

The Torah Any Times

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Rabbi Dovid Goldwasser

Navigating Thorough Challenging Times

Over the course of the past weeks, we have witnessed acts for the Jewish people by the Jewish people which are simply incredible. We have seen heinous and treacherous acts, and on the other hand, we have seen acts of untold greatness and generosity.

We are a nation characterized by three unique aspects: bashful, merciful and kind (Yevamos 79a). We are people who will do favors, be generous and bestow kindness on others even when there would seem no reason that we should. I had the great privilege of hosting Dr. Dov Reichman last Shabbos, and he told me that they are treating the terrorists in the hospitals in Israel! The very people who attempted to inflict merciless harm on our people... and yet what does Israel do? How does the Jewish nation respond? Provide them with medical attention at the highest level. It's mind-boggling, but we are a nation whose kindness and compassion for human life is unparalleled.

Hashem has told us to be a light unto the nations, and that light needs to spread love and generosity. Who do we see coming to the aid of earthquake victims, when lives are buried underneath rubble and crumbled buildings? The little nation of Israel sends their experts, first and foremost.

So what did we do in just a mat-

ter of hours?

We mobilized across the nation and across the world. Whether it be food, drinks, supplies or other provisions needed for the soldiers or otherwise, we stepped up with commitment and responsibility. In Los Angeles, they learned how a certain group of soldiers liked a particular energy drink, and without delay, they bought hundreds of the energy drink and shipped it off to Israel!

That's what the Jewish people are made of: brotherhood, love and peace.

The people in Israel have gone above and beyond to help the troops. One of the greatest weapons we have unlocked is the secret power of prayer. People all over the world have stopped their regular schedules in the middle of the day, and joined in communal prayer.

There was a wedding held on a military base. Where else do you see a nation readying for war and yet there is a wedding? A soldier preparing to head to the front lines, and gets married to his kallah, surrounded by soldiers dancing and singing and rejoicing together. Where do you find that?

Where do you see soldiers, away from their families, and yet they gather to recite the Friday night prayers? One soldier needed to keep watch, and there he was, crouched, with his gun pointed outward from the wall to ensure they would not be attacked. And what is he doing?

TheTorahAnyTimes is a publication of



Compiled and Edited by Elan Perchik

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Singing Lecha Dodi.

The amazing power of our holy soldiers of the Israeli army is beyond words. The *derech eretz*, the respect and dignity, in which they carry themselves is singular. Acts of great kindness have been carried out across the globe just so it should bring more merit for all our soldiers and people of Israel. And the soldiers have been telling us to keep up the prayers and keep up the learning, whether it be the boys in yeshiva or girls in seminary or anyone else in any capacity. Keeping steadfast to the mitzvos will give them strength.

We are not after war. We are after peace.

There is a wonderful family by the name of Kessler. The Kessler's had a daughter, Gila, who was in the army. She assisted everyone by playing beautiful music, and the children loved her. She was the most peaceful person you could find. It is heart-breaking that a terrorist snuffed out the life of Gila hy"d.

So many people wrote in their sentiments and sorrow, and a book was put together. *Divrei Torah* was included along with other reflections. I received an inscribed copy from Gila's parents, who are dear friends of mine. When I took a look at it, one of the pages read as a headline: "It's very difficult to grasp that she is not with us." Everyone whose life was tragically ended... it is difficult to grasp that they are no longer with us. May Hashem avenge their blood.

I was filled with great emotion and pride when I noticed displayed along the buildings in Manhattan posters with pictures of the hostages. Included are their names and ages. Three years old, five years old... a young mother, twenty two years old... a young father, twenty eight years old... an elderly grandmother, eighty two years old. When we see this, we spring to action. It compels

us to think about what each of our personal obligations are toward our brothers and sisters at this time.

The Gemara (Sotah 49b) tells us that one of qualities which will be apparent in the days preceding Mashiach will be the absence of truth. In order to arrive at the truth, it is very rare.

So what happens when we hear things and yet we need to get to the truth? The truth is something everyone needs to hear.

Just this past Monday, the mayor of New York City, Mr. Adams, asked me to attend a prayer vigil and speak on behalf of the Jewish community. I was very privileged to be there, and Mr. Adams was quite emotional given all that has happened. All of a sudden, after I finished speaking, a man tapped me on the shoulder. "Rabbi," he said, "I'm a Moslem." "It's very nice to meet you," I said. "It's my honor." "After I listened to your speech," he continued, "I feel like maybe I should go to Israel and help them out."

Hearing this, I thought to myself that this is unreal. As the saying goes, the truth will set you free. A man like this has a truthful understanding of the situation at hand, and recognizes that we all need to contribute. We are all human beings living in this world, and we all need to make the world better.

The Navi Yeshayahu tells us, "They will beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation will not lift sword against nation and they will no longer learn the art of war" (Yeshaya 2:4). This is what the prophet told us. We are a nation who looks only for peace. And we know that in the future, there will be peace as we read in all the prophetic writings.

Right now, we have been thrust into a war which is the antithesis of our nature, and it demands that we go about our day with a heightened

sense of self-awareness and our spiritual selves. All of us need to become better people. The soldiers need us to be a part of their efforts and be connected to them. Everything that we do has an immediate effect on all of the soldiers and people of Israel.

Rav Avigdor Miller zt"l often said that when you do something in New York, it can affect somebody in California, someone in Australia, someone in London, someone in New Mexico, someone in Afghanistan, and someone in the Holy Land of Israel. We have a higher calling now. We must step up and take whatever challenge we have at hand and personally improve.

Interestingly, the word for war in Hebrew is *milchamah*, whose gematria (numerical equivalent) is 123. Similarly, the words "Am Echad," one nation, also equals 123. At times of war, we forget our differences, we bind together, and we feel the heartbeat of one nation. We seek the commonality and goodness in each other, and using this power, we become capable of destroying the power of evil in the world.

Each one of us can be an ambassador of peace. Likewise, everyone in the world from among all the nations can do the same. The Jewish nation is a small nation, and any and all support helps to ensure better days ahead with the help of the Almighty.

Rabbi Gamliel Rabinowitz

Your Father's House

Parshas Lech Lecha reminds us that we must move in life and cannot stand still and stagnant in the same place. In fact, this week, I gained great chizuk. I don't feel well and I am weak with heart issues. But then I saw in the Chumash that Avraham Avinu at age seventy-five began venturing out and fighting. I'm seventy-four, so I got chizuk! The Torah gives us perspective and we can't lose ourselves when we see what the Torah tells us. Avraham Avinu was seventy-five and he still was full of strength!

Hashem should help that we are able to leave from "our land, our birthplace and our father's house." The Torah is not just telling us about a past event; it is instructing us what to do nowadays and how to live in our world.

Why does the Torah say that first we leave our land, when in fact the first location that we would leave would be our father's home?

Hashem was giving us a lesson in chinuch (educating children): you start with the easier ideas and lessons first, and then the harder ideas and lessons. The hardest is to leave one's father's house because we are connected to our fathers. Therefore, Hashem first said to leave the land, and only then the state and then his father's house. Even though the opposite is true—the home is left first—nevertheless, Hashem first told Avraham the easier feat and then the more difficult one.

It's a lesson with regard to chinuch: a father should not begin

with that which is most difficult. Start with that which is easier, paralleling the way Hashem started the Torah with Bereishis and Shemos, which is mostly comprised of stories. When we reach Sefer Vayikra, we reach the more intricate laws of Korbanos (sacrifices). It's a lesson for us: Don't tell your children to do the most difficult things first.

When it came to Avraham Avinu, Hashem began with the less difficult part of his traveling away. Even though his father, Terach, was an idolator, it was still difficult for Avraham to leave. This sheds light on another insight. Usually, a child at his bar mitzvah begins to feel, "My father doesn't understand..." In fact, the Satmar Rav used to say, "It's one thing when children think they're smarter than their parents; the problem is when they think they're older than their parents."

That's what Hashem was teaching. First leave your country and state. The last part to leave should be your father, and that's because we don't leave our father. For Avraham Avinu, he didn't deem it easy to leave his father even though he was a gentile. Avraham had compassion on his father, despite what his father stood for. Kibbud Av was of the highest degree of importance to Avraham.

I heard from my father, as well as from R' Zundel Kroizer and R' Yisroel Yaakov Fischer in the name of the Chofetz Chaim: Kibbud Av Ve'im escorts a person until his death. My father always used to say: What does it mean "Ur'eh banim levanech sha-

lom al Yisroel"? At times there are issues between a father and son. When, though, is there "peace"?

When the son has his own children and has issues, then he runs to his father. "Ur'eh banim levanech"—When your son has children—then there will be "Shalom al Yisroel"—peace. Children won't often fully understand and appreciate their father until they themselves have children.

This Shabbos, we should think about, "Lech lecha... el ha'aretz asher er'eka—Go to the land that I shall show you." We should ponder, "How can I get closer to Hashem?" This Shabbos is auspicious to come closer to Hashem. We let go of the physical ties and constraints of our lives, and we become closer to Hashem! This is the essence of Shabbos Lech Lecha.

May Hashem help that we have Heavenly protection, and may Hashem help Klal Yisroel who are in need of great salvation. We should unite ourselves, and arouse mercy that we all be helped, and that no one should be harmed, neither physically nor in spirit. May Hashem also have mercy on the outcast neshamos that they all return to Hashem, without exception.

Thank you for reading this edition of The TorahAnyTimes Newsletter. If you've enjoyed, please let us know – we'd love to hear from you! Email info@torahanytime.com.

Rabbi Yaakov Rahimi

The Tzitzit that Saved

Just this past Monday, I spoke with Rabbi Chaim Zaid, head of the Yeshiva Nachalat Shlomo, located in the Kiryat Herzog neighborhood of Bnei Brak. He personally verified the following true story.

Last week, a student of Rabbi Zaid called him and mentioned that she has six thousand shekalim saved up in her savings account. However, she decided that she wanted to use the money to buy pairs of tzitzit for the Israeli soldiers. Rabbi Zaid at first tried determining if she was fully intent on using her entire savings account toward this, for after all, it was all the money she had set aside. "Perhaps you can donate a portion of it, and leave some for yourself for whatever purposes you need." But the girl was adamant. "I want to use all of it for tzitzit for the soldiers," she confidently told Rabbi Zaid.

Appreciatively, Rabbi Zaid took the donation and purchased boxes upon boxes of tzitzit. But then came the more complicated part. Rabbi Zaid was intent on having these tzitzit brought directly to the soldiers stationed in the south. Of course, the areas there are fraught with danger and little access is granted to civilians. But with resolute purpose and mission, Rabbi Zaid arranged to

have police escort that would safely bring him near the border of Gaza.

As Rabbi Zaid was making his way to the south, the car came to a slow halt. Dozens of police officers and helicopters stood by, patrolling and guarding the area. Rabbi Zaid was told with no uncertain terms: he couldn't continue past that point as it was too dangerous. With no recourse, Rabbi Zaid opened the trunk, opened one of the boxes with tzitzit, and began handing each pair out one by one to the nearby officers, soldiers and other military personnel.

Noticing the commotion and catching sight of Rabbi Zaid handing out pairs of tzitzit was one soldier. The problem was that he stood on the other side of the barricade. Raising his hand and signaling that he too wanted a pair of tzitzit, Rabbi Zaid grabbed hold of a pair and threw it above the barricading wall.

As the tzitzit made its way over the wall, it eventually landed on the floor on the other side in a light crumple. And then shots went off, ringing not in the far distance, but immediate area. Rabbi Zaid stood still, frozen.

The pair of tzitzit, which had been thrown over, had landed on a bush,

under which a terrorist had been laying low. When the pair of tzitzit, however, made its way down, the terrorist had gotten startled, unsure what was being hurled in his direction. His immediate reaction was to move and stand up, at which point the nearby Jewish soldier caught sight of him and put a bullet through him.

Who knows how many Jewish soldiers were saved from that one pair of tzitzit?

This story is one of many, and it speaks to where our focus should be concentrated these days. We must be on a campaign of increased Torah study and performance of mitzvot. Every mitzvah you do has an unbelievable effect on the world. Do not hesitate or doubt how much power you have. Learn more Torah for the soldiers, do more mitzvot for the hostages, focus more on Tehillim, Shabbat, candles on Friday night, Tefillin, kindness. Everything you do makes for a difference in the Land of Israel.

Don't stop. Keep on going.

With G-d's help, the Jewish nation will see a tremendous salvation, and we will all be safe.



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Bring Them Home!

Names Of Hostages In Gaza

רותם בת אריאלה	עדי בת ז'קלין	מיייה שם בת קרן	דורן בן אלה	אליקים שלמה בן אבישג	אביב בת דורון
רז בת דורון	עדי מרגלית בת אילקה	מיכאל בן רחל	הילי בת מרגרט	אלכס בן אוקסנה	אביגיל בת סמדר
רחל בת פלינה	עדי מרגלית בת אילקה חנה	מעין בת רחלי	הירש בן רחל	אלרואי בן איריס	אבינת בן דיצה תרצה
רינת בת מכולה	עדן בת אורין	מתן בן מרים	יואן בת שושנה	אמיר בן רחל	אביתר בן יסמין
שגב בן גלית	עדן בת עליזה	נאור בן לבנת	זיו בן תמר	אמיתי בן חפצי	אברהם גלעד בן ליאת
שהם בת רחל	עדי בת שושן	נבו בן מירב	חוה בת סלי	אמנון סאן בן שרה	אבשלום בן רותי
שוהם בן פזית	עומר בן אסנת	נוי בת חווה	טל בן ניצה	ארתור אהרון בן מינה	אדר בת דניאלה
שושן בן רינה	עומר בן שלי	נווה בן עדי	יהונתן בן לימור	בכור חי בן הדס	אופיר אנג'ל בן יואב ושרון
שחק ב'ין מירב	עומרי בן חגית	נוי בת חווה	יהל בת עדי	בן בן זהבה	אופיר בן רישל
שנהב בת רחל	עומרי בן רעיה	נועה בת לאה	יובל קים בת מרים	בן בן ניירית	אופק בן אתי
שקד בת בלה	עידו בן כוכבה	נועה בת ליאורה	יוחאי בן זיוה	בן בצנצין בן מזל	אור בן אבי
שרון בן לימור	עידן בן דלית	נועה בת מלי	יונתן בן מרים	בניהו בן אתל	אור בן סימה
שרון בת מתוקה	עידן בן תמר	נועם בת הדס	יונתן חי בן לינדה	בנימין בן אליזבת	אוראל בן מירב
שרון בת רותי	עינב בן פנינה	נחמן בן דגנית	יסוף בן חנה	בר בן ג'ולי	אורי בן עינב
תאיר בת עדנה	עמית בת דנה	ניצן בן ורד	יורם בן מרים	בר בת נילי	אוראל בן נעמי
תומר בן סיגל	עמית בן לימור	ניצן בן יסכה	יפתח בן שושנה	גיאת יעקב בן לבנה	אוריה בת חני
תמר בת יאירה	ענבר בת יעפתי	ניצן בת רונית	יצחק אייזיק בן ציפורה	גילי בת אורנה	אושר בן רחל
תפארת בת שרה	ענר בן שירה	נעה בת נצחונה	ישי בן טליה	דביר בן חגית	אושר בת תקווה
	קארין בת אוסנת אסיה	נעם בן טליה	לאור בן מיכל	דוד קרול בן גרציה	איזבלה בת נטלי
	קארין בת לובה	נעם בת שרון	לוטן בן נעמי	דור בן איריס	איילת בת רחל
	קים בת מירי פינס	נעם ליאל בן חייטל	ליאל בן נרדית	דור בן בתיה	איתן אברהם בן אפרת
	קשת בן נטילה	סאן בן שרה	ליאל בת יונית	דור בן גלית	איתן בן חגית
	רום בן תמר	סהר בן תמר	לידור בן בת אל	דור בן ורד	אלון בן עידית
	רום בת מר	סטיבן בן אינה	לידור בן גיטה	דור בן שרונה	אליה בן אודיל
	רומי בת מירב	סטרוסטה תומר בן אורלי	לילך בת רינה	דורון בת שרה	אליה בן בת שבע
	רומי רוחמה בת שרה	סיגל בת אני	ליעם בן שרית	דורין אטיאס בת טלי	אליהו בן חנה
	רוני בן לילך סנדרה	סיגל בת אסתר	מוטי בן מזל	דן ססי בן שושנה	אליהו יעקב בן הדסה עדי
	רוני בן ברטה	סתיו בת אתי	מור בן לינדה	דניאל בן אינגה	אלינה בת יבגניה
	רועי בן ניצה	עדי בת אהובה	מוריה אור בת סנדרה	דניאל בת אלה	אליסיה בת לודמילה

Aviv Bat Doron
Avigayil Bat Smadar
Avinatan Ben Ditzza Tirtza
Evyatar Ben Yasmin
Avraham Gilad Ben Liat
Avshalom Ben Rutli
Adar Bat Daniella
Ofir Angel Ben Yoav V Sharon
Ofir Ben Rishel
Ofek Ben Etty
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Ohr Ben Sima
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Doron Bat Sarah
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Dan Sasi Ben Shoshana
Daniel Ben Inga
Danielle Bat Ella
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Hili Bat Margaret
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Vivian Bat Shoshana
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Lidor Ben BatEl
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Leelach Bat Rina
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Motty Ben Mazal
Mor Ben Linda
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Michael Ben Rachel
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Matan Ben Miriam
Naor Ben Livnat
Nevo Ben Merav
Noi Tiferet Bat Chava
Naveh Ben Adi
Noi Bat Chava
Noa Bat Leah
Noa Bat Leora
Noa Bat Molly

Noam Bat Hadas
Nachman Ben Deganit
Nitzan Ben Vered
Nitzan Ben Yiskah
Nitzan Bat Ronit
Naah Bat Nitzchonah
Noam Ben Talia
Noam Bat Sharon
Noam Liel Ben Roital
San Ben Sara
Sahar Ben Tamar
Steven Ben Ima
Strosta Tomer Ben Orty
Sigal Bat Annie
Sigal Bat Esther
Stav Bat Etty
Adi Bat Ahuva
Adi Bat Jacqueline
Adi Margalit Bat Elka
Adi Margalit Bat Elka Chana
Eden Bat Oreen
Eden Bat Aliza
Adi Bat Shoshan
Omer Ben Osnat
Omer Ben Shelly
Omri Ben Chagit
Omri Ben Raya
Ido Ben Kochava
Edan Ben Dalit
Edan Ben Tamar
Aynav Ben Panina
Amit Bat Dana
Amit Ben Limor

Inbar Bat Yifat
Aner Ben Shira
Kareem Bat Osnat Asya
Kareem Bat Luba
Kim Bat Miri Pines
Keshet Ben Natalya
Rom Ben Tamar
Rom Bat Mar
Romi Bat Merev
Romi Ruchama Bat Sara
Roni Bat Leelach Sandra
Roni Ben Berta
Roie Ben Nitzah
Rotem Bat Ariella
Raz Bat Doron
Rachel Bat Plina
Rinat Bat Mechula
Segev Ben Galit
Shaham Bat Rachel
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