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USA Travels

Bracha and I spent just under three weeks in the Seattle area, with two of our daughters (Avital and Tamar) and their families. We were reminded afresh of the sweetness of family life and moved to thank God for this wonderful, exclusively human experience. We are also reminded of the cost involved in pursuing our calling to remain and serve in Israel. Family is very dear to us, and our inability to be part of the girls' lives and that of their families is a constant thorn in the flesh. But we have no doubt of our duty and are seeking to make the most of the years still accorded us, primarily in writing. In the course of the trip so far, I have managed to complete (but for a few minor touches) a review and correction of my translation of Matthew and of Mark in light of editorial comments and to proceed in the translation of Cairns' laborious book on church history.

At the time of writing Bracha is in Seattle, investigating the likelihood of a surgical procedure being performed there while Baruch is making his way eastward to Valley View Ohio, and thence southeast toward Philadelphia (with a stop on the way to be with Shlomit and her family), whence we were scheduled to fly back home on October 5th. Developments (described below) are likely to force us to remain in the USA until the end of November, possibly, with a short visit to Israel to deal with pressing matters.

Our lawyer, having heard of our loss of the final payment on the house due to the burglary and the damages uncured in the course of the burglary, astounded us with the generous offer of a loan to the tune of our losses (\$85,000). We declined, of course. In the course of repairs we also discovered significant water damage (does that sound familiar?) due to neglect on the part of our contractor and that the electrical wiring system was not up to legally required standards. Needless to say, this has further complicated matters and left us with a still greater challenge. At present we have no home to which to return.

Consequent to the loss of about half of our monthly financial support, the theft and related damage, and the discovery of water damage, we have never been as financially impoverished or as financially insecure as we now found ourselves to be. Our savings are completely wiped out and we owe large sums. Blow after blow, the Lord has been testing us. I hope and pray we honor him by our conduct and by the motivations of our

heart. We seek grace to do what is right in his eyes and to provide all things honorable in the sight of men.

We were then further challenged with the discovery that Bracha has Stage One cancer and that she needs to undergo a (rather common but significant) surgical procedure. The situation was discovered and diagnosed in the course of our present trip. We are presently considering whether to have the operation in the US or in Israel. Israel excels in the quality of its technical medical abilities but human care is often sub-standard. What is more, our children are here, eager to stand alongside us while we seek to improve Bracha's health and to be a part of our battles.

Many kind friends have assured us of their prayers. Such encouragement is much appreciated. We are grateful to all who care for us and earnestly beseech you to seek the Lord's grace for us at this time. Pray, too, that if the Lord would allow, our bank will agree to render our bridge loan into a mortgage and add to it the sum we need to cover repairs. As stated in our previous newsletter, we do not wish the financial issue to be the major focus of attention. We seek the grace to glorify God in these rather challenging circumstances. Above all, please pray with us to THAT end.

The need to complete renovations on our home and the surgical procedure probably combine to force us to remain in the US for almost two months longer than intended, in which case we will leave for Israel in late November. That is contingent upon our having the surgical procedure done here rather than back home. During that time I expect to be available for preaching and to be able to travel for engagements, particularly in the East and West Coast. Interested churches are invited to enquire by writing to bmaoz@themaouzweb.com and to follow our news by the various media we employ.

Israeli Realities

Prime Minister Netanyahu is steadily losing altitude. The economy is faltering; the cost of living continues to rise; his Iranian policy has failed; relations with the US are strained; tensions increase on our borders with Lebanon, Syria and Gaza, as well as with the Palestinians; ISIS grows stronger in Sinai, threatening our south; the West is increasingly critical and the danger of boycotts has increased; the Orthodox are flexing their political and social muscles and the fourth Netanyahu Government includes Cabinet Members who command little respect. Governmental performance has little to commend itself. In spite of repeated Governmental efforts, the cost of housing continues to rise while unemployment increases and exports are threatened by European measures to boycott exports from the West Bank and pressure mounts to boycott Israeli products altogether. To top it all, the Prime Minister's conduct is being investigated by the police and the State Comptroller.

The Hebrew-speaking church in Israel evidences a growing sense of belonging, with a focus on national and cultural identity. While such identification is valid, even positive, it must never be allowed to modify the content of our message. There is a present danger that the church will put national identification on so high a scale that it will decline to exercise its intended role in society by associating with nationalistic aspirations, avoiding criticism of national sins and transforming the Gospel message into an instrument of

national arrogance. In Israel, that danger often lurks in the shadow of the conflict with our Palestinian neighbors. God-fearing morality demands the courage to disagree, sometimes, vocally and firmly, with a majority opinion or with Governmental policies. As is true in the West, the Israel church has been taken up by a fascination with issues of leadership rather than with the more important matters of humility and godliness, spiritual-mindedness, a walk with God and an increasing understanding of his word. A good deal of the preaching leaves much to be desired in terms of doctrinally informed biblical exposition. As a result, there is little real Bible knowledge and even less Bible understanding in the churches. Yet the people are eager, dedicated, seriously-minded and the church is growing numerically in an encouraging way. In recent weddings I was privileged to attend, I was astounded at the number of young people whom I have never met before. The days when I knew practically everyone in the churches has long passed.

Pray with us that God would bless the church in Israel with godly Pastors, committed to the ministry of his word and courageously faithful in the shepherding of his flock.

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COME LET US REASON TOGETHER (On the Unity of Jews and Gentiles in the church), P&R. This book presents Christ as the fullness of divine revelation and his work as sufficient for our whole salvation.

JONAH: A PROPHET ON THE RUN, Shepherd Press. A devotional commentary on the book of Jonah.

MALACHI: A PROPHET IN TIMES OF DISTRESS. A devotional commentary on the book of Malachi. This book is **presently unavailable**. Crossbooks, who published this commentary, has closed its doors. We hope to republish in 2016.

Baruch's sermons may be heard on [Sermon Audio](#)

To remain abreast of developing circumstances in Israel, visit the [MaozWeb](#) or "follow" Baruch on [FaceBook](#), [LinkedIn](#) and on [Twitter](#) (@BaruchMaoz).

Intermittent bulletins are produced as necessary



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