JERUSALEM JUBILEE

This is a year of Jubilee celebrations for Jerusalem!

ALIYAH

Jews return from Ethiopia to Israel
Dear friends,

This issue reports a third healing testimony we experienced within our ministry in the past year. David Elms survived a fatal aneurysm. When he visits the hospital in Liverpool, the doctors say: “Here comes the miracle man.” His miracle, along with the story of Danny Meka and my own testimony strengthened significantly our trust in the Lord as a miracle-working God. Nothing is impossible for our God! I hope as you read the testimony of David your faith will be strengthened to expect your own personal miracle from God.

As you are reading this issue, the first big flight of Ethiopian Jews is well underway to Israel. There was a significant delay in their arrival, as we expected more Ethiopians to arrive since last year. But now it seems the final bureaucratic hurdles have been overcome and the long awaited Ethiopian Aliyah wave is in full swing. We are delighted that the funds for the flights in the first year have been mostly covered. But an Israeli official assured us their arrival is only the first of many steps to fully integrate them into Israeli society. Many of them come from rural areas and living in Israel comes with major cultural and educational challenges. They need to transition from a third world context into one of the most modern societies in the world. As the ICEJ, we are fully committed to help Israel with this process and have already committed to assist in some of the absorption projects for the Ethiopian Jews. Remember that God promised to “plant them in the land and not to uproot them again” (Jer 24:6). Please join us in this unique and prophetic vision of bringing them to the land, and helping to plant them in such a way that their return will become a great blessing for the entire society in Israel.

In the meantime, we invite you, along with thousands of Christians from around the world, to congratulate Jerusalem on her historic Jubilee. You can do so online at www.jerusalemjubilee.com (read more on page 9). And if you have not done so already, please prayerfully consider joining us for this year’s momentous Feast of Tabernacles as we will celebrate the fifty years of Jerusalem’s reunification. I look forward to welcoming you there!

Many blessings from Jerusalem and remember, nothing is impossible for our God!

Yours in Christ,

Dr. Jürgen Bühler
ICEJ President

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

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 recognise 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 140 countries worldwide, with branch offices in over 80 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 ministry supported by the voluntary contributions of our members 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.

Support our ministry on-line at: www.icej.org
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ATTRACTING EXTRAORDINARY BLESSING

BY DR. JÜRGEN BÜHLER
touch of God, in many ways out of season, since Jesus repeatedly made it clear during His earthly ministry He was sent only to the Jews. (Mt 15:25) When Jesus sent out His disciples He likewise commanded them to avoid Gentiles and focus only on the “lost sheep of the house of Israel” (Mt 10:6). Just a few days before Christ’s crucifixion, a group of Greeks wanted to see Jesus. But he would not see them (John 12:20).

“Yes Lord, yet even the dogs…”
Consequently, when the Phoenician woman approached Jesus with the desperate request to heal her sick demonized daughter, Jesus first ignored her and then rather abruptly rejected her: “I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel,” He said, and then added, “It is not right to take the children’s bread and throw it to the dogs.” (Mt 15:25-26)

It must have been extremely humiliating for the woman to be addressed like that by Jesus. As He said, healing was God’s gift – the daily bread – for the sons of God, the Jews who, according to Paul, were adopted. (Rom 9:4) To give the same gift to this Gentile woman Jesus equated with throwing the gift to the dogs. Jesus was using a seemingly harsh rabbinic approach also found in Midrash Tillim, which states: “The nations of the world are like dogs.”

But this did not stop the Phoenician woman. Her reply demonstrated both relentless faith and extreme humility, not only towards Jesus but towards her own standing within God’s economy of her time. “Yes Lord, yet even the dogs…” was her reply. The German theologian Albrecht Bengel notes: “She does not ask to be admitted to the table, but implies that she was not far distant from it.” In the new covenant, Gentiles would soon be admitted to sit at the table as children and have full access to all the heavenly goods, but in this early stage Jesus marvelled at the humble faith displayed by the woman. “…Jesus answered her, ‘O woman, great is your faith! Be it done for you as you desire.’ And her daughter was healed instantly.” (Mt 15:28)

“For he loves our nation”
Another Gentile to experience an untimely touch of Jesus was a Roman centurion from Capernaum. Like the Phoenician woman, he did not ask for himself, but needed a miracle for one of his servants. However, instead of approaching Jesus directly, he sent the elders of the local Jewish community to put in a good word with Jesus. This is how Luke reports it: “And when they came to Jesus, they pleaded with him earnestly, saying, ‘He is worthy to have you do this for him, for he loves our nation, and he is the one who built us our synagogue.’” (Lk 7:4–5) Archaeologists have found the basalt foundations of an ancient synagogue in Capernaum which could be the one mentioned in this passage.

“I know you from Jerusalem”
In the last issue of our magazine we shared the story of miraculous healing of Danny Meka, ICEJ’s Director in India. Severely burned after a gas explosion, an angel appeared to him in a dream and the Lord supernaturally touched his body, allowing Danny to leave the hospital after eight days, when the doctors said it should have taken months. His story shows us that our God is the same God from the days of the Apostles. And nothing is impossible for our God!

As you may recall from Danny’s story, when the angel appeared to him in a dream, he asked: “What do you want me to do for you?” In that dream Danny responded: “Who are you?” The angel answered him: “I know you from Jerusalem!”

That remarkable response reminded me of three stories in the Bible – three Gentiles who were singled out in the New Testament to receive a special blessing: A Roman centurion (Lk 7:1-10), a Phoenician woman (Mt 15:21-28), and Cornelius, the Centurion from Caesarea (Acts 10-11). All three experienced an unusual
What is striking is the argument that the elders bring to Jesus, and His subsequent reaction. “He is worthy to have you do this for him, for he loves our nation, and he is the one who built us our synagogue.” The elders recognized that dealing with a Gentile would be an exception for Jesus. Nevertheless, they argued that Jesus should still heal him as he is a ‘worthy Gentile.’ He loves our nation, they argued, and demonstrated it very practically by building a synagogue. Unlike with the Phoenician woman, Jesus did not oppose and followed the elders immediately to heal the centurion’s servant.

“...well spoken of by the whole Jewish nation”
The third prominent Gentile highlighted in the New Testament is Cornelius, the centurion of Caesarea. The Phoenician woman and the centurion from Capernaum experienced a touch of Jesus before the times of the Gentiles had begun. Cornelius however represents the very watershed which opened the doors to the Gentile world. His testimony became a sign not only for Peter, but for the entire early church, that “also to the Gentiles, God has granted repentance that leads to life.” (Acts 11:18) The person of Cornelius represents thus a paradigm shift for the early church. From that moment on, it was clear that the Gentiles would be allowed to sit at God’s table as sons. They would not receive merely the crumbs of blessings that had fallen from the table of God’s people Israel, but would become full partakers of God’s nature and His most powerful promises.

The question I used to ask myself was: Why did Cornelius become the prototype, the first fruit of a Gentile believer? Why was he chosen, of all the Gentiles living in Israel at that time? Again, it is Luke who answers these questions. The disciple reports that the centurion sent two of his (probably Jewish) servants to Peter’s home in Joppa (today’s Jaffa), to come to Caesarea and share God’s Word in his house. They must have known that an observant Jew like Peter would not defile himself by visiting the home of a Gentile, especially if he was a leader of the Roman occupying force.

So the servants give a testimony about Cornelius, reminiscent of the story of the centurion of Capernaum: “Cornelius, a centurion, an upright and God-fearing man, who is well spoken of by the whole Jewish nation, was directed by a holy angel to send for you...” (Acts 10:22) This Roman, they argued, was different from the other Romans Peter knew. Cornelius was well spoken of by the Jewish nation. The Jews loved him.

The reason why they loved him was explained by the angel who appeared to Cornelius: “Cornelius, your prayer has been heard and your alms have been remembered before God.” (Acts 10:31) Cornelius was a spiritual man who prayed and whom the Jews considered as ‘God fearing.’ The practical expression of his faith was love and care towards the Jewish nation through the alms that were given by him. Therefore, the Jews held him in high regard and more importantly his alms were noted in Heaven.

_Candidates for extraordinary blessing_  
What connects all three stories is the relentless faith and the unique relationship these three Gentiles shared with the Jewish people. The Phoenician woman showed incredible humility in God’s seemingly preferential treatment of the Jews. Both centurions showed active signs of love and support for the Jewish people by giving alms and even building a synagogue. The Word of God indicates it was their faith and their attitude towards the Jews which marked all three of them for an extraordinary treatment by God. They received a touch of God before the Gospel of Jesus would ‘officially’ launch into the Gentile world. One of them, Cornelius, became the very first Gentile Christian and opened the door for all Gentiles to receive the Spirit of God.

The stories confirm that God is indeed watching how we relate to Israel and the Jews. Our relationship to Israel is surely not a precondition for salvation or eternal life, but it marks us as possible candidates for an extraordinary blessing.

What the angel said to Cornelius: “Your alms have been remembered before God,” reminds me of what the angel said in a dream to our Indian ICEJ director in the hospital. “I know you from Jerusalem!” Many times I have asked myself, what would have happened if Danny would not have devoted some of his time to bless the Jewish people. He visits Israel several times a year and works tirelessly in India to bless the Jewish nation. Somehow this must have attracted the attention of Heaven. “I know you from Jerusalem,” the angel answered him. God’s Word makes it crystal clear that blessing Israel attracts the blessing of God on our own life. (Gen 12:3)

Blessing Israel is surely no quick fix for getting rich, but it marks us for times when we need an extraordinary touch from God. I have experienced it personally, and many others do too. I know you will as well, as you seek ways to bless the people of God. Even if you should never experience it here on earth, you are marked in Heaven. And one day you too will hear: “I know you from Jerusalem. Your alms have been remembered.”

May the Lord bless you mightily as you bless the Jewish people.

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11:18) The person of Cornelius represents indeed watching how we relate to Israel and the Jews.

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May the Lord bless you mightily as you bless the Jewish people. ☺
This is a year of Jubilee celebrations for Jerusalem. In 2017, Israel marks fifty years since the city was reunited in the Six-Day War, as well as one hundred years since the liberation of Jerusalem by British General Sir Edmund Allenby. Yet this year also holds one more important Jubilee salute for Jerusalem: The discovery of the ruins of the ancient City of David by Sir Charles Warren in 1867, exactly 150 years ago.

Warren came to the Holy Land under a commission from the Palestine Exploration Fund, chartered by Queen Victoria, to study the suitability of the land for Jewish settlement. But his time here was most notable for his efforts to uncover the site of the Jewish temples. Denied permission by the Turks to excavate on the Temple Mount, Warren began digging down several meters away from its retaining walls and then tried to burrow sideways to reach the Mount from below. During this tunneling activity, he inadvertently came upon a circular crevice in the bedrock leading hundreds of feet south and eventually reaching the Gihon Spring. Now known as Warren’s Shaft, it turned out the long tunnel was largely a natural formation. But his digs in the Gihon area soon revealed ancient fortifications and a vertical, man-made shaft leading down to the spring from above, prompting him to conclude that the original City of David lay south of the Temple Mount. David’s actual city had become so lost under centuries of rubble that “Zion” eventually shifted westward to present-day Mt. Zion. Yet Warren’s theory has since been proven correct, and his gritty efforts birthed the new field of biblical archaeology.

WITH THIS unlocking of Jerusalem’s biblical past 150 years ago, the city re-emerged onto the world stage. The discovery seemed to stoke the Jewish longing to return to Zion. In the years following, the first waves of the modern-day Aliyah began arriving from Russia. Israeli president Reuven Rivlin recently recalled how these early pioneers were drawn by their yearning for Jerusalem. They may have settled along the coastal plain in such new towns as Rishion LeZion and Petah Tikvah, but in their hearts they were returning to Jerusalem. Many had just started walking in the direction of Jerusalem, which they knew because their daily prayers had always pointed the way.

The ancient City of David continues to give up her secrets and to draw Jews back up to Zion. Excavations of the site accelerated following that incredible Jubilee release fifty years ago, when eastern Jerusalem returned to Jewish hands. Since then, archaeologists have located David’s Palace, his likely treasury vault, and the outer walls and towers protecting his fortress city. A number of bulla, or clay seals, have been found in the palace confines with the names in ancient Hebrew of King Hezekiah and several royal advisers to the Judean
kings, all mentioned in Scripture. Other proofs have surfaced elsewhere in the land, such as the Tel Dan stele (inscribed stone) referencing the “House of David,” which confirm that David and Solomon ruled over a large kingdom. This has all validated that the Jews are not foreigners who have stolen this land from others, but are a native people who have returned to their ancestral homeland.

WHEN THE Temple envisioned by King David was completed by his son Solomon, Jerusalem became more than just an administrative capital. It was transformed into a majestic center of worship and pilgrimage for Jews and others who revered the Creator God. From Jerusalem, the Jews developed one of the greatest cultures of antiquity, which would have lasting, universal significance.

Inspired by David – their renowned warrior/poet – the Jews began writing songs to express their devotion and awe for Jerusalem, and especially for the courts of the Lord. These hymns not only extolled the Lord God, but also exalted Jerusalem as His resting place. There were even specific psalms to be sung while ascending up to the city and when entering the Temple courts. Jerusalem acquired such a lofty status that even visiting royalty were driven to their knees.

When the Jews were later taken captive, the Babylonians knew how to make the pain of exile really sting, demanding: “Sing us one of the songs of Zion.” (Psalm 137:3)

And when the Jews returned and built the Second Temple, Jerusalem took on even more allure and grandeur, only to later be sacked by the Romans. For centuries afterwards, the city languished and the Temple lay desolate. But the pull of Jerusalem was always there, as Jews continued to pray towards her and long for what they had lost. Even well into Christian times, Jerusalem was still viewed as the center of the world, as attested by the famous 15th century map by Heinrich Buenting.

TODAY, the incredible finds in the ancient City of David are rekindling the longing for Zion. They are awakening a sense of pride within the Jewish people and deepening their attachment to the land and the city. They realize their ancestral heritage is truly rooted in this land; that they are not intruders, but have come home to Zion. For instance, a brand new poll of Israeli Jews has found that 79% want to retain a unified Jerusalem under Israeli sovereignty, while 83% oppose transferring the Temple Mount to the Palestinians. In this year of Jubilee for Jerusalem, what will happen next to ignite an even greater longing for the courts of the Lord? Does the City of David hold more secret treasures which it will give up this year?

For Christians, the ongoing discoveries in the City of David also hold great worth. They show our Bible is true and strengthen our hope in the soon return of that remarkable Son of David, to take up his throne in Jerusalem. And as for exalting Jerusalem – the New Testament even presents the city as a bride coming down from heaven.

So make sure to come join us in Jerusalem for this Jubilee celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles. There is much to see and experience in the City of God. 🙏
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2. Sign up
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Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: “May they prosper who love you.” Ps 122:6
GOODBYE AND THANK YOU TO HARLEY

ICEJ staff gathered to say thank you and farewell to long-time friend and Feast volunteer, Harley Henson. Harley and his late wife Vida were first introduced to the ICEJ when volunteering with the costume department during the Feast of Tabernacles in 1998. They became Feast “regulars,” always helping wherever needed. Even after Vida’s passing, Harley faithfully pitched in wherever help was needed, during the Feast and throughout the year. Due to declining health, Harley returned to the United States earlier this month. He is currently in rehab and doing well. Our love and prayers go with him.

VISIT OF BROTHER YUN

The ICEJ head office staff were blessed to meet Brother Yun in March of this year. “The Heavenly Man” shared the story of God’s faithfulness throughout his years of imprisonment for the Gospel. Through much suffering and torture, the Lord used Brother Yun mightily, supernaturally leading him out from a totally locked-down prison to freedom. Now a German citizen, Brother Yun travels the world testifying of the Lord’s grace and power to “set the captives free.”

CELEBRATING WIM AT RETIREMENT

Wim Van der Zande, one of the longest serving ICEJ staff members in Jerusalem, recently retired, promising to visit and support the Embassy headquarters whenever needed. Wim and Petra first came to Jerusalem in 1988, served at the Feast and felt God was calling them to serve longterm. Petra joined the Social Assistance Department (now ICEJ Aid) and Wim, a jack-of-all-trades, was soon brought on staff to handle administrative work, make sure the offices were well equipped and manage daily and ever-increasing mass mailings. He managed the mailing office until his retirement this January and coordinated headsets and translators during each Feast of Tabernacles.
VISIT OF REPS FROM MINISTRY OF PUBLIC SAFETY

On the morning of February 16, a group of 10 government workers from the Ministry of Public Security visited ICEJ headquarters and met part of the staff for breakfast and to learn more about the ministry of the ICEJ in the land of Israel. Dr. Mordehai Zaken, who oversees the Desk of Minority Affairs for the Israeli government, brought the group to help government officials learn more about the work of Christians who love and support Israel and the Jewish people. Dr. Zaken was impressed with the reception at the Embassy and promised to bring other groups of government officials to the Embassy in the near future.

TRIP TO SHILO

In March, ICEJ staff spent a day traveling through the Binyamin Region of Israel, often referred to as the “land of biblical heroes.” The first stop was Shechem, the high place where Abraham received the Lord’s promise to receive the land stretched out before him. The entire staff prayed for the nation and her people as they gazed on Mounts Gerizim and Ebal, where blessings and curses were recited over the children of Israel, recorded in Deuteronomy 27. Next the staff visited ancient Shiloh, where the Tabernacle and the Ark of the Covenant resided for 369 years. There Hannah prayed for a child and where later that son, prophet Samuel, ministered and served the kings of Israel. The day concluded with a meal at Psagot Winery, overlooking the pass between Gibeah and Michmash, the location of Jonathan’s stunning victory over the Philistines (I Sam. 14) and the modern-day victory of Gen. Allenby in WWI against the Turks.

USA PASTORS’ LUNCHEON AT THE ICEJ

The ICEJ Jerusalem staff was honored to host a lunch for a large delegation of pastors and church leaders from the United States on the Embassy property in the last days of March. Pastor Jerry Dirmann, Founder and Senior Pastor of The Rock Church in Anaheim, California and ICEJ Board Member shared an exciting message about Israel and introduced the visitors to the ministry of the ICEJ.
Audio Download

2017 ENVISION
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The Jerusalem Compass instead of pointing north points only in the direction of Jerusalem from any point on the globe. Fashioned from pure solid brass, the lid is deeply embossed in the center with a Jewish Star of David and the words “Jerusalem” in Hebrew and English. The outer edges are encircled with a delicate floral design of Pomegranates.

39 USD

JERUSALEM NOTEBOOK
This notebook comes in two different colors; black, white. The edges are gold colored and the pages (140) are lined - pages of high quality Italian paper, 16 x 16 cm. Cover style - hard cover luxuriously embellished with the skyline of Jerusalem and ICEJ’s logo in a gold color.

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Go to: ICEJSTORE.COM and use the discount code: WFJ2017ICEJ – The special 10% discount for your purchases at the Embassy Resources is valid until 31/12/17
**THE PALESTINIANS, MYTHS AND MARTYRS**

BY JOHANNES GERLOFF

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

USD 29 EACH

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**A HISTORY OF ISRAEL FROM THE RISE OF ZIONISM TO OUR TIME**

BY HOWARD M. SACHAR

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

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MORE ETHIOPIAN JEWS ARRIVE IN ISRAEL IN MAY

BY ESTERA WIEJA

The ICEJ sponsors another large group of Ethiopian Jews approved by the Israeli government to make Aliyah

The next wave of Aliyah from Ethiopia arrives in Israel this May! The ICEJ is committed to standing with these families every step of the way. Therefore, as soon as they are back in Israel, we will help them settle in their promised land.

Most Ethiopian Jews returned to Israel in the early 1990s. However, some remained in their small community in this poor African country, caring for their elders and waiting for a future opportunity to make Aliyah. They long to come home to Israel. In November 2015, the Israeli government announced its intention to bring up to 9,000 Ethiopian Jews home by 2020. On October 9, 2016, the first wave of 63 of them arrived in Israel, thanks to the Christian support through the ICEJ.

We are grateful for every gift dedicated to this special endeavor! By sponsoring the return of the Ethiopian Jews to Israel, we become part of God’s fulfillment of His promise, recorded in Isaiah 43:5-7. As Christians, we can carry the sons and daughters of God’s chosen nation back to the land of their fathers (Isa 49:22). We will be blessed for it in return, according to the spiritual law described in the Bible.

What a joy it is to see these Jewish families make their home in their Promised Land! It is not too late and it is our honor to play a part in their journey! 🕉️

Join the ICEJ today and pave the way for more Ethiopian Jews to return to Israel! Send your gift at www.icej.org/ethiopia

DONATE ONLINE

Pray for Aliyah flights from Ethiopia!
MAY YOUR PRAYERS MOVE MOUNTAINS!

Join us in prayer for urgent needs in and around Israel, and concerning the Jewish people worldwide.

BY AARON HECHT

JERUSALEM
In early June, Israel will mark fifty years since the reunification of Jerusalem in 1967. But the Arab states are again challenging Israel’s rule over the city today, 50 years later, and the spiritual battle over the city intensifies once more. Yet this is a year of Jubilee favor over Jerusalem, and we believe God wants to release it even more in the coming months into its redemptive destiny.

Please pray for God’s prophetic purposes for Jerusalem to be hastened and all He intends to accomplish in the city this year would come to pass. Pray that the nations will move their embassies to Jerusalem this year, starting with the United States. Pray for the sound defeat of any diplomatic efforts to undermine Israeli sovereignty over Jerusalem.

ETHIOPIAN ALIYAH
More Ethiopian Jews will be making Aliyah on flights sponsored by the ICEJ in the coming months, but there are still obstacles in their way. The delays involve difficulties on the ground in Ethiopia, as well as certain pockets of resistance within Israel. Let us cover the entire Ethiopian Jewish community with our prayers – especially those who will be traveling from Ethiopia to begin new lives in Israel.

Please pray for the ICEJ’s continuing efforts to bring home the last of the Ethiopian Jewish community to Israel. Thousands of Jews still remain in the Gondar and Addis Ababa regions in Ethiopia, who need to be cared for, transported to the airport and then flown to Israel. Pray against any further delays and hindrances, which are only prolonging the separation and suffering for these families. Pray they would be kept safe from harm until they are able to fly to Israel, that their journey to Israel would be swift, and they will easily adjust to living in their new homeland.

SYRIA AND THE REGION
In early April, the USA destroyed a military airfield in Syria which was recently used to launch chemical gas attacks on villages in rebel-held territory. This surprise action by the Trump administration could change the dynamic of the Syrian conflict and even have far wider consequences, especially for Iran. Meanwhile, Israel’s relations with the US have improved under the Trump presidency, although the “settlements” issue could still cause tensions between Washington and Jerusalem.

Please pray for Israel’s leaders to have the wisdom, foresight and abilities needed to keep Israel safe and the Syria conflict at bay (Isaiah 62:6). Pray for US-Israel relations to flourish and have a positive impact on the whole region. Pray that any US-led renewed peace talks between Israel and the Palestinians would not be used to increase international pressure on Israel to make unwise or unwarranted concessions.

Join the Isaiah 62 initiative of the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem as we corporately pray for Jerusalem, the nation of Israel, and the Middle East:

1. Join as an individual prayer warrior at: www.icej.org/isaiah62
2. Begin an Isaiah 62 prayer group in your community.
3. Join us in fasting and praying on behalf of Israel every month.
The Aliyah numbers have increased rapidly over the past few years due to wars and anti-Semitic aggression around the world. The ICEJ is leading the way in helping many more Jews come home to the land of their fathers. Please join the ICEJ in responding to this urgent need! www.icej.org/aliyah
Ukraine
When the civil war broke out in Ukraine in the Spring of 2014, the ICEJ reacted quickly to raise money for flights and flight-related expenses to help the Jews caught in the crossfire. Although Aliyah from Ukraine has recently slowed, the ICEJ expanded the work to also sponsor absorption programs in Israel which help these new immigrants learn Hebrew and gain job skills to integrate in the society. Since the crisis began the ICEJ has rescued 1,318 Ukrainian Jews from the warzone and the work continues.

France
Since the Islamic terror reached France in 2001, more than 50,000 French Jews have made Aliyah to Israel. In 2008, the ICEJ began assisting them upon arrival in Israel with immediate absorption needs and, in 2010, we began sponsoring flights. In 2015, a new program was designed to help Jewish families in France who live in impoverished, thus dangerous, neighborhoods surrounded by Muslim immigrants from North Africa, where they are often victims of hate crimes. The safety situation in France is not improving. Riots and acts of terrorism are frequent and many await their chance to come home to Israel. Since 2010, ICEJ has assisted more than 4,000 French Jews in their journey to come home.

Belarus
The weak economy in Belarus is a strong argument for the local Jewry to pursue Aliyah. Last year the Aliyah numbers from Belarus increased by 90% from the previous year. Since 2006, the ICEJ has helped some 4,000 Belarusian Jews with their trip to Israel. This work is coordinated through the ICEJ offices in Helsinki (Finland) and St. Petersburg (Russia). Currently the tensions between Russia, Belarus and NATO are sparking major regional concerns and the interest in and pursuit of Aliyah is expected to rise even more. So far in 2017, the Belarusian Aliyah is already up by 88% from the same period in 2016.

Russia
ICEJ began helping the Jews of the Soviet Union in 1986 when they went through Vienna. Since 1989, ICEJ has been assisting the Russian Jews in the northwest region to make Aliyah through Finland. In the 1990s, the Jewry from all over the former Soviet Union attempted Aliyah by the northern route – through Finland – because the southern routes were much longer and slower. After a stagnant period, Aliyah from the former Soviet Union has doubled since the world economic crisis in 2008. Today the economy in Russia is again very weak. Last year the ICEJ assisted about a thousand Russian Jews to return to Israel. Aliyah has risen 34% in the first months of 2017.

Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia & Uzbekistan
The ICEJ also assists Jewish people to make Aliyah in other former Soviet Republics, like Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia and Uzbekistan. Although these numbers are not as great as Russia or Ukraine, there are still Jewish communities in these nations. This work is also supervised by the Finnish branch and the St. Petersburg office.

India
The unique tribe of Bnei Menashe is one of the youngest to start making Aliyah to Israel. Since 2012, the ICEJ has been sponsoring most of the flights for the Bnei Menashe who are coming to Israel from Northeast India. More than 1,000 came with our assistance during the past four years.

China
In 2000, the ICEJ brought the first family of Kaifeng Jews to Israel through Finland, and we have actively helped nearly two dozen who have come since then. Five young ladies from Kaifeng, China, are living in Israel today to pursue their Jewish studies at Jerusalem’s Center For Advanced Torah Study For Women. Although these numbers are small, the Aliyah from China is particularly interesting.
I see Jerusalem in your heart.

ICEJ says farewell to International Director Juha Ketola

By DR. JÜRGEN BÜHLER

I remember well how Juha Ketola became the International Director of the ICEJ. The Board of the ICEJ had just asked me to serve as the Executive Director of our ministry, and it was through divine guidance that Juha and I ended up traveling to Brazil together that same year, in 2011. At that point Juha served as National Director of ICEJ-Finland, and at the last minute he was willing to change his schedule and accompany me to the Amazon rainforest. As we landed in Manaus, we were brought to the house of our host, Apostle Rene Terra Nova.

As we entered his house I expected the usual warm embrace and welcome. But this time Rene stood in the middle of the living room and said: “Stay where you are, don’t talk.” He then pointed to Juha and said: “I see Jerusalem in your heart! I see God wants you to move to Jerusalem!” Both Juha and I were surprised by this welcome, and leaving his house a few hours later I asked Juha: “Did this make sense to you? Do you agree with what he said?” “Absolutely, yes,” he replied. “For some time, my wife and I have felt God is calling us to Jerusalem.” “Then you will be our new International Director!” I shouted. We had prayed for weeks for guidance regarding who would assume this role in our ministry, and God answered our prayers more directly than I expected!

Juha has been an extraordinary International Director who led an unprecedented growth in our international work. Within the last five years, he established ICEJ branches in 25 nations, including Georgia, Albania, Kazakhstan, Mali, Burkina Faso, Turkey and more. He oversaw the expansion of our work in India, where today we have over 100 representatives and volunteers working for the ICEJ in almost every federal state of this huge nation. But what excites me the most is that ten of our new branches are in predominantly in Muslim countries. This was the direct result of a prophetic word received even before our trip to Brazil. Juha and I were ministering in a little country church in

On his recent trip to East Asia, Rev. Juha Ketola preached 20 times over the course of 20 days
Finland, where after the message the Pastor publicly shared a prophetic word for the ICEJ: “Within the next few years, you will open ten new branches – in nations where today Israel is an abomination,” he declared. Juha and I looked at each other and we both understood that this meant Muslim nations. We had no idea how God would accomplish this, but today by the grace of God we have ten new branches in Muslim nations, and more are lining up to join! Nothing is impossible for our God.

It was exactly this sensitivity to the leading of God’s Spirit that made Juha so successful. He always reminds us that if you flow in the guidance of the Spirit, then “it’s eeeaaasy!” When Juha joined our ministry, he felt from the beginning to make a commitment for five years. This period has come to an end, and both he and his wife Kati agreed it is the right timing of God for them to return to Finland. We all wish the Lord would have kept him longer in Jerusalem, but God still has an exceptional calling for Juha and his wife. To work with him here in Jerusalem and around the world was a tremendous privilege. His heart has been constantly burning for revival. His enthusiasm and faith are infectious and his zeal for the Kingdom of God is an example to all of us. We will miss him greatly, along with many pastors and leaders he connected with here in Israel.

On behalf of the Board, the entire staff and the international family of the ICEJ in more than 90 branches, we say ‘Kiitos’ – Thank You to Juha and Kati Ketola. We know God has even greater things in store for them both. From the bottom of our hearts we all wish them God’s mighty blessings for this new season of their lives. Juha will leave his position in June, but he will not leave us completely. Our friendship and partnership in ministry will continue, and I know that Jerusalem will always stay in his heart.

Meanwhile, last October after prayerful consideration the ICEJ Board appointed Mojmir Kallus of the Czech Republic as ICEJ’s new Vice President of International Affairs. He will join our staff in June, and it will be our pleasure and honor to introduce him to you, our readers and supporters, in the next issue of the Word from Jerusalem magazine.

What a rich, colorful and very interesting season of five years has now come to an end in Jerusalem for me and my dear wife, Kati! I keep telling everyone how in Jerusalem it is never boring, but something is always happening here – and how the ICEJ ministry flows within this great excitement!

It has truly been exciting and a great honor to be part of and experience all these wonderful and mighty things which have taken place with ICEJ both in Israel and all around the world these last few years! To minister and work under Dr. Jürgen Bühler’s leadership has also taught me so very much about Israel, about the principles in the Kingdom of God and in life in general; I will always treasure these teachings in my heart. His friendship and fellowship in the ministry will be unforgettable to me. Working alongside the staff at the ICEJ Head Office has also been a tremendous joy for both me and my wife; it is awesome to see the high-quality men and women the Lord Jesus keeps sending to serve Israel and the nations with the message entrusted to ICEJ! This ministry has a great future and will grow!

I am so grateful to Jesus that, when I look back at what has happened since we moved to Jerusalem in 2012, I can look at it with joy. Even though more could have been accomplished, and in a better way – as always – I can still say I am joyous and feel pleasant satisfaction and fulfillment in my heart. In addition to all the numerous ministry-related events which happened in Jerusalem and Israel, I also traveled to the nations on average more than once a month to carry the message and to connect the global Church with Israel. As a result, I have innumerable precious memories and experiences in the Lord from this season from all the continents, and I know time will never be able to erase them!

With much love and many blessings to all the ICEJ family,

Rev. Juha and Kati Ketola
ICEJ-USA HOSTS A SERIES OF MEETINGS WITH ICEJ PRESIDENT DR. BÜHLER

Last month, ICEJ President Dr. Jürgen Bühler visited the USA for a series of pastors’ luncheons and church meetings. The local organisers, Rev. Kevin Jessip and Dr. Tony Crisp were instrumental in setting up highly successful meetings with key leaders and in local churches.

A special highlight was the gathering for pastors in Lake Worth Florida where Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke was one of the key speakers at the event.

We are also thrilled that Dr. Crisp has joined the ICEJ-USA team as Strategic Initiatives Director and will assist with developing our work in the USA on different levels.

After his time in the USA, Dr. Bühler remarked, “The time in the USA was a blessing, and we are grateful to God for the great opportunities that are opening up for our ministry there. We are thankful to God for Susan Michael and her team who are leading our work in the USA, and for the long-standing support of the USA to the global ministry of the ICEJ. The USA have a long tradition of standing with Israel and it is always overwhelming to witness this first hand in the churches across that nation.”

ICEJ-SPONSORED OSLO SYMPOSIUM A GREAT SUCCESS

In March, the Oslo Symposium in Norway gathered about 700 conservative Christians for a day of spectacular speeches by the US presidential candidate, Mike Huckabee, Mosab Hassan Yousef, known as the “Son of Hamas,” and Dr. Jürgen Bühler, ICEJ President. ICEJ-Norway is one of the main sponsors of the Oslo Symposium, which is the biggest conference for conservative Christians in Norway. The conference was covered by Norway’s two biggest TV channels as well as other news media.

ICEJ-Norway led by branch director, Dag Øyvind Juliussen, organized and led both the Israel session and the session for the Kåre Kristiansen Memorial Prize.

“I feel honored to receive an award in the name of a man of such integrity,” said Mike Huckabee, two-time US presidential candidate and recipient of the Kåre Kristiansen Memorial Prize for his fearless and unfailing support of Israel. “Kåre Kristiansen was one who understood that God in a special way has given Israel a rebirth, to fulfill His promise that God gave to Abraham. [Kristiansen] lived a life that left footprints we can never fill, but we should try as long as we live.”
ICEJ-GERMANY DELIVERS PETITION TO GERMAN FEDERAL MINISTRY OF ECONOMICS

Over 26,100 signatures were collected by ICEJ-Germany to highlight the concern among German Christians over the EU incentive to label Israeli goods on the European continent. The petition was delivered to the Federal Ministry of Economics in Berlin by Gottfried Bühler, director of ICEJ-Germany, and Christoph Scharnweber, ICEJ-Germany’s Political Consultant.

The Federal Ministry has reported receiving many calls to boycott Israel, so the petition is an important signal indicating many Germans are opposed to it, which is taken seriously in Berlin. The petition states: “Israel’s blossoming economy has created a climate of innovation, entrepreneurial spirit and co-existence, which is without comparison in the Middle East. In Israel Arabs have an unhampered access to democratic rights and commercial opportunities. On the other side of the green line [in the West Bank] the only examples of peaceful coexistence are exactly those enterprises which will be affected by the labeling law. This will harm thousands of Palestinian families that depend on their work for Israeli companies in the West Bank.”

ICEJ IN GEORGIA

The ICEJ-Georgia branch held a conference in Tbilisi, the capital of Georgia, late in January. Packed with biblical teachings and intercession for Israel, the conference was also an opportunity to introduce local believers to the work of the ICEJ in Jerusalem as well as the growing ministry of the ICEJ in their own country. ICEJ-Georgia has been working closely with the local Jewish community in Georgia, and seeds of friendship and solidarity have been planted in the hearts of the young Jews and Christians there.

In February, representatives of the ICEJ met with the Israeli Ambassador to Georgia, Shabtai Tsur, who was very impressed with the Christian support for Israel through the ICEJ’s global network. We hope to celebrate Jerusalem Day in Georgia together, as Jews and Christians.

“What you are doing is more than simple friendship,” said Mr. Tsur. “All of you are Ambassadors of Israel on different levels of the society. I’m looking forward to our cooperation from now on!”

ICEJ IN FINLAND

Nicole Yoder, director of ICEJ Aid, traveled to Finland in March, where she met with Israel and ICEJ supporters, and spoke at various events in the south-central part of the country. While there, Yoder also recorded programs for radio shows, to bring awareness and increase support for the people of Israel. Nicole Yoder, who has served in Israel for over two decades, knows the land and its people very well. Her testimonies from Israel touched people’s hearts in Finland, and many were moved to tears. Yoder was very warmly received everywhere she went, accompanied by her translator Johanna Manner and later also Ulla and Kaarlo Jarveleto of ICEJ-Finland.
The year 2017 is a very special year for any student of history and biblical prophecy.

This year celebrates the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, which made the Bible available to all people. Once the Bible was accessible in the vernacular (the language of the people) a mighty reformation of Christianity began. As time passed, hidden truths were revealed, including the understanding of Jesus as the Messiah of both Jew and Gentile. Gradually, through reading the scriptures, there came about amongst some of the Reformers an understanding that prophecy still had many aspects to be fulfilled. One very important aspect was that Israel had to exist as a nation and Jerusalem had to be the city of God to which the Messiah would return.

Hundred years ago, the Balfour Act was passed by the British government. This was the “birth certificate” for modern Israel. It guaranteed the right of return for Jewish people to their ancient and God-given land - Eretz Israel.

Fifty years ago, Israel was attacked by its enemies. Miraculously not only did it survive but it drove its enemies from its historical and biblical capital, Jerusalem. This year we celebrate the return of the Jewish nation to Jerusalem.

How I looked forward to 2017! I was planning many meetings, both in the UK and overseas, to share about these wonderful prophetic events and the destiny and purpose of Israel. Parallel to this was the incredible political developments within Europe and in the world; surely these were heralds of His coming!

On October 13, 2016, with eager anticipation I prepared for the ICEJ Feast of Tabernacles celebrations in Jerusalem which I have been blessed to attend for many years. That day everything changed in a moment; truly in the twinkling of an eye.

As I stood up in my lounge, I experienced the most excruciating pain I have had in my life. It was in my kidneys and the pain caused me to collapse on the floor. Providentially, as I collapsed my dear wife walked into the room. She realised something was seriously wrong, and within a very short time I was taken to Liverpool hospital, slipping in and out of consciousness. My wife said the last words I spoke to her that day were, “If I don’t see you here, I will meet you over there.” The specialist came to her and told her to gather the family to say goodbye, as there was very little chance of me coming.
through the procedures relating to an aortic, abdominal aneurysm. It appeared that instead of me waiting for the return of the Lord, He was about to take me to be with Him.

All of what was to follow is not in my memory. I went into a coma and contracted pneumonia. It was to be many weeks before I would again be conscious and discover the incredible power of prayer in the name of Jesus, which was to raise me up. This prayer began in a small way within my family, friends and church. Soon the situation was brought to the attention of believers in the UK. Prayers were offered up from America to New Zealand, a very humbling experience. Jerusalem was told of the situation and a Facebook Messenger account was opened by my family. If this aneurysm had happened 24 hours later I would have been on the plane to Israel, and there would have been nothing anyone could have done for me. But there is a providential plan and purpose for each of our lives.

Even though I was to miss my appointment in Jerusalem, I was not to miss out on the biggest miracle in my life. When the specialist later discharged me, his exact words to me were, "This was a minor miracle." My wife said, "It was not a minor miracle, but a major one!" Recently, my local doctor said to me, "We call you the miracle man. 85% of people who suffer from these aneurysms die, and of the remaining 15% many are left with various handicaps." Since then my health and mobility improve on a daily basis. Glory to God.

However, the truth is, I am not a miracle man, but I follow and serve a miracle-working God who answers the prayers of His people.

For many who attend the Feast of Tabernacles celebration, one of the great highlights is the gathering together of thousands of pilgrims at Ein Gedi. This spectacular event on the shores of the Dead Sea is very moving and powerful. To be with so many believers from so many nations worshipping the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, in the promised land is a most wonderful experience.

That night at Ein Gedi, the main speaker addressed the ICEJ leadership and said he had a word from the Lord that someone closely linked to the ICEJ ministry was very ill and the whole assembly should pray for him, so the thousands gathered prayed for me. He went on to say that in a few hours my kidneys would be healed. Until that point I had never suffered from any kidney troubles in my life. Back home a few hours later the surgeon came to my wife and said there was no damage to my kidneys and they were now hopeful I would make a full recovery.

Sometime later, Jürgen called me to see how I was progressing. I told him the artery which had burst ran down the front to the kidneys, and I had this enormous scar down the front of my chest. He told me the cancer which he had been miraculously healed of had run from his kidneys to the heart, via the veins. His enormous scar was across his stomach. Putting our two scars together we have the sign of the cross.

The ICEJ has had many trials and testings. However, we are covered by the finished work of the cross and the power of the resurrection. If we continue together in faith and prayer the ICEJ will complete its calling and destiny. There are many challenges ahead but, my dear friends, there are also many miracles awaiting you and Israel. 🙏
A special rate of $425.00 for full registration is available until April 30, 2017.

The ICEJ also offers a land package program to provide hotel accommodations for 7 nights, transportation to Feast events including the Jerusalem March. Land package rates begin at $1345.00 and include the registration fee.

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Join the ICEJ and Christians from around the world at the Feast of Tabernacles in October. **Be in Jerusalem and celebrate the 50th anniversary of the reunification of Jerusalem.**

The Feast of Tabernacles is always a wonderful foretaste of that future time when all peoples will come up to Jerusalem to celebrate Sukkot. It is a prophetic statement that our Lord is indeed coming soon. And it declares to Israel and the nations that a new day is dawning.

6-11 October 2017

feast.icej.org

We look forward in seeing you in Jerusalem

The City of God – in 2017!