

MaozNews No. 92
Published every 4 weeks or so
October 2015

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Travels and Challenges

On October 16th, **Bracha underwent surgery** at the Medical School of the Washington University Hospital. The staff, from the receptionist to the surgeon were wonderful, to say the least. Wheeled into the operating theatre, Bracha engaged one of the anesthesiologists with the few words she knew in Hungarian and sang him the one song she had learnt in that language. The surgical team fell in love with her as she fell asleep. The procedure took less time than expected and the initial prognosis was excellent.

Avital and Tamar stayed with me in the waiting room until we were able to see Bracha in the recovery ward. A short while later she was taken to the hospital ward, accompanied by her two loving daughters and doting husband. I was able to spend the night with her. Within 8 hours following surgery she was walking. On the following morning, October 17th, she was discharged.

God's grace and the prayers of God's people sustained us. Many wrote, messaged and otherwise found ways to express their love and support. We heartily thank each and every one. Your affection has encouraged us at this time of sweet trial, strengthened our hand and assisted us in **trusting in him whose hand guides all**. We rest in his good providence as we await the final pathology report.

Bracha is forbidden to fly for about a month. In the course of this time my weekends are engaged in **ministry** and my weekdays with caring for Bracha, **writing and translation** and spending time with our family. I am able to accomplish quite a bit in terms of the work that is before me. This forced delay of our return home has brought to our hearts and minds in a fresh, painful way how very much we miss by being away from the family for most of the year.

God willing, we expect to return to Israel toward the end of November, following a long weekend with our daughter and her family in Pennsylvania.

News on our home is not what we would hope for, but then our hopes are often misguided because we do not have access to the mysteries of God's temporal intentions. His providence is best. **Repairs** are nearing completion, which means we will have a home to which to return. However, **the contractor** is challenging our claims and

disavowing responsibility and **the insurance company** accepts only limited responsibility for damages incurred in the course of the theft. We shall have to deal with these matters upon our return to Israel. We are grateful to God for the individual repairing our home, for our lawyer and for our insurance agent, each of whom have strenuously labored on our behalf.

The insurance company here in the US covered most of the value of the Equinox, “totaled” in an accident. We have replaced it. I have a new pair of glasses – one third of the cost that would have been required in Israel. We’re set to go!

Israeli Realities

Tensions with the Palestinians have erupted in a wave of violence, with Palestinians attacking soldiers, police officers and primarily citizens with knives, box-cutters, pistols, screwdrivers and pipe bombs. In one case a 13 years-old boy was one of the attackers (The Palestinian Authority President, Mahmoud Abbas, described him as “an innocent child,” “murdered” by Israeli forces. The young boy is alive and well, being treated in an Israeli hospital. He can hardly be described as innocent: two Israeli civilians, one of whom was a cyclist of the same age as his attacker, bear the scars to prove it).

Most of the attacks were perpetrated in Jerusalem, now flooded with soldiers, border police and police officers. Israel is floundering in its search for a resolution to the violence while Mahmoud Abbas is speaking out of both sides of his mouth, denouncing Israel on the one hand and vowing “to protect Al Aqsa” (one of the two mosques on the Temple Mount) and calling for Palestinian restraint on the other. Israel’s repeated statements to the effect that no changes are contemplated with regard to the Temple Mount and that Muslim interests will continue to be protected fall on deaf ears.

Palestinian frustration is the product of the continued political stalemate. For years, not a single step has been made toward resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict while Israel continues to encroach on Palestinian territory in the West Bank, increasingly rendering the creation of a feasible Palestinian State unlikely. Both the Israeli Government and the Palestinian leadership are responsible for this state of affairs. Both must change course and seek a reasonable compromise that will maximally take into account the concerns and interests of both sides, both of which must come to the realization that not all of their aspirations will be fulfilled. Perfect justice is beyond human reach; the “perfect justice” demanded by one side is a perfect injustice to the other.

What is clear is that any attempt to force both nations to live together in the context of a single political entity is foolhardy. It has not worked anywhere, and will certainly not work in the Middle East. A large part of the murderous vortex in our region today is the product of Western indifference to national identities: Shia and Sunna, Kurds and Alawites, Ethiopian and Eritrean, Berbers and Arabs, and so on. Britain, France and Russia simply drew lines in the sand, wholly ignoring centuries-old tribal and national entities, and laid the ground for the horror of recent events.

The church in Israel has had little to say in the course of recent events. It, too, is caught

up in the spiral of national concerns while experiencing the tension born of the conflict between Gospel standards and those of our nation. On an individual level, Israeli and Palestinian Christians reach out to one another. But they both tend to identify with the intransigent stance adopted by many in their respective nations.

Family News

Avital, Eran and family, now hosting Bracha and me, are busy with life. **Avital** works part-time in the Jewish Community Center while **Eran** is busy in his office at home with projects for Sandisk. **Noam**, who is doing very well at school, has begun looking at colleges. **Maya**, ever the social bug (in this respect, she reminds us of Shlomit) is proving her creative abilities while making good grades at school and Nadav has taken up football, which provides an outlet for his boundless energy and gives him an opportunity to develop manly skills.

Keith, Shlomit and family are taken up with church life. Keith is blossoming in his preaching and pastoral ministry. The church is growing, and some of the growth has been through new Christians whom the Lord has brought to himself. **Yonatan** surprised his parents with his first-ever asthma attack. He continues with his love of learning and his big-brotherly attitude toward his sisters. It was sweet to see him and Caytlin embrace spontaneously when I picked them up from their respective day-school classes. **Kaykay**, as we call her, is eager, happy and prone to moods as any lady-child while **Elinoris** threatening to walk any day now.

Tamar, Marcus and family are likewise blessed. Marcus received another promotion at work (Boeing). He seems set on a promising course while being sought by other companies. **Yotam** and **Avishai** love pre-school. Yotam is developing study skills while Avishai is having a whale of a time, and giving us some such as well. A recent exchange with his mother was as follows (Avishai is 4.5 years old):

Avishai: Mom, will you take me and Yotam to the park?

Tamar: I'd love to, Avishai, but it's hard for me to cope with all three of you in the park, especially since Eliya is just a baby.

Avitshai: But, mom, it would be much harder for you to cope with three bored children.... Why are you laughing, mom? I'm serious!

Eliya, like Elinor, is about to walk. She devours anything edible and is willing to test just about anything to see if it fits into that category.

Felix, Katya and the two girls are coping with the usual Fall colds and runny noses while Felix and Katya are both busy with their studies. They are encountering difficulty in finding a solid, stable church. **Rose** has commenced her first year of studies.

We continue in an effort to broaden our regular support base and make up for the loss of income following the withdrawal of a long-time supporter who provided about half of our monthly income. So far we have made little progress.

Founders Press has undertaken to republish my **devotional commentary on Malachi**

following the collapse of my previous publisher. **Colossians** (serialized on my Facebook wall) will be the next of my titles that Founders plans to publish. I continue to fine-tune my **translation of the New Testament** in light of editorial comment and to translate the **book on church history**. I've commenced initial research for a commentary on **Habakkuk**.

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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**. Founders Press will be republishing this work in 2016.

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

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