



WORD

FROM JERUSALEM



A Feast OF
UNPRECEDENTED UNITY



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, and
- 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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INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN EMBASSY JERUSALEM - USA

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FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Dear Friends,

After two years of lockdowns and travel bans, Israel's borders are finally opened again! As soon as Israel removed restrictions on incoming tourists, we immediately saw the first groups arriving back in the land—and the stream of pilgrims entering the Land of Promise has continued to grow. We are busy preparing for our first physical Feast of Tabernacles celebration in Jerusalem since 2019, and we invite you to join us from October 9 to 16 in Jerusalem to celebrate!

This year's Feast theme is "The Land of Promise," and in this issue, you will read how this is a feast of unprecedented unity (p. 4). We have exciting plans for all our pilgrims to personally experience what God is doing today in *eretz Israel*! Many will be surprised to see with their own eyes how much Israel has developed.

We have adapted the trip itinerary to make it more exciting for all ages, so we welcome all ages and families to come up to Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles this October. It will be a life-changing experience! See page 7 for tour details.

I pray you will enjoy this issue of the *Word From Jerusalem*. We continue to welcome rescue flights of Ukrainian Jews home to Israel (p. 10) and help them settle into their new lives. Several members of our Jerusalem staff who speak Ukrainian and Russian are assisting new immigrants to adjust to Israel's rules, language, and culture (p. 11). And our ICEJ Finland Branch recently organized a large van to take over one ton of relief aid to Warsaw and deliver it to the beleaguered Jewish refugees in that city.

I especially urge you to read the timely Israel Answers article *Why Christians Support Israel Part 1: Personal Reasons* (p. 18), the first installment of a five-part series, as well as Susan Michael's article *Nothing Is Impossible for God* (p. 16), and sign up for her weekly Shabbat Shalom devotionals, which are an inspiring way to end your busy week.

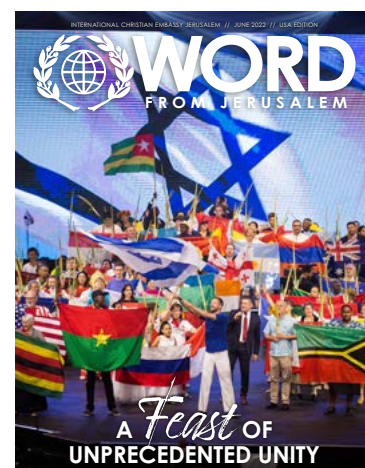
Many blessings from Jerusalem, and I hope to see you at the Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem this fall!

Yours in Christ,

Dr. Jürgen Bühler
President
International Christian Embassy Jerusalem

COVER PHOTO: 2019 Roll Call of the Nations, opening night at the ICEJ's Feast of Tabernacles

FOR MAGAZINE ARCHIVES
visit www.icejusa.org/wfj



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A Feast OF UNPRECEDENTED UNITY

BY DR. JÜRGEN BÜHLER, ICEJ PRESIDENT

Three times a year, the Lord commanded His people to ascend to Jerusalem for the three main pilgrimage festivals of *Pesach*, *Shavuot*, and *Sukkot*. The Bible refers to them as the “Feasts of the Lord,” meaning they were divinely instructed holidays God expected His people to keep (Leviticus 23:1ff). According to Scripture, each is a *mo’ed* or “appointed time.” In a way, they can be understood as entries on a heavenly calendar when God decides to meet with His people in a special way. But of these three festivals, the Feast of Tabernacles (*Sukkot*) was considered the greatest.

Over the centuries, Christians have celebrated the first two feasts during Easter and Pentecost. But the third feast of *Sukkot* has not been celebrated throughout most of church history, and it was even declared heretical at one point by the Catholic Church. Only during recent decades has *Sukkot* increasingly become part

of the Christian holiday calendar—in no small part due to the Feast of Tabernacles sponsored for over 40 years now by the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem.

THE MESSAGE OF THE FEASTS

As with the other pilgrimage feasts, there are two main concepts undergirding the Feast of Tabernacles. First, all three festivals are tied to special periods in Israel’s agricultural calendar. *Pesach* celebrates the feast of “firstfruits” (Leviticus 23:10ff), *Shavuot* marks the wheat and barley harvests, and *Sukkot* celebrates not only the final harvest season for grapes, pomegranates, and olives—the most precious of the harvests—but it also rejoices in God’s faithfulness and provision throughout the entire year.

Secondly, each feast commemorates a specific period in Israel’s history. *Pesach* (Passover)

remembers the deliverance from bondage in Egypt. On *Shavuot* (Pentecost), Israel recounts how God came down with fire on Mount Sinai and delivered the Ten Commandments. And during *Sukkot* (Feast of Tabernacles), the people of Israel recall their 40 years of wandering in the wilderness, living in rickety booths and yet experiencing God’s supernatural provision.

**ALL THREE FEASTS HAVE THEIR
FULFILLMENT IN THE PERSON
OF JESUS CHRIST.**

All three feasts have their fulfillment in the person of Jesus Christ. First, Easter honors Jesus as our spotless Passover Lamb, who rose from the grave as the “firstfruits” from the dead (1

Corinthians 15:20). Then on Pentecost, the Spirit of God came in fire upon the disciples of Jesus and wrote His law on their hearts—an initial harvest of 3,000 souls who came into God's kingdom, just as countless more have done since.

Lastly, *Sukkot* celebrates the final and most precious harvest of the year, and no doubt we are experiencing today the largest harvest of souls in church history. The gospel of the kingdom is being preached in every nation, and great efforts are underway to reach the last tribes and tongues with the good news of Jesus Christ.

Another fulfillment, however, centers around the main characteristic of *Sukkot*: the tabernacle.

THE BOOTHS

The chief symbol of *Sukkot* for most people is the building of a booth or tabernacle (*succah* in Hebrew), as commanded by God: "You shall dwell in booths for seven days. All who are native Israelites shall dwell in booths" (Leviticus 23:42).

Every year, it is always fascinating to see Jewish families all over Israel build *succahs* on their porches or in their gardens. God commands His people to dwell in these frail tabernacles for an entire week to relive the wilderness experience. These small huts have flimsy walls and a roof covered with branches. The rabbis say you need to be able to see the stars at night through the ceiling. In this makeshift tent, the whole family is supposed to eat their meals, study, and even sleep.

Recapturing the desert experience serves to remind everyone that we live in a fragile

world, and despite our prosperity, we are still dependent on God to sustain us. Paul refers to this enduring truth that we live in "earthly booths":

"For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven." (2 Corinthians 5:1–2)

These past two years of a global pandemic and now a brutal war in Ukraine have reminded us just how fragile life can be. Even Christians are shaken by these events and often wonder: *Where is God?* But Paul says that as we experience our frailty and feel "hard-pressed on every side . . . perplexed," we should not despair (2 Corinthians 4:8)—this is the ordinary life of a believer in Christ, and it should not crush us but rather bring us closer to Him.

AS WE EXPERIENCE
OUR FRAILTY AND FEEL
"HARD-PRESSED ON
EVERY SIDE ... WE ARE
PERPLEXED, BUT NOT IN
DESPAIR."

- 2 Corinthians 4:8 -

Only when Christ returns will we receive our full redemption in a new resurrected body, but until then, we are still groaning (2 Corinthians 5:2), waiting like Abraham for the city whose builder and architect is God (Hebrews 11:10).

THE FOUR SPECIES

The word of God combines the command to build a *succah* with another divine charge: "And you shall take for yourselves on the first day the fruit of beautiful trees, branches of palm trees, the boughs of leafy trees, and willows of the brook; and you shall rejoice before the LORD your God for seven days" (Leviticus 23:40).

Israel was to take these four species from trees common in the Mediterranean area. The branches of the palm tree, willow, and the leafy tree together make up the *lulav*. They add to it the fruit of a "splendid tree" (*etz hadar* in Hebrew). Since the time of the Maccabees, this has meant a citrus fruit called the *etrog*. When Jews purchase an *etrog*, they always carefully examine it for possible flaws, and a perfect *etrog* can sell at a high price.

These four species are used today in the Jewish people's daily prayers during *Sukkot* and are waved toward each of the four corners of the earth, recognizing God's kingship over the world.

According to the rabbis, the four species represent the many character types within the people of Israel, as well as the fullness of the wilderness experience. The palm trees are the wanderings through the valleys and plains, the leafy trees are the bushes on the mountain heights, the willows represent the brooks of water God provided, and the splendid trees are the hope for the fruits of the Land of Promise. Therefore, these species represent the entire people and their different characteristics and experiences.

According to a Sadducee tradition dating back to Second Temple times, these branches also were to be used to build the *succah*. The book of Nehemiah refers to these species in that context:

They should proclaim it and publish it in all their towns and in Jerusalem, "Go out to the hills and bring branches of olive, wild olive, myrtle, palm, and other leafy trees to make booths, as it is written." (Nehemiah 8:15, ESV)

Nehemiah used these species as building materials for the booths. But the main difference in the list of species is his mention of olive trees instead of the *etz hadar*. The *Jewish Encyclopedia* explains that citrus trees like the *etrog* originated from India and were introduced into Israel after the Jewish people's return from the Babylonian exile. Could it be that the "splendid tree" in ancient times was understood to be the olive tree? We do not know for certain, but passages like Zechariah 4 speak about the splendor of the "golden oil"



A *succah* in the desert

flowing from two olive trees. And Nehemiah called the people to bring cultivated and wild olive branches “to make booths, as it is written.”

WILD AND NOBLE OLIVES

It is also fascinating to note that this passage in Nehemiah is the only other verse in the entire Bible besides Romans 11 where wild and natural (or cultivated) olive trees are mentioned together. The English Standard Version translates it as the “wild and the noble” olive in line with some main commentaries. For Paul in Romans 11, these two branches represented the household of God, consisting of both Jews (the natural or noble olive tree) and gentiles (wild olive branches). Paul saw the wild branches being grafted into the noble tree, and the two united through faith in a Jewish Messiah, Yeshua. Both are partakers of the nourishing sap that flows within the noble tree (*etz hadar*) of Israel. In Romans 9:1–5, Paul explains this includes “the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises; of whom are the fathers and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came.” Paul, therefore, instructs the gentile church to be grateful toward the Jews and bless them in return with material gifts (Romans 15:27).

Already in the times of Nehemiah, when God restored Jerusalem and the temple, these two branches—the wild and noble olive trees—appear to cast a prophetic shadow onto our day. As in the days of Nehemiah, we see Jerusalem restored and a global temple of God being built of “living stones,” believers from every tribe and nation being fit together as a spiritual house (1 Peter 2:5). Paul saw this reality of Jews and gentiles together in one body as a “mystery” hidden from ages past but now revealed through the holy apostles and prophets (Ephesians 3:5–10). This “one new man” (Ephesians 2:15), united by the atoning blood of Jesus Christ, is formed into “a dwelling place of God in the Spirit” (Ephesians 2:22).

PAUL SAW THE WILD BRANCHES BEING GRAFTED INTO THE NOBLE OLIVE TREE AND THE TWO UNITED THROUGH FAITH IN A JEWISH MESSIAH, YESHUA.

The prophet Zechariah saw in a vision two olive trees extending their branches and their oil to a golden lampstand. “Not by might, not by power but by My Spirit” declared the Lord to the prophet (Zechariah 4:6). In this vision, Zechariah sees God placing the capstone, the completion stone, upon the temple “with shouts of ‘Grace, grace to it!’” (Zechariah 4:7; see also vv. 1–6).

In Solomon’s time, the temple was completed during the Feast of Tabernacles (1 Kings 8:1ff). Thus, it is not surprising that Zechariah also saw gentiles coming to Jerusalem to join Israel in celebrating the Feast of Tabernacles (Zechariah 14:16).

I believe there is a great prophetic purpose in why God has restored the Feast of Tabernacles to the church. We are living in the time when God is placing the capstone to His temple. God is preparing His bride of both natural and wild olive branches, and He will do this with renewed outpourings of the Holy Spirit and great dispensations of grace upon His people.

HOSHANA RABA

We can learn one more lesson from the four species. In the temple in Jerusalem, the priests circled the altar every day, waving the species in their hands, praying, and proclaiming from the Psalms: “Save us, we pray, O Lord! O Lord, we pray, give us success!” (Psalm 118:25)

On the last day of *Sukkot*, the *Hoshana Raba* (*hoshana* means “please save us”), the priests

circled the altar not once but seven times. The prayer was a prayer for blessing, for rain, and for God’s overflowing provision. The reenactment of the battle of Jericho was the pleading for a breakthrough for their personal lives, their families, and their nation.

Over the past 40 years, we have witnessed exactly that! We have heard testimony after testimony of answered prayers for personal breakthroughs and exceptional blessings offered during our Feast of Tabernacles. Feast pilgrims were called into ministry, had financial breakthroughs, and were healed from diseases. Church revivals were kindled in various countries, parliamentarians were called into public service, barren women were able to have children—these are just some of the testimonies we heard from people attending the Feast.

BEHOLD, HOW GOOD AND HOW PLEASANT IT IS FOR BRETHREN TO DWELL TOGETHER IN UNITY!

- Psalm 133:1 -

One of the pilgrimage psalms sung at *Sukkot* proclaims: “Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!” (Psalm 133:1) This, the psalmist adds, releases God’s anointing, and “there the Lord commanded the blessing—life forevermore” (v. 3).

We have seen God answer prayer many times and in surprising ways when the one body of Messiah came together pleading, “Lord save us!” This confirms that *Sukkot* is indeed a *mo’ed*, an appointed time to meet with the King of kings when nothing is impossible for Him!

In many ways, the Feast of Tabernacles has become a global *succah* for Jews and gentiles, and the special unity we have in Yeshua becomes a catalyst for God to send a breakthrough. I pray that you can join us this year and experience the Feast outpouring for yourself! 🌿



Pilgrims from the nations at the Jerusalem March during the Feast of Tabernacles

Join us **IN ISRAEL FOR FEAST 2022!**

With great joy and anticipation, the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem is pleased to announce that we will be hosting our first public, physical celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem since 2019.

Join us in Israel from October 6–17, 2022, and together we will explore the land of the Bible, deepen our faith in the Lord, and worship the King of kings from His holy mountain: Jerusalem.

This year's Feast theme is "The Land of Promise," and at the Feast, we'll unpack all the Lord is doing in and through the nation of Israel—and in our own lives. So make sure to join us for a wonderful time of worship, the proclamation of the Word, and prayer, as we connect with believers from around the world to keep the biblical festival of Sukkot (Zechariah 14:16).

Since this will be our first tour to Israel since COVID-19, we have adapted the trip itinerary to make it more exciting for all ages. We welcome all ages and families to come up to Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles this October. It will be a life-changing experience!

There is no better time to visit Israel than during this Feast of Tabernacles!

Land of Promise

Join us as we explore the incredible land God promised to Abraham for the purpose of world redemption—Israel's homeland that she is being restored to in this day and where many other divine promises are being fulfilled before our eyes.

The Feast Journey

ICEJ's Feast of Tabernacles 2022 will begin with two exciting days in the Galilee, including glorious worship services each evening along the beautiful shores of the Sea of Galilee. Then we move up to Jerusalem for five days of Feast events, starting with the traditional Parade of Nations in the Pais Arena. There will also be seminars, special prayer gatherings, communion at the Garden Tomb, and the ever-popular Jerusalem March—plus plenty of time for touring biblical sites. The Feast will conclude with a special tree-planting ceremony and solidarity rally in the Negev with the Jewish National Fund (JNF) and the resilient Israeli communities along the Gaza border.



Speakers

This year's excellent lineup of inspiring local and international ministers and experts will bring you biblical and prophetic insights into Israel and current updates on this ever-changing region.



Worship

Enter the presence of God during an amazing time of praise and worship in Israel. This year's Feast will feature local and international worship leaders who will lead us in refreshing times of worship to Jesus.

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Tour Highlights

Mount of Olives overlooking the City of God • Garden of Gethsemane & communion service at the Garden Tomb • Old City of Jerusalem, including time to pray at the Western Wall • Dead Sea area sites (Masada, Qumran, and Ein Gedi)—and a swim in the Dead Sea • Galilee area sites (Capernaum, Tel Dan, and Banias) • Boat ride on the Sea of Galilee • Jerusalem rampart prayer walk • And much more

Hotels include:

David Resort and Spa – Dead Sea • Yehuda – Jerusalem • Magdala Hotel – Galilee

Is God calling you to come to Israel this Feast of Tabernacles? Register today!



To register or for more details about the Feast, call us at: (615) 895-9830 or go to: www.icejusa.org/feast-tour



THE OUTPOURING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN CAESAREA

The beginning of our story as gentiles

BY DR. SUSAN MICHAEL, ICEJ USA DIRECTOR



The city of Caesarea is mentioned a handful of times in the New Testament and the setting of several critical events recorded in the book of Acts, including the Roman centurion Cornelius' receiving of the Holy Spirit. This watershed moment in the history of Christianity took place not in the holy city of Jerusalem but the pagan city of Caesarea.

SETTING IN A PAGAN CITY

Known as Caesarea Maritima, or "Caesarea on the Sea," this expansive port city on the Mediterranean Sea was built by King Herod. Named in honor of Roman Emperor Caesar Augustus, Caesarea Maritima contained a prominent temple to the emperor that stood 100 feet high.

Herod built Caesarea's expansive harbor using cutting-edge technology that allowed concrete to harden underwater. He then built a 10-mile-long aqueduct to transport fresh water from springs at the base of Mount Carmel. Herod's summer palace was designed to jut out into the sea with an Olympic-size pool of fresh water. A Hippodrome (a stadium for horse and chariot racing) that could seat 20,000 people paralleled the beach.

Herod also constructed a theater with a seating capacity of 3,500. According to the Jewish historian Josephus, this was where Herod's grandson—King Herod Agrippa I—died, also recounted in Acts 12.

Today visitors to Caesarea can sit among the ruins of these magnificent structures and imagine the lifestyle of the Roman people in Herod's day. We can also review the biblical story of the Roman Centurion, Cornelius.

In this opulent city of extravagance and excesses, rife with pagan worship of emperors and mythical gods, lived a Roman centurion named Cornelius. Acts 10:2 says he was a "devout man and one who feared God with all his household, who gave alms generously to the

people, and prayed to God always." Hence, he had a "good reputation among all the nation of the Jews" (10:22).


This Roman centurion, a gentile of the Italian regiment, feared and prayed to the God of the Jews and gave alms according to Jewish practices. Cornelius, therefore, was held in good standing with the Jewish people. It was this man God chose to be the first gentile blessed with salvation and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

THE BEGINNING OF OUR STORY

Until this time, the gospel of Christ's death for the remission of sins had only been preached among Jesus' Jewish brethren. While the Hebrew prophets foretold a day when the gentiles would worship the God of Israel, these first-century Jewish believers in Jesus were not expecting it to begin in their lifetime.

Peter immediately went to Jerusalem, where he had to convince church leaders that the Holy Spirit was falling on people outside of the nation of Israel and the Jewish faith. From the pagan city of Caesarea, word came to the apostles and believers in Jesus that God had "also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life" (Acts 11:18).

Gentiles, who were "strangers and aliens" to God's covenants of promise, had been "brought near by the blood of Christ" (Ephesians 2:12–13). Jesus' death on the cross paid the price for all people—but when it was time for the Holy Spirit to break into the gentile world, it began in the pagan city of Caesarea, in the home of a Roman Centurion who prayed to the God of the Jews.

Join Susan in Israel November 2–12, 2022, on a tour designed just for women to see many incredible sites mentioned in the Bible—and watch your Bible come alive! For information, go to www.icejusa.org/CT112. 

NOV 2-
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ICEJ SPONSORS RESCUE FLIGHTS FOR UKRAINIAN JEWS

With the Russian invasion of Ukraine triggering the largest refugee crisis in Europe in over 75 years, Israel has been scrambling to rescue thousands of Ukrainian Jews in harm's way and bring them home safely to Israel. The Jewish Agency for Israel (JAFI) oversees the emergency Aliyah process, which begins with meeting Ukrainian Jewish war refugees at the border crossings into Poland, Hungary, Romania, and Moldova. They are given temporary housing while their Aliyah file is opened, and then they are flown to Israel. The new arrivals are then placed in hotels and municipal housing across Israel for several months while they adjust to life in Israel.

During the first six weeks of the war, JAFI flew more than 7,000 Ukrainian Jewish immigrants to Israel. The Christian Embassy has sponsored the transport, temporary housing, medical care, and Aliyah flights for many of these new immigrants, and more are on the way.

The first Aliyah flight in this mass exodus landed in early March with some 90 children from a Jewish orphanage in central Ukraine. The youngsters, aged 2 to 18, had walked through freezing temperatures and snow to cross the border into Romania several days before. Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett was waiting on the tarmac at Ben-Gurion Airport to greet them.

Additional flights soon arrived with hundreds more Ukrainian Jewish immigrants. ICEJ delegations were on hand to greet several of these planes. It was clear that most passengers were women, children, and the elderly, as Ukrainian men between ages 18 and 60 had to stay behind to help defend the country. The hope is they will soon be able to rejoin their families here in Israel.

At one flight arrival, our ICEJ welcome team spoke to several Ukrainian Jews about their difficult journey to Israel. One mother and daughter

said they had spent several weeks fleeing to Poland from Kharkiv, a hard-hit city near the Russian border. They crossed the entire country on their own without a vehicle and sought refuge in one town after another. They were happy to finally be in Israel at an absorption hotel in Rishon LeZion but will eventually settle in Netanya.



ICEJ's Nicole Yoder welcomes a mother and daughter who trekked across Ukraine to reach Israel; Ukrainian Jewish refugees board a bus for Poland.

These new immigrants are being classified as "war refugees," which means they need to receive extra government assistance in their first years here. But Israel and the Jewish Agency also are appealing to their Christian friends to help fund this mammoth Aliyah and absorption effort.

With the war in Ukraine dragging on and Russia's economy crippled by international sanctions, Israeli officials say they expect as many as 50,000 Ukrainian and Russian Jews to make Aliyah in the coming year or so, depending on how the conflict plays out. Counting those who are Jewish and their immediate families, there is an estimated 200,000 Ukrainians and more than 600,000 Russians eligible to immigrate to Israel.

The ICEJ already has a long record of assisting with Aliyah from Ukraine—we have helped nearly 50,000 Ukrainian Jews immigrate to Israel since the Soviet Union disbanded in 1989. But for those who remain, the need has never been greater to help bring them to safety in Israel.

The current surge in Aliyah from Ukraine, Russia, and even Belarus is expected to continue over the coming months. The costs to evacuate Ukrainian Jews and then shelter and fly them to Israel are currently averaging US \$1,000 per person.

Please consider sending your best gift today to help with this urgent need. Do not miss your chance to be part of this historic moment in the prophetic ingathering of Israel. 🌍

Donate today at: www.icejusa.org/ukraine



ICEJ STAFF HELPING UKRAINIAN JEWS ADJUST TO ISRAEL

The ICEJ's involvement in the current wave of urgent Aliyah from Ukraine includes members of our Jerusalem staff who speak Ukrainian and Russian and are helping new immigrants adjust to the rules, language, and culture of Israel.



Anna Lan is originally from Russia, while Liliya Shapchyts came to Israel from Belarus. Both have been on the ICEJ staff for many years, and they eagerly accepted a recent offer to help new Ukrainian Jewish immigrants staying at a local Jerusalem hotel complete their applications for Israeli identity cards in Hebrew. Anna also assisted with translation for children participating in fun activities at the hotel, such as arts and crafts.

"As someone originally from Russia, I am very happy to be able to assist these people from Ukraine," said Anna. "Not only are they adapting to a new country, which is hard, but they are also coming with very few possessions and are in a state of shock. I'm so grateful that God can use me in this small way of translating for them."

For Liliya, the chance to help these new immigrants extends beyond the hotel corridors. She is assisting new immigrants by providing them with critical information in Russian about life in Israel, such as getting an Israeli mobile phone and applying for a bus card so that they can travel around town with ease.

"I'm very happy to help these people," assured Liliya. "I understand what it is like to come to a new country and the difficulty of not knowing where to start with things or how to do things. It is very hard when you don't know the Hebrew language." 🌍



Ukrainian Jewish immigrants receiving help from Liliya

ICEJ BRANCHES DELIVER AID TO JEWISH REFUGEES IN WARSAW

When the war in Ukraine broke out in February, thousands of Jews fled west into Poland and converged on Warsaw, where they had heard the local Jewish community could help take care of them. The Chief Rabbi of Warsaw realized that community was overwhelmed with Jewish war refugees, and so he reached out for help. In response, ICEJ Finland National Director Jani Salokangas organized a large van to take over one ton of relief aid to Warsaw and deliver it to the beleaguered Jewish refugees. Within three hours of arriving in Warsaw, the aid shipment was completely dispersed to needy families. Our Finnish branch recently sent a second truck filled with relief aid, including sleeping bags, warm clothing, items for babies, toiletries, air mattresses, medications, and food. ICEJ Germany and ICEJ Norway planned similar aid deliveries to Warsaw. 🌍



Jani Salokangas and John Remes of ICEJ Finland with the Chief Rabbi of Warsaw Michael Schudrich



Another completed Finnish aid delivery

ICEJ staff packing toys and games for new immigrant children

GIFT PACKAGES SAY 'WELCOME HOME' TO UKRAINIAN JEWS

BY ANASTASIYA GOODING

As more Ukrainian Jews flood into Israel, the Christian Embassy has welcomed hundreds of these new immigrant families with gift packages to say warmly, "Welcome home!"

Many Ukrainian Jewish families coming to Israel left their homes without any advance planning, taking only a few items and little to no money. This wave of new immigrants is largely an Aliyah of women and children because most of the men had remained to help defend the country. So amid the anxiety, separation, and uncertainty, we have extended a loving hand to these new arrivals on behalf of Christians worldwide.



Pnina with the Ukrainian Jewish orphans

Recently, an ICEJ team visited the Nes Harim complex in the Jerusalem foothills to deliver gift packages to some 90 children who arrived early in the war from a Jewish orphanage in Ukraine. Our team first met a group of teenagers and then the younger children. When we distributed the gifts, some children asked if they could hug our staff.

"What a privilege to be able to participate in packing and handing out gifts to these Ukrainian children arriving in Israel," shared Pnina Zubarev, an ICEJ staff member originally from Ukraine.

"You know, it's a foreign country, it's foreign people, and they don't know anyone here," explained Pnina. "But as I started talking with them, suddenly they heard the language that they know without any accent and were so happy. The children went from being closed and distant to being open, happy, and willing to talk."

"It seems that maybe the hug was also like a present for them because they are orphans, and they really need it," Pnina added.

The children were also amazed at the variety and size of the toys and games they were given.

"I was overwhelmed as I watched the sadness turn to happiness and joy on the faces of the children," expressed Pnina.

One little girl was pushing a stroller with a stone and a piece of wood in the seat. When Pnina asked why she had a stone and stick in her stroller, she replied: "My doll is at home where the war is!" She was thrilled when Pnina mentioned she was about to receive a doll.

Each gift came with a beautiful ICEJ greeting card in the Ukrainian language, stating: "We are so sorry for the tragic loss and unjust suffering that has come so suddenly to your lives. May this gift from Christians around the world be an encouragement and help to you as you establish your lives afresh here in Israel. May you flourish here and find new hope and a good future."

The Christian Embassy also has provided aid packages to hundreds of other Ukrainian Jewish youths and families who recently arrived in Israel. These packages are stocked with essential items, such as sheets, towels, toiletries, vouchers for food and clothing, household items, and a beautiful card with a blessing in Ukrainian.

"It is really exciting to be able to welcome these new immigrants and support them by providing very basic and useful, tangible items everyone needs," assured Nicole Yoder, ICEJ Vice President for AID & Aliyah.

With your support, we can help more Ukrainian immigrant children and families uprooted by war as they seek a new life in Israel. Please give your best gift today. The cost for an immigrant gift package for children is US \$100 and for a family US \$350. 🌍



The little Ukrainian girl with a stone and stick as her only toys

A Ukrainian boy reads the ICEJ gift card

Donate today at: www.icejusa.org/Ukraine



Ida Lvovna



Yana and Marianna

ICEJ WELCOMES MORE UKRAINIAN JEWISH IMMIGRANTS WITH AID BASKETS

BY ANASTASIYA GOODING

Over recent weeks, the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem has continued to deliver welcome baskets to hundreds of Ukrainian Jewish immigrants in Israel who were forced to flee their war-torn country with few possessions. In one of the latest distributions, an ICEJ team visited the homes of several dozen new arrivals from Ukraine who have settled into apartments in Ma'ale Adumin, a growing city located just east of Jerusalem.

A representative of the mayor's office joined the ICEJ delegation in greeting the Ukrainian Jewish families that found refuge in this modern city on the edge of the Judean desert. We handed over food and aid packages to these immigrant families and listened to their stories of peril and escape from the ravages of war.

IDA

Ida Lvovna is a 92-year-old Jewish lady who came to Israel with her family at the beginning of the hostilities in Ukraine two months ago. We met four generations of her family. Ida is the oldest, while the youngest is only two years old. She explained how it was a bittersweet moment when they were forced to leave their home and come to Israel.

The family greeted our ICEJ staff with gratitude, but some could not hold back tears as they shared about the men they had to leave behind.

It was genuinely moving to share with them that Christians from around the world love and care about them. Upon hearing this news, their hearts opened to tell their story.

"The first time I had a desire to move to Israel was more than 30 years ago, as soon as my daughter moved here, but the whole family didn't agree, and so we stayed in Ukraine," recounted Ida.

Now, many years later, the terrible war in Ukraine has motivated the rest of the family to decide to pack up and move to Israel. Ida played a key role in encouraging the entire family to move at once, as she knew firsthand what war was after surviving World War II.

"On the day the war began, I said, 'If we don't leave today, it might be too late tomorrow,'" she recalled. "So we began our long journey to the border, which took two nights and three days."

The whole family traveled together and finally reached the western border. All seemed well until the sad news hit home that they would have to leave the men of their family behind to help defend the country. This meant Ida had to leave her son and grandson at the border!

At the end of her story, Ida said softly: "I wish that you will always live under a peaceful sky."

We all prayed that their entire family would be reunited soon in their ancestral homeland of Israel.


YANA AND MARIANNA

That same day, our ICEJ team visited another family who had fled Ukraine. Even though Yana and her daughter Marianna do not have Jewish roots, Israel opened its doors and became a shelter for them. They left their whole life behind and fled with only a little bag of clothes and their family cat. The Christian Embassy offered a helping hand amid their stark new reality.

"Thanks to you, the Ukrainian people realized that they are not alone, and they have support," Yana said with tears in her eyes.

We also delivered a food package to a Jewish family from Russia who finally made Aliyah after waiting five long years.

"I am so moved by the fact that Israel is open to everyone," shared Pnina Zubareva, an ICEJ staff member from Ukraine. "Today we met a Jewish family from Russia, a Jewish family from Ukraine, and even non-Jewish refugees."

The ICEJ is so privileged to stand with Israel in supporting these Jewish families and others who have found refuge from war in this beautiful Land of Promise. Please support our efforts to bring comfort, encouragement, and practical aid during these trying times to new Jewish immigrants escaping the horrors and widening impact of the war in Ukraine. 



The Latest News from ICEJ'S HAIFA HOME FOR HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS

EXCITING ARRIVAL OF NEW RESIDENT

As a Holocaust Survivor, Shelia (85) had always desired to immigrate to Israel, but her husband saw many difficulties in starting their lives from scratch in a new country, so it never happened. Her husband passed away 12 years ago, and Shelia had already suffered the loss of their only daughter many years ago. Nothing could have prepared her for what would happen in Ukraine these past months. She was sure that she would die in this war as her hometown, Kharkiv, was bombarded again and again. By a miracle, ICEJ's partner organization received her address and we were able to rescue her under dire circumstances. At the end of April, Shelia became a resident of our Home. Despite the trauma she has suffered as of late, she already feels at home and is grateful she has gained a "new family." Shelia is the first of more Survivors from Ukraine whom we hope to welcome soon and give a home and a "family" at the ICEJ Haifa Home for Holocaust Survivors. 🌍



Shelia in Kharkiv



Shelia arrives in Israel



Haifa Home residents on an outing hosted by AppsFlyer

THE FIRST OUTING

In April, the residents were invited to a picnic by a digital advertising analysis company called "AppsFlyer." They rented a bus and drove the Haifa Home residents to the Louis Promenade up on Mount Carmel, where residents enjoyed the beautiful view over Haifa. Some residents told their stories to the employees, and they were quite pleased. The residents enjoyed the tour, one of the first opportunities to go a little farther out and meet new people since the pandemic hit. They enjoyed good food, pleasant company, and listening ears for their life stories. One resident exclaimed, "The employees of the company really made an effort for us, and I'm glad that people still want to hear our stories after all this time." 🌍

A SPECIAL VISIT

Soldiers from a special unit occasionally visit and play games with the residents. They also talk about their time in the military, their families, and where they are from. In a recent visit, the residents delighted in meeting new people and sharing about their lives in the Haifa Home. They are so proud of these young soldiers who protect Israel day and night. If there would have been an Israel in 1940 and an army to defend her borders, there would not have been a Holocaust. 🌍



Fanny (93) proudly showed her artwork.

Donate today at: www.icejusa.org/haifa-home

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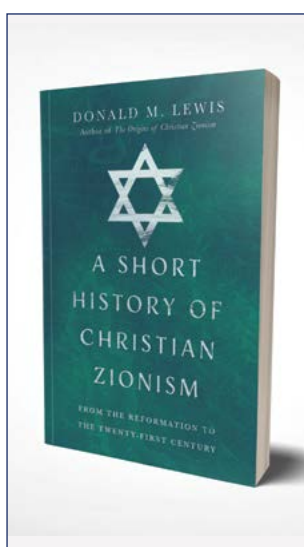


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by Donald M. Lewis

A Short History of Christian Zionism seeks to provide a fair-minded study that shows that Scripture mandates a Jewish return to Israel.

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NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE WITH GOD

BY DR. SUSAN MICHAEL

Many of us have suffered from grief, isolation, or some level of loss due to the COVID pandemic.

We've also suffered fear, not knowing who to believe or what to do. As a result, anxiety is becoming an epidemic in our nation. A recent survey of adults in the United States revealed that over 30 percent have suffered from some level of anxiety due to COVID—and those are just the ones who admitted it.

Critics of the Bible attempt to debunk it by denying any miracle story it contains. They have given special attention to trivializing the amazing story of the Israelites' exodus from Egypt. In fact, a funny story illustrates their failure to do so. In it, a pastor was speaking about the miracle of the parting of the Red Sea, when a skeptic felt the need to tell him that the water in the Red Sea was really only six inches deep; therefore, the parting of the waters was not a miracle at all. At that news, the pastor grew even more excited and proclaimed, "Oh, what a miracle! The Egyptian army drowned in six inches of water!"

While these critics point out the lack of evidence affirming this miraculous deliverance, I find proof in the fact the Israelites began celebrating the miracle of the Exodus as soon as they left Egypt. They knew what had happened, and their remembrance of the event became an annual weeklong feast they have been celebrating for 3,500 years now.

The God Who Sets Us Free

The exodus event is engraved in the DNA of the Jewish people. It was the watershed moment in their history when they were delivered from the bondage of slavery and set free to serve their God (Exodus 8:1).

It is as if God had taken them from death into life and gave them a hope and a future as a nation.

After the Israelites entered Sinai, this God began to reveal Himself to His people and associated Himself with that redemptive event when He said, "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery" (Exodus 20:2). This is the God of Israel—the God of the Bible—He frees His people from bondage and slavery so that they can serve Him.

This is your God too. Whatever your need is—the problem that has overcome your life and made you a slave to it—you serve the God who set His people free, and He can do it for you too. Jesus already paid the price for your redemption with His own blood. He became your Passover Lamb, and all you must do is apply His blood to your life and walk into freedom with Him.

A Greater Miracle

The Exodus event was so pivotal for the people of Israel that God commanded them to remember and celebrate it forever—throughout all their generations. It must have been quite a shock when the Hebrew prophet Jeremiah said that one day, something even greater than the exodus miracle was going to happen:

"Therefore, behold, the days are coming," says the LORD, "that they shall no longer say, 'As the LORD lives who brought up the children of Israel from the land of Egypt,' but, 'As the LORD lives who brought up and led the descendants of the house of Israel from the north country and from all the countries where I had driven them.' And they shall dwell in their own land" (Jeremiah 23:7–8 NKJV).

Dr. Susan Michael is USA Director of the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem and host of the *Out of Zion* podcast. Text "zion" to 72572 to receive an alert each Friday for her Shabbat Shalom devotional, and end your week with a little inspiration and peace.

Jeremiah was prophesying that one day, God would miraculously bring the Jewish people back to the land He had given them, from every country in which they had been in exile. This event would be so miraculous it would overshadow the exodus story. This second watershed moment is happening in our day. After 2,000 years of exile, the Jewish people are returning to their ancient homeland and reestablishing a national home: the State of Israel.

Jeremiah specifically mentions their return from the north. I remember in the 1980s when the Jews of the north—the former Soviet Union—were not allowed to leave. They were forbidden to practice their religion or even learn about Israel. Those who wanted to immigrate to Israel were instead imprisoned and called “refuseniks.”

We prayed for them and held rallies around the world, calling for their release. We knew God would deliver them, but we did not know if it would be in peace or if they would have to flee for their lives. Many Christians in Europe even prepared safe houses for Jews escaping the Soviets. Thank God they were able to leave in peace; in 1989 the Iron Curtain fell, the doors swung open, and Jews were allowed to leave. Since then, over 1 million Jews have emigrated from the former Soviet Union and moved to Israel. Jeremiah had seen this day 2,500 years before it happened.

You, too, serve a mighty God who is sovereign over the universe He created. No miracles are too big for Him. He is the God who sets His people free, and He can do it for you too. Whatever your need, bring it to the God of Israel, the God of the Bible who sets His people free. As Jesus said, “What is impossible with man is possible with God” (Luke 18:27 NIV). 🌍



FREE DOWNLOADABLE

10 Reasons Christians Should Stand with Israel

Though Israel enjoys growing support from the Evangelical movement today, this support is little understood—primarily because for centuries, the church struggled to understand the “Jewish question” and even displayed and instigated militant antisemitism against God’s chosen people. Many churches taught that God was finished with the Jews. This mindset has changed dramatically, yet the question remains: Why do we support Israel today? Susan Michael invites you to explore why all believers in Jesus should support, bless, and stand with God’s chosen people, the Jews, in the free booklet *10 Reasons to Stand with Israel*.

Get your copy of this downloadable resource today: icejusa.org/10reasons-ooz

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Episode 101
The God Who Brought You Out of Egypt



Episode 103
A Greater Miracle



YOUR ISRAEL ANSWER

Why Christians Support Israel: Personal Reasons

Part 1 of a 5 Part Series

By Dr. Susan Michael, ICEJ USA Director

Since the founding of Israel almost 75 years ago, millions of Christians have visited Israel and its holy sites. Many of them have experienced their Bible come alive and their faith renewed. It only stands to reason they would return home with excitement and a newfound appreciation for the country that afforded them that experience.

This was certainly my story. I was a 19-year-old biblical studies major in university when I had the opportunity to study in Israel for the summer. The Bible I read on a devotional level every day and studied in class at a theological level became three-dimensional in its historical, geographical, and cultural setting. It came alive!

A trip to Israel can truly be transformational. I have never been the same, and ever since, I have been an ardent supporter of Israel for affording me this wonderful opportunity.

ISRAEL WELCOMES CHRISTIAN TOURS

This helps explain what experts have noted: tourism to Israel is different than elsewhere because of the repeat visits. Most people who tour the Holy Land spend their flight home planning their next trip because a tour to Israel is an educational, spiritual, and life-changing experience. It is a spiritual retreat, a pilgrimage, rather than a vacation, and Israel warmly welcomes and encourages this.

ACCESS TO CHRISTIAN SITES

Christian tours also benefit from the freedom Israel provides to access Christian holy sites. This would not be the case if it were a closed country like many Muslim or communist countries, where we would not have access to sites so central to our Bible and faith. We should be thankful for the freedom we have to visit religious sites and even hold prayer and worship services while there.

CARE OF SITES AND ARTIFACTS

Israel also takes great effort to preserve holy sites and archaeological finds. In contrast, Muslim authorities literally bulldozed and discarded archaeological debris from under the Temple Mount during a construction project. Despite the tremendous historical importance of that area that archaeologists had never excavated, construction crews removed approximately 9,000 tons of archaeologically rich soil in 1999, dumping 350 truckloads of that dirt into the Kidron Valley.

The Muslim authorities over the Temple Mount did not want to preserve any artifact that proved a Jewish or Christian connection to the site, so they had no problem destroying and disposing them. As a result, two archaeologists started the "Temple Mount Sifting Project," and over 200,000 volunteers and tourists have

helped sift through the debris. They have found over 400,000 artifacts dating back to the Stone Age. Fifteen percent of the pottery finds come from the First Temple period and over forty percent from the Second Temple period.

Israel would never have done what the Muslim authorities did. They would have conducted a proper excavation and cataloged remains before any such construction project could begin. Christians should appreciate Israel's preservation of artifacts, so many of which prove the accuracy of the Bible and are meaningful to our faith.

SAFETY OF ISRAELI CHRISTIANS

Another reason for Christian support of Israel has nothing to do with tourism: the well-being of the Christian minority in Israel. While religious minorities face intense persecution across the Middle East, Israel provides the only haven for Christians in the region. While Christianity is becoming extinct in much of the region, it is growing in Israel. We should support Israel for the safety of the Christian minority and the opportunities they have as full citizens of the Jewish state.

Israel is a blessing to Christians around the world, and we owe the people of Israel a great debt of gratitude. 🌍

EPISODE 106

Israel Answers

Why Christians Support Israel
Part 1: Personal Reasons

Visit us at: www.IsraelAnswers.com
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