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Maoz Israel REPORT

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REUTERS

MILLIONS OF PROTESTORS DEMONSTRATED AGAINST EGYPTIAN PRESIDENT MOHAMED MORSI OF THE MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD MOVEMENT UNTIL EGYPT'S MILITARY OUSTED HIM. NOW HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF BROTHERHOOD SYMPATHIZERS INSIST THEY WILL CONTINUE TO DEMONSTRATE FOR MORSI UNTIL HE IS REINSTATED.

OH NO! NOT THE MIDDLE EAST AGAIN!

By Shira Sorko-Ram

Our outgoing Israeli ambassador to the U.S. made a fascinating, and I believe quite accurate, evaluation of the atmosphere that dominates the U.S.

"There is a great weariness now in America," says Michael Oren, "that is leading to a kind of neo-isolationism. In the past decade, this great nation has been through two difficult wars and a traumatic economic shakeup. So you have this exhaustion and cutbacks in the defense budget and a shrinking of the military and an aversion to any more overseas intervention.

Lawmakers are asking why send money to Egypt or the Palestinians rather than invest that money in a new bridge. Americans are tired of the Middle East. They don't want to hear about it, and they don't want to know what is happening in Egypt and Syria and Iran.

And what I am compelled to repeat here over and over is that when the helicopters took off from the Saigon embassy in 1975, the Vietcong did not chase the Americans all the way to Fifth Avenue. But it won't be the same with the Middle East. You can't run away from the Middle East, because if you run away from the Middle East, the Middle East will come running after you." (haaretz.com,11July2013)

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WHAT'S WRONG WITH EGYPT

Egypt is dirt poor. Poverty and filth smothers the city slums; infrastructure is non-existent. The peasant farmers in the countryside live much like their ancestors thousands of years ago. Fifty percent live under the poverty line, making about $2.00 a day. When I visited Egypt many years ago, it reminded me more of India than any other country I had been to. But today the masses in urban slums have had it. The problem is that there are two camps: the very religious and the less religious. Both are in dire economic straits and now they are at each other's throats.

The principle reason that millions of people have risen up against President Mohamed Morsi is because he made great economic promises. This latest revolution is all about promises that Morsi didn't – couldn't keep.

As columnist Caroline B. Glick of the Jerusalem Post describes it: "There are only three things knowable about the future of Egypt. First it will be poor. Egypt is a failed state. It cannot feed its people. It has failed to educate its people. It has no private sector to speak of. It has no foreign investment." (JP, 5July2013)

Given Egypt's dire economic plight, it is impossible to see how any government will be able to deliver on any promises – large or small – that its politicians will make.

A crying lack of investment, the death of tourism, and above all the need to feed and provide livelihoods for more than 84 million people every day - even Morsi's ouster will solve none of these problems, which seem too big for any regime to cope with." (Amos Harel, Haaretz, 4July2013)

THE ARMY

There are only two powers in Egypt: the military and the Islamists, explains Daniel Pipes, Middle East expert. The army with its half a million conscripts, has three times overthrown its leaders. The military officer corps has a vast and unhealthy control over the country's economy. They own somewhere between 15 to 40% of the economy. Even those are wild estimates. (Aljazeera, 15Feb2012)

The military's massive economic interests in Egypt are one of those secrets which is not really a secret. The military has, over decades, created an industrial complex that is well-oiled and well-funded. They produce everything from flat-screen televisions and pasta to refrigerators and cars. They own restaurants and football grounds. They are huge land owners in the country.

Their economic interest transcends all else: officers may disagree on other matters, but they concur on the need to pass these privileges intact to their children. Conversely, this materialism means that they will make a deal with anyone who guarantees its privileges. (www.danielpipes.org)

DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS?

There were many conspiracy rumors back in 2012 that the army actually helped the Muslim Brotherhood with money to buy votes in the "democratic elections" last year because then candidate Mohamed Morsi promised to not interfere with the army's finances.

Secondly, Dr. Michael Youssef, founding pastor of the 3,000 member Church of the Apostles in Atlanta, who was born in Egypt, said that the elections were anything but fair.

He insists that "in thousands of villages during the elections, the Muslim Brotherhood stood with guns outside the polling booths. And if a Christian wanted to go in to vote, they would say, 'You go in, and we'll kill you.' So hundreds of thousands of Christians couldn't vote." The Coptic Christians are approximately 10 percent of the 84,000,000 Egyptians.

Mohamed Morsi won the election by 51 percent.

The Salafists who are Islamists even more extreme than the Muslim Brotherhood came out of nowhere winning 25 percent of the vote. How? Salafist leader Tal'at Zahra called the democratic system "infidel," "criminal," and "out of the Elders of Zion." He cynically observed that "it is our duty to forge elections; God will reward us for this."

Salafis want one thing and one thing only: Sharia law. Now. They promote lawlessness – violence and terrorism. They have been heavy persecutors of the Coptic Church.

THE MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD AND THE EGYPTIAN PEOPLE

Egypt is not a secular nation. Islam is engrained and intertwined into every aspect of Egyptian culture. Seventy-four percent of Egyptians who favor Sharia law believe it should be applied to non-Muslims, and 86 percent believe that a Muslim who changes his religion should be executed. (Economist, 30April2013)

Many Westerners believe that the Muslim Brotherhood is a "moderate" Islamic movement. Perhaps in method but not in goal. While al Qaeda is willing to use every possible means of violence to establish Sharia law, the Muslim Brotherhood believes they can reach the same goal through elections.

In both movements, Sharia law and a world Caliphate is their raison d'etre. If you wonder what a Caliphate would look like, think Taliban. Think mandatory hijabs, hands chopped off of thieves, acid in the faces of women, instant execution for anyone thought to be an opponent of Mohammed or Allah.

But if the Egyptian people are so Islamic in their beliefs, why did they turn on Muslim Brotherhood president Mohamed Morsi? The answer is that it began to dawn on the poor that instead of delivering jobs and bread, as Morsi had promised, he gave them gas lines and electricity cuts. Morsi is now being accused by the army of concentrating power in the hands of the Muslim Brotherhood, sending the economy into free fall and failing to protect minorities.

THE LIBERALS

But for the well-wishing Westerners, here is a very important point to remember. The liberals might have started the protests, but when it comes to power, the liberals don't have it. They are not a solid front as is the massively organized Brotherhood. And these "liberals" don't like the U.S. They don't like Jews. And they don't want the peace treaty with Israel. Plainly, if anyone thinks democracy will spring from the current mess, he is dreaming.

Meanwhile the Muslim Brotherhood has plotted and planned its takeover of Egypt for 80 long years. They are not about to give up now. Moreover, at this writing, the U.S. and Germany are demanding that the Egyptians free Morsi from house arrest. Massive counter-demonstrations of Muslim Brotherhood activists claim they will stay on the streets until Morsi is returned to his presidency. One can only imagine what the future holds for the hapless Egyptians.

The renowned British American scholar of Islamic studies, Bernard Lewis, explained, "Democracy is a political concept that has no history, no record whatsoever in the Arab Islamic world." "In the West," he says, "we tend to get excessively concerned with elections, regarding the holding of elections as the purest expression of democracy, as the climax of the process of democratization." However he warns, "Consider, for example, that democracy was fairly new in Germany after World War I, and Hitler came to power in a free and fair election."

In our April 2011 Maoz Report, (before the elections were held) we quoted Lewis as saying, "As for the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, I don't think it is in any sense benign. I think it is a very dangerous, radical Islamic movement. If they obtain power, the consequence would be disastrous for Egypt." (www.maozisrael.org, see archives March and April, 2011)

Because the Brotherhood is so well organized and powerful, there can be no "democratic" government without them. They will probably run in the next election again, and they may win the presidency again. Or they may boycott the elections with the goal of making it an illegitimate vote in the eyes of the Egyptians and the world. Whatever they decide, their goal to bring Sharia law to all of Egypt is still before their eyes.

ISRAEL

Israel's greatest concern is that as Egypt grows more chaotic, al Qaeda terrorists will flood the Sinai desert – coming from both Gaza and other countries. The Sinai Bedouin are being radicalized by extremists and hundreds of mosques are mushrooming all over the Sinai. They threaten both Egypt and Israel's borders. For that reason, the Egyptian and Israeli military have been working closely together. The dangers are real. At this very moment, there is a fierce gun-battle between Egyptian soldiers and jihadists in process near the Israeli border.

AMERICA

The U.S. leadership and media do not yet grasp the threat posed by the Muslim Brotherhood; they continue to see the movement as a moderate one. In fact, a number of individuals from the Brotherhood work for the American administration – which means they are an influencing force. Rep. Louie Gohmert (R-TX) recently said, "This administration has so many Muslim Brotherhood members that have influence that they just are making wrong decisions for America." In July 2012, Rep. Michele Bachman (R-MN) led the charge, pointing a finger at top Hillary Clinton aide Huma Abedin. Bachmann's accusations were widely condemned at the time.

The only way to reverse Egypt's downward spiral into more hunger, poverty and violence, is through a genuine outpouring of God's Spirit on the land, a true revival. Only about 10 percent of the Egyptian Christians are Evangelicals. But they are crying out to God for revival. We who are from democratic nations can stand with them and know that when we pray for revival, we are agreeing with God's word. He has promised that Egypt will know the one and only True God. ■

CURSES AND BLESSINGS FOR EGYPT

A curse of chaos and violence will continually torment the country.

And I will stir up the Egyptians against the Egyptians: and they shall fight every one against his brother, and every one against his neighbor; city against city, and kingdom against kingdom. *Isaiah 19:2*

The Egyptians will worship false gods.

And the spirit of Egypt shall fail in the midst of it; and I will destroy the counsel thereof: and they shall seek unto the idols, and to the charmers, and to them that have familiar spirits, and to the wizards. *Isaiah 19:3*

For generations, the fate of the Egyptians is to live under fierce Muslim dictators.

And I will give over the Egyptians into the hand of a cruel lord; and a fierce king shall rule over them, said the Lord, Jehovah of hosts. *Isaiah 19:4*

There will be ruinous unemployment and poverty.

Neither shall there be for Egypt any work, which head or tail, palm-branch or rush [great or small], may do. *Isaiah 19:15*

There is coming a day when the Egyptians will cry out to the true God.

In that day shall there be an altar to Jehovah in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar at the border thereof to Jehovah.

And it shall be for a sign and for a witness unto Jehovah of hosts in the land of Egypt; for they shall cry unto Jehovah because of oppressors, and he will send them a savior, and a defender and he will deliver them. *Isaiah 19:19-20*

There will be a great revival in Egypt.

And Jehovah shall be known to Egypt, and the Egyptians shall know Jehovah in that day; yea, they shall worship with sacrifice and oblation, and shall vow a vow unto Jehovah, and shall perform it. *Isaiah 19:21*

Suffering will bring the Egyptians to receive healing from the true God.

And Jehovah will smite Egypt, smiting and healing; and they shall return unto Jehovah, and he will be entreated of them, and will heal them. *Isaiah 19:22*

A beautiful day is coming to the Middle East!

In that day shall there be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria; and the Egyptians shall worship with the Assyrians.

In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth.

NEW TESTAMENT POLITICAL PARTY!

Christian Arab citizens of Israel have just formed a new political party called *B'nei Brit Hahadasha*. It's a great name! In today's Hebrew, it could be translated, "The New Alliance." But Brit Hahadasha is the phrase for "The New Testament!" They are calling themselves "Sons of the New Testament!"

Ship captain Bashara Shlayan from Nazareth is the founder of the brand new party. *"The entire thing started from the fact that I wanted to get my nephew into the army and there were difficulties; the army really didn't want him to integrate. Today he is a major in a combat unit,"* Shlayan said.

"When I wanted my son to join the army, we decided to create a forum for Christian enlistment. We also invited priests, one of whom is the Church patriarch, Father Gabriel Nadaf, a Greek Orthodox priest from Yafia who preferred [our way] and said we were right."

For his backing of Christian recruitment, Naddaf was banned from entering Nazareth's Church of the Annunciation, and was threatened with being fired from his position in Yafia. The tires of his car were punctured and a rag with bloodstains was laid at his doorstep.

The Arab parties currently in the Knesset oppose Arabs serving in the Israel Defense Forces or in civilian service, and some of their members do not want Israel to remain a Jewish state. This new party, though, advocates allegiance to Israel as a Jewish state and participation in military or national service alongside most Israelis.

Shlayan's efforts have already begun to bear fruit: 90 high school graduates have joined the IDF in recent months, a number that may seem like a drop in the bucket considering the total number of 130,000 Israeli Christian Arab citizens. But it is a threefold increase compared to 2010. (www.thetimesofisrael.com, 11July2013)

The numbers are large enough to enrage Muslim Knesset Members like Hanin Zoabi and Bassel Ghattas who bitterly oppose the Jewish state.

The platform of the Sons of the New Testament Party includes full integration of Christians in all fields, peace with a democratic Palestinian state and all of Israel's neighbors, increased tourism and trade, and the return of Israelis who have left the country.

Shlayan said his party is a response to current Arab parties that do not meet the needs of Christians. Approximately 10 percent of Arab Israelis are Christian. One percent of West Bank Arabs are Christian. (The term "Christian" in this context does not necessarily mean a born-again Christian. The term characterizes a cultural Christianity into which a person is born.)

"You need to be like any citizen," Shlayan said. *"If you were in America, you wouldn't be an American? At least in Israel, those who stayed here have been given the right to be a citizen and to integrate. But Israel's first demand, which I support – and which needs to be understood – is that Israel is the home of the Jewish people."*

The violence against Middle Eastern Christians in the wake of the Arab Spring has likely pushed Israel's Christians to more publicly express opinions considered unacceptable in Arab society. Coptic Christians in Egypt have faced attacks on churches and murders of priests since Hosni Mubarak was toppled in 2011. In Syria, Orthodox and Catholics have been kidnapped, and Islamist rebels declare Sharia law on Christian villages that fall under their control. *"People see what's happening now in Lebanon, Egypt, and Syria,"* said Shlayan. *"They understand where we're living."* Indeed, Israel is the only country in the Middle East where the number of Christians is growing.

A similar process has taken place among Druze on the Golan Heights. According to government figures, 2012 showed a sharp several-hundredfold increase in requests by young Druze in the Golan Heights for Israeli citizenship, as they come to the understanding that Israel offers them a future much brighter and safer than neighboring states. (Ibid.)

This is an historic turning point with profound and far-reaching consequences for Israeli society. If the Christian party is successful, it will provide an alternative for that sector of Israel's Arab population that seeks full partnership in Israeli society, and which sees a Jewish democratic Israel as its home. (www.israelhayom.com, 11July2013) ■

ARI SORKO-RAM BLESSES CHINESE CHURCH LEADERS IN HONG KONG.

A SPIRITUAL CONNECTION DEVELOPING BETWEEN CHINA AND ISRAEL

By Ari Sorko-Ram

Three years ago I felt the Lord move upon my heart concerning the Far East. Our Maoz board, a few years back, had prophetically felt there would be a connection, especially with China.

So two years ago I begin studying Chinese on-line. Once a week I would contact my teacher through a video classroom and we would have an hour session and the adventure began. I spent many hours each week learning to read, write and speak Chinese.

Soon after, I had a "chance meeting" with a Chinese pastor from mainland China who was in Israel to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles. My desire grew for God to reveal to me how I was to be involved with China.

I was dissatisfied with the speed I was learning with only one-hour sessions, so I searched the Internet and found a program birthed out of the University of Beijing. Last summer I enrolled for an intensive one-month course there.

For centuries China has been a place of refuge for Jews and it has become clear to me, as well as many other people from Israel, that China looks favorably upon Israel – not a common phenomenon!

But I had to admit, I did not yet have a clear picture of what God had planned for me in China.

After a second year of once-a-week video studying, last month I was invited to teach (in English!) foundational issues concerning Israel and end-time revival to a conference of about 500 Chinese Christian leaders in Hong Kong, along with Asher Intrater and Ariel Blumenthal.

China is virgin territory. Today, China has 100,000,000 believers – certainly the largest Christian body by far in any given nation. Very few "replacement theology" ministers have touched this massive church. Chinese believers are hungry and open to the great truths in the Bible as to why Israel is important for revival and blessing in their own nation.

My trip to Hong Kong was stepping into new territories. After the first conference, I was invited to a second (Home Coming) as an observer and guest with 20,000 attendees from all over China. Here I met pastors and leaders who have oversight of hundreds of thousands and even millions of members.

As I watched the masses worship with total abandonment, I was swept away into the sea of praise and adoration of our Messiah and King Yeshua.

It is clear to me that the greatest blessing we Messianic Jews can give these precious Chinese believers is the revelation of God's plans for revival in Israel – and China! ■

20 ISRAELIS ATTEND THE MESSIANIC JEWISH CONFERENCE IN PENNSYLVANIA

ALL WE CAN SAY IS "THANK YOU!"

By Chaim Goldberg

No matter how many Messianic Jews I meet, each one of us wind up sharing a common memory; at one point we all thought that we were the only Jew in the world who believed in Yeshua.

It certainly happened to me when the Holy Spirit first knocked on my heart.

It's a favorite tactic of "the enemy." He loves to make us feel isolated, bizarre, and as if we are "in sin." He hopes this fear and embarrassment will get us to walk away from our brand new faith, or to live a life of secrecy and shame.

So you can imagine my shock and delight to arrive at my first "Messiah Conference" in Pennsylvania put on by the Messianic Jewish Alliance of America. To encounter over 1,000 Jewish believers, from all over the world, gathered in one place, was simply overwhelming.

Everywhere I looked was another Jew who professed faith in Yeshua. It was incredible! Where were all these people 18 years ago when I first came to faith?

I was privileged to attend this conference with a group of over 20 Israelis, some of whom were visiting the United States for the first time! The trip was organized by Maoz and funded by Maoz partners and the MJAA.

We were invited for a variety of reasons; to lead worship, to teach, to share about Maoz, but most of all we were there to serve as living breathing examples of God's miraculous power!

Let me explain.

It's one thing to read in a Maoz Report about Israelis coming to faith in Yeshua, it's quite another thing to see a group of over 20 of them walk through the door.

Some speaking broken English, some speaking no English at all, but each one shining with the Spirit of God and overflowing with His love and grace.

Everywhere our team walked, people literally stopped, stared, applauded, broke down in tears or reached out for hugs.

In addition to encountering hundreds of fellow Messianic Jews, it was also something rare and special to encounter so many lovers of Israel! Living in Tel Aviv and watching the news each day, you begin to feel like the most isolated and hated group of people on earth. You're told to be careful not to mention that you're from Israel, even when visiting countries like Jordan with whom we have a peace agreement. But here at the MJAA conference, saying you were from Israel was a badge of honor! This took some getting used to!

It was truly incredible to be greeted and received so warmly by the entire MJAA staff and all of those attending the conference.

They loved Ron Cantor's messages. They loved the worship music from our "Band from the Land" (our combined worship team from congregations all over Israel). They loved visiting our Maoz table and meeting our team. They loved us. And we felt it.

I could write thank you notes to all of you who made this trip financially possible. But that wouldn't begin to scratch the surface. Because the real gift wasn't the trip itself. The real gift was the experience of meeting so many other Jewish believers and so many lovers of Israel - and being showered with encouragement and blessings and prayers and love.

And so, on behalf of the entire Israel team, I say "thank you." To our Maoz partners and to the MJAA. Thank you. We come back strengthened in our faith and ready to press on, here in Israel. ■

Shalom Shira and Ari,

I am so happy to report that the team organized by Maoz did a wonderful job at the Messiah Conference both in worship ministry and speaking. It was very special to see the increasing integration spiritually and prophetically between the two communities represented. I really believe God is accomplishing far more than even we realize towards creating unity of heart and vision between the mainstream Messianic community outside Israel and the Israeli Messianic community.

Your worship teams had a strong presence throughout the conference both in the program and even offstage. I also noted that they were fully embraced as a part of the Messiah Conference family. I believe that we all felt that they were *mishpocha* and now find it hard not envisioning them with us every year.

I am also very encouraged when I see the Israelis responding positively to the Messianic vision and life as expressed at the conference. A picture is always worth a thousand words. Seeing how the Messianic community outside of Israel lives and expresses itself is something they can take home with them.

I had the wonderful opportunity of better getting to know your senior staff and team leaders and I must say they were excellent. Ron Cantor did a superb job as a main stage evening speaker. Of course, it didn't hurt that the Spirit of God also fell during his message! His wife Elana was the social glue, you might say, the ima (mom) of the team while Rechelit N. seemed to effortlessly manage the whole show. Congratulations.

Thanks so much for all you do and may the Lord give us many years of serving Him together for the restoration of Israel and the return of Yeshua.

We missed you and love you both! Hope to see you later in the year when I return.

Your friend,

Joel Chernoff
General Secretary/CEO
Messianic Jewish Alliance of America. . .
for the restoration of Israel

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THE MESSIANIC JEWISH ALLIANCE OF AMERICA CONFERENCE 2013

UNDERSTANDABLY, WE ARE PROTECTING THE IDENTITY OF THOSE DELIVERING BACKPACKS IN THE WEST BANK. THESE PICTURES WERE TAKEN LAST YEAR.

WE WERE GIVEN PERMISSION TO PUBLISH PICTURES OF THESE CHILDREN.

ARAB EVANGELISM IN THE WEST BANK

In the last few years, God has opened many doors to the Muslim world in the West Bank. (99% of West Bank Arabs are Muslims.)

God has raised up courageous brothers who are reaching Muslim families with the truth of the One True God and His Word in the Bible.

This August-September, we want to help provide 1,000 school backpacks which they will deliver door to door in the West Bank and in Israeli villages. These will be given to both families who have come to faith and also those yet to be reached for Christ.

What a fabulous opportunity to open the door to touch Muslim families with the Gospel!

The backpacks will have a Bible and other books for children ages six to sixteen.

Each backpack costs $20.80, including transportation for two teams.

This group has already raised $3,800, but they still need $17,000 to reach their goal of distributing 1,000 backpacks.

Maoz will send 100% of the donations received for the backpacks to this Arab ministry. If more than enough is received, our Arab brothers and sisters will prepare gifts for the very poor – another way to reach out to the lost with the Good News!

This is a marvelous opportunity to reach the Muslims in the West Bank! ■

JOIN US THIS SUMMER!

THE MAOZ ISRAEL **SUMMER** READING PROGRAM

As a Maoz partner, you can request a copy of our recommended reading for August-

The Fig Tree Blossoms

by Paul Liberman

Join us!

YOU WILL LOVE IT!

The fig tree is the Biblical symbol for the Jewish people. Since thousands of Jewish people are accepting Jesus as Messiah, it could be said that the fig tree is blossoming.

This book answers the following questions:

- What is stirring in Jewish hearts?
- What happened to Jews of the first century who believed in Jesus?
- Why have the Jewish people not recognized Jesus as Messiah for nearly 2,000 years?
- What is the real prophetic significance of the Jews being re-gathered in Israel?
- How is Jewish outreach different today?
- How are Gentiles a part of God's ultimate plan for the Jews?
- What is the future of Abraham's descendants?

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