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In This Issue:

Baruch's Biography Continued, pg. 1

The Maozes in the US, pg. 3

Ministry and Family News, pg. 3

Baruch's Biography (continued)

In the previous installment we described some of the church's efforts to reach out to the needy. Here we continue that subject.

In addition, in the very early stages of our church life we contacted the Underhills, a missionary family working in Kenya and budgeted to participate in their support. However small that support might be in financial terms, it was meant to be the fulcrum for more substantial missionary involvement through a growing acquaintance with the real-life labors of a missionary family.

In the course of time, we were able to host the Underhills and expose the church to them. One of the couples worshipping with us, Andy and Shiri Vinten, were being watched and cultivated with a view of suggesting to them that they undertake a missionary calling. However, their lives took a different turn and that hope was never materialized.



In the course of time, at the initiative of Eitan, one of the Elders, we also took interest in the Teasdales, working in a remote area of Kenya and were able to send youth groups over to assist in the work while being challenged to walk closer to the Lord, as well as take an active interest in the spread

of the Gospel. Such embassages continue to date.

Sergei* and Alexandra* immigrated from Siberia with their toddler of a daughter and two teenage daughters. Family life was a total disaster and the two teenagers were profligate to an extreme. Efforts to tame Sergei's outbursts of rage and his well-meaning but childish manipulations continued for years. In the course of that time we were called to their home on numerous occasions and at all times of the day and the night. Many a time we'd find Sergei outside of the home, fuming,

refusing to return inside, Alexandra at her wit's end seeking to negotiate between her husband and her unhappy daughters, and the two girls crying out of anger, sorrow and frustration.

When Alexandra was diagnosed with terminal cancer in an advanced stage, it fell to me to inform one of the estranged daughters and coax her to come with me to visit her mother. Following that, the other daughter came. It was a painful period for all five, as Alexandra slowly waned, consumed by the dreadful disease, until she died.

That was a turning point in the life of the remaining family. Sergei moved in to live with his daughters, bringing his younger daughter with him. The two adult girls made awful choices of spouses, only to bear the terrible consequences. One of them drew near to God, turned from her sins and, in time, became active in the church. The other vacillated. Neither of them had parental wisdom and their children suffered consequently, continuing the cycle of sad individuals, ill-equipped for life.

We labored hard and long for this family, with few desired results, but for one: the youngest daughter has grown to be a delightful, godly young lady, active in the church, in love with God, eager to serve and far better adjusted than her two sisters.

Misha* and Tamara* were another couple that arrived at the church's doorstep. They had immigrated to Israel with different spouses, met, fell in love, divorced their spouses and married. Later exposed to the Gospel, they and their two young boys (one of whom was the child of a previous marriage) had been in fellowship in a church in Be'er Sheba.

They had an obvious love for one another and were a delight to know. Interviewing them, it became clear that Misha understood the Gospel and sought to lead a life compatible with it. Tamara was clueless. We therefore invited Misha to participate in Communion but asked Tamara to abstain. She was furious: in Be'er Sheba they were both admitted to the table. By what right had we decided to exclude her?! Our explanations fell on deaf ears. Nevertheless, the couple continued to attend church, and we continued to give the bread and the wine to Misha but not to Tamara.

Then, one day, Tamara asked to speak with the Elders. We met with her most willingly, and she narrated her story: She had indeed been deeply offended by our refusal to extend to her the right of Communion. But as she sat through repeated Communion services, heard the messages that preceded each and witnessed the solemnity of the proceedings, she began searching her heart and discovered to her dismay that she had not ever put her trust in Christ, never turned to God in repentance and never had an assurance of forgiveness. She had simply agreed on an intellectual basis that the Gospel was true. Consequently, she sought God's grace and now believed she had been converted.

We counseled her to wait a few weeks. Perhaps she had merely undergone an emotional experience. Perhaps she simply wanted to belong. Tamara readily agreed and it soon became obvious to us and to her family that God had done a work of transforming grace in her heart. It was a joy to invite her some weeks later to the Lord's Table.

She and Misha have brought up two lovely young Christian men. Misha's daughter, living with her mother, has also been converted, and all are active in the church.

Then there was Zenya,* her seven children and besotted husband. Zenya is an amazingly gifted individual. There is nothing to which she puts her hand in which she does not become highly competent -- often the product of self-learning. She suffered greatly at her husband's hand, bearing his infidelities, his waste of the limited family resources and his abuse. Finally, with our encouragement, she sought to put her life in order. Her husband was told he must either amend his ways or leave the house. If he chose the better course, he would be extensively helped. The church was more than eager to stand by him and to help Zenya in her efforts on his behalf.

But earnest promises were repeatedly broken and no real sign of change was evident. Finally, on the grounds of adultery, Zenya divorced her husband and began putting the pieces of her life back. It was a slow and painful process in which we were privileged to play some small part and God blessed her courageous faithfulness. In the course of the years, Zenya has been a faithful congregant and has made extensive contributions to the life of the church, where she continues to serve and to worship.

These were some of the ways we sought to reach out with the Gospel into the lives of the needy. We were greatly rewarded to see God glorified in the lives of these and other families, and grateful for the joy of seeing the fruits of the Gospel in their lives. These are the sweetest aspects of a pastoral ministry.

The Maozes in the US

Bracha and Baruch are presently in the US, visiting family and friends. Baruch has been invited to address a number of expository conferences and, on other occasions, to address the subject of the Messianic Movement. Your prayers would be appreciated.

Ministry and Family News

Translation of the New Testament is proceeding well. I am now in the first chapter of Ephesians. Last month I worked so many hours daily that I injured my hand (happily, my left hand), and that is now slowing me down, as I can only use my right hand for typing. If the pain does not recede by the time I return to Israel, I suppose I will need to see an Orthopedist. Your prayers are certainly welcome.

The edited version of **Matthew** has now been sent to me for review and comment. I hope to undertake that work, my travel program permitting, in the course of the trip, while continuing work on the NT.

I have completed writing **Colossians** (in English) and am seeking a publisher.

At my insistence, my work with the Young Adults has come to a close. I still preach in the church twice a month but deem it in the church's interest that I play a smaller role than I do and will continue to seek to buttress our Pastor and to encourage him to take the lead in this as in other matters of our church life.

The **Erez family** has bought a house in Bothell, Seattle, to be near the Richardsons. The Richardsons are expecting their third child in October and the Thompsons their third at the end of July or the beginning of August.

Katya and Felix Volenski are moving in two weeks to Quebec. They and their two children are presently with Rose in our home. **Rose** has undergone some difficult trials. Your prayers for them all would be greatly appreciated.

Bracha and I are well. We continue to be amazed at my good health and the level of my stamina (Bracha is NOT amused...), even after long hours of driving.

We have encountered some difficulties in obtaining a mortgage for **our new home** (a bridge until we are able to sell the present residence) due to our age and the lack of a salaried income. Our bank is working to establish a solution and, again, your prayers would be appreciated. We deem it absolutely necessary to reduce our expenses and a smaller home will enable us to do just that.

Baruch's sermons may be heard, among other sites, on Sermon Audio. Click this link:
[Baruch's Sermons on Sermon Audio](#)



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