

# The Goodman's Blog

## Chapter 95

December 2020

# ALIYAH IN OUR 60's FROM ARLINGTON HTS, IL TO CAESEREA, ISRAEL (Part 95)

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*Howie and Suzanne Goodman were valued members at Beth Judea until they decided to make aliyah in 2009. The Goodmans have agreed to provide us with a blog on their experiences as new olim in Israel. Though we continue to miss the Goodmans, we can all look forward to reading about their adventures in Israel through their blog.*

## Aliyah in Our 60's – December 2020 - Part 95

So, now what? The election is over. We are wondering what is going to change with Israel and the U.S. after 4 productive years with Trump. President Abbas has already indicated the US should return its embassy to Tel Aviv. What else may change in the Middle East? Below are thoughts from contributors to *The Jerusalem Post*. Here are some possibilities:

1. Trump's "Deal of the Century" is dead. It won't be used before the inauguration and certainly not afterwards.
2. Settlement Annexation of West Bank will not occur as Biden believes it is illegal.
3. The U.S. Embassy will remain in Jerusalem since Biden was one of the original signatories to the move. However, other countries moving their embassies may not occur as there will be no initiatives by the US government.
4. Israel will be considered the key factor to gain a peace agreement. Biden and Obama both believed Israel was responsible for no movement on the agreement because of the settlements.
5. The Palestinian Authority will be revived. They were on life support. Saudi Arabia, UAE, and Bahrain have indicated the Palestinian Authority needed to be more flexible.
6. Support of Israel will continue in UN by the United States, but not without scrutiny. If Susan Rice becomes Secretary of State, past performance in the Obama administration could indicate a rocky road.
7. The Iran deal will be rejuvenated, although Iran has stated they won't renegotiate. They will ask for much more.
8. President Abbas is 85 and may not be able to wait out the Biden Administration as he did Obama and Trump.
9. Would President Elect Biden believe the pre-1967 lines are the correct boundaries for any peace agreement?

All of this tells Israel it must count on Israel. We appreciate the U.S. but realize we not only must fight our military battles without outside troops, but also, become financially independent.

In 2010 Bahrain, Princess Fatima bint Khalifa received medical treatment in an Israeli hospital. This may have helped pave the way for the normalization deal between the two countries a decade later. Minister Ayoub Kara was Communications Minister at that time and helped to arrange this medical treatment at Haifa's Rambam Hospital. This was handled in a very discreet manner and was known only to the princess, her husband, himself, and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. She was very sick, and they believed that she could be treated best in Israel. After she was released from the hospital, Kara helped the couple settle in an Israeli hotel for a month. Prior to their return to Bahrain, Kara asked how they could help Israel. At that time, they were asked to support a new vision of expanded Israeli relations with the Gulf.

Palestinians refuse to recognize Israel as a Jewish state. However, because we are a Jewish state and follow the belief that *pikuach nefesh*, or saving a life, is primary over all else, that the PLO Secretary-General Saeb Erekat is being treated at Hadassah Hospital in Jerusalem. Erekat is suffering from the corona virus. Dozens of Israelis from across the political spectrum protested outside the hospital with signs that read, "let him die." Rather than asking some favor, Defense Minister Benny Gantz has allowed him to be treated without demanding anything in return. Should Israel be a state that denies medical treatment? How can it do so if the Jewish state is meant to be a light unto the nations? Israeli medical teams for decades have been providing humanitarian assistance to countries around the world. During the first and second intifadas and the subsequent Gaza wars, Jewish and Muslim doctors left their politics at the door and treated both terrorists and victims alike. During the Syrian Civil War, thousands of badly injured Syrians were carried across the border into Israel field hospitals. *Pikuach nefesh* is a basic principle of Jewish law and sets a basic standard of ethical action during the coronavirus pandemic.

Unfortunately, Mr. Erekat died November 10th of COVID complications. He was the Palestinians' Chief Negotiator going back to Arafat. One might ask why PLO Secretary-General Saeb Erekat had to go to a Jewish Israeli hospital. It must be a compromise to his dignity to seek help from a Jewish-sponsored hospital. Are there no hospitals under Palestinian Authority rule to which he can turn? If his father was gravely in 1947, before the establishment of the state, he would have turned to the same hospital. The situation was the same under British rule. The Arabs never succeeded in developing a civil infrastructure, while the Jews did. At that time there was the Jewish Yishuv, with comprehensive self-government, a renowned university, renowned hospital, labor unions, and a national health system, community elections, and self-governing society. This is the current situation. Three days of mourning have been announced by the Palestinian Authority.

Lack of Arab funding is not the reason for the absence of infra-structure. The Arab entity in Judea and Samaria today does not lack the financial resources to set this up. Its government has received huge amounts of financial support. Since the Palestinian Authority was established, their economy has been flourishing to a far greater extent than any neighboring Arab state. The Palestinian Authority has received four times more money per capita than Europe received under the Marshall Plan. None of this funding has gone toward building hospitals. Erekat was probably being treated by more than one Arab doctor and by many Arab nurses as they work as part of Hadassah's excellent medical staff.

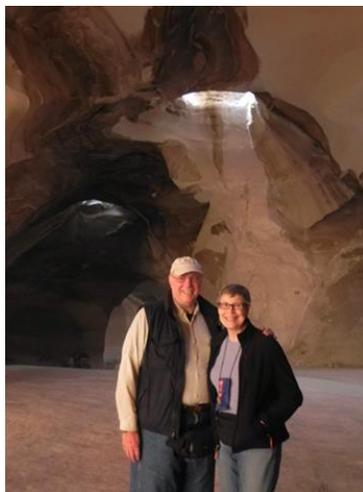
Israeli-Arab enrollment in Israeli universities is beyond their relative proportion in the Israeli society. Why are there no first-class medical facilities and no first-rate universities governed by the Palestinian Authority? Why is there no competent apolitical police force? Eight percent of the PA budget goes for "pay-for-slay" subsidies supporting terrorists and their families. However, what happens to the other 92 percent of the additional funds constantly flowing from Europe and elsewhere into Palestinian NGOs? Maybe this is a question Erekat should have been asking as he checked into a Jewish-sponsored hospital.

New coronavirus cases peaked at the end of September in Israel. However, as of November 10, new cases are dropping. We are coming out of the second lockdown and trying to open more carefully this time. Small shops are being allowed to open, and children up to grade four are back in school. Restaurants are open for take-aways and delivery. Our local health club continues to be closed, and we miss it greatly. Our entertaining has stopped almost completely, as we are trying to be careful. The situation is starting to wear on everyone, but we are grateful that no one we know has caught the virus and testing is started on the new vaccine that has been developed in Israel. Hadassah Hospital has ordered 1.5 million doses of the new Russian vaccine, and this needs state approval.

Our synagogue, Congregation Bet Israel, in Netanya has continued to operate in the Zoom mode while restrictions have prevented services at the shul. We have the Havdalah, Shabbat services, and did the high holidays services on Zoom. It was available to anyone. However, as most nonprofit organizations, our synagogue is very close to the red line. Our membership has dropped, and we have lost our income from those renting our facility not being able to use it. Prior to Corona, we were working on replacing our roof and central heating and air conditioning. We managed to raise the equivalent of a hundred thousand dollars from our members and friends for this purpose. Our goal now is to raise 36,000 sheckels or a little over 10,000 dollars to help us keep operating for the next six months or until we can get our renters back. Some of Beth Judea members have enjoyed fund raising zoom presentations of places in Israel. If you would like to help a Masorti synagogue in Israel, your donation would be greatly appreciated. This can be done through <https://masorti.org/betyisrael-netanya/> which allows claiming as a tax exemption. We receive nothing from the Israeli government, unlike many Orthodox shuls. We are the only Masorti synagogue in Netanya, which has a population of over 200,000. Hope you can help us.

We hope the bright lights of Hanukkah will shine on us and lead us out of the darkness of this pandemic. Happy holidays!

### *Suzanne and Howie*



*-The opinions expressed are those of the authors and may not represent those Congregation Beth Judea- ed.*

*We hope you enjoy this installment from the Goodmans, who have graciously agreed to blog for our congregation their experiences as Olim in Israel. If there are specific topics that you are interested in hearing about of if you just want to stay in touch with Howie and Suzanne, you can reach them at: [HOWIEG@aol.com](mailto:HOWIEG@aol.com)*