



Elections in the Air

BY DAVID PARSONS

Israel suddenly looks headed for new elections by this fall, as the most serious corruption scandal of his political career has engulfed Prime Minister Ehud Olmert in recent weeks. The resulting crisis in leadership has further complicated the already difficult decisions confronting the nation on how to deal with faltering Palestinian peace talks, the looming Iranian nuclear threat, and daily rocket barrages from Gaza.

Olmert has earned an unmatched reputation as a 'survivor' in the tough arena of Israeli politics, but the latest in a string of nine criminal probes against him may finally seal his fate. The 'Talansky affair' erupted in early May when police opened a new bribery investigation of Olmert based on evidence uncovered in earlier cases.

Police insist the proof includes several emails in which Olmert's inner circle note amounts transferred by a certain

"Israel is facing a crisis of leadership, faltering peace talks, a looming Iranian nuclear threat and daily rocket barrages from Gaza"

"laundryman" which went unreported to election or tax authorities.

The man at the center of the scandal, New York financier Morris Talansky, gave dramatic testimony in a Jerusalem courtroom in late May in which he admitted to handing Olmert or his close associates some \$150,000 in cash-stuffed envelopes over a 13-year period.

Saying he "greatly admired" Olmert as a skilled politician who would preserve a united Jerusalem as mayor of the disputed city, Talansky claimed the gifts were for campaign purposes but then began to also include money for Olmert's personal use, to meet his penchant for nice hotels, first class flights, and expensive watches and cigars.

The credible testimony did serious damage to Olmert's already shaky public standing, and most Knesset members quickly realised they faced a stark choice to either replace Olmert within his Kadima party or go to new elections.

State prosecutors have yet to decide the exact nature of the crimes committed in the affair and Olmert hopes his crack legal team can undermine Talansky's credibility during cross-examination in July, allowing him to stay in power a while longer.

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The International Christian Embassy Jerusalem



The International Christian Embassy Jerusalem was founded in 1980 as an act of comfort and solidarity with Israel and the Jewish people in their claim to Jerusalem.

Today, the Christian Embassy stands at the forefront of a growing mainstream movement of Christians worldwide who share a love and concern for Israel and an understanding of the biblical significance of the modern ingathering of Jews to the land of their forefathers.

From our headquarters in Jerusalem and through our branches and representatives in over 80 nations, we seek to challenge the Church to take up its scriptural responsibilities towards the Jewish people, to remind Israel of the wonderful promises made to her in the Bible, and to be a source of practical assistance to all the people of the Land of Israel.

The ICEJ's United States Branch is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization with offices in Washington, D.C. and Murfreesboro, Tennessee. We are a non-denominational faith ministry supported by the voluntary contributions of our members and friends.

We invite you to join with us as we minister to Israel and the Jewish people worldwide by using the enclosed response card to make your donation to the ongoing work and witness of the ICEJ.



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Dear Friends,

Once again the world is taken by surprise with the sudden arrival of a global food crisis. This coupled with rising fuel costs, weather patterns that are out of control, earthquakes and hurricanes in many places, and wars and rumors of wars would almost make one believe that we are observing something straight out of the 'signs of the times' Jesus spoke about in His Mt. Olivet Discourse recorded in Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21. We can add to this the conflict over Zion and the picture becomes even clearer.

The long and short of the matter is this; the Bible has once again proved its accuracy and inspiration. No doubt the "gainsayers" will always write this off as one colossal coincidence and thus proving nothing! There are none so blind as those who will not see! This too the Bible warned would happen (2 Peter 3:3-4).

The fulfilment of the biblical narrative is not to provoke speculation about the times in which we live but to inform us, equip us and galvanise us into action. We must be doers of the Word of God, not speculators and mere readers of it! It is this same "Word" that speaks so powerfully of the return of the Jews to the land of Israel and to Jerusalem (Amos 9:13-15; Luke 21:24.)



This narrative of the inspired word says that, "I will bring them back..." – meaning that the God of Israel and of the Bible will perform this. It is not the outflow of political action but of God's action. The stirrings of God in world affairs are often characterized by upheaval, confusion and even chaos. Thus, if you don't have your eyes upon the Word of God, the ongoing events in the Middle East and Israel will be perceived as chaotic and out of control. They are not because, as Daniel put it, "there is a God in Heaven!" God's purpose is marching on and it will be accomplished.

Christian Zionists have firstly submitted themselves to Jesus as Lord, secondly to the Word of God as fully inspired, and thirdly to blessing what God is doing in the earth and in Israel. He has brought His dear Jewish people home from the four corners of the world and this has been marvellous in our eyes, because it is vouched for everywhere in His Word. We will therefore stand by them, support them and bless them because God has not only promised to finish this work but to bring forth a glorious day of peace and joy for all peoples of the earth through it. What else does Isaiah 2:1-4 mean?

We value and appreciate your prayers and support. These have undergirded us for twenty-eight years and have blessed Israel mightily. Thank you!

Yours in Jesus,

Rev. Malcolm Hedding
ICEJ Executive Director



The Modern Day Genesis of Israel

Excerpted from a recent address delivered by ICEJ Executive Director, Malcolm Hedding commemorating Israel's 60th Anniversary in the same hall where Theodor Herzl presided over the First Zionist Congress in 1897

Our Historic Setting

"Here Theodor Herzl stood in 1897, proclaiming a vision for the Jewish State against the backdrop of the Dreyfus Affair in France. To be more correct; this was the renewed genesis of Israel in that its original genesis lay with the Patriarch Abraham 4000 years ago! (Genesis 12:1-3.)

"God's covenant with Abraham initiated a world redemptive plan and ensured Israel's survival forever; even though her unique journey on behalf of the world has been filled with great sorrows. In 586 BC, the first commonwealth of Israel ended with the destruction of Jerusalem by King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, but in 492 BC it began again when the great prophet Daniel uttered his repentant and restorative prayer in chapter nine of his intriguing book. So, we have each of these men divinely used as the genesis and renewed genesis of Jewish life in the land of Canaan.

Our Historic Understanding

The genesis of the modern State of Israel has a special link to the Christian world, without which it is doubtful whether there would be a Jewish State today! This link began with a Holy Spirit inspired movement amongst the Pietists of Germany, Switzerland and France in the 16th Century that had at its heart a desire to bless the Jews.

It soon crossed into Britain, where it found resonance amongst the Puritans, who recognised that God's blessings would not be upon the nation until the evil Jewish expulsions from England in 1292 had been corrected and reversed. This they eventually accomplished, and in the 18th Century, God visited Britain with a mighty revival through the preaching of the Wesley brothers and George Whitfield.



THEODOR HERZL (ABOVE)
RECOGNIZED CHRISTIANS AS
AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE LATE
19TH CENTURY ZIONIST VISION.



INSIDE THE BASEL CASINO IN
SWITZERLAND DURING THE FIRST
ZIONIST CONGRESS OF 1897.

The Wesleys supported the idea of a restored Jewish State in their ancient homeland and they both fervently preached about this and also wrote hymns calling on Christians to help the Jews return to Canaan.

By the 19th Century, the 'Restorationist' movement had emerged in Britain, impacting not only those in the pews but also the country's leaders. Famous names like William Wilberforce, Bishop Ryle of Liverpool, Lord Shaftesbury and William Hechler come to mind in this respect. Hechler, a chaplain to the British diplomatic corps in Europe, became a confidant of Herzl, and introduced him to major European leaders to present his vision of a restored Jewish State.

Finally the Balfour Declaration of 1917, favouring the establishment of a Jewish national home in Palestine, came about largely because of the dedicated work and influence of the Restorationists. God had triumphed through His people!

Recognizing the indispensable role of Christian supporters, Herzl was the first, as far as we know, to designate them "Christian Zionists."

Our Historic Obligations

On this unique platform, we gather today to congratulate Israel on her 60th Anniversary of Statehood. Israel is young, exciting, dynamic and colorful but, as of old, is also under threat. Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad is genocidal, Hizbullah rockets are poised to strike, and the goal of Hamas is Israel's destruction. These realities cannot be taken lightly, and like our Christian forbearers, we pledge ourselves to the values of prayer, comfort, blessing, proclamation, truth and friendship towards Israel. 🌐



Shelter in the Galilee

ICEJ Builds Rocket-Proof 'Safe Room' for Elderly Kibbutzniks



When might going to a medical clinic be bad for your health? When it's an Israeli clinic with no bomb shelter in an area prone to rocket attack.

Walking across the beautiful shaded lawns of Kibbutz Lehavot HaBashan in the Galilee, it was hard to imagine that in the summer of 2006, Katyusha rockets were raining down on this quaint setting. Yet like one million other residents of northern Israel, they faced a very real threat that is still present today, as Hizbullah has rearmed itself with 30,000 rockets and missiles – twice as many as before the Second Lebanon War.

Although many younger families on the kibbutz relocated south for safety, it was not a practical option for most of the senior residents. In their old age, they have come to rely on the community's medical clinic for dispensing daily medicines and regular checkups. Many were pioneers of the kibbutz who arrived in Israel fresh from the horrors of the Holocaust. Living in tents, they helped fight off Arab attacks, and later built their homes and livelihoods.

Now well into their 80s and 90s, many had become dependent on the medical services provided by the kibbutz clinic, but their routine visits were interrupted by the sirens warning of incoming rockets in July 2006. They could not run down the stairs to the nearest bomb shelter, so they usually just waited it out with the clinic nurses. One nurse explained how unprotected she felt.

“We couldn't convince the old people to flee into the underground bomb shelters, so we had to stay with them despite the danger...”

KIBBUTZ SHELTER: ICEJ INTERNATIONAL DIRECTOR JÜRGEN BÜHLER AND ICEJ AID'S NATHALIE CHARRON SPEAK WITH ELDERLY RESIDENTS AT THE OPENING OF THE SAFE ROOM IN KIBBUTZ LEHAVOT HABASHAN.

“We couldn't convince the old people to flee into the underground bomb shelters, so we had to stay with them despite the danger,” she said.

It was obvious that a 'safe room' next to the clinic was urgently needed. Following a request from the kibbutz, ICEJ AID, along with our German Branch, committed to building a bomb proof room. Recently, the new facility was dedicated with ICEJ staff in attendance.

One of the kibbutz founders recalled how he had helped smuggle other Jews to safety in Switzerland during World War II. “Many of us still remember the Holocaust, the concentration camps and the ghettos. We don't know what we have to face in the future, but when I see the security room you donated, I feel more secure,” he assured. “We need the moral and physical assistance of the clinic staff, and we are very grateful for your assistance in building this new safe place for us.”

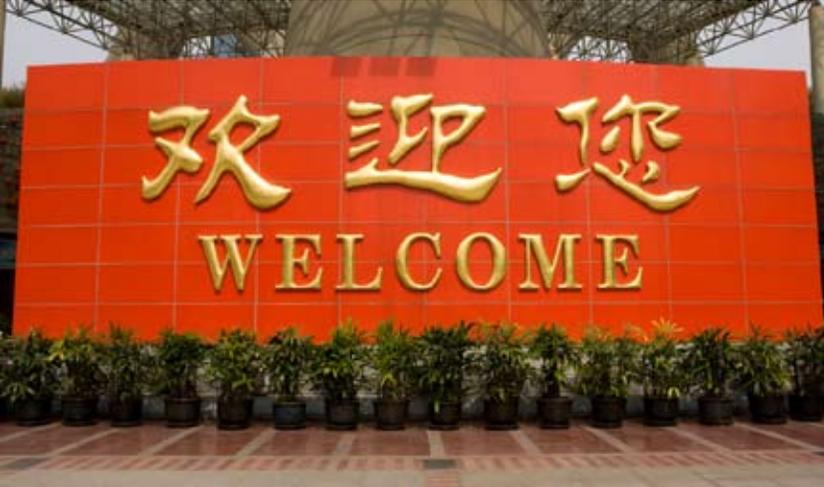
“It was a privilege that Christian believers could help this kibbutz, which is such a symbol of the pioneering spirit of the early Zionists,” ICEJ international director Dr. Jürgen Bühler told the gathering. 

Support Israel, Give to ICEJ AID - www.icejusa.org/aid



Revival in China

A 'Spiritual Giant' is Awakening to Bless Israel



BY JÜRGEN BÜHLER

China and the economically emerging countries of South East Asia are often referred to as the “sleeping dragon” which is about to awaken. The city which best represents this dynamic is Hong Kong. It is a pulsating port city with more than 8 million people living on an area only slightly larger than ‘greater’ Jerusalem.

In May, our music director Chuck King and I had the privilege of visiting numerous churches in Hong Kong, mainland China and Taiwan, as part of a wider Asian speaking tour. What excited us far more than the stunning economic growth was the spiritual richness and dynamics in that part of the world.

Mainland China had just under a million Christians when the communist regime of Mao Tse-tung took over in 1948. The political leaders declared Christianity as an imperialist relic which would soon disappear from the country. However the communist regime had to learn that nothing can stop the work of the Holy Spirit. Just recently the government of China had to make an official declaration confessing that today there are more than 120 million Christians in China.

“Christian leaders in China believe that the actual number is even higher,” says Colin Chow, director the ICEJ branch in Hong Kong.

In meetings in Taipei, Hong Kong and Wenzhou, the passion for worship, the eagerness to listen to the Word of God, and the powerful response in prayer after the message and worship were all the same.

After decades declaring Christianity dead in China, the government now admits that the church is more than 120 million people strong.

We witnessed a unique visitation of God in this part of the world.

It was especially exciting to see that this move of the Holy Spirit is accompanied by a desire to bless Israel. We have seen the ‘fruit’ of this revival in recent years as the number of pilgrims coming from Chinese-speaking countries to our Feast of Tabernacles celebration in Jerusalem has greatly increased. Danny and Linda Chou, ICEJ National Directors

for Taiwan, believe this is just the beginning of a wave of Chinese Christians coming to bless Israel.

Most impacting for us was a meeting in Wenzhou, a large city south of Shanghai where 70 leaders of the underground house church movement came to hear about Israel. Some had driven for hours to attend, and most were responsible for 10,000 believers or more. For all of them, it was the first time to host a visitor from Jerusalem. Both Chuck and I were humbled to talk to these heroes of faith facing stiff persecution over recent decades. To hear their commitment to pray for and stand beside Israel and the Jewish people was unforgettable.

We realised that the most precious export of China and Taiwan today are not electronics or plastic toys, but the church of the living God, which has much to teach churches in the West about prayer, dedication and suffering for Christ. 🌍

Dr. Jürgen Bühler serves as ICEJ International Director.



Yad Vashem Honoring the 'Righteous'



In 1953, the Israeli Knesset passed the Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority Law, which created Yad Vashem as the Jewish people's memorial to the Six Million Jews who lost their lives in the Holocaust. Built on the Mount of Remembrance in Jerusalem, it contains the world's largest repository of information on the Holocaust and is a leader in Holocaust education, commemoration, research and documentation.

One of the principal duties of Yad Vashem is to convey the gratitude of the State of Israel and the Jewish people to those Gentiles who risked their lives to save Jews during the Holocaust by granting them the title of Righteous Among the Nations. Those recognized as such receive a medal and a certificate of honor.

Along the Avenue of the Righteous Among the Nations, trees have been planted in honor of those brave individuals symbolizing the renewal of life. Plaques adjacent to each tree record the names of those being honored along with their country of residence during the war. Next to the Avenue is The Garden of the Righteous where the names of the Righteous Among the Nations are engraved on the walls of honor (pictured above). Since many rescuers will forever remain anonymous, there is also a monument to the Anonymous Rescuer. 🌍

Find out more about the ICEJ's partnership with Yad Vashem at: www.icejusa.org/yadvashem

How Righteous does one need to be?

BY SUSAN MICHAEL

The historical account of the Holocaust would not be complete without the amazing stories of the brave individuals who risked their lives to save Jews. This is why Yad Vashem, Israel's Holocaust Memorial, works tirelessly to locate and honor them as "Righteous Among the Nations."

Just when we realize that the majority of Europeans turned their backs on the Jews, we discover the amazing minority who helped them. They are rays of light in an otherwise very dark era. They restore our hope in humanity.

Many studies have been conducted to determine what gave these brave souls the courage and moral strength to be rescuers. While we would like to think that they were all very spiritual Christians, who understood the biblical significance of the Jewish people, nothing could be further from the truth.

Yes, there were those lovely Christian saints such as Corrie Ten Boom's father who read from the Bible every day and was motivated to rescue Jews by his strong Christian faith. We think of the Ten Boom family as truly being "righteous." But most rescuers were just regular every day people.

The 19,141 Righteous honored by Yad Vashem come from 44 countries; they are Christians from all denominations as well as Muslims, religious and agnostic, men and women, people from all walks of life, of all ages, educated professionals and illiterate peasants, rich and poor. Some were even anti-Semitic. The only common denominator is the humanity and the courage they displayed by standing up for their moral principles.

What gave them the courage and moral strength to do what they did? What made them risk execution, or imprisonment, and endanger their own families? Most studies



CORRIE TEN BOOM: HONORED AS 'RIGHTEOUS AMONG THE NATIONS' BY THE YAD VASHEM HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL IN JERUSALEM, CORRIE TEN BOOM IS THE BEST KNOWN CHRISTIAN HERO OF THE HOLOCAUST, HAVING BEEN SENT TO A NAZI CONCENTRATION CAMP FOR HIDING JEWS IN HER HOME.

agree that the rescuers all exhibited strong individuality. They were independent and did not need the approval of others. They also had strong convictions about helping the weak. Most said that the fact that the needy individual was a Jew had no bearing on their decision to help. They simply felt they should aid those needing their help.

So how righteous does one need to be to rescue Jews? Actually, not righteous at all. We just need to care about those around us who are suffering and needy. How could something so basic to humanity as caring for others, have been so rare? That is the real question. 🌍

Susan Michael serves as Director of the US Branch of the ICEJ.



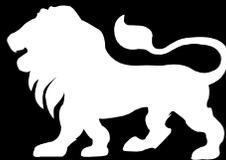
The Lion of Judah

BY CHUCK KING

Jacob's prophetic blessings upon his sons (Genesis 49) insured that Judah would possess enduring preeminence over his brothers and their tribes.

From the lineage of Judah (meaning "praise") would spring forth the Messiah and his Kingdom.

Judah's tribal emblem is the figure of a lion (v.9), a symbol of strength, royalty, and dominion. According to Hosea 5, Judah's Lion will serve as a righteous judge to all Israel, while his roar will serve as a homecoming call for all of his sons to return to the Land in humility and repentance. (Hosea 11:10-11)



2008 FEAST OF TABERNACLES
THE LION OF JUDAH

From the tribe of Judah came King David, and from the House of David the true "Lion King" – Jesus – appeared. Jesus' identity as the triumphal Lion of Judah is revealed in Revelation 5, where He is described as the only one worthy to open Heaven's scroll.

This year's Feast of Tabernacles celebration raises a banner bearing the symbol of the Lion of Judah. By lifting up His tribal ensign, we proclaim in this 60th year anniversary of Israel's national rebirth, that the coming Lion of the Tribe of Judah will soon establish His rightful inheritance and establish His throne to rule over His city and the nations.

At the sound of the "Lion King's" roar, we invite you to rally under His banner and join thousands of worshipers for an unforgettable and life changing experience in Jerusalem. Don't miss this opportunity to be a blessing to the Nation of Israel in her 60th anniversary! 🌐

Chuck King serves as ICEJ Music Director

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But it appears the wheels are already set in motion either for Kadima primaries to select a new party leader or for passage of a bill to dissolve parliament and go to elections as early as November.

Three senior cabinet ministers – Tzipi Livni, Shaul Mofaz and Avi Dichter – are poised to battle it out as Olmert’s successor within Kadima. But if a nationwide ballot occurs, the early frontrunner is Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu, who has been leading most opinion polls since the end of the Second Lebanon War.

Israeli-Palestinian peace talks are basically on hold for now due to the acute political crisis, while Jerusalem and Washington shift their remaining focus on the more urgent existential threat posed by a nuclear Iran. Meanwhile, the Olmert government continues to waffle between accepting an informal truce with Hamas in Gaza and a full-scale invasion to cripple the Islamist terror militia.

After a recent Kassam rocket attack killed an Israeli civilian, Olmert warned “the pendulum” is swinging toward “a harsh operation” in Gaza, while Defence Minister Ehud Barak cautioned that “the sand of the hourglass is running out.”

Hamas militia commanders in Gaza scoffed that they have been hearing Israeli leaders drop hints of an invasion since January and assured their forces are ready to take on the IDF. 🌐

David Parsons serves as ICEJ Media Director in Jerusalem and Contributing Christian Editor of ‘The Jerusalem Post Christian Edition’

***“Pray for the peace of
Jerusalem: May they prosper
who love you.” Psalm 122:6***

www.icejusa.org/pray



ISRAELI FOREIGN MINISTER TZIPI LIVNI (CENTER), FLANKED BY DEFENSE MINISTER EHUD BARAK (LEFT) & EMBATTLED PRIME MINISTER EHUD OLMERT (RIGHT). SHOULD LIVNI WIN THE KADIMA LEADERSHIP FROM OLMERT, SHE WILL LIKELY WORK WITH BARAK’S LABOR PARTY TO STAVE OFF NEW ELECTIONS AND KEEP BENJAMIN NETANYAHU FROM RETURNING TO POWER. (PHOTO: AP)

