

Well, my friends, after three years, Israeli-Palestinian peace talks are to resume next week. I have to tell you, I love the peace process. How could I not? It's older than two of my children, one of whom is starting college in the fall. I have known the Peace Process longer than I have known Sammy and Rachel. It's like a part of the family, the sort of part of the family you thank God did not come from your side, and that you're glad lives very, very far away.

Getting the Palestinians back to the negotiating table was not easy. Not surprisingly, they had a precondition. Too bad the part of ObamaCare that eliminates preconditions has not gone into effect yet—no, wait, that's *preexisting* conditions. Never mind. The Palestinians had a preexisting precondition. They wanted nearly two hundred Palestinian terrorists released from Israeli prisons. Somehow, Prime Minister Netanyahu got the Knesset to agree, although Economic Minister Naftali Bennet, who opposes the release, made a reasonably accurate assessment of the situation. He said, “In the past we freed a terrorist for a live soldier, later hundreds of terrorists for one live soldier, later terrorists for a dead soldier; and now -- a hundred terrorists for a process. We are showing the world that, for us, everything is negotiable.” I think his chronology is somewhat off, but his point is well made.

Most of us agree with Bennet to a greater or lesser extent. We fear that Israel is getting nothing in exchange for these prisoners other than the resumption of a non-productive process. Relax. Tonight, my sermon is called “The Top Ten Benefits to Israel for Releasing Palestinian Murderers.” They are things you will never learn from the mainstream media, so I am proud to be able to bring these ten benefits to you tonight. Here we go:

10. Hamas concedes that covering calls for the destruction of Israel in their charter with clear Scotch tape is not the same as removing them.
9. Abbas agrees to take down the picture in his office of Helen Thomas's face photoshopped onto Sarah Netanyahu's body.
8. Hamas agrees to take two 15 minute breaks every 8 hours from firing rockets into Southern Israel.
7. Abbas agrees to drop the charge that humanitarian food packages given to Palestinians by Israelis had been secretly laced with nutrients.
6. Hamas admits they thought returning to the '67 borders referred to 1867, which was still not good enough for them.
5. Abbas admits that despite his mistaken belief that Raj Kutrappalli is secretly Palestinian, his favorite character on Big Bang Theory really is Howard Wolowitz.
4. Hamas concedes that the Yehiye Ayash exploding cell phone would have been the big winner of the 1,000,000 *dirham* and headlining a show in Ramallah if there had been such a program as “The West Bank’s Got Talent.”
3. Abbas agrees to drop his demand for the Maccabiah Games to have an Arafat Bobble Head Night.

2. At the negotiating table, Abbas has to stop pretending he thinks Bibi's name is pronounced "Bozo."

1. Hamas agrees to change its slogan from "We Love Death as Much as the Jews Love Life" to "We Love Death as Much as the Jews Love Cinnamon Babka."

So there you have it, my friends. What seems like a one-sided deal really is quite beneficial to Israel, especially the one about changing the Hamas logo wording to cinnamon babka, because, unbeknownst to Hamas, many Jews prefer chocolate babka.

And now let's get very, very serious for a moment. I have no inside information. I have only a prayer, a hope and a dream. But seriously, why would Israel do this? Perhaps there was a conversation. One that almost no one knows about. Perhaps it went something like this: The President of the United States said something like, "the Palestinians won't come back to the table unless you agree to the prisoner release. I know how hard it will be to sell that to your government. But if you can do it, then you have my word that if you have to act against Iran, the United States will have your back."

I do not know if that happened, but I can tell you that I am not the only one speculating about the possibility.

At any rate, Netanyahu agreed. The talks start next week. And let's face it: if we did not get the Palestinians to the table by next week, negotiating peace between Israel and the Palestinians could have taken a really, really, long time.