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***MaozNews is a monthly publication. Our goal is to provide readers with an overview of realities in and with regard to Israel, with particular but not exclusive reference to the Gospel. Readers will view those portions of MaozNews in which they have interest. To that end, we seek to diversify.***

**The Radicalization of Palestinian and Israeli Societies**

(From Breaking News, [www.TheMaozWeb.com](http://www.TheMaozWeb.com))

**Israeli Palestinians**

The two societies in conflict are thoroughly intertwined economically, and are being deeply affected by ongoing realities. In the past, Breaking News indicated some of the trends evident among Israeli Arabs, increasingly disengaged from Israel and treated as a potential fifth column by a growing number of Israeli Jews. Many Israeli Arabs have relatives among the Palestinians, are therefore affected by whatever touches on the lives of the Palestinians. Increased contact between the two groups have resulted in Israeli Arabs choosing to describe themselves as Israeli Palestinians, flying the Palestinian flag and actively supporting the political efforts of their fellow nationals in the West Bank and Gaza in their struggle for a Palestinian State, much as Jews overseas support Israel while remaining in their respective countries.

Few Israeli Palestinians are willing to take up arms or otherwise abet terrorism or any form of violent action against Israel, they have increased contact with Palestinian and other Islamic groups outside of Israel that claim to support the Palestinian cause. They are also demanding a fairer share in benefits accruing Israeli citizens, a better and independent) educational system, a more modern infrastructure, more job opportunities and a broader freedom of expression.

Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza are developing a heightened sense of community and of national identity. Held back by their own long-sustained nepotism, corruption and lack of

independent initiative, all of which are responsible for some of their disadvantages, they are inclined to lay the main weight of responsibility for these on Israeli Jewish society, demanding that Israel rectify their social ills without affecting their national identity.

There was no claim for Palestinian national identity until the emergence of the conflict related to the formation of the State of Israel and its continued existence. Arab Palestinians were mostly a hodge-podge of Arab immigrants into Palestine in response to Jewish settlement of the land, to and the job opportunities that settlement offered, with a significant minority of local residents.

### **The Making of Palestinian Nationhood**

In 1948, the UN resolved to partition the land between Jewish and Arab Palestinians. The Jews accepted UN's partition plan, the Arabs did not. Instead, they initiated an all-out attack on the fledgling Jewish State, vowing to wipe it off the face of the map. When the war ended, Jordan controlled most of the area designated by the UN for an Arab Palestinian State, with Egypt and Israel holding approximately equal sections of the rest.

Rather than allowing the establishment of an Arab Palestinian State, surrounding Arab countries drove their fellow Arabs into refugee camps, refused them the right to settle or conduct a normal, industrious life. At the same time, Israel received almost as many Jews who fled Arab countries due to state-initiated persecution. They were settled, educated and equipped for life in a modern State.

The West Bank and Gaza were ruled respectively by Jordan and Egypt through military governors. No political life was permitted, no universities established, no infrastructure developed and no industry encouraged. The pressure-cooker reality into which the Arab Palestinian refugees were forced forged them into a nation.

### **The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict**

Israel's takeover of the West Bank and Gaza following a joint Syrian, Jordanian and Egyptian attack in 1967 resulted in facing the disenfranchised Palestinians with the Jewish State within the framework of ongoing relations. Israel settled the Arab Palestinians, allowed and encouraged them to open universities, conduct an independent political life, including free elections and the franchisement of women, and abetted the development of infrastructure and industries.

Increased freedom and the nurture of Palestinian antagonism toward Israel by Arab nations combined to create an explosive situation, exacerbated by Yasser Arafat's presence, with his lieutenants, in the West Bank following the First Lebanese War.

From an Arab-Israeli conflict, the conflict became one between Israel and the Arab Palestinians, the latter being supported by surrounding Arab and more distant Muslim countries. Graduating from terroristic atrocities to more sophisticated political and economic means, the battle continues to be fought. The Palestinians have become more sophisticated. Realizing they are not likely to defeat Israel on the battlefield, and that the West is increasingly void of cultural, moral or religious conviction, they have transferred their attention to world opinion.

Supported by 57 Muslim countries with a total population of 130,000,000 and in control of 70% of the earth's oil, they have done well in terms of political progress. Latent worldwide anti-

Semitic sentiments were channeled into anti-Zionist action, increasingly questioning Israel's very legitimacy as an autonomous State.

At the same time, endless funds surreptitiously given, corrupted Arafat and many around him. Arafat died a multi-millionaire. Occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, with the consequent friction and the need to control a resilient, uncooperative Palestinian populace, coupled with extremist and religiously-motivated Jewish egotism, have steadily radicalized and corrupted Israeli society, which has become cynical, angry, frustrated and increasingly nationalistic.

The rejection of repeatedly generous offers made by Israeli leaders to the Palestinians has created a sense of frustrated anger, leaving the two nations eager for peace one the one hand, and willing to pay the price, but angry and suspicious on the other.

Israel's weakened status in world public opinion and the USA President's present policies have encouraged intransigence among the Palestinians and increased concern among Jewish Israelis.

### **Gaza – the Hot Potato Nobody Wants**

The Gaza Strip was part of the land apportioned by the UN to become, in 1948, Arab Palestine. Israel accepted the proposed partition, the Arab nations did not. Instead, they invaded the fledgling State, established by a UN resolution. Since then, until the Six Day war in 1967, Egypt ruled the Gaza Strip with an iron fist, forbidding any expression of political will or nationhood (as did Jordan in the West Bank). On Tuesday, the Egyptian government rejected a proposal that would return Gaza to Egyptian control in terms of water, electricity and border crossings, all three of which are presently provide by Israel. There is a certain anomaly in Israel providing such to a declared and determined enemy. In response, a spokesperson for the Egyptian Foreign Ministry claimed Israel was "seeking to evade responsibility for the Gaza Strip."

Egypt now declares that "Gaza is an integral part of the occupied Palestinian territories, and of the future Palestinian state. There is no room to talk or think of it as anything else," the spokesperson added. In other words, "we'd rather have Israel deal with this hot potato – we don't want it."

Hamas is viewed as a threat to the whole region. Consequently, Egypt, Jordan and the Palestinian Authority under Mahmoud Abbas have discreetly insisted that Israel not lift the naval blockade on Gaza, actively supported by Egypt, which shares a naval border with Gaza. Egypt is presently constructing a 20-yard deep underground steel barrier between itself and Hamas-run Gaza, aimed at curtailing smuggling. It has opened its Rafah border crossing for the limited and carefully scrutinized passage of persons, and of goods. Between Israel and Egypt, many scores of tons of food, medical supplies and other necessities have entered the Strip.

Meanwhile, Iran and Lebanon have each announced a flotilla of ships, ostensibly to bring humanitarian aid to Gaza. Israel is unlikely to allow the ships through. Instead, it is likely to follow previous policy by offering to accept and scrutinize the cargo, and to transfer into Gaza all but weapons and materials that can be used for weaponry.

### Appeasing the Unappeasable

President Obama's Containment by Appeasement policy does not seem to be working. Osama Bin Laden may have had a difficult childhood, as is probably true of many in the Taliban. Some sympathetic counseling might indeed be in order, but such sympathy will have to follow effective containment before it can do any good – or before these troubled children wreck further carnage. Hamas and Hezbollah are not likely to become cuddly by considering their sense of disadvantage. They are not helped by being allowed to run amuck, like a pair of spoiled brats. It is also worth remembering that Cairo's Al Azhar (Muslim) University and Saudi Arabia are the hotbeds from which sprung the present wave of radically vicious Islam.

Israel's battle for survival – for it is no less than that (imagine what will happen if Israel is overrun by Hamas and Hezbollah) – is not abetted by the right-wing, ineffective Government it presently has, not its reputation enhanced. But, surely, the Jewish people deserve more than the self-righteous cold shoulder the world now accords us.

### Baruch's Biography

(continued)

*The October War broke out in October 1973. Baruch was enlisted, as was the rest of his unit. Baruch served as a combat medic, attached to the scouting unit of his artillery division. Effi was the doctor and the medical team's commanding officer. Uzzi was the driver and Danny another member of the team. They arrived at the divisional mustering point and awaited the nightlight, when they would be deployed on the Golan Heights.*

### Stealing Supplies

I was very troubled. We had no medical supplies, and were now responsible for the lives of 3,500 men on their way to war. I walked up and down the convoys that passed us on the way to the battlefield, pleading for an emergency bandage here, a splint or an infusion there. For obvious reasons, I had limited success. Effi called me over. "Hop into the car", he said, and we drove off to the nearby Poria hospital. There Effi demanded to see the hospital Director, an old-time friend. "We need medical supplies", he said.

- "I can't give them to you. We are going to be a front-line hospital for the wounded. Some are already here and others are on their way. We need everything we have".

"OK", said Effi. We walked out to the car and Effi took the wheel. Instead of driving to the exit, he drove toward the back part of the hospital grounds. "Where are you going, Effi? The exit is the other way!" "You'll see". We drove to the main hospital storeroom, where Effi proceeded to break the lock and said, "Let's do this quickly". We loaded into the vehicle everything we thought we might need and hastily made our retreat back to Tsemach, equipped to treat the men of our unit, should any be wounded.

### **On the Way to the Front**

We were told that we will be ascending the Golan Heights as soon as night fell. Our unit had been in uniform for three days and two nights. It was high time to wash. Uzzi and I took our toiletries and walked to the nearby beach. We washed, splashed about in the water, swam and had a whale of a time. Having had a good time and feeling quite refreshed, we made our way back to the mustering point, only to discover that the area had been vacated, but for one lone vehicle – our own! Our Division had moved on toward the battlefront. No one was left, no one, that is, but Danny, a fuming Effi, and our solitary van. “If I had the keys, I would have left you here!” he told us, “and court-martialed you for defection in the face of the enemy.” Sheepishly, we climbed onto the vehicle and began looking for our unit.

The signs of war were all about us. Our first night was spent near El Al, an Israeli semi-military Nahal settlement that had been overrun by the Syrians and retaken by our forces. Burnt out tanks and armored vehicles, bodies of the Syrian dead lay about (one night I laid my head on one of these and had a peaceful sleep, thinking it was a comrade). We saw little face-to-face action for the simple reason that we were an artillery division and therefore expected to engage the enemy at long range. But we were fired upon, attacked by enemy planes and had to protect ourselves against an expected commando raid.

Our forces pushed the Syrians back. We heard of a battalion of young soldiers that belonged to our division and that was completely wiped out by the surprise Syrian attack on the first day of the war. As we penetrated Syrian territory, we saw dead Syrian soldiers shackled to their posts, with neither an officer nor a non-com among them. No wonder they fought so ferociously. One of our officers, Amram Blum, distinguished himself by taking up position on a high hill, exposed to repeated enemy attacks, and directing our artillery with a quiet confidence that remained unaffected by the barrages of artillery released to find and destroy him, or by repeated air attacks on his position.

### **Treating Battle Hysteria**

Camped near what was known as Tsir HaNeft (the Oil Route), a soldier was brought to us for treatment. He suffered from an extreme case of fear that evolved into hysteria. Drooling, his eyes glazed and his movements jerky, his hands frozen in what is known as the midwife posture, all he could say is that he wanted his mother. He had been involved in the war from its outset and had not slept in the last few days.

Effi sat him down, instructed us to give him a double dose of Valium and told him in a sharp, stern voice: “Listen young man. There is no way I am going to send you home. You're a soldier and you're here to fight. We're going to give you some pills. After that you are going to sleep. When you awake, you'll take your gun and your helmet and return to your unit. Is that clear?!” I wondered if the man could be of any use in such a state, but then – I was not the doctor. I administered the pills and waited.

The fellow collapsed in a heap and we carried him about with our gear for a good many hours. Finally, he stirred, Effi instructed us to wake him up. The soldier awoke, put on his helmet, took his gun and inquired as to how he can get back to his unit. "If we would have let him go," Effi explained, "he would have never come to himself. As it is, he stands a chance." Effi won his spurs in my eyes from that day.

One night I was ordered to accompany our scouting unit as it led convoys of men and materiel to their positions. The road on which we drove was targeted by the enemy and we were shelled, to no affect. I recall standing, hearing the shelling, noting the explosions al around us and the rain-like pelt-pelt of shrapnel as it fell to the ground. None of us was hurt.

### **A Cold Drought of Beer**

We were ensconced on a hill overlooking what had become a killing field for Syrian and Iraqi tanks in, we were told, the largest tank battle in history. A destroyed Syrian armored personnel carrier marked the site. All hell was loose. The tanks let off repeated barrages, shifting their positions frequently. The infantry exchanged shots. It was pure chaos. A canteen truck lumbered up to our position.

"What on earth are you doing here?!" we exclaimed.

- "Well, you see, this rich guy in New York wanted to express his support of the combat troops. So he offered to provide a cold can of beer for every combat soldier if we would get it to you. So here it is!"
- It was a hot, dry, harsh day and we had been engaged for most of its duration. I have no words to tell you how good that cold tin of beer tasted as we gulped it down before returning to fighting. Thank you, Mr. whoever you are.

On another occasion, we were positioned on one side of a hill and one of our units on the other. A Syrian Mig made a dash for us, shooting its machine gun as it descended. It swooped down on us, then lifted, flew over the hill and discharged its payload on the other side. Suddenly one of our own aircraft appeared, pursued the Mig and destroyed it. We were informed that the Mig had hit an ambulance and a medical team that belonged to a unit on the other side of the hill. Once the shooting stopped, and the politicians began to talk, we took a position in a clear, open space on the Golan and awaited instruction.

We were told that there were Syrian commandos in the area, so our watch was especially vigilant. One day our men caught two Syrian soldiers, apparently from the commando unit of which we had been warned. A dispute broke out: should the two be killed or should they not. Danny was all for killing them and offered to do so himself. Uzzi and I insisted they should not be killed, they were prisoners of war. We threatened to respond to any attempt to commit such an atrocity. Finally, the two were roughed up a bit and taken to be interrogated by Military Intelligence.

*To be continued*

### King David's Private Spa

Archeological digs conducted in the latter half of 2006 in Jerusalem have stumbled upon a tunnel that seems to lead to a pool used by King David himself. The dig in question is part of an extensive archeological effort conducted over the course of many years, in David's City, west of the Western Wall. In 2005, archeologists discovered a pool from the days of the Second Temple that was used by pilgrims to refresh themselves after the long journey.

Recently, the edge of a tunnel was discovered. Archeologists posit that the tunnel leads to a pool, originally located next to a fruit tree garden where King David and other kings of his dynasty used to bathe. To ascertain whether the find is King David's spa, it will be necessary to dig to the other end of the 30 meter-long tunnel, an undertaking that will entail some months of careful digging, and which cannot be conducted without permission from the Greek Orthodox patriarchy, who owns the land. So far, permission has not been granted. Only if the dig uncovers dateable artifacts will they be able to posit what lies at the other end.

### Ministry and Family News

Required courses Baruch must undertake in preparation for his MA thesis will be completed next year. At the present, while working on his commentaries on Romans and Matthew, Baruch is reading in preparation for writing his thesis, which will deal with Christian use of the Old Testament. **Matthew** has been edited and now requires an introduction and a three more chapters, after which it will be submitted to the publisher. **Judges** is ready for the editor, but the high costs involved in editing the work on Matthew and the considerable drop in the value of the Euro and the Dollar necessitate a few months' wait before handing it over to the editor. The **Romans** commentary is making excellent progress.

At church, the **young adults** are doing well. Two are about to complete their mandatory stint in the military and are expected to join hands in the work. Baruch has also been involved in some **counseling**, at the behest of the church's Pastor.

Bracha left on June 11<sup>th</sup> to visit the children and grandchildren **in the USA**. Baruch hopes to join her on July 12<sup>th</sup>, at which time they will embark onto a coast-to-coast trip by car to visit family, friends and supporters. They expect to return to Israel October 11<sup>th</sup>. In the course of the trip, Baruch will continue working on the extra chapters for the commentary on Matthew and on the commentary on Romans.

**Noam** has graduated onto an insulin pump that will help her control her diabetes. **Shlomit** expects to give birth in August (Bracha will be with her afterward to assist). **Keith** was asked to accept the position of Associate Pastor in the church he and Shlomit serve (Cleveland OH).

**Katya** has now returned to work after an extended maternity leave. Her mother and mother in law take turns caring for Maya while Katya is at work.

**Rose** has successfully completed boot camp and the military course which followed. She is now an accredited dental assistant and has been posted to a base in the south of the country. It is unclear as to whether she will be able to come home on most weekends. Toward the end of her military service, in 16 months' time, she will be required to sit the governmental exams and, if she passes, will leave the army with a gainful profession. Rose is considering studying to be a dental hygienist.

Your prayers are much appreciated, as are your letters. Over the years, I have received many offers to register as a "friend" on **Facebook**. Thinking of the site more as a closed site to family, I declined many such offers. Having learned something of the usefulness and of Facebook, I wish to invite all recipients of MaozNews to become my "friends" and to apologize to those of my readers who offered such a cyber-relationship in the past and were turned down.

TAX-deductible **support for our ministry** should be written to the order of **Berean Baptist church, P.O. Box 1233, Grand Blanc, Michigan 48480-3233**. Direct bank transfers may be made to **Franklin Bank, 24725 West Twelve Mile Road, Southfield, MI 48034 USA, Routing Number 241271957 Berean Baptist Special Account No. 567495976**. Please inform Max Sharp at Berean Baptist Church by email of the details of the transaction (including date, transaction number, sum and designated purpose) at [maxsharp@earthlink.net](mailto:maxsharp@earthlink.net) All contributions are tax deductible. Receipts are sent at the end of the calendar year or at the donor's request. Please do not send contributions directly to us – we consider accountability extremely important.

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