



WORD

FROM JERUSALEM



...
**ICEJ WAR RELIEF
UPDATE**
(PAGES 14-17)
...

2023

Feast of Tabernacles Highlights



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

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

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

Our vision is:

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

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



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Staff Writer Anastasiya Gooding

Graphic Design/Illustrators Ryan Tsuen, Peter Ecenroad, Nancy Schimp

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FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



Dear friends,

Israel's war with Hamas continues to rage on, and many Christians, me included, are experiencing a range of emotions. We are rejoicing over the release of more than 100 hostages, but our hearts are heavy for those still held captive in Gaza. We are encouraged by so many terrorists surrendering and sense Hamas terrorists are growing weary, yet we know the war is far from over.

We also know the battle is a spiritual one that must be fought on our knees through prayer and fasting, trusting in God's promises that "The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much" (James 5:16)—and I encourage you to continue to stand firm in doing so. We invite you to join our daily Global Prayer Gatherings and our three-day Esther fast initiative.

On pages 6 through 10 of this month's *Word From Jerusalem*, we want to celebrate something good from the past year—the joyous Feast of Tabernacles 2023 that happened right before the terrible events of October 7. You'll read all about this year's feast, including the Negev Solidarity Gathering and Healing Service in the Western Negev region mere days before Hamas terrorists breached the gates into that exact same area. And you'll read an interesting excerpt from Prof. Gerald McDermott's seminar presentation at the Feast about where the church went wrong about Israel—and how it came right.

You'll also read an encouraging story about how radios donated by the ICEJ saved thousands of Israeli lives on October 7 (see p. 17). And Dr. Susan Michael addresses a critical topic prominent in the media right now to equip you as you enter conversations with others related to the war: Who is really committing genocide—Israel or Hamas? (p. 18)

As we enter the new year, though we see much happening in the world that can be disheartening, be encouraged! God is still on the throne, and He who watches over Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps (Ps. 121:4). Keep praying. Stand firm and let nothing move you—your work is not in vain (1 Cor 15:58). Our God reigns, and His plan of restoration is moving forward.

Yours in Christ,

Dr. Juergen Buehler
President
International Christian Embassy Jerusalem

COVER PHOTO: Roll Call of the Nations at the 2023 Feast of Tabernacles

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GOD'S CALENDAR

- MAY**: The third month (SIVAN) - Wheat Harvest
- JUNE**: The fourth month (TAMMUZ) - Grape Harvest
- JULY**: The fifth month (AV) - Grape, Fig, Olive Harvest
- AUGUST**: The sixth month (ELUL) - Summer Fruit Harvest
- SEPTEMBER**: The seventh month (TISHREI) - Olive Harvest
- OCTOBER**: The eighth month (CHESHVAN) - Planting Grain
- NOVEMBER**: The ninth month (CHISLEV) - Planting Grain
- DECEMBER**: The ninth month (CHISLEV) - Planting Grain

4 GOD'S CALENDAR

FEATURED TEACHING



GOD'S CALENDAR

And How It Impacts Our Understanding of the Prophetic Timeline

BY KAREN ENGLE, ICEJ USA MANAGING EDITOR

Then God said, "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and seasons, and for days and years; and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth"; and it was so.

(Genesis 1:14-15)

As December winds up, many people look forward to a new year, and with it, consider hopes and dreams for accomplishing goals. However, many Bible readers are unaware that the calendar most of the world follows today is not the calendar God set back in Genesis and Exodus—and the new year doesn't begin in January. Indeed, God has a calendar, and the Bible tells us all about it. His is a different system of days, months, years, and seasons than what we follow today—and there is much we can learn from it about God and how He has operated over time.

Back in ancient biblical times, people did not have digital clocks to track time in hours, minutes, and seconds. And they certainly didn't have calendars on their phones or hung on walls to alert them to the numbers of days in a particular month or the date of a certain holiday. But they did have a system given to them by God.

The Biblical Day, Week, Month, and Year

The principles of God's calendar go back to Genesis 1, which reveals that on day four of creation, God established the sun, moon, and stars:

Then God said, "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and seasons, and for days and years; and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth"; and it was so. (vv. 14-15)

Notice that God created the "lights in the firmament of the heavens" for light but also for His calendaring system, for signs and seasons, for days and years—in short, for timekeeping. The lunar cycle defined the months, while the solar cycle set the year.

The Biblical Day and Week

In Genesis 1:5 we learn that God called the light day and the darkness night and that "the evening and the morning were the first day." God also referred to each day as an ordinal: "the first day," "the second day," and so on. God's day is from evening to evening, affirmed with

Ultimately, Satan does not want God's people to follow the biblical calendar because like so many other types and shadows in the Old Testament, it points to Israel's Messiah and affirms the accuracy of God's Word. Satan's goal has always been to lie and deceive. Even Daniel said: "He will think to change times (seasons) and laws" (Daniel 7:25).

His instruction for celebrating the Sabbath in Leviticus 23:32: "From evening to evening, you shall celebrate your sabbath." This is why to this day Jews begin the first day of their week at sundown on our Saturday and their seventh day, Sabbath, at sundown on Friday.

Obviously, this is quite different from our calendaring system. Our day begins at midnight and ends at midnight, but the biblical day starts in the evening, a portion of time with no light, from sunset to dawn. The second part of the Hebrew day is from dawn to sunset, daylight hours. Thus, the sunrise in the morning was the middle of the Hebrew

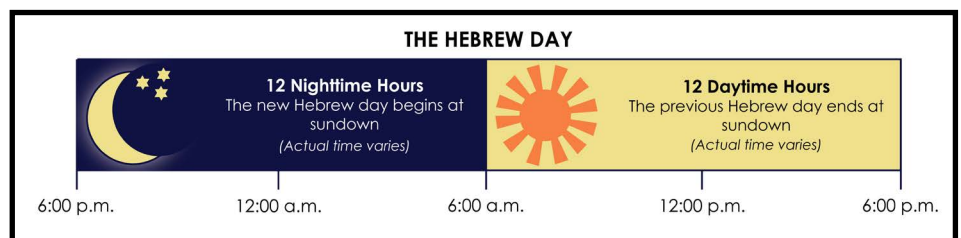
day; when the sun set, the day ended, and the people started a new day—with darkness.

The Biblical Month

The sun divided the day from night, establishing a biblical day. But the moon provided the division of the month—one new moon to the next equaled one lunar, biblical month. As the moon waned, ending one month, the children of Israel looked for the New Moon—and once sighted, a new month began. We see this in Isaiah 66:22-23, where the prophet hints that this is how God will calculate months in His kingdom to come:

"For as the new heavens and the new earth which I will make shall remain before Me," says the LORD, "So shall your descendants and your name remain. And it shall come to pass that from one New Moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, all flesh shall come to worship before Me," says the LORD.

Interestingly, Exodus 12:2 indicates God numbered the months based on when Israel was released from captivity in Egypt, the very first Passover: "This month shall be your beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you." It was the Hebrew month *Abib*—roughly our March/April. Nahum Sarna writes in the *JPS Torah Commentary* that God did so as a stark visual—Israel would be starting a new order



of life dominated by the consciousness of God's active presence in history: "The entire religious calendar of Israel is henceforth to reflect this reality by numbering the months of the year from the month of the Exodus."

It was at this same time God formally instituted the Sabbath, linking God's rest after the six days of creation (Exodus 20:8-11). God would arrange His calendar according to His great acts on behalf of the nation He set apart to bring glory to his name.

Like biblical days, God identified His months using ordinals: "the first month," "the second month," and so on. Later, the children of Israel gave them Hebrew names. However, while in Babylonian captivity, Jews borrowed month names from the Babylonian calendar. The first month, Abib, for example, became Nisan.

The Biblical Year

The first month of the year was determined by watching for the ripeness of the early grain, barley, according to the state of maturity called *abib* (hence the Hebrew name for the first month). At the close of the year, farmers would check the barley's stage of ripeness, and if too unripe, add a month to the calendar. God's calendar is thus solar-lunar. The lunar reckoning uniquely tied His calendar to the rain seasons in Israel, which makes sense knowing that God's feasts, outlined in Leviticus 23, centered on agriculture in Israel and the ripening of certain harvests.

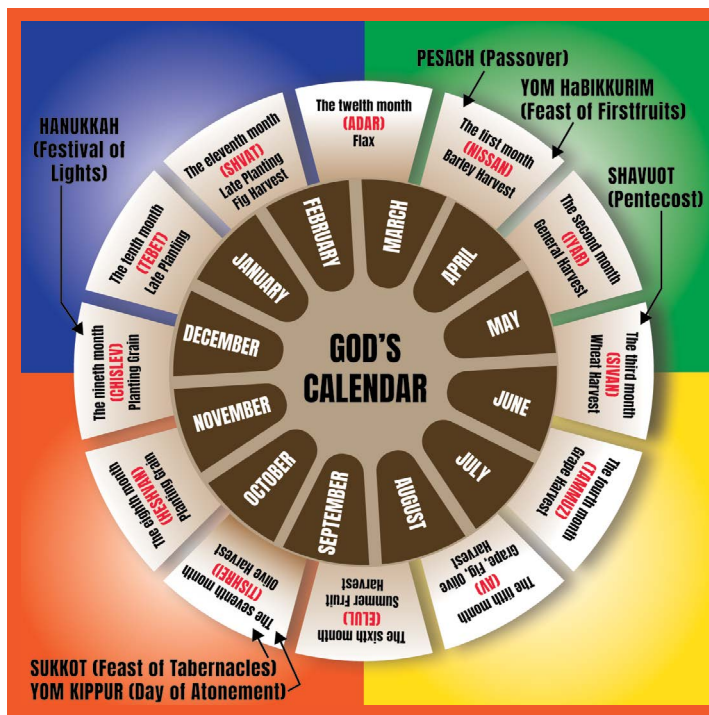
Starting the first month of the biblical year at the correct time was paramount and impacted when Israel would celebrate each feast. For example, Firstfruits required that the priests pick the first ripened fruits of the barley harvest in the later spring to present before the Lord. If God's people did not set the first month of the year according to His instruction—according to the ripening barley harvest—the first fruits of the barley harvest might not be ready to be picked at Firstfruits.

The Biblical Calendar and Bible Interpretation

Knowing God's calendar is certainly not a salvation issue. However, it's what I call a "Bible interpretation aid." Understanding God's method of timekeeping can help bring a deeper understanding of not only what day or month He told Israel to celebrate a certain feast or when an event happened, but it illuminates the majesty of His Word. When we understand days, months, and years according to God's calendaring system, we

start to see the exactness of days and times He caused—and still causes—things to happen. And that matters when it comes to Bible prophecy.

Let's return to that first Passover. Recall that the month the children of Israel came out of Egypt was the first month of the year, and on the tenth of the first month, they were to take an unblemished lamb into their home "until the fourteenth day of the same month," at which time they were to kill the lamb at twilight (Exodus 12:1-6). This might seem like trivial information—until we consider



Understanding God's calendar helps us know Babylon's siege against Jerusalem started in the winter on the tenth day of the tenth month of Tebet.

How We Shifted from God's Calendar

Julius Caesar reformed an existing Roman calendar in 46 BC, calling it the Julian calendar. After the Romans destroyed Jerusalem in AD 70 and the Jews were scattered from one end of the earth to the other, the Roman Empire took control of Judah, and the Julian calendar became the standard. It remained in use until it was reformed again in 1582 under Gregory XIII, further reflecting the solar cycle. This Gregorian calendar is the calendar now in use in most of the world. Over time, the church moved away from the biblical, solar-lunar calendar centered on God's yearly cycle of festivals to a strictly solar calendar centered around Roman, pagan holidays.

Ultimately, Satan does not want God's people to follow the biblical calendar because like so many other types and shadows in the Old Testament, it points to Israel's Messiah and affirms the accuracy of God's Word. Satan's goal has always been to lie and deceive. Even Daniel said: "He will think to change times (seasons) and laws" (Daniel 7:25).

Why It's Important to Understand God's Biblical Calendar Today

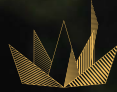
What are Christians to do? Should we move off the current Gregorian calendar and onto the biblical calendar? Practically, that would not make sense; much of the world follows this calendar, and we must be able to function accordingly. However, understanding God's calendar sheds light on not only Scripture and the timing of events in both the Old and New Testaments, but it helps us understand more deeply what God is doing in our day.

But perhaps the most important reason to understand God's calendar today is its connection to His feasts. Because all of God's Feasts point to our Messiah, knowing God's calendar will only magnify our understanding of those set-apart festivals, giving us a greater understanding of who He is and how perfect His Word. God's feasts are a shadow of His plan of redemption over all time, and knowing God's calendar provides incredible "clues" found in His feasts about not just Jesus' first coming but His second coming too. 🌍

that when Jesus entered Jerusalem on a donkey and was declared the King of Israel, it was the season of Passover. John 12:1 says that six days before Passover, which would have been Nisan 9, Jesus had been in Bethany with Martha and Mary. "The next day" (v. 12) the blameless Lamb of God chosen before the foundation of the world to take away our sins entered Jerusalem on the tenth of Nisan, the first month. Five days later before sundown on the fourteenth, the Lamb of God was slain. God revealed way back in Exodus the day and month Jesus would be crucified through the shadow of the first Passover.

There are many other examples of specific dates in Scripture, and understanding God's calendar helps make sense of those dates. Consider just one more, Ezekiel 24:1-2:

In the ninth year, in the tenth month, on the tenth day of the month, the word of the Lord came to me (Ezekiel) saying, "Son of man, write down the name of the day, this very day—the king of Babylon started his siege against Jerusalem this very day."



KING OF ALL THE EARTH

BY LAURINA DRIESSE,
WITH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM TRICIA NEIGHBORS AND LOIS HERRINGTON

In late September, mere days before the October 7 Hamas attack on Israel, ICEJ's annual Feast of Tabernacles celebration drew over 3,000 Christian pilgrims to Israel, while several thousand more joined us on our online streaming platform and at Feast watch parties worldwide. The Feast theme this year was "King of all the Earth" from Psalm 47:7. 🌍



DAY 1 🌍 OPENING NIGHT AT EIN GEV, SEA OF GALILEE

The Feast opened on September 29 at Ein Gev—on the beautiful Sea of Galilee—with a spirit of excitement and expectation in the air. The main speaker was evangelist Manasa Kolivuso from Fiji, who helped lead a large group of pilgrims from the Pacific Island nations on a historic charter flight—the first time Fiji Airways had landed in Israel. The Lord had inspired Pastor Manasa and ICEJ Fiji National Director Pastor Mikaele Mudreilagi to charter the flight, and several groups from other Oceania nations joined in to make it happen.

see suffering, sorrow, and brokenness; in Psalm 23 we see the Great Shepherd leading, guiding, guarding, and offering His peace and rest; in Psalm 24 we see Him as the King of Glory and experience His power and victory! Referencing Psalm 24:1, "The earth is the Lord's and all the fullness, the world and those who dwell therein," Pastor Manasa reminded Feast pilgrims that we are "owners of nothing but stewards of everything. The earth is God's by ownership and is ours by stewardship. God owns it all and deserves our praise and worship!" 🌍

Pastor Manasa brought an inspiring message from Psalms 22 through 24. In Psalm 22, we



DAY 2 🌍 EIN GEV CELEBRATION, SEA OF GALILEE

The second evening of our Feast celebration also took place at Ein Gev in the sweet presence of the Lord. Dr. Enoch Abeboye from Nigeria ministered from Mark 5:1–20, showing how powerful the King of kings is. Mark tells the story of a demon-possessed man from Gadaren, but in the end, this madman became an evangelist for the kingdom of God. Pastor Enoch encouraged the pilgrims by saying: "There is hope for you, and I want you

to rejoice because it means no matter how low you are, your tomorrow will be alright." He also reminded pilgrims that there are many kingdoms in the earth, each one having its own king, but there is only one person who is the King of kings! He shared how even in the animal kingdom, the lion is king, but the King of all kings also controls the lions and shuts their mouths, as in the story of Daniel in the lion's den. 🌍





DAY 3 🌟

ROLL CALL OF THE NATIONS IN JERUSALEM

From the Galilee Feast pilgrims ascended to Jerusalem for an amazing five days of celebrations! The opening night at the Jerusalem Pais Arena saw nearly 80 nations appear before the Lord in Zion. Delegates from each nation waved their country's flag on stage in the colorful "Roll Call of the Nations"—a highlight for many Feast-goers. This year's Roll Call included flag-bearers from Egypt, Turkey, Algeria, and Mongolia, as well as two pilgrims who appeared together from North and South Korea.

Often, flag-bearers dress in their national attire; this year was no exception! Several shared their joy and pride in representing their country at the Feast. "I'm carrying the



flag of my nation, and my desire is that God will move in the Philippines, and we will catch a new anointing in a new season," said

Rose Riviera. Swiss believer Sabine Bartsch-Santmann said, "I am representing Switzerland as an intercessor for our nation to the God of Israel. We bless Israel, console Israel, and love the people of Israel."



Feast participants also were welcomed in video greetings by Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and President Isaac Herzog, who said: "It gives me great pleasure to send greetings to the entire Christian world and to the thousands of pilgrims who, in these very moments, are celebrating the festival of Sukkot with us here in the holy city. You are gathered here, dear friends, for this sacred pilgrimage from all corners of the earth, welcomed by the International Christian Embassy of Jerusalem ... for 'my dwelling place shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations.'"

ICEJ President Dr. Juergen Buehler brought an anointed message on the King of Glory from Psalm 47. He reminded pilgrims that God is present wherever they gather, but there is something special about worshipping in Jerusalem. "The Feast of Tabernacles is also a feast of prayer," said Dr. Buehler. "God is calling you here in Jerusalem to a fresh and new lifestyle of prayer." 🌍



DAY 4 🌟

FEAST YOUTH DAY

The next day started with impactful morning seminars and thought-provoking messages on Israel and the New Testament, as well as the prophetic challenges of

Artificial Intelligence and Transgenderism.

The evening featured a joy-filled celebration with messianic youth from across Israel raising one voice to offer songs of praise and worship in the fresh Hebraic style now coming from the Land of Israel. Dr. Billy Wilson, president of Oral Roberts University, shared on the "Power of One" and the value of every person's life to God: "The Shepherd is looking for one. No matter how broken, how crushed, He will change their life, and through them, change the world," said Dr. Wilson. "What is the potential in your life that needs to be unlocked? ... Every single person on planet Earth is important to Christ." 🌍





DAY 5 ● ISRAELI GUEST NIGHT

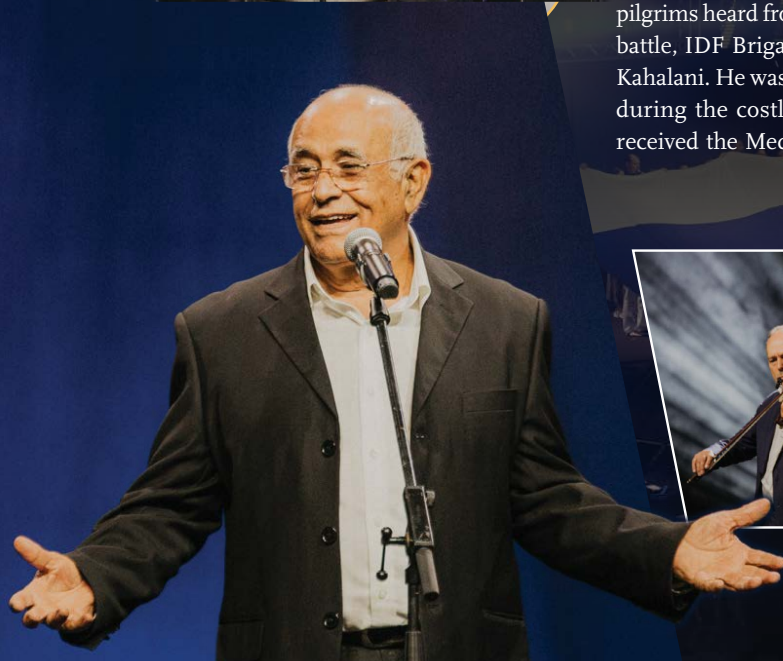


The morning seminars began with local Messianic pastor Benjamin Berger, who spoke on “The Throne of David in Jerusalem.” Other speakers included Rania Sayegh, an Israeli Arab Christian prayer leader from Nazareth; Julia Popova from Moscow, who spoke on the move of God in Russia; and Sergey Shidlovskiy, who shared on prayer as the key to revival.

The evening centered around our traditional Israeli Guest Night. With this year being the 50th anniversary of the 1973 Yom Kippur War, pilgrims heard from the legendary hero of that battle, IDF Brigadier General (Ret.) Avigdor Kahalani. He was an Israeli tank commander during the costly battle for the Golan and received the Medal of Valor, Israel's highest

military distinction. Kahalani reminded everyone that Jews have had little choice but to fight for their survival from generation to generation.

Another moving highlight was hearing Eva Erben's story. Eva was a Holocaust Survivor deported to several concentration camps during the Second World War. She later endured the death march from Auschwitz and became the sole survivor of her family. She shared her incredible story of survival, hope, and forgiveness. When asked her secret to keeping so young at heart, her immediate response was, “Love! Love is a very splendid thing, and you should fall in love with somebody because nobody is perfect, and you will never get a person who is exactly your taste!”



DAY 6 ● GARDEN TOMB AND JERUSALEM MARCH

The sixth day of the Feast began with a special communion service in the peaceful setting of the Garden Tomb, just outside Jerusalem's Old City walls. There is always something special about this gathering around the Lord's table with believers from all over the world. Presiding over the communion elements were local Jewish pastor Sasson Pochtar and Israeli Arab Pastor Saleem Shalash. Rev. Malcolm Hedding delivered the main message and reminded all: “If we want to experience His mercy, grace, and reconciling love, we have to come to the cross.”

“It's special to be in Jerusalem and know our Lord and Savior is no longer in the grave. Our Savior lives and gives us hope!” responded Tiara from the Cook Islands. In the afternoon, our Feast delegates made their way to the assembly point for the popular Jerusalem March through the streets of the capital. There was an incredible atmosphere of joy as Christians from some 90 nations expressed their love and support for the people of Israel and were warmly received by a massive crowd of Israeli parade watchers.





DAY 7 ● NEGEV SOLIDARITY GATHERING AND HEALING SERVICE

Then on day 7, over 600 Feast pilgrims traveled from Jerusalem down to the Gaza border area for a special solidarity gathering with Israeli communities in the Western Negev region. Among the speakers at this event were the late mayor Ofir Libstein and IDF (Res.) Brig. Gen. Amir Avivi. “How important it is to keep Israel safe and fight for its security for generations to come, because there will always be enemies who want to destroy this jewel called the Land of Israel,” said Gen. Avivi. Little did we know then that just two days later, thousands of Hamas terrorists from Gaza would invade this same area, commit mass murder against innocent Israeli civilians, and take upwards of 240 hostages captive to Gaza.

Next, a special ICEJ leadership delegation attended a tree-planting and dedication ceremony for our new “Christian Embassy Nature Park” located near the ANZAC Monument in the Be’eri Forest, just meters away from the Gaza security fence Hamas terrorists breached on October 7.

After returning to Jerusalem, our Feast pilgrims attended a special healing service led by ICEJ Philippines National Director Pastor Stephen Mirpuri, who shared several personal testimonies about the many dramatic healings he has seen and experienced throughout his life, including the miracle birth of his first child. After the message, there was a powerful time of prayer for healing. 🌍



DAY 8 ● PRAYER VIGIL

During the Feast, virtual pilgrims had the opportunity to unite with other believers in the online Prayer Sukkah to offer prayers for Israel, their respective countries, their families, and their communities.

Pilgrims who were physically present enjoyed a special dedicated Day of Prayer on the eighth day in the Jerusalem Pavilion. John from Poland said this day was a highlight—especially to hear the prayers from so



many countries. “It has been worthwhile to hear the nations praying for their own nation. It’s been touching, especially listening to the prayers for North Korea, for instance, where believers are having such a difficult time, and praying for a reunion with South Korea. We were thinking of only coming for our own nation, but it’s been worth it to listen to the other nations.”

The Feast of Tabernacles 2023 ended that evening with an amazing worship concert led by local singer/songwriter Shiloh Ben-Hod and his band SOLU-Israel. 🌍



HEARING FROM THE PILGRIMS!

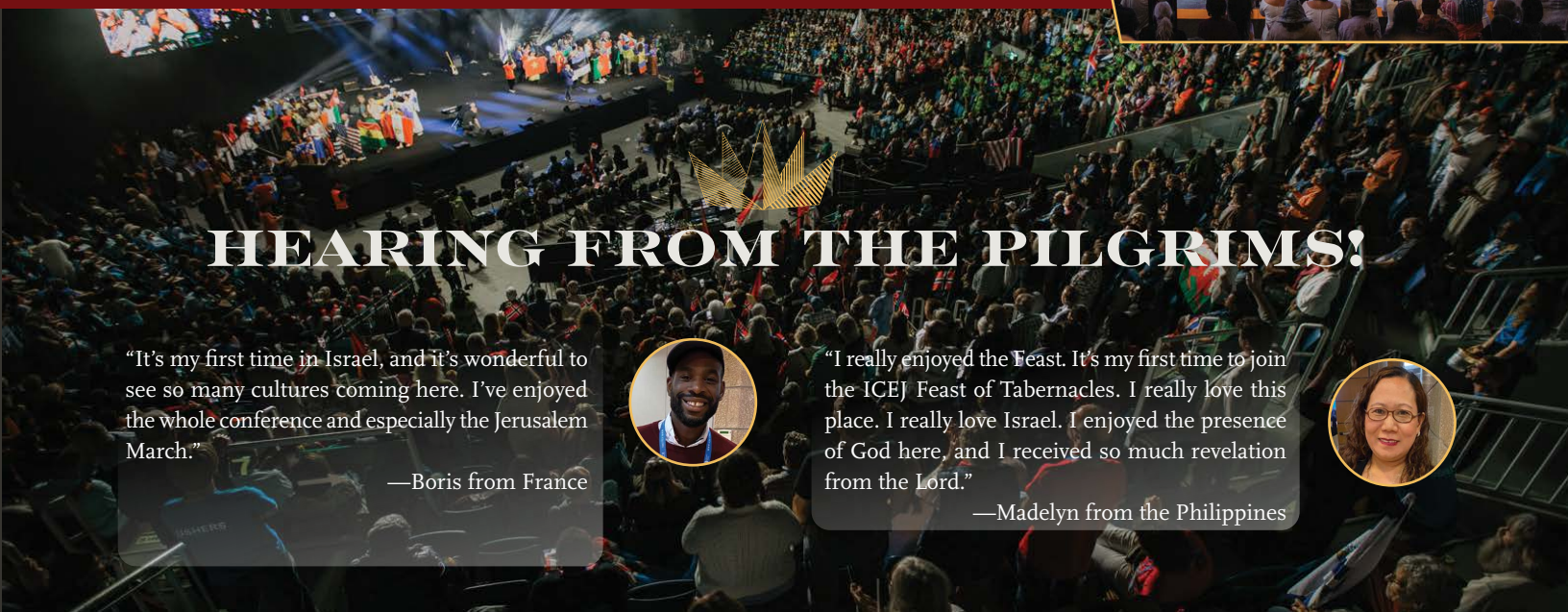
“It’s my first time in Israel, and it’s wonderful to see so many cultures coming here. I’ve enjoyed the whole conference and especially the Jerusalem March.”

—Boris from France



“I really enjoyed the Feast. It’s my first time to join the ICEJ Feast of Tabernacles. I really love this place. I really love Israel. I enjoyed the presence of God here, and I received so much revelation from the Lord.”

—Madelyn from the Philippines





WHERE THE CHURCH WENT WRONG ABOUT ISRAEL—AND HOW IT CAME RIGHT

BY PROF. GERALD MCDERMOTT

[Excerpts from McDermott's seminar presentation at Feast of Tabernacles, 2023]

My subject is not only where the church went wrong about Israel and why but also how the church in the last 400 years since the sixteenth century has been regaining a proper approach to Israel.

This reconsideration by Christians of Israel and God's eternal covenant with the Jewish people started to take place after the Holocaust. Tragically, Germany—the most Christianized country in history, the birthplace of the Reformation—destroyed 6 million Jews, one-third of all Jewry. After the Holocaust, Christian Bible scholars and theologians from the 1950s to 1970s tried to rethink: How could this have happened? Where did we go wrong? Obviously, we went tragically wrong.

One famous Bible scholar was W. D. Davies, a Welshman, who concluded as he reread Romans 9–11 after the Holocaust that Paul never calls the church the “New Israel”—not once! He never calls the Jews the “Old Israel.” Unfortunately, for more than 1,700 years, Christian leaders, theologians, and pastors called the church the “New Israel” that replaced Jewish Israel. But Paul never did that, not even in Galatians 6:16.

The great British New Testament scholar Charles Cranfield wrote a massive two-volume commentary on Romans. He says Romans 9–11 forbids the church to call itself the “New Israel.” And by God's election, the Jewish people are beloved of the fathers—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Their gifts and calling from God are never to be revoked.

For almost 2,000 years, Christians who accepted Replacement Theology have used Matthew 21, the parable of the wicked tenants, as a proof-text for Replacement Theology, also called “Supersessionism.” This is where

the wicked tenants, according to Jesus, are replaced by other tenants who will produce fruit. Christian scholars and theologians interpreted the other tenants as gentiles. But in this reconsideration, since the Holocaust, many have realized that the killed servants were faithful Jewish prophets. And the new tenants are faithful Jews—the apostles and their spiritual descendants, not to count out faithful descendants of the Pharisees, Rabbinic Jews today, or Orthodox Jews throughout the centuries who kept their faith with the Jewish covenant because God had given it to them.



Gerald McDermott delivers an insightful teaching at Feast 2023.

For centuries in the Christian church, starting in the fourth century under Constantine, if you were a Jew and you believed that Jesus was the Messiah, but you wanted to continue to practice a Jewish lifestyle as a Jew, you were either excommunicated, persecuted, or killed by the church for living as a Jew. How did this happen? How did everything go so wrong?

The simple answer is that at the start of the second century, gentiles took over leadership

of the church. These non-Jewish leaders did not know the Jewish roots of the Christian faith, starting with Justin Martyr and other Church Fathers, like Irenaeus and Tertullian ... And it became the mainstream story for the church, up until the Reformation, that God had ended His covenant with the Jewish people and had forsaken the Land.

But then, in the sixteenth century, the Puritans in England and the Pietists on the continent started questioning these things. The Puritans were Calvinists, yet they disagreed with Calvin, a Supersessionist, a replacement theologian. He reinterpreted all the promises of God to the Jewish people in the Hebrew Bible and applied them to the gentile church. But beginning with the Reformation, the biblical hermeneutical principle arose that the plain sense of Scripture is to be taken first. There are other spiritual senses, but you always look at the plain or literal sense first.

When taking the plain sense of the Hebrew Bible, too many prophecies about the future of Israel clearly cannot—and should not—be applied to the gentile church. They clearly are about the future of Israel and the Jewish people. The Geneva Bible of 1560, produced by the Calvinists, talks about the spiritual return of the Jewish people and implies a literal return to the Land of the Jewish people.

Then, in the seventeenth century, Puritans in England affirmed the Jews would return to the Land someday, that the Jewish people were still God's chosen people—and Christians were debtors to them.

The tide is continuing to shift—seen in the thousands of Christian pilgrims at this year's 2023 Feast. 🌍



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Israel impact

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Join us for this once-in-a-lifetime tour as we pray, worship, learn, laugh, and walk where Jesus walked in the promised land. We'll explore the area of the Sea of Galilee, pray for Israel and the neighboring countries, show God's love for the people through a practical outreach project, ride a camel in the Negev Desert, float in the Dead Sea, explore the ancient city of Jerusalem, visit amazing archeological sites—and much more! Most importantly, we'll experience firsthand what God is doing in Israel today.

While on tour, we'll discuss some of the cultural divides in the Holy Land and how the younger generation is reaching across borders. The kingdom Jesus spoke about has the power to heal the divides of a world polarized by numerous conflicts. We will explore inspirational stories and related Scripture and learn conflict resolution tips as we discuss having personal and meaningful experiences with people from different backgrounds.

This tour is for young adults ages 18-32, so if you know a young adult interested in touring Israel in the future, feel free to forward this tour information to them. We fully anticipate that Israeli life and tourism will return to normal in 2024, even if the war lasts a few more months. Sign up today!



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AMERICAN CHRISTIAN LEADERS FOR ISRAEL PRAYER WEEKEND RECAP

Thankful for the Release of Hostages— but What Now?

SHANNON BENNETT, LEADERSHIP OUTREACH COORDINATOR &
JOHN VEDDER, CHURCH RELATIONS COORDINATOR

Throughout the weekend of November 17–19, thousands of churches prayed in agreement with synagogues worldwide for the nation of Israel and the release of the hostages held by Hamas. The astounding result: 105 hostages were released during a weeklong pause in fighting that began the following Friday. The release is truly bittersweet as there are still over 100 hostages still being held in Gaza. As we've learned more about what the hostages endured, the thought of so many still being in captivity is agonizing.

Though the situation remains challenging, we thank God for moving so powerfully in response to our prayers. Throughout this crisis, relationships between Christian and Jewish communities are deepening as we stand together. For example, in Auburn, Alabama, Pastor Miles Fidell of Auburn Community Church (ACC) hosted Bruce Pearl, head coach of the Auburn Tigers basketball team. Coach Pearl's grandparents fled from Ukraine and Russia to Israel to escape the Holocaust. Pearl shared, "I didn't go to Hebrew school learning that ... He (Jesus) lived his entire life as a Jew, and that makes us family. That brings us together ... Pray for those hostages for sure, but this is personal, ACC ... Jesus' family has been attacked in Israel ... This book (the Bible) was written by Jewish men inspired by God. I stand with Israel. ACC, I ask that you also stand with me."

At Berea Baptist Church in Rockville, VA, Daniel Lifshitz, from Kibbutz Nir Oz where one out of every four residents was kidnapped or murdered, spoke. Daniel is also the grandson of hostages Oded and Yochabed Lifshitz. His grandparents tried to build bridges with Gazans, routinely accompanying those suffering from cancer to Israeli hospitals for treatment. Oded is still in captivity. Daniel described their capture, sharing that his grandfather was shot in the hand before he could close the door to their safe room and how his grandmother was rolled inside a carpet and taken to Gaza while being beaten along the way. He implored the church to "take one of them—take a grandmother, take a baby, take a daughter, take a face—and think about it every morning and every evening." The church then prayed with him and his family.

The situation in Israel remains complex. The impact of the temporary cease-fire is being debated by military experts and others. We are thankful for the release of these hostages, but how much momentum has been lost toward ridding Gaza of Hamas' vicious rule? The need for continued, persistent prayer is clear.

Thanks again to all those who participated in the Weekend of Prayer for Zion's Sake. Your support of this initiative enabled us to reach so many more than any of us could do alone. 🌍



WATCH THE REPLAY of this webinar on Israel's multifront war with Brig. General (Res.) Amir Avivi, who shares his thoughts and the specter of a multifront war should Hezbollah attack in a candid conversation with ICEJ's David Parsons:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=kbKS62lboQw&t=179s

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MULTI-
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THURSDAY
23 NOVEMBER | 3:00 PM (ISRAEL TIME)

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IDF BRIG GENERAL (RES)
FOUNDER OF IDSF

HOST
David Parsons
ICEJ VICE PRESIDENT
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Jerusalem March 2023

ICEJ USA FEAST TOUR

JOHN VEDDER, CHURCH RELATIONS COORDINATOR

In a world that is changing faster than it seems we can keep up, it is a blessing to have something concrete we can count on. That is one of the beautiful things about the Feast of Tabernacles and the yearly calendar the Lord has set out. There is comfort in knowing that no matter what the world economy does or how the stock market looks today, the Lord is already preparing for next year's Feast of Tabernacles—and 2023 was no different. The Lord went before us and walked with us as we took a group from ICEJ USA to join in the Feast in Jerusalem.

We started our journey arriving at Ben Gurion airport and made our way to the Dead Sea hotel by way of a pit stop for lunch on Mount Scopus overlooking the old city of Jerusalem. After touring Masada, Ein Gedi, and Qumran, we turned north and stayed a few nights overlooking the Sea of Galilee. We gathered for times of devotion, prayer, and worship at locations like Magdala, Capernaum, and while riding a wooden boat on the Sea of Galilee. In the evenings we gathered with a couple thousand friends in an outside theatre to proclaim Jesus is the King over all the earth! We worshiped with what seemed like every tribe and tongue. We cried. We laughed. We hugged strangers who became family in one instant. And we met with the Lord.

From the Galilee we set our faces to Jerusalem, where we spent the next five days walking the old streets and touching the stones that Jesus himself would have likely touched. We sat next to walls hundreds of years old that were crying out the faithfulness of God. In the mornings we enjoyed world-class speakers who taught on subjects like interacting with AI from a Christian perspective, the biblical significance of the Feast, God's purpose

for Israel in the coming days and much more. In the afternoons we fellowshiped together over lunches and, one afternoon, participated in the Jerusalem March to show our love and support for the people of Israel. Thousands of children flocked the streets wanting our little American flags and hoping for a smile and a wave. In the evenings we gathered at the Pais Arena with what was now our closest friends from around the world.

As our time in Jerusalem ended, we lamented that we would have to leave this wonderful city and return home, but we knew that we were returning home changed. After having met with the living God, the Alpha and Omega, we could return filled to overflowing with the Spirit of God.

What we did not know was that as our flight was midair returning home, Satan would unleash one of the worst attacks on the Jewish people in many generations. As we landed at JFK airport at 4:00 a.m., we turned our phones on to hear the news from our friends back in Israel. It was no accident that Hamas terrorists attacked on October 7—they intended to cripple Israel and believed they could be victorious. They were mistaken. They forgot the God of Israel is the same yesterday, today, and forever more. He is never shaken and never sleeps.

The Feast teaches us many things. One thing I took away from this year's event is the faithfulness of God throughout the generations. In a world that fights in opposition to God and His Word, we can hold fast, knowing that He has already won the battle. God will be in Jerusalem next year, waiting for us to return to meet Him at the Feast of Tabernacles—and we look forward to that day in great anticipation. 🌍



ICEJ HELPING DISPLACED ISRAELI CHILDREN RETURN TO SCHOOL

BY DAVID PARSONS

ICEJ VICE PRESIDENT & SENIOR SPOKESMAN

Among the many war relief efforts the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem is undertaking to help Israel through the current conflict is an aid project to provide 11 classrooms for children of evacuated families from the Eshkol Regional Council so students from kindergarten through sixth grade can resume school together again.

Over 17,000 residents of the Eshkol region were evacuated from their homes after the horrific Hamas terror attack of October 7 and moved to temporary housing in hotels and guest houses in Eilat, the Arava, the Dead Sea area, and Jerusalem. Once they realized it could be months before they can safely return to their homes, community leaders started looking for ways to provide classrooms for their children.

Tayir Azulay, director of a nonprofit group connected with the Eshkol Regional Council to meet the needs of their residents, decided to reach out to the Christian Embassy and request help to equip 10 such classrooms. Her letter explained how the Eshkol region had suffered greatly from the mass invasion on October 7, as the Hamas terrorists not only targeted their communities, such as Be'eri, Sufa, and Nir Oz, but they also attacked several army bases in their regional council, as well as the outdoor music festival near Reim, where some 350 young people were massacred that dark day.

The ICEJ quickly agreed to help fund the project and later added a commitment for one more classroom for children from Kibbutz Be'eri, one of the hardest-hit Israeli communities. Thus, the Christian Embassy is providing 11 classrooms for displaced Eshkol region families lodging in hotels, and these classrooms will move with them once they move from their present temporary residence to intermediary housing.

The ICEJ's donation includes classroom

equipment and roomy tents to serve grade school classes. The classrooms will each hold up to 20 to 25 children, so this initiative will end up serving several hundred children over the coming school year.

Another part of the project is the ICEJ sponsorship of a special children's book now being prepared for printing at the reopened Be'eri print house. The book aims to help children work through the trauma they experienced, and each of the 4,000 copies will have a dedication page and blessing from the ICEJ in the front.

Recently, ICEJ Vice President for AID and Aliyah Nicole Yoder went to Eilat to meet Tayir and visit three kindergartens we are sponsoring, which are already open for youngsters from families displaced from the Eshkol region. As Nicole arrived, some tables and other classroom equipment were just being delivered, giving the children reason for excitement.

Tayir explained to Nicole the thinking that had gone into how these communities were trying to help their children recover from the tragedy of October 7.

"We want to keep the same framework as before," Tayir said. "It is very important for us, especially right now, to guard the sense of community—that the children and families still feel they are with the broader community of Eshkol. We have concerns among the leadership that the moment a kibbutz or community moves physically further away, their emotional connection to Eshkol may also weaken. We want to keep those ties strong and will do everything possible to protect them."

"So to create stability, we are giving the children the same classmates, the same teachers, the same school buses from Eshkol. We want them to have the feeling that it is the same as what they are accustomed to,"

Tayir continued. "We want to create the most secure and familiar surroundings so that they can enjoy physical and emotional rehabilitation, to give them a little of their normal life back. A daily routine is one of the important elements of resilience."

In addition, Tayir described how giving the children daily routines and school activities also frees up the parents to start working or planning for their family's future, since the hotel rooms they are staying in can be cramped for large families and difficult for parents who can "work from home" to do so.

Tayir also shared a little about her own family. She has four children, including six-year-old twins (boy and girl) and two teenage daughters. They moved to Moshav Yevul in the Eshkol region just over a year ago and were used to rocket barrages. But what happened on October 7 was hard to grasp at first.

The family hid in their safe room all day Saturday and finally left at 1:30 p.m. on Sunday afternoon with other neighboring families in a convoy of vehicles driving eastward through fields. They saw the effects of fighting around them and soldiers and tanks coming forward to battle the terrorists before they finally reached safety.

Today, Tayir and the other residents of the Eshkol region remain scattered around Israel. They are trying to hold their communities together as best they can until they can safely return home.

Until then, they have prioritized getting their children back in school in as familiar and uplifting an environment as they can create to aid their recovery and return to normalcy. Your donations to the ICEJ are helping to do just that.

Please continue to support our Israel in Crisis fund as we help Israel overcome the tragedy of the current war thrust upon them. 🇮🇱

Donate today at: www.icejusa.org/crisis



(Left to right) ICEJ AID and Aliyah Director Nicole Yoder, Head of Marketing/Chinese Coordinator Haifa Lu, Art & Design Officer Ryan Tsuen, and Assistant to VP for AID & Aliyah Jannie Tolhoek



ICEJ SHOWS SOLIDARITY WITH ISRAEL BY HELPING TO HARVEST FRUIT

BY RYAN TSUEN, ICEJ ART AND DESIGN OFFICER

It has been more than 50 days since scores of Hamas terrorists breached the Gaza border fence and ignited a war with Israel. This conflict has impacted every sector of Israeli society, including farmers in the South who have struggled to harvest their crops due to the constant rocket fire.

Prior to that devastating Shabbat of October 7, many farming communities in the western Negev employed field workers from Gaza and foreign countries to help harvest their crops, which were ripening for market. But once the war began, many of these fields and orchards were left unattended, with fruit and crops rotting. In addition, dozens of foreign laborers were tragically killed or kidnapped, while others fled back to their home countries. The lack of workers to tend to the farms and harvest the fruit in the groves meant much of the produce would have gone to waste.

ICEJ AID assistant Jannie Tolhoek heard that Kibbutz Yad Mordechai, located just four kilometers from Gaza, has needed help salvaging fruit from orchards that have been ready for harvest since October. The ICEJ immediately saw this as a great opportunity to show solidarity with the Israeli farmers and ventured to the southern Gaza border to lend a hand.

Our volunteer team first picked pomelito, a sweet citrus fruit. Since this is a late harvest, the fruit will be used for juicing. Volunteers needed ladders to reach the high-hanging fruit in tall trees, while other volunteers on the ground caught the falling fruit.

“It’s actually raining pomelito today,” joked Nicole Yoder, ICEJ Vice President for AID and Aliyah, who headed our staff contingent that

day. “One of the best things about our involvement in this harvesting project was meeting and working alongside Israelis who volunteered their time to help in the fields.”

Yigal, a university professor from Kiryat Ono, took a moment to chat with our Facebook Live audience, saying that he had become a “farmer” for the day and felt it was important to be there to show support. “I am here because our hands are needed, and morally, we need to show support to the people of Yad Mordechai—and all the farming villages and towns living near Gaza,” shared Yigal.

Our team then moved on to an orchard of clementines. Each tree was overflowing with the ripe little mandarins. We were instructed to pluck the fruit and toss them into the middle of the aisle—the clementines, we learned, would be crushed to serve as fertilizer for next year’s harvest. Leaving them on the branches invites flies and disease and signals the tree to produce less the following season.

The Israelis we interacted with were delighted to hear that Christians worldwide were showing their support. They truly appreciated hearing that the ICEJ staff in Jerusalem from many different nations are standing firm by Israel’s side during these challenging times.

Throughout the day, we knew the risks of being close to the Gaza border and could hear shelling from tanks nearby. However, we were assured that it was not enemy fire and that we were safe.

In times like these, it is crucial to show our unwavering support for Israel. The ICEJ is continuing to respond to the urgent needs of Israeli communities along the Gaza border. Please join us in meeting these needs by donating to our Israel in Crisis fund. 🌍

Donate today at: www.icejusa.org/crisis



ICEJ Assistant to VP for AID & Aliyah Jannie Tolhoek (left) and ICEJ VP for AID and Aliyah Nicole Yoder help pack food at a distribution center in Israel.



ICEJ staff Fine Ditoka and Nativia Samuelsen help pack basic necessities.

ICEJ HELPING FEED THOUSANDS OF UPROOTED ISRAELI FAMILIES

BY NATIVIA SAMUELSEN, ICEJ AID ADMINISTRATOR

Israel's war with Hamas started suddenly on October 7, one day after our Feast of Tabernacles ended, requiring the ICEJ staff in Jerusalem to quickly pivot into crisis mode to act as a lifeline for scores of families severely impacted by the conflict. With over 250,000 Israelis now displaced by the fighting along the Gaza and Lebanon borders, there has been a drastic rise in the demand for basic needs.

In response, the Christian Embassy has been on the front lines on your behalf. Sometimes this involves donating larger items like ambulances and bomb shelters, while other times, it means volunteering to pack food for families in need or picking fruit late for harvest.

For instance, ICEJ staff have been volunteering alongside Israelis several days each week at a major food distribution center. So far, we have packed nearly 15,000 food boxes that were delivered to families in the Gaza border area, families evacuated from the North and South, and those serving the country. We also have assembled and handed out almost 5,000 hygiene kits to evacuated families and soldiers.

The packing floor is always abuzz with activity and conversations, which readily occur between our Christian staff from many countries and Israeli volunteers from local businesses. These friendly chats on the assembly line make it easier to pack the oil, coffee, tea, lentils, rice, flour, sugar, tuna, chicken soup powder, pasta, pickles, olives, and corn into boxes and wrap them for delivery. Consider what the volunteers are saying:

Barak, Israeli volunteer: "It's so important to volunteer to support the families in desperate need of food and supplies so that they can focus on rehabilitation and healing from trauma. My family and friends are in the war, and to be here with Christians and Jews

united to support those who have been affected blows me away. I am so grateful to be part of this work. Thank you."

Anna, ICEJ staff: "It is a privilege to be involved in reaching out to the Jewish communities affected by the war. Although it seems small to be packing boxes, the impact is immeasurable for these families."

From my experience conversing with the Jewish volunteers, I sense a deep heart cry. They all tell me about their sons, daughters, spouses, and friends fighting in this war. They tell me how they struggle to sleep and have no words to describe how they feel. I have also seen a level of resilience and unity in this nation and how, through projects like these, the ICEJ is undoubtedly a light in dark times.

In addition to contributing "muscle" to pack the boxes, the ICEJ also immediately responded to an urgent need by leasing a semi-trailer truck to transport the thousands of food packages to evacuated families in southern cities, such as Ashkelon, Ashdod, and Beersheva. As a result, essential aid has made its way to over 33,000 struggling uprooted families.

We are encouraged to see the people of Israel from all parts of society join as one in the war effort. We see retired couples donating clothes and toiletries. Sometimes, we see youngsters working alongside CEOs to pack food or sort donated items. This national emergency has created a renewed sense of unity that inspires hope and perseverance.

By supporting our Israel in Crisis fund, you can impact this battered nation, be a voice against growing antisemitism, and encourage many Israelis in this difficult hour. Join the ICEJ in standing with Israel by continuing to give to our urgent war relief efforts. 🌍

Donate today at: www.icejusa.org/crisis

ICEJ-DONATED RADIOS SAVED THOUSANDS OF ISRAELI LIVES ON OCTOBER 7

The Untold Story of How Hof Ashkelon Region Fended off Hamas

BY DAVID PARSONS, ICEJ VICE PRESIDENT & SENIOR SPOKESMAN

When waves of Hamas terrorists breached the border fence and slaughtered over 1,200 Israelis on October 7, four Israeli communities just north of Gaza managed to fend off the attackers and avoid the carnage that occurred in nearby farming villages. According to Amnon Ziv, security chief for the Hof Ashkelon region, special communication equipment that the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem donated last year helped save the lives of over 3,000 residents under his watch during the widespread massacre that day.

Hof Ashkelon Region

Amnon lives in Netiv HaAsara, the Israeli village closest to the Erez Crossing, which was penetrated by hundreds of armed Hamas militiamen on the morning of Simchat Torah. He quickly assessed the gravity of this threat and used the radio devices provided by ICEJ to send a simultaneous alert to all the standby squads in his *kibbutz*, as well as those in Yad Mordechai, Zikim, and Karmia. This allowed



ICEJ Vice President for AID & Aliyah Nicole Yoder with Shmuel Bowman and Amnon Ziv

all four communities to rapidly organize and fight off the terrorists at their gates and fences along the perimeters of each kibbutz. Their swift and courageous actions prevented Hamas gunmen from entering the *kibbutzim* and massacring their residents. As a result, these communities did not suffer the same tragic fate as Kfar Aza, Kibbutz Be'eri, and many Israeli villages in the Gaza border area.

On the day of the massacre, Amnon instantly realized Israel was being invaded from Gaza, so he grabbed his weapons to protect the kibbutz, and, at the same time, sent an alert on the special walkie-talkies to the other security coordinators in the Hof Ashkelon region. Thanks to his warning message, the standby units also had just enough time to organize

themselves to fight back, saving many lives.

“When I heard the paragliders, I realized that they were terrorists,” recalled Amnon. “I took out my weapon and shouted on the radio: ‘Security chiefs, terrorists at Netiv HaAsara! Go to the defense! Go to the attack!’ The emergency teams had eight minutes to organize, and thanks to this, no one was killed in Zikim, Yad Mordechai, and Karmia. Three thousand people were saved.”

Indeed, the members of Yad Mordechai’s emergency squad prevented the terrorists from entering the kibbutz, and in Zikim and Karmia, battles were also fought along the outside fences. The alert squad in Zikim even came across a military Savannah vehicle stolen by the terrorists and eliminated them.

“I assess that they intended to reach Ashkelon and murder hundreds of people,” Amnon added.

Amnon said that the regional council had been asking the Israeli army for these special radio devices for the last five years, but never received a response. Only after he met with ICEJ Vice President for AID & Aliyah Nicole Yoder and told her about the need for these walkie-talkies did he receive the equipment.

“Due to government budget constraints, we decided to donate these special radio devices to most of the regional council emergency first response teams along the Gaza border over the past four years, and I remember seeing the excitement in their eyes when they received them,” said Nicole. “After all, these teams carry a great responsibility for their communities in times of crisis. Little did we know then just how critical these devices would turn out to be in the days to come.”

The devices feature medium-wave radio technology that can use existing signal towers to simultaneously send secured messages and alerts to everyone in real time. This is more effective than group chats on cell phones, which have proven too slow and cumbersome to rely upon in times of crisis.

The Christian Embassy has now supplied these same communication devices to most regional councils in the Gaza envelope. We

recently learned from officials in the Eshkol region that the radio devices helped alert residents of Kibbutz Re'im, saving that kibbutz from being overrun too.

Along with the walkie-talkies, the ICEJ has also donated nearly 150 portable bomb shelters and dozens of firefighting trailers and ATVs to the regional councils along the Gaza border, from Hof Ashkelon down to Keren Shalom on the Sinai border.



ICEJ-donated radio devices


“We have used this equipment many times before to put out fires,” Amnon said. “When we called the fire department, they never came. But I knew we would need these walkie-talk-

ies for this one day.”

Amnon recently sent a letter to ICEJ President Dr. Juergen Buehler, thanking the organization for the communication equipment and explaining how the devices saved over 3,000 lives in his regional council on that infamous day of the Simchat Torah massacres. His letter stated:

There are no words in the human language to express my gratitude, the gratitude of the residents of the regional council, and the gratitude of the citizens of the State of Israel to you. There are no words that can express the greatness of your actions and the saving of their lives, which was only possible thanks to them.

“I was moved to hear about the rescue of the residents thanks to our donation,” responded Dr. Buehler. “The mass terror attacks on October 7 touched the raw nerve of the Holocaust, and as Christians, we feel a strong moral duty to stand with Israel in these most difficult times. Millions of Christians all over the world support you and know that your war is also our fight, a war of light versus darkness.”

The ICEJ is continuing to respond to the urgent needs of Israeli communities along the Gaza border and throughout the nation. Please join us in these worthy efforts by donating to our Israel in Crisis fund. 

Donate today at:
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YOUR ISRAEL ANSWER

The Big Lie: Who Is Really Committing Genocide?

By Dr. Susan Michael, ICEJ USA Director

The “big lie” is an expression Adolf Hitler coined to describe his technique of telling a lie so colossal that no one would ever suspect it was false. He first described this concept in his autobiographical manifesto *Mein Kampf*, which outlined his plans for ruling Germany. He surmised most people would never think of fabricating massive untruths so they would not believe others had. In other words, Hitler understood that people would see the world through the lens of basic honesty and would assume that same trait in others.

Use of Propaganda

Hitler used propaganda to convey the big lie and garner the support of the masses. Successful propaganda spoke to people’s emotions more than their intellect, was limited to a few points, and harped on slogans. He said repeating simple slogans was necessary for the masses to retain them.

Hitler’s words ring with a chilling truth. Despite his plan’s evil intent, he knew how to get it past the people. When he became the head of state in Germany, Hitler implemented his strategy precisely. He fabricated the “big lie” of the evil Jew causing Germany’s troubles, and he used propaganda to instill it in people’s minds, preparing the way for the extermination of the Jewish people.

Timeless Strategy

Hitler’s strategy is still working today. *Mein Kampf* was translated into Arabic back in the 1930s and has been one of the all-time best sellers throughout the Muslim world since. *Mein Kampf* means “my struggle” within the Nazi context, while *jihād*, a major tenant of Islam, also means “struggle.”

Not coincidentally, Muslim leaders, such as Iran’s supreme leader, have adopted Hitler’s strategy. They are also propagating the “big lie” of the evil Jews (particularly Israelis), using emotionally charged slogans and antisemitic cartoons to gain people’s support and prepare the way for the final destruction of Israel. This strategy is not limited to Iran but is at epic proportions throughout the rest of the Muslim world, where conspiracy theories run rampant, and people believe all types of lies about Israel and the Jewish people.

Genocide—a Modern-Day “Big Lie”

One “big lie” circulating today related to Israel’s current war with Hamas is that Israel is committing genocide. Let’s first define genocide to determine who is committing genocide against whom.

The legal definition of genocide was codified in the 1948 Convention of the Prevention of the Crime of Genocide, the first international treaty of the post-WWII United Nations, created in the shadow of the Holocaust. It prohibits acts committed with an “intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial, or religious group” by killing or causing serious bodily or mental harm, “deliberately inflicting on the group conditions calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part.”

The term “genocide” is being used today for its emotional and political power, evoking an ultimate unsurpassable crime—and those propagating it know full well how it resonates with the Jewish people. They are deliberately using it to equate what happened to the Jews in the Holocaust with Israel’s military actions of self-defense after the October 7 atrocities. It pokes at a deep wound all Jews have, delegitimizes Israel’s military campaign, and ultimately denies Israel’s right to exist.

Yet Hamas’ founding covenant documents a long-term plan and intent for the destruction of the Jewish people in a way comparable to Hitler’s *Mein Kampf*.

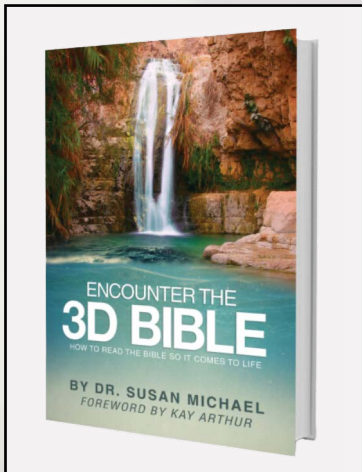
Who Is Really Attempting Genocide?

Israel is defending its right to exist and following international humanitarian war law while doing so. Israel is not attempting to destroy the Palestinian people. Hamas, however, wants to wipe Israel off the map and has made it clear it won’t stop until that happens, saying October 7—when terrorists killed and mutilated more than 1,400 innocent people—will happen again and again. Hamas, not Israel, violated the 1948 Genocide Convention on October 7 and has continually been clear on its intent: to destroy Israel. Hamas’ end goal is genocidal.

Christians must not remain silent but arm themselves with the facts and speak up against this evil campaign. We must also call for a robust effort at the government level to bring international compliance with standards of education and press that are free from antisemitism. 🌐

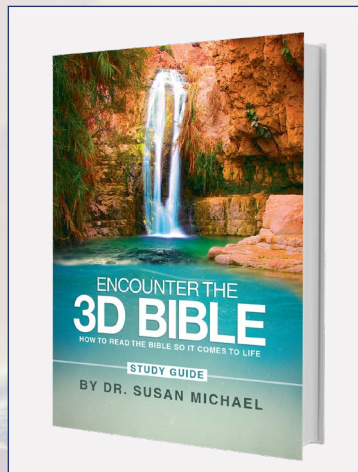
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AND OTHERS ...

Israel is in its worst crisis since the founding of the state 75 years ago, and Christian support for the Jewish nation and people has become more important than ever. Therefore, we would like to invite you to a special Solidarity Mission to Israel during our Envision Pastors and Leaders Conference 2024.

Starting in late January, our Envision Conference will take you to areas of Israel most impacted by the current war, subject of course to security clearance. You will gain your own first-hand impressions of the atrocities committed on October 7th which compelled a serious Israeli response. In addition, we will engage with key leaders from Israel and around the world on the strategic, historic, biblical and moral issues involved in this conflict.

In addition, you will hear inspiring updates from local Messianic and Arab pastors about exciting spiritual developments in the Land of Israel. And we are especially delighted to have Dr. Gerald McDermott, a renowned scholar on Christian Zionism, joining the conference. I am looking forward to seeing you in Jerusalem.

Jürgen Bühler

Dr. Jürgen Bühler
ICEJ President



IN-PERSON & ONLINE CONFERENCE*

* Visit us at envision.icej.org and join us in Israel at ENVISION Pastors and Leaders Conference 2024

