



# אלהי מעוזי Maoz Israel

Founded by Ari & Shira Sorko-Ram

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## R E P O R T

Israel's Generals are asking:

# Is Syria Planning To Start a War?

by Shira Sorko-Ram

Living in Israel may be stressful, but living in Sderot, Israel, is really indescribable. Thousands of Kassam rockets stuffed with shrapnel have rained down on this unfortunate town of 23,000 citizens, mostly Jewish immigrants.

Although the town has been under fire for seven long years, lately the attacks have increased to such an extent that 10,000 of its residents have fled to friends and relatives in other parts of Israel. Many others would leave permanently but they know no one will buy their homes.

Sderot is just over a mile away from the Gaza strip and evidence of Hamas' and other Jihadists' Kassams is everywhere, on every street, in every neighborhood.

Anywhere from ten to thirty Kassams rockets fall every day. Lately schools are closed; few cars and no pedestrians can be seen. Children sleep in stifling, windowless bomb shelters, packed in like sardines.

Before the advent of Kassams, Sderot was



a quiet little community, home to several factories, hi-tech businesses, yeshivot (Orthodox Talmudic) schools, parks and a thriving business district. Today, 75% of small businesses are permanently or temporarily closed. Out of absolute need, adults rush out to buy groceries and rush home again. Not many have been killed, but the real toll is the permanent damage which can result from the mental and emotional deterioration of Sderot's citizens. (Metro, 1Jun07)

A repeating scenario goes like this: A few days ago a 10-year-old girl, Mayan, was sent across the street to bring a lonely neighbor over for the blessing which welcomes the onset of the Sabbath. Then the "red alert" sounded over the citywide public address system – the recorded voice of a woman calmly but urgently repeating "Color Red, Color Red," the code for an incoming rocket which is inevitably followed by a whistle and a terrifying

boom.

Mayan sat on the grass screaming and could not move until an ambulance crew arrived and calmed her down. Yet, officially, “there were no injuries.” The fact is that ambulance crews pick up numbers of adults and children who, when caught outside during an attack, simply freeze and fall to the ground wailing.

“Psychologists and mental health workers here describe a population that has become paralyzed by the terror of the last red alert and the dread of the next one...

“People are shaking, they can’t move, they are crying, sweating, and in a state of shock...it affects everybody – young, old, men, women, children,” say psychologists and counselors. (International Herald Tribune, 1Jun07)

Taking a shower is particularly stressful – as the running water may keep a resident from hearing the alert. (We remember when Iraqi rockets fell on Tel Aviv in 1991, taking a shower was very traumatic – especially for our children – as we only had seconds to wrap a towel around us and rush to our sealed rooms.)

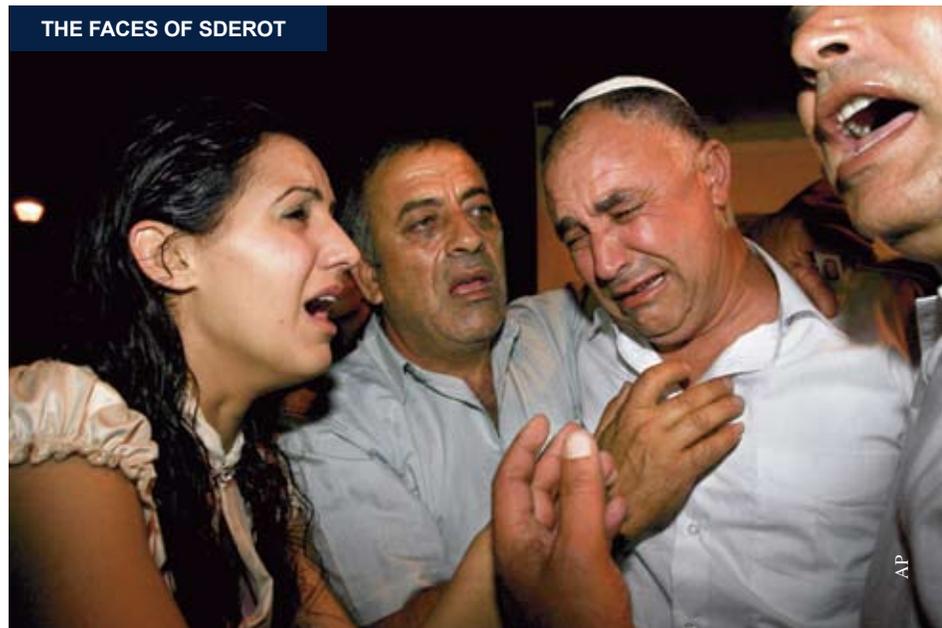
The aim of mental health workers in Sderot is to prevent post-traumatic stress disorder from setting in, a potentially chronic condition that can cripple lives. However, at the moment there is no “post” because there is no end in sight of Kassams randomly crashing down on Sderot any time of the day or night. (Ibid.)

The Mayor of Sderot stoically reflects, “I suffer here so that the Tel Avivians can sit at cafes in peace and quiet. This is the People of Israel. This is our part in history.” (Jerusalem Post, 31May07)

Some \$50 million is being spent on reinforcing schools in and around Sderot. For cash-strapped Israel the price is high, but there is no other choice if children in war are going to be able to continue school.

## SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS

Rabbi Mordechai Eliyahu, once the Sephardi chief rabbi, calls for dire action to stop once and for all the rocket attacks from Gaza. He opposes a ground troop incursion into Gaza that will for certain result in many casualties of Israeli soldiers. Rather he advocates carpet bombing the general area from where the Kassams are launched, citing the Psalm, “I will pursue my enemies and apprehend them and I will not desist until I have eradicated them.”



Far right politician, Strategic Affairs Minister Avigdor Lieberman, also suggests a strong response. He says Israel should bomb Gaza after every Kassam rocket strike. In his blog he writes, “Even after Israel pulled out of the very last inch of Gaza they [the Palestinians] chose to use it as a launching ground for attacks against Israeli towns and civilians.”

He advocates shutting off the water and power in areas in Gaza where Palestinians fabricate their rockets and weapons. And he suggests bombing Gaza’s extremely affluent neighborhood, Rimal. He urges that “the decision makers will pay the price for attacking Israel, not the innocent [Palestinian] masses.” (Ibid. 1Jun07)

## REASONS FOR ISRAEL’S RESTRAINT

Of course, there is little chance of any of these methods being activated. Indeed Israel has shown extraordinary restraint in the face of these devastating and incessant attacks – for a reason. According to sources in the Israel Defense Forces, the army is not currently recommending a major ground offensive in the Gaza strip because of the fear that war in the north might break out this summer.

This argument, according to the respected Haaretz newspaper, is rarely mentioned officially because Israeli intelligence analysts are still uncertain as to whether Syrian President Bashar Assad really intends to start a war or is merely trying to pressure Israel to resume peace talks.

One thing is clear to Israel’s military: Syria is preparing herself for war through extensive troop training and military arms purchases. As a result the IDF believes it must be ready for this possibility and if Israel were to become entangled in a military offensive on the southern front, it would impair its ability to defend itself against Syria. (Haaretz 1Jun07)

## AN ALTERNATIVE: PEACE TALKS?

Should Israel enter into peace talks with Syria? Should Israel offer the Golan Heights to Syria in exchange for “peace,” whatever that may mean? Some voices are saying, “Yes.” What they really mean is, “Call Syria’s bluff!”

The key question is, “Why is Syria hinting that she wants to hold peace talks with Israel?” The apparent answer is that Assad is desperate to deflect attention from the massive condemnation leveled at Syria by the world community because of Syria’s evident participation in the assassination of the former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri – a popular politician who was determined to get Syria out of Lebanon.

The United Nations has voted to establish a tribunal to find and prosecute Hariri’s killers. Syria and her allies fought hard against the UN decision although Assad denies any involvement in the killing. In short, all signs point straight to Dictator Assad. The charge by the world body is serious enough that Bashar urgently needs to find a distraction that would bring him in out of the cold. Is this the reason Assad wants “talks with Israel?”

## SHOULD ISRAEL CALL SYRIA’S BLUFF?

Since the possibility of peace with Syria seems so remote and insurmountable, Israel is weighing whether or not she should simply call Assad’s bluff. Negotiating with Assad would allow all the world to see that he will never give up supporting terrorist organizations.

Or would it? When such negotiations are begun, many Israeli politicians are afraid that world pressure might bare down on Israel to force her to give away the Golan Heights simply in exchange for a piece of paper signed by Dictator Bashar Assad.

“There are lots of serious questions about Bashar, his re-

# ISRAELI POLITICIANS WEIGH PROS AND CONS

The few Israeli politicians who believe something good could come out of such negotiations – if Assad is serious – propose the following benefits:

Syria is the prime sponsor of Hezbollah in neighboring Lebanon and the conduit of rockets and arms to them, many originating in Iran.

Syria also is home to the headquarters of Hamas and Islamic Jihad, listed as terrorist groups by the United States and the European Union.

Syria, which is predominantly Sunni, is Shiite Iran’s only state ally. To pull Assad out of the Iranian orbit and return Syria to the more moderate Sunni world of Egypt, Jordan and even Saudi Arabia would be a major strategic

victory.

Peace between Israel and Syria would remove the chance of an attack from neighboring Syria who has modern fighter jets and heavy, accurate missiles.

The fact is that many Israeli politicians would give Assad the Golan Heights in exchange for her breaking off partnership with Iran and bringing a halt to her arming Hizbullah, and making peace with Israel. However, it is not only this writer who says, “Fat chance!” Alas, there are few Israeli citizens that really believe Assad is serious about peace with Israel. Dictators must always have an outside source of perceived danger to keep their own people unified around their cause, and Israel is it! ■

gime, his intentions and his capabilities,” says Itamar Rabinovich, a former Israeli ambassador to Washington, “and to walk unprepared into a negotiation with an Arab leader can have disastrous results, as we saw at the second Camp David [when Clinton tried to negotiate a peace agreement between Arafat and Barak].”

### CIVILIANS PREPARING FOR WAR

While the politicians weigh the next move, the army is preparing itself for the real possibility of war with Syria

and/or Hizbullah as soon as this summer. Extensive military training exercises have been implemented and Israel’s Home Front Command plans to launch a publicity campaign to prepare the public for war.

“Our job is to prepare for an all-out war,” said Col. Hilik Sofer, head of the Home Front Command Population Division. “We prepare for a wide range of possibilities since it doesn’t make a difference where the threat comes from.” (Jerusalem Post 31May07)

Hamas has Kassams that could reach as far as Ashkelon. Hizbullah’s rockets can reach to Hadera south of Haifa. Syr-



SYRIAN BASHAR ASSAD IS EVERYWHERE.

ISRAEL’S PRIME MINISTER EHUD OLMERT VISITS THE TROOPS GUARDING THE ISRAELI - SYRIAN BORDER ON THE GOLAN HEIGHTS.

WHAT  
WILL  
IT  
TAKE?

The question is, what is it going to take for Israel to turn back to God? What will open the eyes and ears of Israelis to believe the words of Moses?

**Yeshua said, “For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?” John 5:46-47**

But how much destruction will have to take place in Israel before the people who are called by His Name leave their stiff-necked ways and give their hearts and their lives to their God?

Here is what Moses, the man of God, wrote to his people:

**And the Lord said to Moses... “Then My anger shall be aroused against them in that day, and I will forsake them, and I will hide My face from them, and they will be devoured. And many evils and troubles shall befall them, so that they will say in that day, ‘Have not these evils come upon us because our God is not among us?’”**

**“And I will surely hide My face in that day because of all the evil which they have done, in that they have turned to other gods.”**



ia's missiles can reach anywhere in Israel. And Iran will soon have nuclear weapons that could cause a major city to disappear in a minute.

The University of Tel Aviv holds regular seminars in crowded auditoriums with experts lecturing on the different aspects of security. Recently the subject undertaken was: "What will Tel Aviv do if and when the bomb drops?" Arguments among audience members broke out during the lectures, punctuated with bursts of nervous laughter.

Israel is coming to grips with the awareness that the entire country must prepare for a missile attack. Once again, in the

long history of the Jewish nation, holocaust sits on the horizon.

### IF IT WERE NOT FOR THE LORD...

For believers there is hope. We know the end of the story: Israel will not be obliterated. In fact, one day, in Jerusalem "the Mountain of the Lord's House shall be established on the top of the mountains," or kingdoms of this world, "and all the nations shall flow to it."

But what will have to happen in the interim to cause Israel to turn to their King? ■



SYRIA BUYS EQUIPMENT FROM RUSSIAN ARMS AGENTS.

BEAUTIFUL MT. HERMON, THE HIGHEST POINT OF THE GOLAN HEIGHTS, OVERLOOKS MUCH OF NORTHERN ISRAEL.



Moses continued: **For I know your rebellion and your stiff neck. If today, while I am yet alive with you, you have been rebellious against the Lord, then how much more after my death?**

**For I know that after my death you will become utterly corrupt, and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you. And evil will befall you in the latter days, because you will do evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke Him to anger through the work of your hands."** Deuteronomy 31:17-18, 27, 29

But praise be to the Only True God, Moses did not stop there! Days before his death he recorded the promise:

**For the Lord will judge His people  
And have compassion on His servants,  
When He sees that their power is gone...  
Rejoice, O nations with His people;  
For He will avenge the blood of His servants,**

**And render vengeance to His adversaries;  
He will provide atonement for His land and His people.** Deuteronomy 32:36,43

Atonement awaits Israel through God's own plan which He made available through His very own Son. What will it take for His people "**who have no money**" to bow before our God and buy "**wine and milk without money and without cost?**" What will it take for His people to accept the free Bread of Life?

Yeshua, our Messiah, gave the answer. He told us that many in Israel *are* ready to turn to Him – if they can only receive faith by hearing the Word of God.

**Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, that they are white for harvest.**

**Already he who reaps is receiving wages, and is gathering fruit for life eternal; that he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together.** John 4:35-36 ■

**Want to know how to effectively pray for Israel? Request our weekly prayer letter via e-mail. Please e-mail us at [maozisrael@maozisrael.org](mailto:maozisrael@maozisrael.org)**



# "I'M FROM THE NEW GENERATION OF ISRAELI BELIEVERS"

By Arieh as told to Rachel Rachewsky

**M**y first memories are of my childhood in Belarus, the Former Soviet Union. Because my father left home when I was one month old, I was raised by my mother along with my older brother.

Father would come to visit us, but it was often unpleasant, as he would arrive at our house drunk and begin to quarrel with our family. My mother is Jewish, but was raised in a completely secular home, as were most Jews in the Communist era.

When I was five or six years old, an acquaintance witnessed to my mother and she found her Savior, Yeshua her Messiah. We found a Messianic congregation and met other believers, but at the time I did not really understand a whole lot about the Bible or faith in God.

As problems increased with my father, Mother found it increasingly difficult to make a living as the conductor of a children's orchestra. When I was seven years old, my mother decided that the best life for her and my brother and me would be to immigrate to Israel. Why Israel? Because the congregation we were attending in Belarus spoke of God's favor on the Holy Land and our Jewish people. So then our

whole extended family of fifteen decided to make aliya.

When I arrived in Israel everything felt so strange. It was summer when we got off the plane, and we stepped into a heat wave that I had never experienced before, coming from Belarus.

We moved into a small town outside of Tel Aviv and everybody started talking to me but I didn't understand anything when I entered the third grade. But there was another student whose parents were from Russia, and he spoke some Russian, and helped me get started with Hebrew.

The other thing that was so strange to me was that in Belarus, all my classmates sat very quietly and respectfully when our class was in session. But in Israel, the kids were yelling and goofing off, with not much respect for the teacher. Within a year I was able to speak Hebrew and be on the level with the rest of the kids. And I can say that students in the tenth grade where I am now are much quieter than the kids were in grade school!

After about four years we moved to Jaffa, a neighborhood in Tel Aviv, to be closer to our congregation. However I, myself was not that interested in following Yeshua. Faith was not something alive in my heart. I would go to the meetings more to please my Mom but I didn't really understand what I

was doing in the congregation.

I had one friend from school, who was not a good influence on me. Among other things, we used to steal the metal symbols from cars. This went on for a while until one of our teachers caught us.

But the turning point in my life happened at the age of 13 while preparing for my Bar Mitzvah. I was studying with my pastor, Ari, and the things he told me really began to stir my heart. It was then that I started asking questions such as why was I going to the congregation anyway? Or, why should I follow my Mom? Why do I need God? In fact, was I really sure there was a God?

When Ari explained to me the importance of God's covenants with Israel, and more specifically God's Covenant with Abraham, it suddenly made sense. What spoke to me was the

came friends with the youth in our congregation, there was a 'twist': He was suddenly surrounded by friends in school, while before he had few. He became like a light, a magnet."

I started sharing about my faith in Yeshua with my new friends in school, but I didn't know exactly how to explain all aspects of my faith. So one Friday evening I invited some of them to our congregational building for social games, where Motti and others could meet them and talk with them in a deeper way. And so the seeds were planted.

I play basketball in the team of my neighborhood in Jaffa and I am so glad I am not the only believer there. The other guy is from another congregation in Tel Aviv. I can only say it is a great blessing to have another believing friend on the team. When things don't go so well, we support each other in prayer.



fact that God promised to make a great people of Abraham and that actually Israel was to be a blessing to all the nations of the earth.

Motti, our youth pastor, says he was actually following my progress from the side, watching as I started to change quickly, even during the preparations for my Bar Mitzvah. He says I became more mature and even the way I prayed changed, from an 'obligatory' kind of prayer to a deep, serious way.

I found that I began looking for fellowship with believing youth and for activities to do together. After I cut ties with that friend who influenced me negatively, I searched for people I would really enjoy. I wanted friends who would have a good influence on my life.

I found that when I met my new friends with our youth director, we always had something new to do, and it was never boring, the way it was when I was with my unbelieving colleagues from school. With believers, it is different. We support each other in prayer; we even share secrets we cannot share with unbelievers. It has helped me a lot. Because before, I felt alone in this world, and with the help of my believing friends I saw I was not alone.

Motti wanted to add this to my story: "After Arieh be-



About my dreams for the future? I would like to see more holiness among the youth. I think that we should talk more about holiness. My school friends talk about sex all the time and then there is the internet and TV which is full of sex. I try to tell my unbelieving friends that it is wrong to be sexually active outside of being married, but they do not understand. I ask them what they would gain from being with girls now, but they don't get it.

For sure, I believe music is a powerful tool that influences the youth. All the popular songs for teenagers speak about the same dead things. Many speak of sex and none speak about God.

I would love to see a place where I could bring my unbelieving friends to listen to "clean" music, a place to take them out of the boredom of the streets. When teens are bored, they do stupid things, and I would like to see a place that would attract the youth – through music. . . a place with praise and worship, teachings, fellowship – through fun activities.

I see a place with a stage, people coming in because of the music they heard from the outside.

I would love to see all Israel being saved. . . I would like to see revival!

## A Will: Is it necessary?

Someone has determined that in a lifetime the average person spends more than 97,000 hours building and putting together an estate. The same person spends less than four hours determining the disposition of his or her estate.

We procrastinate, or documents are put in place and almost forgotten until a critical life event occurs.

If you need a will or need to update the will you already have, do so now. A few minutes of planning can make a world of difference for those you love - family, friends and charities.

You can invest in Israel and make a lasting contribution to the spiritual return of the Israeli people to their God and His Lamb until the Messiah Yeshua returns.

Consider including Maoz Israel Ministries in your will.

“I will bless those who bless thee.” Genesis 12:3



Spring flowers in Galilee.

Hertzel Ein Eli

In the U.S. or Canada, call Jim Morrison at Maoz 800-856-7060.  
In Great Britain, call Stewardship at 020-8502-5600.  
You will receive comprehensive advice concerning endowments to Maoz Israel Ministries with no obligation.