



WORD

from JERUSALEM

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The Battle for Israel

Contending in Prayer against Principalities and Powers

BY MALCOLM HEDDING

There is no doubt that the Church in general needs to rediscover the role and power of prayer. Jesus said that His house should be “a house of prayer for all nations.” Today this house is filled with much activity but little prayer. Our prayer meetings are weak and badly attended and consequently our projection of ministry is greatly lacking in power.

The early church by contrast made prayer a feature of every meeting. This is the testimony of the Book of Acts (Acts 1:14). We need to urgently adopt this way of life together as, if we don't, we shall “win on the grandstand but lose, where it counts, on the field!”

The words of Moses in Exodus 32 will thus continue to haunt us when he said that he doesn't hear the sound of defeat or victory but that of singing – a good time.

“And when Joshua heard the noise of the people as they shouted, he said to Moses, ‘There is a noise of war in the camp.’ But he said: ‘It is not the noise of the shout of victory, nor the noise of the cry of defeat, but the sound of singing I hear.’” Exodus 32: 17-18.

More important still is the fact that great events are taking place in the world that require our most urgent intercession. Israel is facing an unprecedented threat from more than one source but in particular from Iran. The President of this nation continues to call for Israel's destruction and is rapidly developing the nuclear weaponry to make good this threat.

Scripture has always warned that Israel, by virtue of her peculiar God given call and mandate for the sake of the world, has been subjected to programs of destruction.

(Note Psalm 83) History, sadly, well testifies to this.

In addition the arrival of North Korea on the world stage as a nuclear power is deeply troubling, not only for the nations of the region but also for the United States of America. This is so because the North Koreans are quite prepared to sell their arsenal to the highest bidder! International terrorists have no doubt taken note. Iranian observers were recently in North Korea to

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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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Washington Allies

ICEJ Partners with IIACF to Reach out to Congressional Allies in D.C.



On May 3-4 the International Israel Allies Caucus Foundation (IIACF) sponsored the 2009 Israel Independence Gala event. This second annual conference began with a Gala Banquet, celebrating Israel's Independence Day and speakers included Gabriela Shalev, Israel's Ambassador to the UN, Rep. Mike Pence (R-IN) and Rep. Elliot Engel (D-NY), co-chairs of the Congressional Israel Allies Caucus, MK David Rotem, Chairman of the Knesset Christian Allies Caucus, former Minister Rabbi Benny Elon, IIACF President, Susan Michael, US Director of the ICEJ, and Michael Little, CEO of the Christian Broadcasting Network.

The ICEJ partners with the IIACF in their work of developing pro-Israel caucuses in governments worldwide and introducing those caucus

members to national Christian leaders. To date, they are responsible for the establishment of caucuses in fifteen governments.

The Independence Day Gala offered US Director, Susan Michael (pictured above) the opportunity to team up with Jeff Mendelsohn from the American-Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) to brief a group of 25 college students from area colleges hosted by Ruth Sims, Director of Love of Israel. The following day Michael and Jim Schutz from the ICEJ's International Department in Jerusalem spoke at symposiums on UNRWA and on Iran. The IIACF recently hosted a lunch in Paris, France for parliamentarians from across Europe. Rev. Malcolm Hedding, ICEJ Executive Director, and Dr. Jürgen Bühler ICEJ International Director, provided keynote addresses at that event. 🌐



Celebrating Israel's Independence in Ethiopia

ICEJ Music Director Ray Ramirez was recently invited to Addis Ababa to participate in the nation of Ethiopia's first-ever official celebration of Israel's Independence Day, held at the initiative of the Patriarch of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, Abune Paulos. The ceremony was colourful and joyous, as Ray led the gathering in worship and traditional Israeli songs. The occasion was especially notable in that Abune Paulos is currently serving as one of the

seven presidents of the World Council of Churches, a body that has a history of taking anti-Israel stands. But the head of the Ethiopian church, which has 45 million devotees, is bringing a different attitude in his love and respect for Israel. Speaking at the event, Paulos said the ties between Ethiopia and Israel go back well beyond the few decades of current diplomatic relations between the two countries, and actually date back 3000 years. 🌐



The Double Burden of the Pope

BY MALCOLM HEDDING

A German pope, who fought in Hitler's army, comes face to face with the legacy of Christian anti-Semitism at Yad Vashem. But according to Rev. Malcolm Hedding the leader of the Catholic Church could still not bring himself to repent...

Like so many of my Israeli friends, I too was disappointed with the pope's recent visit to Jerusalem, and not just because of the road closures and traffic snarls. No, the big disappointment is over the message delivered by Pope Benedict XVI during his visit to the Israel's National Holocaust Memorial at Yad Vashem - the most important leg of his Holy Land pilgrimage, from a Jewish perspective.

His background as a conscript in the Hitler Youth and German army in World War II demanded something more personal and contrite from this particular pontiff. It was not enough to just say he was grateful to be able to "come to stand in silence" on this revered site. As both a German of the Nazi generation and as head of a Catholic Church that for centuries taught Europeans to detest Jews, Benedict bore a double burden to express remorse and humbly ask for forgiveness, so as to truly honor the memories of the six million victims of the Holocaust.

But it was not to be. This has left room for some of the nagging questions about him to linger. For instance, even though he eventually deserted his artillery unit and fled into the service of God, why did this occur only at the end of the war? And why, just a few months ago, did he lift the excommunication of Bishop Richard Williamson, who openly denies the Holocaust? It seems highly improbable that the pope knew nothing about this. The official line was, "He doesn't do Internet!" But I remain skeptical.

NEVERTHELESS, THE POPE is welcome here, as is any other Christian pilgrim, and Israelis can take solace in the fact that Jewish relations with the Vatican are much more cordial today than during the long hostile eras of the past.

Still, it was a lost opportunity to make amends for this past, and not just for the unique Jewish tragedy of the Holocaust. For example, no pope at any time - not even Pope John Paul II - has articulated that the Catholic Church takes full and direct responsibility for the vicious anti-Semitism down through the centuries in which, by the instrument of the Inquisition, hundreds of thousands of Jews were murdered, tortured and expelled from Europe. The stories are



"As both a German of the Nazi generation and as head of the Catholic Church, Benedict bore a double burden to repent."

well documented and cannot be denied. As with the Holocaust, papal admissions have spoken only of the "sins of the sons and daughters of the Church," but not of the Church itself.

Therefore, it is indeed a strange twist in history that Pope Benedict was very graciously received at Yad Vashem. It was good that he asserted that Holocaust denial should not be tolerated. But the question we ask of a man of God is, "Why is it so hard to embrace humility and repent?" After all, these are the great hallmarks of the Christian faith.

Indeed, it also would fulfill prophecy, just as Isaiah foresaw that "the sons of those who afflicted you shall come bowing to you, and all those who despised you shall fall prostrate at the soles of your feet" (Isaiah 60:14).

Yet oddly, it has been Evangelical Christians - today the fastest-growing stream of Christianity worldwide - who have sought to fill that prophetic role by facing up to the Church's tragic legacy head-on.

From our ranks, clergy and laymen alike have journeyed to Yad Vashem to profess the Christian world's corporate guilt for the church's dark history of anti-Semitism, including the Catholic Church, and to repent for these great moral failings.

This repentance has been honest, sincere and without condition. We have stood in humility, accepted the shame, and said "sorry", even though there is no history in our 400 year-old movement of Evangelical involvement in the sad chronicle of inquisitions, pogroms, expulsions and convert-or-die scenarios that repeatedly took aim at the Jewish people.



More than that, Evangelicals have set out to show forth the "fruits meet for repentance" by making restitution through the many acts of love and kindness we have carried out in Israel. "Sorry" is cheap without acts of contrition. Our experience is that this especially rings true for the Evangelical Christian communities of Europe. They may be smaller in number than American Evangelicals, but they know their own continent's history well and are often more motivated to undertake "Zionist acts" as a result. They not only plant trees in Israel, but they sponsor aliyah flights, help build hospitals, feed needy families, support Holocaust education and so much more.

Though these acts of contrition can never restore the precious lives of Jews who were murdered in Christ's name, they can restore friendship and hope. And hope is what Yad Vashem is all about! 🌍

Rev. Malcolm Hedding serves as executive director of the ICEJ - which since 2006 has partnered with Israel's Yad Vashem Holocaust Remembrance Authority to establish 'Christian Friends of Yad Vashem'.

This article was first published for an Israeli audience in the May 14th edition of The Jerusalem Post.



CHRISTIAN FRIENDS OF YAD VASHEM *An outreach of the ICEJ worldwide*

In October 2006 the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem and Israel's Yad Vashem Holocaust Remembrance Authority forged an historic partnership, with the aim of joining forces to fight anti-Semitism.

Today's world is not so different from the past. Anti-Semitism and racism still exist. The Holocaust is being denied. Threats of genocide are being voiced again. The question is whether we will decide to remain silent and unaware of the past, or will we dedicate ourselves to learn and speak up.

Yad Vashem is more than a Holocaust Museum. It houses the International School for Holocaust Studies, a first-class Institute for Holocaust research, a Publications Division, a renowned library and the world's largest archive of Holocaust materials. It is an institution entrusted with the mission of safeguarding the memory of the Holocaust and imparting its meaning to future generations. It is also our duty towards humanity to keep the memory alive. But this in itself is not enough. We need to make sure that the past will not be repeated and educate the generations to come about what happened. The ICEJ is committed to this goal. You can join us and participate by:

1. Inviting the ICEJ to bring our new half-day seminar '*For Such a Time as This*' to your local church or area. This event seeks to raise up an Esther generation to stand with the Jewish people in our day.
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2. Supporting our partnership with Yad Vashem with a \$25 membership of Christian Friends of Yad Vashem.

Learn More at: www.icejusa.org/yadvashem



Poised on the Panic Button

BY DAVID PARSONS

For three whole weeks, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu prepared for his recent meeting with US President Barack Obama like a student cramming for final exams. He consulted every expert. He read through all the latest studies. His staff debriefed any Israeli official who had been in recent contact with Obama administration figures, trying to glean the slightest hint of what to expect when he visited the White House on May 18. He did his homework as if his life – and the life of his nation – depended on it. And, quite literally, it does!

Deeming Iran's nuclear program an intolerable existential threat to Israel, the freshly-sworn in Netanyahu had warned in a recent Atlantic Monthly interview that, "You don't want a messianic apocalyptic cult controlling atomic bombs." All that remained was to convince Washington's new establishment that the Ayatollahs are indeed mad men who will use a Bomb if they get their hands on one.

However, reports coming to Jerusalem via European diplomats indicated that some on Obama's team are prepared to live with a nuclear Iran. "Better an Iran with a bomb than the bombing of Iran," they were counselling the president.

By the time the appointment in Washington rolled around, numerous media reports predicted that serious clashes would erupt between Netanyahu and his host over the Israeli government's lack of adherence to the "two-state solution" on the Palestinian track, its doubts as to the wisdom of US diplomatic overtures to Iran, and the sequential linkage between these two overriding issues.

Nevertheless, Netanyahu emerged from their marathon, four-hour discussions optimistic that he had reached a basic understanding with Obama both on how to stop Iran and how to make progress with the Palestinians.

As expected, Netanyahu stood fast on refusing to commit to the goal of Palestinian statehood, in spite of Obama's insistence that it is the only way forward. Netanyahu believes the term "state" could be too easily defined as full sovereignty and thus he first wants to spell out its security limitations before agreeing to a Palestinian state. This is especially so after Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas made clear that he has no plans to recognize Israel as a "Jewish state."

On Iran, Obama seemed to place enormous confidence in his own powers of persuasion. "I firmly believe it is in Iran's interest



not to develop nuclear weapons... and I am prepared to make what I believe will be a persuasive argument, that there should be a different course to be taken."

Rejecting any "artificial deadlines" on his proposed diplomatic engagement with Iran, he did admit "we're not going to have talks forever," adding that by the end of the year he should be able to assess if Iran is ready to bend. The comments marked the first time Obama has publicly suggested a general timetable for progress in talks – a victory for his Israeli guest.

In return, Netanyahu privately pledged not to disrupt the US dialogue with Tehran over the next six months, including a hold on pre-emptive strikes against its nuclear facilities.

Perhaps the most glaring gap that emerged between the two leaders came on the question of "linkage," which Netanyahu has described in terms of the need to contain Iran first before any serious movement can be expected on the Palestinian track.

"If there is a linkage between Iran and the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, I personally believe it actually runs the other way," retorted Obama. "To the extent that we can make peace... between the Palestinians and the Israelis, then I actually think it strengthens our hand in the international community in dealing with a potential Iranian threat."

Netanyahu quickly sought to smooth over their differences, insisting that the two "see exactly eye to eye" on moving simultaneously on both fronts. Thus he and his entourage left Washington claiming that they had opened vital channels of communication on the Palestinian issue and witnessed "the beginning of a strategic convergence" between the two sides on dealing with Iran.

The Netanyahu government now has the remainder of 2009 before hitting the panic button on Iran. They hope that by then, Obama will have become better educated on the harsh realities of the Middle East; that the Palestinians are too divided to make a deal, that no amount of Israeli concessions will stop Iran's atomic quest.

Some voices, however, are accusing Jerusalem of being too alarmist on Iran and provoking a needless war with its own threats of pre-emption. Yet even Israel's dovish president Shimon Peres says he prefers to "overreact" to the Iranian threat than to underestimate it and be wrong. 🌐



>> CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

witness that country's nuclear achievement and there is a growing relationship developing between Hugo Chavez of Venezuela and Iran. The USA and Israel are in "gun sights" of these nations.



Just two years ago Ahmadinejad of Iran hosted a conference that not only denied the Holocaust but also fantasized about a world without the United States of America. While all men are entirely responsible for their actions it is true that behind these people are dark principalities of destruction and deception. Paul wrote that we are to recognize this and thus oppose these principalities through the struggle of prayer. (Ephesians 6:10-12) Prayer is hard and demanding work and yet it constitutes the mighty power of God when discharged faithfully. We neglect it in our churches to our peril! Paul, writing to the Church at Philippi said, "In all things by prayer....." (Philippians 4:6) If we took this simple advice we would see so much more of the "hand of God" in our communities.

This letter is then an urgent call to prayer. Prayer for your great nation, your church and for Israel. We believe that prayer can change all things and that God in Christ is calling our ICEJ family to faithful prayer. Please join us as we begin a campaign to call on God as never before. To help you we have some "prayer pointers" that you can use each week to focus your intercession. Get your home group or prayer meeting involved and add these pointers to your own devotional life.

Let us not be guilty of just singing while our world burns and our churches lack the power of God. 🌐

Join the Prayer Battle

A four-week prayer guide for Israel

Week One: Our Leaders

The Bible calls us to pray for those in authority. That is for our national leaders. This according to Paul is the first obligation before us as we go to the place of prayer. (1Timothy2:1-3) Pray therefore for President Obama and his cabinet this week and include Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel and his cabinet in this intercession. These leaders carry great responsibility and they need the wisdom and help of God. We have no right to criticize them as Christians if we have not regularly called out to God on their behalf! They are the "servants of God" (Romans13:1-4) and do not carry "the sword" for nothing.

Week Two: The Middle East

The Middle East region is a "tinder box" and destruction of immense proportions could take place at any time. The Lebanon war of 2006 proved that. I was in the upper Galilee a day before it erupted and the scene was pastoral, quiet and peaceful. A day later missiles were raining down on the towns and villages of Israel as radical Islamic terrorists, called the Army of Allah (Hezbollah), and attacked Israel. This situation continues in the south of Israel where thousands of rockets of one type or another are launched by Hamas, another Islamic terrorist group, against Israel. The Bible states that "no weapon against Israel will prosper." (Isaiah54:17) We need to hold these scriptures before the throne of God as we ask our Father to be merciful to His people Israel. Today Hezbollah have thirty thousand new generation missiles aimed at Israel. We can only defuse these by the "missile" of prayer!

Week Three: The Peace Process

While we can so easily dismiss peace efforts as insignificant and hopeless we should recognize that initiatives in this regard are going to be launched with or without our involvement. Our involvement is not official. It is in the place of prayer. The book of Psalms declares that we rule national and international affairs from our bedrooms! (Psalm149:5-9) Mary, Queen of the Scots said that, more than anything on earth; she feared the prayers of John Knox! We should therefore pray much about all the efforts to reach a lasting peace in the Middle East and beyond always recognizing that true peace comes only from God and His Son the Prince of Peace. We must pray for President Obama and his engagement with Israel and the region in this regard. He needs God's help. Hopefully we too, one day, can gain a reputation that like that of John Knox!

Week Four: Ahmadinejad & Iran

The situation with Ahmadinejad of Iran is becoming critical, very critical. He has set his sights on Israel and desires nothing less than her destruction. This week we must wait on God and call out to Him to remove this threat from over the nation of Israel. Also we must understand the threat that he poses to the USA. His involvement with North Korea is highly dangerous since a "dirty bomb" of some type could be smuggled into the USA with very severe and serious consequences. This must not be dismissed and the mighty power of prayer can effectively deal with this threat. If only we believed this! Daniel, the prophet of old, understood this and changed the direction of history because of his faithful prayers. Nothing could stop him, not even persecution! Daniel knew that there is a "God in Heaven" who reveals secrets to his servants. (Daniel2:28) Hold this fact before the "Most High" this week and ask Him to expose the sinister plans of destruction that people like Ahmadinejad and others have for Israel and the USA. God can do it! 🌐



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