of 2024. More than 24,000 have come since October 7, 2023.

The ICEJ has played a pivotal role in facilitating this influx of new immigrants, sponsoring 601 Aliyah flights and assisting over 1,700 new immigrants already this year—including 200 flights from France, with hopes to support another 100 flights this fall. Besides French Aliyah, other upcoming flights include a youth Aliyah flight from Ukraine in late August.

The Jewish people's resilience and commitment to Israel amid these challenging times underscores a powerful narrative of solidarity and hope rooted in the promises of the Hebrew Scriptures. As the situation evolves, the ICEJ's support remains crucial in ensuring that Jewish communities worldwide can find their way home. 🌍

Donate today at:
www.icejusa.org/aliyah

ICEJ



INTERNATIONAL
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Stand with the Jewish People Against Rising Antisemitism

We are battling antisemitism in communities all over America. Since October 7 we have criss-crossed the nation defending Israel and the Jewish people by organizing rallies, speaking at events, conducting media interviews, and debating the opposition every chance we get. We sent a letter to over 300 universities asking them to better support and protect their Jewish students from antisemitic attacks. We asked the Biden administration to clamp down on federally funded campuses that allow antisemitism to run rampant.

But there is so much more we need to do! The Jewish community is asking us to mobilize Christians in this battle.

Please help us organize an army of Christian activists and educate the American people with truth to counter the lies and deception of the terrorist's sympathizers in America.



**We need
\$100,000
immediately
to help offset
these critical
needs.**

Will you help?



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50 STATES Days of Prayer for Israel

August 24–October 12 • 8 am (ET) Daily

As we approach the first anniversary of October 7—the deadliest single day for the Jewish people since the Holocaust—Israel's very existence is being threatened by enemies who want her wiped from the map. We are witnessing Israel's most critical hour since its founding in 1948. In response, the ICEJ USA is calling a 50-day vigil of fasting and prayer in the days leading up to Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement.

Intercessors will gather each morning on Zoom for one hour of prayer for Israel and the United States and will be joined each day by a team from one state in order to represent and pray for their state. The states will be covered in the order they joined the United States.

 DELAWARE AUGUST 24	 PENNSYLVANIA AUGUST 25	 NEW JERSEY AUGUST 26	 GEORGIA AUGUST 27	 CONNECTICUT AUGUST 28	 MASSACHUSETTS AUGUST 29	 MARYLAND AUGUST 30	 S. CAROLINA AUGUST 31	 NEW HAMPSHIRE SEPTEMBER 1	 VIRGINIA SEPTEMBER 2
 NEW YORK SEPTEMBER 3	 N. CAROLINA SEPTEMBER 4	 RHODE ISLAND SEPTEMBER 5	 VERMONT SEPTEMBER 6	 KENTUCKY SEPTEMBER 7	 TENNESSEE SEPTEMBER 8	 OHIO SEPTEMBER 9	 LOUISIANA SEPTEMBER 10	 INDIANA SEPTEMBER 11	 MISSISSIPPI SEPTEMBER 12
 ILLINOIS SEPTEMBER 13	 ALABAMA SEPTEMBER 14	 MAINE SEPTEMBER 15	 MISSOURI SEPTEMBER 16	 ARKANSAS SEPTEMBER 17	 MICHIGAN SEPTEMBER 18	 FLORIDA SEPTEMBER 19	 TEXAS SEPTEMBER 20	 IOWA SEPTEMBER 21	 WISCONSIN 1848 SEPTEMBER 22
 CALIFORNIA SEPTEMBER 23	 MINNESOTA SEPTEMBER 24	 STATE OF OREGON 1859 OREGON SEPTEMBER 25	 KANSAS SEPTEMBER 26	 W. VIRGINIA SEPTEMBER 27	 NEVADA SEPTEMBER 28	 NEBRASKA SEPTEMBER 29	 COLORADO SEPTEMBER 30	 N. DAKOTA OCTOBER 1	 S. DAKOTA OCTOBER 2
 MONTANA OCTOBER 3	 WASHINGTON OCTOBER 4	 IDAHO OCTOBER 5	 WYOMING OCTOBER 6	 UTAH OCTOBER 7	 OKLAHOMA OCTOBER 8	 NEW MEXICO OCTOBER 9	 ARIZONA OCTOBER 10	 UTAH OCTOBER 11	 HAWAII OCTOBER 12

Join the movement at: www.icejusa.org/50states50days



YOUR ISRAEL ANSWER

Does the House Bill Opposing Antisemitism Outlaw Parts of the New Testament?

By Dr. Susan Michael, ICEJ USA Director

Prompted by a swell in antisemitic incidents in Europe back in 2016, the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) drafted a definition of antisemitism to help countries, institutions, and organizations recognize it when it was happening in order to respond quicker to, monitor better, and track antisemitic incidents. As of April 2024, 45 countries and more than 1,000 nongovernmental institutions have adopted the definition, which says:

Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, Jewish community institution, or religious facilities.

In addition to defining antisemitism, IHRA also gave practical examples of it, including targeting the State of Israel as it is a “Jewish collective.” For this reason, anti-Israel critics complained that the IHRA definition inhibits their freedom of speech and was being misused to protect Israel from their legitimate criticism. However, the IHRA explanation explicitly says that this is not the case. It says that “criticism of Israel similar to that leveled against any other country cannot be regarded as antisemitic.”

Recently, another complaint about the IHRA definition was heard when the US House of Representatives passed a bill to enforce federal anti-discrimination laws on campuses. The bill, called the Antisemitism Awareness Act, requires universities to consider the IHRA definition when assessing whether an allegation was motivated by antisemitic intent, and failing to do so could result in their federal funds being withheld.

To the surprise of many, a rather vocal member of Congress voted against the bill, saying it could lead to convicting Christians of antisemitism simply for preaching the gospel or quoting the New Testament. The accusation spread throughout the media, and a

chorus of voices began expressing concerns about Congress’ adoption of the IHRA definition.

The controversy surrounds another example of antisemitism listed by IHRA, which is “Using the symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism (e.g., claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterize Israel or Israelis.” Several verses in the New Testament do blame Jews for Jesus’ death, like Acts 2:36, Acts 3:13-15, and 1 Thessalonians 2:14-16. But is that what the IHRA definition is talking about?

Does this recent House bill opposing antisemitism really outlaw parts of the New Testament?

Not at all. According to Dr. Michael Brown in his article “Did the House of Representatives Just Outlaw Quoting Parts of the New Testament?” the IHRA definition merely states it would be antisemitic to label Israelis today—or all Jews—as Christ-killers or as responsible for Jesus’ death. Dr. Brown says it “addresses the historic (and still present) antisemitic libel that all Jews were and are Christ-killers, a libel that has led to the slaughter of Jews throughout history.”

Context Is King

When I was studying theology in college, a fundamental rule we learned when interpreting Scripture was “Context is king.” This means we must interpret a verse or passage literally and within its historical setting. Taking a verse out of context leads to error and misunderstanding.

Critics of this bill do just that. They fail to consider that the audience to whom the New Testament authors were speaking or writing were some of the actual Jewish leaders who either carried out or supported turning Jesus over to the Roman authorities for crucifixion. These verses cannot be applied to all Jews of all ages, and to do so is antisemitic. The charges raised against the House bill are false and a gross misuse of Scripture. 🌐

Get your questions about Israel answered at:
www.israelanswers.com

JOIN US IN HONOR OF COURAGE AND SACRIFICE

In Washington, DC, on October 7

BY SHANNON BENNETT
ICEJ USA COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

Near the end of our eight-day Feast of Tabernacles celebration last October, the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem led nearly 700 Christians from around 50 nations to the western Negev for a solidarity rally with Israeli communities along the Gaza border. The event featured a warm welcome from Ofir Libstein, the mayor of Sha'ar HaNegev Regional Council, who expressed gratitude for our support, which he credited for the community's safety and growth. Tragically, just two days later, Mayor Libstein was killed while defending his home in Kfar Aza during the heinous attack by Hamas on October 7, becoming the first named Israeli casualty of the conflict.

Despite enduring years of rocket attacks, Ofir remained committed to peace and had spearheaded projects to improve relations with Gaza through economic development including a water project and a joint industrial park. This was true of many killed by Hamas on that dark day.



Mayor Ofir Libstein, David Parsons, and Shai Hermesh during Feast 2023 at the Solidarity Gathering in the Sha'ar HaNegev

The ICEJ USA is dedicated to honoring Ofir's life and the lives of all the innocent Israelis murdered on October 7, as well as the hundreds of Israeli soldiers who have sacrificed their lives in the ensuing war in a special commemoration event in Washington, DC.

This gathering on the National Mall will unite Jewish and Christian communities in remembrance, prayer and solidarity with Israel as it continues its fight against Hamas, Hezbollah, and Iran. The event will feature reflections and prayers from leaders from both communities and serve as both a memorial and a call to action, urging participants to stand firm with Israel during these challenging times.

More details will be released soon. In the meantime, we encourage you to make plans to be with us at this important gathering. Let's show Israel and the Jewish people that they are not alone in their grief or their fight against those seeking their destruction. 🌍



2024 EDITORS' CHOICE AWARD

Every Generation's Story: 75 Years of American Christian Engagement with Israel

was recently awarded the 2024 Editors' Choice Award!

The award is sponsored by the Christian Editor Connection and celebrates newly released books that are "superbly written, well edited, and published by a Christian publisher or self-published."

Every Generation's Story was compiled and edited by ICEJ USA Director

Dr. Susan Michael and copyedited by ICEJ USA Managing Editor Karen Engle.

Get your copy today on Amazon or at the ICEJ USA bookstore at:
www.icejusa.org/product/every-generations-story

FEAST 2024

OCTOBER 16-23 2024

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