

**MaozNews No. 123**  
**Published every 4 weeks or so**  
**May 2018**  
© Baruch Maoz

**The Israeli Church, pg. 1**  
**Israel, pg. 2**  
**Ministry and Family News, pg. 3**

**The Israeli Church**

I was corresponding with a prominent Pastor of an Israeli church about trends evident among Israeli churches. His observation was, "Baruch, this will either make us or break us". Earlier, another well-known Pastor who enjoys extensive influence in the country, expressed the view that, "sooner or later, the church in our country will be divided between the true and the false in the Faith". I believe neither of them overstated the implications of the issues being discussed among us these days. The first has to do with the trinity, a truth that has often been contested in Jewish Christian circles and one which touches on the essence of our faith. A significant number of groups in Israel lay claim to the Gospel and insist upon their belonging to the body of Christ but either question or outright deny that God is triune. Messiah is perceived of as having achieved or been granted special unction and the Spirit is spoken of as an influence or a special divine presence, but neither is acknowledged to be equal in essence with true deity. One church leader, in defense of what he described as biblical truth, has spoken of the Son as "part" of God, as if God were capable of division. Some of the more theologically acute have nuanced their affirmation and denials by insisting that the Son is divine, yet when pressed will insist he is not God.

The second issue facing the church in Israel today has to do with the nature of the church and touches on the essence of how we live. Claims were being made to the effect that certain individuals in the country have apostolic authority, and that Israeli churches and evangelical organizations in the land are duty-bound to recognize their authority and submit to it. When challenged, explanations were offered to the effect that all such submissions should be voluntary (how can one be duty-bound to do something voluntarily?), and that present-day apostles do not have the same authority as did the Twelve and Paul.

What I find heartening is the manner and the spirit in which these two challenges are being handled. *Ad hoc* bodies emerged, which organized discreet gatherings in which the proponents of the doctrines, particularly of the second, were accorded kind and ample opportunity to clarify their position, hear reservations, weigh and respond to them. Conflicting views were expressed in a respectful manner, without personal

recrimination and a good deal of the argumentation was consciously based on the scriptures.

Until now, most theological disagreements were the occasion for personal affront and therefore degenerated into personal conflicts. The change is most welcome and is the only means by which true conversation can be held.

The issues have not yet been resolved. Agreement has not yet been reached and, possibly, will not be reached. If that is the case, the likely result will be a division into two camps, the one affirming the triune nature of God and denying the contemporaneous existence of apostolic authority, the other denying what the first affirms and affirming what the first denies. God's grace, time and your prayers will tell. Please do pray.

I've said this before, but it remains true: our refusal to heed lessons from the history of the church condemns us to repeat its' mistakes.

### Israel

The pace and potential import of events in Israel and along Israel's borders are such that anything written today might be old hat tomorrow. Israel's strategic response to Iranian tactical aggression sent a clear message to all who will hear. Iran sent an armed drone into Israeli airspace, in response to which Israel destroyed the launch and control position in Syria, operated by Iran, that sent the drone. Iran responded in turn by shooting some 20 rockets toward Israel, 16 of which fell in Syrian territory and four of which were intercepted by Israeli defenses. Israel then wiped out the Iranian military infrastructure in Syria by attacking 50 bases throughout the country. Syrian air defense batteries that shot at Israeli warplanes were likewise destroyed. So far, Iran has responded by verbal fire and fury, but its inability to respond in kind is evident to all. The expectation is that, for lack of a reasonable military option, Iran will resort to terrorism in one country or more.

Israeli moods have been buoyed by these events, as with America's opening of an embassy in Jerusalem (to my mind, the right step in the wrong time). At the same time, Hamas' orchestrated protests at the border with Gaza continue to occupy minds and hearts. The Palestinian protesters destroyed the pipeline which enables Israel to provide Gaza with fuel and wrecked extensive damage on the border entrance through which Israel provides the Strip with food, building supplies, medicines and the such like. It boggles the mind to think such action could in any way serve Gazan's best interests.

The international press has criticized Israel for what it described as "disproportionate use of lethal force" against those Gazans who tried to breach the border. One wonders how many Israelis need to have died to render Israel's response acceptably proportionate. Can you even begin to imagine the bloodbath that would have occurred had the mass of angry Palestinians managed to breach the border and reach any one of the Israeli villages and farms nearby? The claim that protests were merely protests, and peaceful at that is disproven by the repeated attempts to break through the fence marking the border between Israel and Gaza, by pictures of Gazans running toward the border with axes, firebombs and other weapons, and by the fact that Hamas admitted to orchestrating the masses, utilizing the presence of civilians to place IUDs along the border and beyond, the shooting incidents Hamas initiated and by the over 50 Hamas operatives among the casualties. Charging Israel

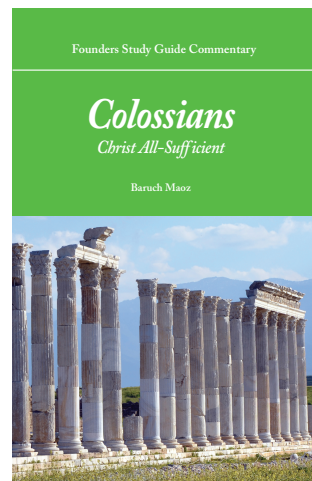
with "killing children" will also not do: what were the children doing there in the first place. Videos of children being forced to serve as human shields abound. Enough with the hypocrisy! Hamas' intentions were anything but peaceful.

### Ministry and Family News

Bracha and I are presently **traversing the continental USA**. So far we have driven from Mechanicsburg PA, via Chattanooga TN, El Paso Tx, Phoenix AZ, San Diego CA to Seattle WA. We will soon be on our way to Minneapolis MN and onward to the east (NJ) and the south (southern FL, IN, GA and Chattanooga TN) again, with a flight to Montreal interjected. As we travel, I'm busy with the **New Testament translation** and with another project I've been asked to undertake. Although once stricken with the flu and once with a heavy cold, we are well and have reason to believe God is blessing our travels.

My **commentary on Colossians** is available! Orders may be submitted to <https://pressFOUNDERS.org/shop/fsgc-colossians/> and with Barnes & Noble or Amazon. Reviews of this or others of my books would be helpful and much appreciated. Please do assist in this way.

Another way you can help is by requesting my books at your local Christian bookshop, encouraging them to carry my titles.



Our **church crises** continues and your prayers are still much. One brother has taken advantage of the situation to vent his spleen, enlisting others in his support.

**Keith, Shlomit and the family** plan to move to Chattanooga TN at the end of this month, following which Keith will be seeking secular employment as he labors to renew his health and strength. Your prayers are needed.

**Noam** has been accepted for studies in Gonzaga, one of the USA's best schools. She was also accorded a \$56,000 scholarship – we are immensely proud of her. **Maya** has opted to complete her high school education in a local college, thereby advancing her plans to study medical engineering.

**Katya's Maya** (8 years old) has been diagnosed with a form of shingles. Her mother, a nurse, questions the diagnosis, but the child clearly needs grace for healing.

Your fellowship in the Gospel is much appreciated.

In Christ by grace,

Baruch and Bracha Maoz

**You can help** by purchasing copies of Baruch’s books from Barnes & Noble or from Amazon, by asking for them at your local bookstore and **by posting reviews of these books** on Barnes & Noble or Amazon websites. Positive reviews help us sell.

**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. Founders Press.

**COLOSSIANS: The All-Sufficient Savior** a devotional commentary on the book of Colossians. Founders Press.

**The commentaries are suited for personal devotions and group studies**

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 [Twitter](#) (@BaruchMaoz).  
Intermittent bulletins are produced as necessary



Tax deductible **support for our ministry** should be written to the order of **Berean Baptist Church special missions account, 6705 Rustic Ridge Trail, Grand Blanc, MI 48439, Chemical Bank, 333 E. Main Street, Midland, MI 48640, Account 1148701325** Routing Number (ABA#): **072410013** SWIFT Code: **CHEMUS33**.

Please designate: For Maoz Ministry.

All contributions are tax deductible. Receipts are sent at the end of each calendar year or at donor’s request.

Please do not send contributions directly to us; we value accountability.

Funds sent for the ministry will be used exclusively for that purpose.

We reserve the right to use personal funds for the purposes of the ministry.