



WORD

FROM JERUSALEM

• • •
**THE HEIR
OF THE
WHOLE WORLD**

(PAGE 4)

• • •

WHY IS THE

Aliyah

OF THE ETHIOPIAN JEWS CRITICAL?



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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FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



Dear friends,

This year the State of Israel turns 75! But the story of when the nation of Israel was birthed goes back some 4,000 years. In my article "The Heir of the Whole World" (pp. 4-6), I look back to that story and where it began—through the Hebrew patriarch Abraham. I offer some amazing facts about this man who had unparalleled insight into the distant future and believed God for what he could not see, a man whom even Jesus said could "see my day" (John 8:56) and "looked forward to the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Hebrews 11:10 RSV). May you enjoy this teaching.

Last November Israelis once again headed to the polls to elect Knesset members, and a new government was formed in late December. ICEJ Vice President & Senior Spokesman David Parsons explains the situation that the new Israeli government currently faces on page 8 and continues to unpack the progression of the Abraham Accords on page 9.

Finally, it's hard to process the unimaginable suffering and loss caused by the devastating earthquakes in Turkey and Syria in early February—it truly shocked the world. Israeli volunteers were among the first to respond and arrive on the scene to help. On page 10, you'll read how the ICEJ is partnering with United Hatzalah of Israel to bring aid and emergency services to the hardest hit regions of Turkey.

May the Lord bless you as you read more about our ministry and consider lending your support. And please make plans to join us for this year's Feast of Tabernacles in late September.

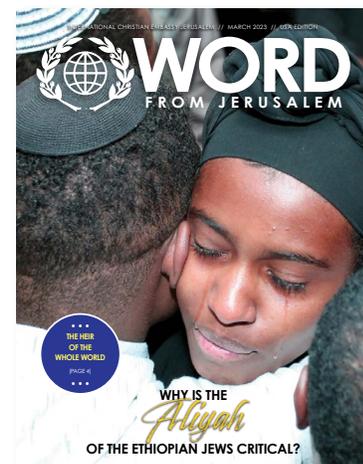
Thank you for standing with us!

Yours in Christ,

Dr. Jürgen Bühler
President
International Christian Embassy Jerusalem

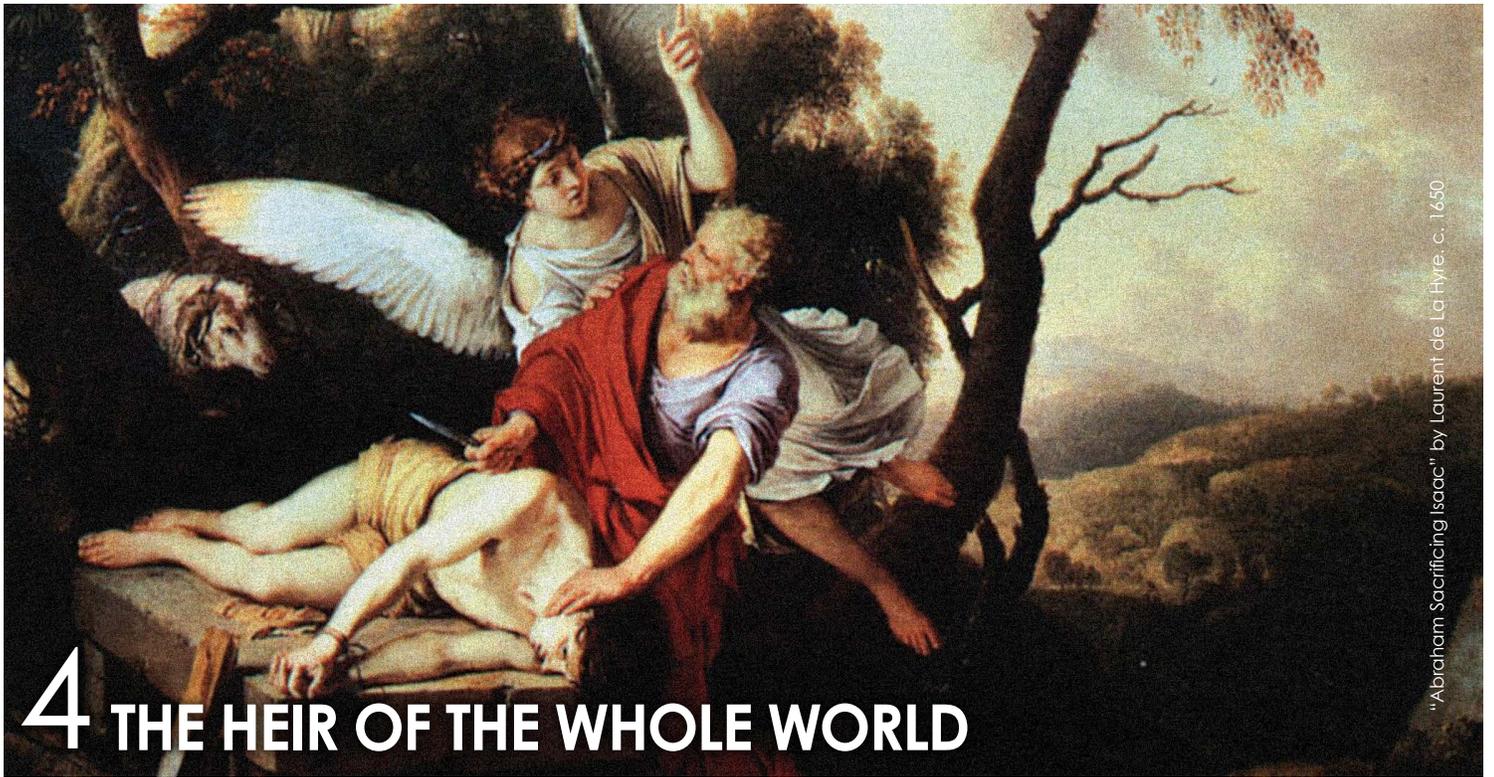
COVER PHOTO: A new Ethiopian immigrant being welcomed to Israel by a family member

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CONTENTS

MARCH 2023 USA EDITION



"Abraham Sacrificing Isaac" by Laurent de La Hyre. c. 1650.

4 THE HEIR OF THE WHOLE WORLD



10 THE CONSTANT CALL OF ALIYAH



12 TURKEY NEEDS URGENT HELP



13 IN SEARCH OF OUR HEBREW ROOTS



18 WHY IS THE ALIYAH OF THE ETHIOPIAN JEWS CRITICAL?



THE HEIR OF THE WHOLE WORLD

BY DR. JÜRGEN BÜHLER, ICEJ PRESIDENT

The name Abraham written in Hebrew script

As modern Israel prepares to turn 75, I am drawn back to where the story of the Jewish people began—with Abraham. For many Christians, he is just one of many great men of God in the Bible. However, God’s word gives Abraham unique characteristics that no other person besides Jesus ever attained. It can be said that when Abraham appeared, salvation history began.

Until Abraham, all we know about humanity is that every generation degenerated away from “the image of God.” Genesis 6:12 says, “all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth.” Even the severe judgment of the flood did not enact change: “Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top is in the heavens; let us make a name for ourselves” (Genesis 11:4) declared an unrepentant humanity at Babel, following Satan’s arrogance in wanting to be like God.

In just 11 chapters the Bible describes

2,000 years of human moral decay—until Abraham came. The rest of the Bible covers the next 2,000 years, from Abraham to Jesus. Abraham’s life was not just a reset of history, like Noah, but the launching point for God’s salvation plan for the world.



“The (Great) Tower of Babel” by Pieter Bruegel the Elder

The Blessing of Abraham

Abraham became the father of the Jewish people and received powerful promises

with fulfilments still unfolding today. These promises to Abraham—and Abraham’s calling—are found in Genesis 12:1-3:

Now the LORD had said to Abram, “Get out of your country, from your family and from your father’s house, to a land that I will show you. I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

This calling included four main facets: the promise of a land, becoming a great nation, receiving blessing and prominence, and being a blessing to the entire world.

An Unchangeable Calling

God repeatedly assured Abraham that these promises are absolute fixtures that cannot be revoked because they came with two

immutable guarantees. First, God affirmed it through a unilateral (unconditional) covenant (Genesis 15:12–20): “To your descendants *I have given this land*, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates” (v. 18, emphasis added).

Second, God further affirmed His intention by an immutable oath (Genesis 22:15ff). The writer of Hebrews comments on this oath, saying: “For when God made a promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself ... Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath” (Hebrews 6:13–17).

God’s intention to keep all His promises to Abraham and his offspring is non-negotiable, and He will never change His mind on this.

God’s intention to keep all His promises to Abraham and his offspring is non-negotiable, and He will never change His mind on this. Even an unfaithful Israel cannot alter it. For those who think Israel’s unfaithfulness would cause God to change His mind about them, Paul cautions this would render God a liar (Romans 3:34).

This means not only in the Old Testament but also for the writers of the New Testament, God’s promises to Abraham have eternal validity—including Israel’s land promise, her blessings, and her national calling.

AMAZING FACTS ABOUT ABRAHAM

Abraham’s stature is so great that certain statements about him in both the Old and New Testaments are simply remarkable.

GOD’S NAME

First, God identifies Himself with Abraham more than 20 times in the Bible, saying He is “the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.” This includes five times in the New Testament, by both Jesus (e.g., Matthew 22:32) and the apostles (Acts 3:13; 7:32).

A FRIEND OF GOD

In Isaiah God calls Abraham “My friend” (Isaiah 41:8; see also 2 Chronicles 20:7; James 2:23). John Calvin noted, “to be called ‘My servant’ by God is high and honorable, but how much is it to be called a friend of God?” Only Jesus later uses this title for His disciples (John 15:14).

HEIR OF THE WORLD

Possibly the most remarkable reference to Abraham comes from Paul. In Romans 4:13, Paul calls him the “heir of the world.” Some Jewish sages point out that when Abraham encountered Melchizedek, this mysterious king-priest blesses him as “possessor of heaven and earth” (Genesis 14:19). The rabbis say this obviously implied that God intended to make him heir of all things.

FATHER OF US ALL

Equally remarkable is Paul’s weighty statement that Abraham “is the father of us all” (Romans 4:16). He repeats this theme in both Romans and Galatians, asserting that all who have faith in Jesus are also sons of Abraham (Galatians 3:7).

THE FIRST PROPHET

Abraham is also the first man to be called a “prophet” (Genesis 20:7). Indeed, he had unparalleled insight into the distant future. Jesus said Abraham could “see my day” (John 8:56), meaning he had a vision and understanding of the coming Messiah. But his foresight reached even further! According to Paul, the gospel was preached to Abraham beforehand (Galatians 3:8). That means from early on, he knew what started through him would not stop with his own Jewish people, but as God had said, he would be a father of nations and kings—and all the families of the earth would be blessed through him (Genesis 12:3). Yet amazingly, his vision did not stop there. According to Hebrews 11:10, “He (Abraham) looked forward to the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God” (RSV). That means long before the apostle John wrote the book of Revelation, Abraham saw the holy city John describes in chapters 21 and 22. Indeed, Abraham could see to the end of history.

ABRAHAM’S HEAVENLY SIGNIFICANCE

Another amazing fact is that Jesus elevates Abraham to a significance like no other person in the Old Testament. When Jesus told the story of Lazarus and the rich man (Luke 16:19ff), Lazarus was carried to Abraham’s bosom. And Abraham communicated with the rich man tormented in hell. This seems to suggest that even in the world to come, Abraham holds a prominent office in the heavenlies. Not only that, but every gentile who believes in Messiah

will be linked to Abraham in eternity. Jesus assured: “Many will come from east and west and sit at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 8:11 RSV). That means we will enjoy eternal fellowship together at the table of our father, Abraham. Whether we like it or not, our lives are closely knitted with Abraham.

However, the reason Abraham was so impactful lies in the unique calling of God over his life.

THE NATIONAL (PHYSICAL) CALLING OF ABRAHAM

Abraham’s calling in Genesis 12:1–3 eventually gives birth to his physical descendants, the people of Israel. From this calling, the physical and spiritual DNA of the Jewish people emanate, and from here originate all the claims that Israel holds to the land of Canaan. This land promise is upheld throughout the Bible, from Genesis through the New Testament.

Based on this ancient covenant, the people of Israel have returned to their ancestral homeland and are turning it into a garden of Eden. Abraham is the founding seed of national Israel. In his circumcision, he foreshadowed the distinct identity of Israel given some 400 years later when receiving the law at Mount Sinai. Since Abraham, every male descendant was circumcised on the eighth day as a sign of the divine covenant (see Genesis 17). This year, 4,000 years later, the modern State of Israel is celebrating its 75th birthday, and the nation is stronger than ever and impacting the world on many levels.

THE UNIVERSAL (SPIRITUAL) CALLING OF ABRAHAM

At the same time, this calling has a broader, even universal, aspect. From the beginning, God revealed a calling over Abraham that went beyond his physical ancestors. While they would become a “great nation,” this



“In you all the families of the earth shall be blessed”

nation also was destined to release a great blessing for the whole world: “In you all the families of the earth shall be blessed” (Genesis 12:3).

Abraham understood that his descendants’ ultimate destiny was not just for some self-serving purpose but to be a blessing to every nation on earth (Genesis 28:14). God revealed the global impact of this blessing early on, vowing that Abraham’s descendants would be “as the sand which is on the seashore” and “as the stars of heaven” (Genesis 22:17; 26:4 RSV). To Abraham’s grandson Jacob, God specified that “a company of nations shall proceed from you, and kings shall come from your body” (Genesis 35:11).

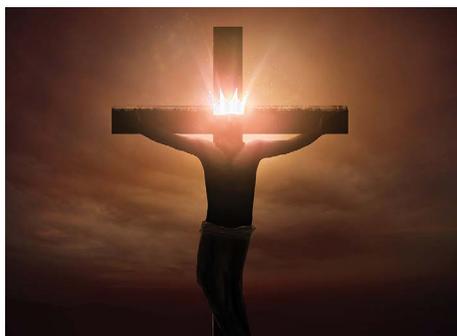
Thus, the apostle Paul concluded that the moment God first called Abraham was also when God revealed His decision to save the world. To the church in Galatia, Paul wrote: “And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, ‘In you all the nations shall be blessed’” (Galatians 3:8).



The ultimate, singular seed that broke through the national boundaries of Israel into the family of nations was Jesus, the son of Abraham. Paul understood that in Jesus, the

door was pushed wide open to bring the Good News of salvation to the ends of the earth:

“Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree’), that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.” (Galatians 3:13–14)



Likewise, Jesus commanded His disciples: “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 28:19). And the accomplishment of this global mission would—according to Jesus—signal the end of the age: “And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come” (Matthew 24:14). The world has never been closer to that day.

THE TENSION IN ABRAHAM’S CALLING

However, one major challenge for Paul was witnessing Jesus being more widely accepted by gentiles than by His own people: “I was found by those who did not seek Me,” Paul wrote with sorrow in Romans 10:20.

Already in Paul’s time, some gentiles took this as a sign that God was finished with Israel. To the church in Rome, he responds: “I say then, has God cast away His people? Certainly not! For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin” (Romans 11:1). Paul answers forcefully, “By no means!” For Paul, his own salvation was proof that God’s promises to Abraham’s natural descendants were still intact. God would

The gentile church worldwide exists today because God is faithful to His promises to Abraham, and if God ever changed His mind regarding His covenant with Abraham, it would be fatal to the church as well.

still watch over the seed of Abraham, even if “concerning the gospel they are enemies” for they remained “beloved for the sake of the fathers” (Romans 11:28). Paul had full confidence that God’s promises to Abraham one day would come to fulfillment, and then “all Israel will be saved.”

CONCLUSIONS

There are people to this day who still wrongly believe the church has replaced or superseded Israel for rejecting their Messiah. Yet we saw that the church’s calling is a direct consequence of the calling of Abraham. The gentile church worldwide exists today because God is faithful to His promises to Abraham, and if God ever changed His mind regarding His covenant with Abraham, it would be fatal to the church as well. According to the writer of Hebrews, it is the immutability of God’s promises to Abraham that provides believers “an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil” (Hebrews 6:19). Let us, therefore, hold fast the anchor God has offered us.

As spiritual sons and daughters of Abraham, we should identify with these great Patriarchs of our faith. God identifies Himself as “the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.” The way they experienced God teaches us much for our own lives. I encourage you to reread the book of Genesis. It is the story of your spiritual ancestors. Their battles are likely your battles, and their victories can become your victories. One of Paul’s great sorrows was that his own brothers—the physical sons of Abraham—have largely not yet experienced the promise of the Holy Spirit. Let us pray that the same outpouring of the Spirit that came through Yeshua to the gentiles will also come to the people to whom it was originally promised. 🙏

TRIBUTE TO DR. JOHANN LÜCKHOFF

Dr. Johann Walter Lückhoff, the founding director of the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem, passed away in his home in South Africa in late December 2022, leaving behind a unique legacy as a modern-day pioneer of Christian relations with Israel.



At the very inception of the Christian Embassy in September 1980, Dr. Lückhoff was asked to head up its initial leadership team and served as executive director from 1980 to 2000. In that time, he opened new doors for Christians to engage with Israeli leaders, gave vision to the Feast of Tabernacles as a dynamic worship event, and set the course of the ministry to assist in practical and significant ways with Aliyah and social needs in Israel.

Born in South Africa, Dr. Lückhoff sensed a strong calling to God's purposes for Israel from an early age. He studied economics and foreign relations before entering seminary and receiving ordination as a minister in the Dutch Reformed Church. His training and time of service in his country's diplomatic corps and his doctorate in theological studies made Johann uniquely qualified to lead the Christian Embassy in its formative years as a global Christian ministry seeking to impact churches and nations in their relations with Israel and the Jewish people.

Rev. Malcolm Hedding, who succeeded Johann as ICEJ's executive director in 2001, said: "Johann Lückhoff was tasked with building the organization in Israel and internationally by laying for it a firm foundation. In this regard, he did so with wisdom and excellence, as seen in our ministry's global reach today."

Rev. Ingolf Ellßel, chairman of the ICEJ's international Board of Trustees, commented that "the foundation laid by Johann Lückhoff has stood the test of time, and today, millions of lives in Israel and abroad have been impacted and blessed in ways that only heaven will one day reveal."

Dr. Jürgen Bühler, the current ICEJ president, added: "I consider it a great privilege to have experienced firsthand the statesmanship of Dr. Lückhoff. He was a true diplomat of the kingdom of God and gave excellent leadership to the ICEJ. His legacy is felt not only within our ministry but in many other pro-Israel organizations around the world that were inspired by the work he guided."

It was a special privilege for the ICEJ to host Dr. Lückhoff at its recent Feast of Tabernacles in October 2022. Though frail and in a wheelchair, Johann insisted on attending every Feast event. The Christian Embassy honored him during this year's Feast with a special award for his legacy of leadership. 🌐

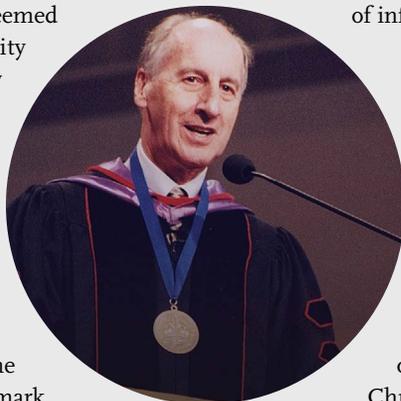


Johan Lückhoff receives an award at the 2022 Feast of Tabernacles.

TRIBUTE TO PASTOR JACK HAYFORD

The ICEJ also expresses its immense respect and affection for Pastor Jack Hayford, who passed away in early January 2023 at his home in Los Angeles. He was 88.

Pastor Hayford was a highly esteemed pillar of Evangelical Christianity in our day and will be especially remembered for giving apostolic leadership to the ever-growing Pentecostal/Charismatic movement worldwide. He had a boundless passion for worship and preaching the Word of God with sincerity and power, while his exemplary life and ministry as a shepherd of the Lord's flock have left an enduring mark



on our generation. Notably, Pastor Hayford possessed a deep love and respect for Israel and the Jewish people, which he faithfully spread to others within his vast sphere of influence.

Pastor Hayford served as chancellor of a successful seminary, founded the Church on the Way in Van Nuys, California, and was president of the Foursquare Church denomination.

In addition, Hayford was a bestselling author and songwriter.

Regarding Israel, Pastor Hayford made some 40 trips to the Holy Land to lead tours and speak at ministry events. He was a featured speaker at the ICEJ's Feast of Tabernacles and served on the Global Advisory Board of the International Christian Embassy in Jerusalem.

"There may have been no greater example today of a minister with a true shepherd's heart than Jack Hayford," said ICEJ President Dr. Jürgen Bühler. "Hayford's love for Israel brought him to our Feast and our circle of friends and trusted advisers. I hold dearly every moment spent with him." 🌐

NEW ISRAELI GOVERNMENT FACES “CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS” OVER JUDICIAL REFORMS

BY DAVID PARSONS, ICEJ VICE PRESIDENT & SENIOR SPOKESMAN

Shas Party Leader Arye Deri and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu toasting in happier days (winnews.com)

Rather than another close nail-biter as expected, Israel’s recent elections ended with Benjamin Netanyahu—already Israel’s longest-serving prime minister—securing a surprisingly easy path to form a right-of-center government with a comfortable margin of 64 Knesset seats. Since taking office, however, the new government is running into a growing protest movement against its proposed judicial reforms that is shaking Israel’s democratic foundations. The heated dispute is quickly making the nation’s three recent years of political deadlock almost seem like “the good old days.”

Most Israelis were undoubtedly relieved that the political impasse that drug the country through 5 elections in 43 months broke and that a strong, proven leader like Netanyahu was back in power. After all, the nation has been trending rightward for quite some time, with 62 percent of Israelis identifying themselves as right-wing, according to a study by the Israel Democracy Institute.

But some elements of Netanyahu’s coalition are too Far Right for many in Israel and abroad. They are especially troubled by the intolerant views of certain religious Zionist leaders on the Arab minority, the LGBTQ movement, and even Christians. Netanyahu himself helped the Far Right unite and gain political legitimacy, but he surely did not foresee them winning 14 Knesset seats to become such a powerful player in his government.

Netanyahu’s new government has been passing a flurry of legislation to solidify its position, with a particular goal of reining in the Israeli courts. Many on the Right feel the more liberal judiciary

has gone too far in its expansive review and reversal of numerous laws and government decisions over recent years. Thus, the new Minister of Justice, Yariv Levin of Likud, announced a sweeping series of judicial reforms, which the coalition intends to pass in the coming weeks, including a measure banning unelected judges from nullifying laws passed by the elected members of parliament. Even how judges are selected is set for significant changes.

This has triggered panic on the Left, warning that these reforms will destroy Israel’s democracy by crippling its most principled and widely respected branch of government. They are vowing to launch a nationwide uprising that will dwarf the bitter “black flag” protests against Netanyahu of recent years—a threat that the Right is labeling an “insurrection” and attempted “coup d’état.”

This heated debate has been brewing for some time now, ever since the Israeli courts began in the early 1990s to invalidate Knesset laws without any clear authority to do so. The underlying problem is that the judiciary cannot rightly declare a law “unconstitutional” because Israel has no constitution. Thus, there are no enshrined checks and balances regulating relations between the legislative and judicial branches.

One commonly heard explanation for Israel’s lack of a constitution is that the ultra-Orthodox originally objected to such a document because the Torah should be considered modern Israel’s constitution. But it was actually Israel’s founding father, David Ben Gurion, who quashed the idea, arguing that the young nation was poised to be

a model of progressive socialism and did not need such a rigid legal document impeding the path forward. Some on the Right say the Left has no grounds to complain and that true democracy is letting elected officials make the most important decisions, while the courts should only interpret the laws.

At the heart of the current “constitutional crisis” also lies a tug-of-war over the character of Israel as both a Jewish and a democratic State. For decades, the largely liberal judiciary has borrowed heavily from court decisions in other Western democracies to expand and protect minority rights and individual democratic freedoms in Israel. Many on the Right see this as judicial overreach that is undermining Jewish majority rule.

The religious Right is further concerned that too many recent immigrants are not truly Jewish according to halachic law and thus wants to change the Law of Return. The Right’s distrust of the courts also prompted them to pass the contentious Basic Law on Israel as the Nation-State of the Jewish People in 2018, just to remind judges of the “Jewish” part of “Jewish” and “democratic.”

The raging dispute over the proposed judicial reforms is rapidly coming to a head as Israel’s Supreme Court just overwhelmingly ruled that Shas party leader Arye Deri is barred from serving as a cabinet minister due to his two past convictions for financial crimes while in public office. Netanyahu needs Deri’s faction to keep his new government afloat and must find a way around this sudden political crisis—or plunge Israel into yet a sixth snap election in a row. 🌐

NETANYAHU SEEKS LEGACY-SEALING DEAL WITH SAUDIS

BY DAVID PARSONS, ICEJ VICE PRESIDENT & SENIOR SPOKESMAN

The impact of the Abraham Accords continues to reverberate throughout the Middle East, and returning Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu certainly hopes to build on their momentum, especially by sealing a historic breakthrough with Saudi Arabia. But Riyadh (Saudi Arabia's capital) is signaling any deal first depends on rebuilding their frayed relations with the United States.

Two years on, the Abraham Accords are still bearing good fruit in the region. Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates continue to expand their trade and investment ties with Israel, while Morocco is now welcoming scores of Israeli tourists. Jerusalem's relations with Egypt also continue to warm, and the Negev Forum countries recently met again in Abu Dhabi and are planning an even larger regional summit in Morocco this spring. Hopes also are growing that perhaps Indonesia and other key Muslim nations further afield may soon open ties with Israel.

However, not everyone is joining the bandwagon. Sudan may have signed the Accords, but it is too fractured to contribute anything to the normalization process. And while Oman was seen as the next possible Arab state to reconcile with Israel, its new leader is leaning closer to Iran, and its parliament recently voted to criminalize any interactions with "the Zionist entity."

Meantime, Jordan just skipped the latest Abrahamic gathering again. Even though the Hashemite kingdom has a long-standing peace treaty with Israel, most of its population identifies as Palestinians and rejects any move to deprioritize the Palestinian cause. Instead, Amman has upped its rhetoric against Israel concerning Jerusalem and the Temple Mount and even turned down Israel's recent offer to supply the energy-strapped nation with natural gas.

For Netanyahu, the best response to Jordanian and Palestinian obstinacy is to seek a normalization pact with Saudi Arabia—the biggest prize left in the region. Returning to power in late December, he made clear in his first Knesset speech that this was his main foreign policy goal, contending that peace with Riyadh would leave Jordan and the Palestinians too isolated to continue rejecting peace with Israel.

For their part, the Saudis recently indicated to a visiting delegation of American Jewish leaders they indeed are ready for a historic rapprochement with Israel, but it is first contingent on improved relations with Washington. Riyadh has watched the Biden administration return to Obama-era policies of appeasing Iran despite its relentless drive for nuclear weapons, while US President Joe Biden has labeled Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman a "pariah" and "murderer" following the death of journalist Jamal Khashoggi.

The Saudis retaliated last October by lowering oil output despite Biden's plea to increase production to ease the global energy crisis, a move that embarrassed the Democratic leader just before the US midterm elections. Biden threatened to impose "consequences" on Riyadh, marking a new low in US-Saudi relations.

As a result, the Saudis reportedly told their recent Jewish visitors they had three key demands to reach a peace deal with Israel, none of which involved the Palestinians.

First, they seek a written agreement enshrining Saudi Arabia as a strategic partner of the United States and committing Washington to come to Riyadh's defense if attacked.

Second, they seek a preferred ally status, which would ensure the reliability of American weapons sales. When signing the Abraham Accords, the United States reportedly promised the United Arab Emirates it would be able to purchase the new F-35 stealth fighter, and no doubt, Riyadh expects the same.

Finally, the Saudis want American help to develop a peaceful civilian nuclear program that would allow them to enrich uranium.

This wish list has left Netanyahu in the position of playing mediator to repair the broken US-Saudi relationship. He has already pledged to convince his "old friend" Joe Biden to reaffirm Washington's commitment to its traditional allies in the Middle East, a move he claims will greatly stabilize the region. It also will lead to a major leap in the budding peace between Israel and the Arab world. And ultimately, he contends, it will facilitate a peace deal between Israel and Palestinians.

To be successful, Netanyahu must not only persuade Biden to change course on the Saudis, but he also must rein in right-wing members of his governing coalition who want to expand and fully legitimate the settlement enterprise. They did promise not to stand in his way on making peace with Riyadh, so we will soon see if the veteran statesman can indeed broker a legacy-sealing deal with the guardians of Mecca and Medina. 🌍



The biggest prize left: Saudi Crown Prince and de facto ruler Mohammed bin Salman (Reuters)





ICEJ staff welcome Aliyah arrivals at Ben-Gurion International Airport

THE CONSTANT CALL OF ALIYAH

BY LAURINA DRIESSE, ICEJ MEDIA AND PUBLICATIONS DIRECTOR

*This is what the Sovereign LORD says: "See, I will beckon to the nations,
I will lift up my banner to the peoples;
they will bring your sons in their arms and carry your daughters on their hips."
(Isaiah 49:22 NIV)*

For over 40 years, the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem (ICEJ) has faithfully answered the divine call for Christians to partner with God in the great ingathering of the Jewish people. We believe it is the hand of God in keeping with His promises to restore Israel after their long exile. The ICEJ has now assisted over 170,000 Jews from around the world to make Aliyah (return) to Israel. We also have helped tens of thousands of new Jewish immigrants adjust to their new lives once back in the land of their forefathers.

This past year we witnessed a massive surge in Jewish immigration to Israel, largely due to the brutal war in

Ukraine and the economic and political uncertainty in Russia. Latest figures show that well over 70,000 Jews made Aliyah last year, with some 80 percent coming from the Former Soviet Republics (FSU). This is nearly double the number of Jewish immigrants to Israel in recent years.

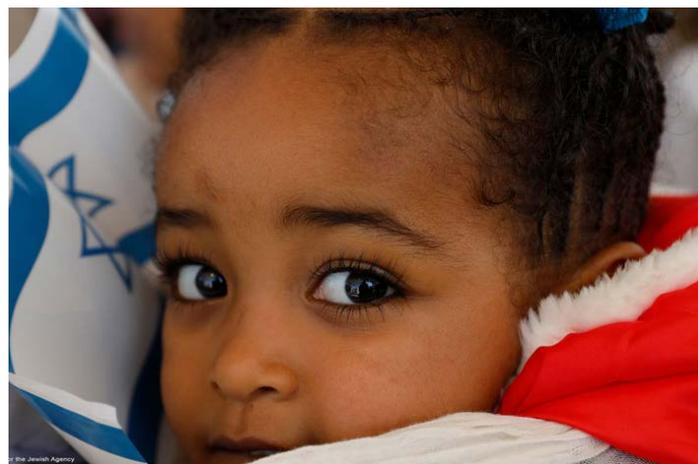
Our Aliyah support in 2022 helped bring 4,732 Jewish immigrants to Israel, whether through the flights themselves, pre-flight assistance (Aliyah camps and seminars), bus transportation, and/or accommodations enroute. Among them were 1,092 Ukrainian Jews desperate to escape their war-torn cities.



Jani Salokangas, ICEJ Finland Director, delivering aid to Ukrainian Jewish refugees



Ukrainian Jewish refugees on an Aliyah bus transfer



ICEJ's next assisted flight from Ethiopia will be on March 30, 2023.

This included 190 Holocaust Survivors—plus an additional 100 frail, elderly Jews all rescued from Ukraine and given special accommodations, transport, and medical care on their journey to Israel. Our staff were privileged to welcome 17 of these Holocaust Survivors from Ukraine into the ICEJ's unique assisted-living home in Haifa.

Early in the Ukraine refugee crisis, ICEJ Finland delivered two truckloads of humanitarian aid to Poland to disperse to needy Ukrainian Jewish families uprooted from their homes.

Amid the crisis, the Jewish Agency established an Aliyah assistance hotline so people could access urgent Aliyah information. To ensure desperate people received the information they needed immediately, our own hotline for Holocaust Survivors stepped in to help answer calls when Jewish Agency representatives could not answer.

In addition, our support ensured the 1,571 new arrivals landed softly in their homeland and integrated as smoothly and quickly as possible into Israeli society. For example:

- 79 new immigrants from the FSU received professional recertification assistance, including 16 doctors and 30 nurses; 34 others received vocational training in the hi-tech industry.
- 23 Ethiopian students, each with at least 8 to 11 years of schooling, were sponsored by the ICEJ to join a special 9-month course that enabled them to complete their high school studies. Another 20 new arrivals participated in after-school educational programs for Ethiopian children.
- 10 Ukrainian teens who arrived in Israel without their parents participated in a six-month integration program that included housing, Hebrew lessons, seminars, and army preparation.
- 20 homes were furnished for new immigrants arriving from Ukraine.
- 490 new immigrant families received welcome packs.
- 29 Ukrainian immigrant families received subsidized dental treatment.
- 50 FSU immigrant families received housing assistance for their first two weeks in Israel, including household and electrical appliances, linens, and bedding.

Your support toward the work of Aliyah and Integration is making a big difference in helping Jews from around the world reach Israel and get settled in their ancestral homeland. The surge in Aliyah is expected to continue well into 2023, so please keep supporting the ICEJ's Aliyah efforts. 🌍

DONATE AT: www.icejusa.org/aliyah



TURKEY NEEDS URGENT HELP!

Earthquake Relief Efforts with ICEJ & Israel's Top Responders

The death toll from the devastating earthquakes in Turkey and Syria has surpassed 50,000, and thousands more are missing and may still be buried in the massive rubble of destroyed towns and villages.

Israeli search and rescue teams from the IDF, United Hatzalah, and other first responders were the first on the scene in the worst-hit areas of Turkey, many arriving within 24 hours. Over the next 5 days, they managed to pull 19 people from the rubble of collapsed buildings and treat scores more for their injuries. The International Christian Embassy Jerusalem appealed for donations from Christians worldwide to support the efforts of United Hatzalah, the world's largest volunteer emergency medical service with a well-earned reputation for arriving first to the scene of accidents and terror attacks in Israel. Twenty-five volunteers from United Hatzalah were on the ground in Turkey.

However, on February 12, Israeli teams in Turkey called an end to the search-and-rescue phase of their earthquake response and brought those volunteers home. Given the freezing temperatures and the passage of nearly a week since the initial earthquake, they assessed it was unlikely they would find more people trapped

ICEJ STAFF



Israeli search and rescue team

alive. Credible threats to the safety of Israeli personnel operating in the affected regions also impacted this decision. While some media reports have linked these threats to ISIS or other regional militias, local villagers' mounting anger and frustrations with their government's poor response to this national disaster created a real danger of violence to the Israeli teams.

But the humanitarian relief phase of Israel's response to the Turkey earthquakes will continue. Though United Hatzalah brought its search and rescue team home to Israel, it is still readying relief aid. That is, our donations will continue to go toward providing sorely needed warm clothing to people impacted by the earthquakes, along with first-aid kits, oxygen tanks, defibrillators, and other emergency medical equipment.

The ICEJ will continue to support the IDF field hospital, which has remained in Turkey and will continue to treat hundreds of people injured in the earthquakes.

Finally, we have been approached by the Jewish Agency for Israel to assist the local Jewish community and Israeli citizens in the impacted regions, primarily by bringing them home on rescue flights to Israel.

The suffering and loss in the impacted areas are unimaginable, and the ICEJ will continue to support the aid and relief efforts of Israeli organizations in response to this ongoing tragedy. By giving toward these efforts, you not only are demonstrating Christian compassion and helping those in desperate need, but you are also enabling Israeli humanitarian relief missions to have more significant impact and thereby improve Israel's standing in the eyes of the world.

So please generously give toward the disaster relief fund as we join with our Israeli partners in helping those shattered by the devastating earthquakes in Turkey. 🙏

Donate today at:
www.icejusa.org/donate-disaster-relief/





IN SEARCH OF OUR HEBRAIC ROOTS

BY DR. MOJMIK KALLUS, ICEJ VICE PRESIDENT OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

"The Last Supper" by Vicente Juan Macip (Wikimedia Commons)

"Comfort, yes, comfort My people!" says your God. "Speak comfort to Jerusalem and cry out to her that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins." The voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God." (Isaiah 40:1–3)

More than 40 years ago, ICEJ's founders chose this prophetic passage as a guideline for our work. These verses herald a new era in the history of the Jewish people. After centuries of exile, persecution, and punishment, God would turn a new page and restore Israel according to His promises. A partial restoration had happened before, after Israel's return from Babylon, but this time there is a new witness: the church from the nations, which is called upon to comfort Israel, pray for her, and prepare the way for the coming of the Lord.

It turns out that this is also a new era for the church. After centuries of preaching contempt and hatred toward the Jews, the combined effect of the Holocaust and the rebirth of the Jewish state forced Christian leaders to rethink their theology. That opened the way for Christians to examine a long-lost heritage of our faith—namely the Hebrew background of Jesus' life and teachings, the way Jews have understood the Bible and kept the biblical feasts, and so much more. This new quest has come to be known as the search for our Hebraic roots and the Jewishness of Jesus. It is greatly encouraged by Paul in Romans 11:17–18, when he says that gentile believers "became a partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree ... remember that you do not support the root, but the root supports you."

An obvious start is to look at the biblical feasts. On Passover, Jesus was offered as a blameless Lamb for the sins of the world, fulfilling the prophetic picture of the lamb whose blood saved the Israelites from death in Egypt (Exodus 12). It is a fascinating exercise to compare the Jewish custom of celebrating the Seder meal on Passover eve with the story of the Last Supper. Many such New Testament passages come to life in a new way when we read them in light of their original Hebraic setting.

There are parallels between the Jewish and Christian understandings of Pentecost too. While Jews celebrate the giving of the Word of God on Mount Sinai, Christians remember the giving of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2). One needs the other: the Word without the Spirit is a dead letter, while the Word will always support the true work of the Spirit.

It is no coincidence that the founding of the Christian Embassy was connected to the first Christian celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles, another biblical feast with great global significance. Though never kept by the church, this fall harvest festival will have its glorious prophetic fulfillment at the second coming of the Lord.

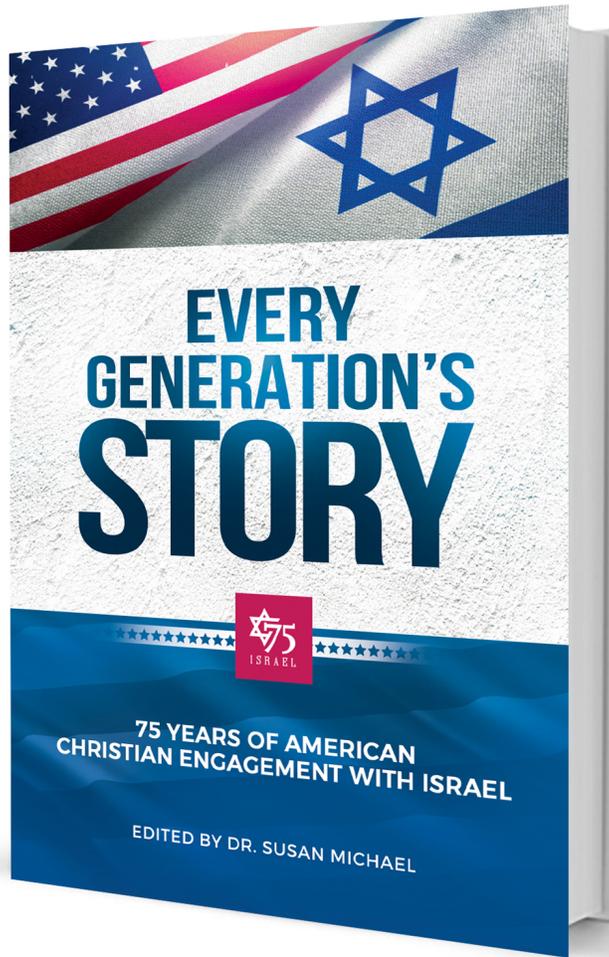
Many more insights can be gleaned from the biblical significance of the Hebrew months or from the weekly Torah readings and Jewish prayer customs. This journey is not without its pitfalls, however. Some Christians become so overwhelmed by the richness of Jewish traditions, or some of its outward symbols, that they run the danger of losing sight of the uniqueness of Jesus' work of salvation. Ultimately, there is only one way to God—through His Son, Jesus Christ, and the new covenant he established (Romans 3:28). The guiding principle should be what Paul wrote to the Colossians in 2:16–17: "So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ."

In this spirit we invite you to join us as we continue to seek to discover and bring forth treasures, both new and old (Matthew 13:52).



“Traveling to the Holy Land radically changed my faith. I will never read Scripture the same again. I will never pray the same again. The way I worship our Lord and Savior has been forever changed by those 10 days in Israel.”

—Sarah Weiskopf,
student at Grand Canyon University,
Phoenix, AZ



“From that day forward, I knew my calling would involve teaching the Hebrew Scriptures and building relations with the People of the Book.”

—Dr. Marvin Wilson,
author of *Our Father Abraham: Jewish Roots of the Christian Faith*

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Former Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee, ICEJ USA Director Dr. Susan Michael with husband George Michael, and ICEJ International Spanish Spokesman Miguel Munoz

In January Former Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee was honored by a group of Jewish and Christian friends of Israel as well as international parliamentarians for his steadfast support for the Jewish state over the past five decades.

The Israel Allies Award was bestowed upon Huckabee by the Israel Allies Foundation at a gala Miami event attended by ICEJ USA Director Dr. Susan Michael and ICEJ International Spanish Spokesman Miguel Munoz.

The 67-year-old conservative evangelical pastor, TV host, and two-time Republican presidential candidate has visited the Holy Land almost

LONGTIME ISRAEL SUPPORTER MIKE HUCKABEE RECEIVES ISRAEL ALLIES AWARD

BY SUSAN MICHAEL, ICEJ USA DIRECTOR

100 times and led thousands of participants on solidarity tours over the past half-century.

Huckabee told about his first trip to Israel right out of high school. Though it was just before the 1973 Yom Kippur War, Huckabee said he felt “absolutely right at home.” After each trip, the only question he had on the flight back to the United States was how and when he would be back.

A longtime champion of Israel’s cause—based on biblical beliefs—he has been a staunch supporter of the relocation of the US embassy to Jerusalem and has worked to fight the BDS movement.

“Till my last breath, I shall speak out for my second home,” Huckabee said. “We need to proclaim, not edit, the word of God.”

Mobilizing support for Israel worldwide through faith-based diplomacy, the Israel Allies Foundation has emerged as a powerhouse with its network of more than 50 parliamentary caucuses encompassing over 1,200 legislators around the world based on shared Judeo-Christian values, 🌍



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YOUR ISRAEL ANSWER

Why Is the Aliyah of the Ethiopian Jews Critical?

By Dr. Susan Michael, ICEJ USA Director

The origin of Ethiopian Jews is a bit of a mystery. Most agree they are descendants of Israelites who migrated to the area at one time or another. One theory allows for migrants as early as Moses' time when the Israelites were in nearby Egypt. Another possibility is that the interactions between the Queen of Sheba and King Solomon may have brought about a migration, if not a rumored offspring. Still another theory posits that some of the tribe of Dan made their way to the region when fleeing the Babylonians in the sixth century BC. Genetic tests indicate that others may have intermarried with Yemenite Jews who fled to Ethiopia during several different periods of conflict in Yemen.

Ancient Form of Judaism

Whatever their origins, the fact is thousands of Jews lived in the northeast region of Ethiopia for centuries. They were cut off from the rest of the world and faithfully observed the Jewish faith as it had been practiced before the destruction of the temple and the influence of Rabbinic Judaism. They developed their own interpretations of the law and added some of their own feast days. They didn't know Hebrew because their Scriptures were written in Ge'ez, and they spoke Amharic.

Because they had no contact with the outside world, they thought they were the only Jews left on the planet and subsequently endured generations of hardship to sustain their Jewish identity. Nevertheless, they practiced their form of Judaism and longed for the day when they would return to Zion, calling themselves "Beta Israel" (House of Israel), while their neighbors derogatorily called them "Falashas"—the alien ones. They suffered from dictators, famines, and wars along with their fellow countrymen but also faced discrimination because of their faith. Their mysterious story is one of a beautiful, simple faith alongside centuries of difficulty.

Longing for Zion

God heard their prayers, and the Beta Israel encountered other Jewish communities in the nineteenth century. In 1977 Israeli officials approved their immigration based on the Israeli Law of Return and

began Aliyah operations, including Operations Moses and Joshua in Sudan from 1979 to 1990 and Operation Solomon from Addis Adaba in 1992. Hence, these Ethiopian Jews became the only black African population to be brought to a non-African country for freedom.

Today, some 140,000 Ethiopians live in Israel, and while their cultural and religious acclimation has been difficult, they are beginning to enter Israeli society and its workforce in increasing numbers.

The Remaining Aliyah

However, not all Jews in Ethiopia have been able to realize their dream, and many remain—most of them living in deplorable conditions. Some left their work and villages more than 20 years ago to register with Israeli officials and wait in makeshift camps for their turn to immigrate. Because they expected to make Aliyah soon, they did not create new means of income, plunging them further into poverty as time passed. Most live in mud shacks without electricity or running water. Many of their children are malnourished, and at this point, their remaining Aliyah is a rescue operation.

In its most recent wave, the Israeli government approved bringing 3,000 Ethiopian Jews home to Israel. In 2022 the ICEJ helped support 260 out of 1,512 immigrants who made Aliyah; that means 1,488 are still eligible to come home this year, and already in 2023, the ICEJ has sponsored 120 of those 1,488. ICEJ's next assisted flight from Ethiopia will be on March 30, 2023.

When Ethiopian Jews arrive at Ben Gurion Airport, it is typically full of emotional embraces and tears of joy as parents reunite with children, sisters reunite with brothers, and grandchildren meet their grandparents for the first time. Their joy is only dampened when they remember the many who died back home as refugees or because of famine and who will never see the Zion they dreamed of.

The Aliyah of the Ethiopian Jews is critical. They have waited and suffered long enough—the last of the Ethiopian Jews need to come home. 🇮🇱

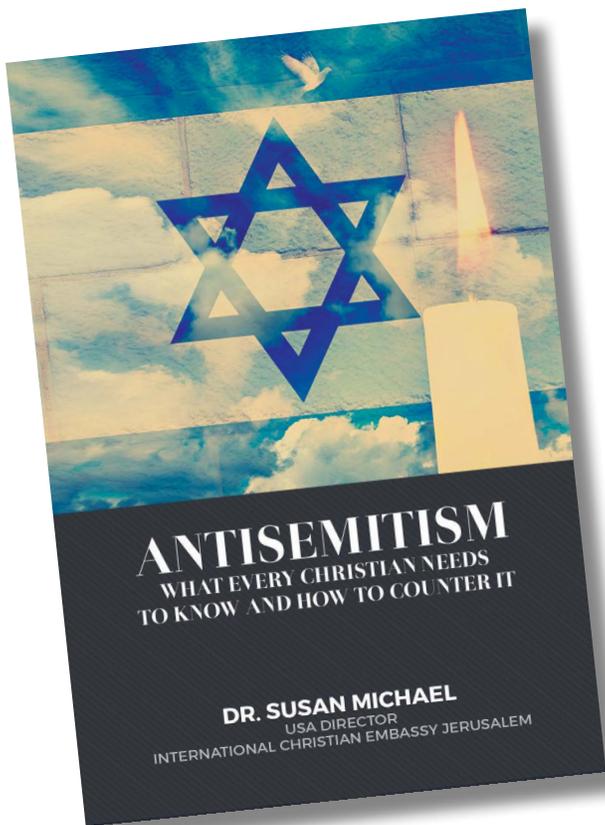
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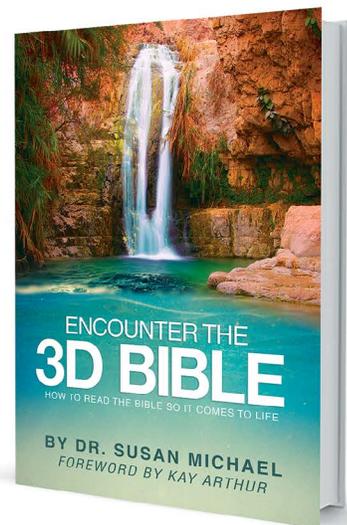
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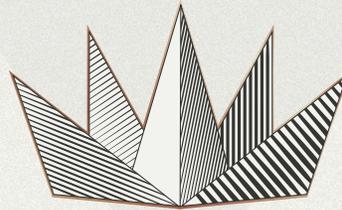
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