

# The Torah Any Times

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## Rabbi Zechariah Wallerstein zt"l Screaming My Name

Years ago, I was in Florida for a few days and it happened to be raining. Given the inclement weather, my wife and I decided we'd go to the Sawgrass Mills mall for a few hours. We left Miami at 2:00 knowing that Mincha was at 5:20.

But, not native to Florida, I got so lost on my way driving to the mall that we only got there at 4:55. Knowing that Mincha was in a short while, I phoned the shul near Fort Lauderdale and asked how long it would take me to get from the mall to the shul. "40 minutes," I was told. But that wasn't good. "Can I make it in 25 minutes?" Despite my question, I had the feeling that the answer was no. "It 4:55 and it's rush hour. It'll be at least 40 minutes." Now I knew that I don't miss davening at a minyan and especially to miss it because I decided to go shopping. How could this happen? I had left for the mall with enough time to make it to Mincha, except I had gotten very lost and here I now was.

"Why don't you ask if there's a shul that's closer to Sawgrass?" prompted my wife. Asking the shul secretary, I was told that there is a Lubavitch shul in Plantation. "I don't know if they have a minyan every day though," she said, "but it's closer to you—15 minutes away." That sounded like a great idea. I'd get there in time. Still unsure if they'd be having a

minyan, I called the shul just in case. No answer, but I did find out the address. At this point, I figured that I should go on the off chance that they did have a minyan, and even if they didn't, at least I'd be able to daven in a shul which is preferred to davening at home. So off I went, dropping my wife off at the mall.

The shul was located in a strip mall near a Walgreens in Plantation, which I had never heard of. I had gotten lost going to Fort Lauderdale, and had the feeling that I'd have no chance finding this small shul in 25 minutes. So I went slowly, driving from one block to the next and asking at each corner how to get closer to the strip mall near Walgreens.

Time wasn't stopping, and soon it was 5:15, then 5:20, and finally 5:25. I still didn't know if there would be a minyan, and even if there would be, I missed it already. Eventually though, to my surprise and relief, I arrived at Walgreens and noticed the sign that read Chabad. I figured that even if I missed the minyan accidentally, at least I'd be able to daven in a shul.

I came driving up, and standing outside the shul door was a man. "We need a minyan," he said, "and you're the man." I walked in and I was the tenth guy.

As I took a seat, I understood why I needed to get lost. Had I not, I would have gone to Fort Lauderdale and the Chabad here would not have had a minyan. My whole getting lost and being worried that I was going

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#### L'iluy Nishmat

R' Elchonon Yaakov z"l ben R' Shmuel  
Pinchos

Manish ben Esther

Meir Eliyahu ben Yaakov Dov

Bechor ben Rivkah

Shlomo Zalman ben  
R' Mordechai Yisroel Tzvi

Esther bat  
haRav Avraham Halevi zt"l

Moshe Simcha ben Doniel Dov Ber

Miriam bat Yeshayahu

Malka Bracha bat Shimon Chaim

#### L'refuah Sheleima

Deena bat Shoshana

Chaya Raizel bat Dena

Yerachmiel Eliyahu Ben Esther Riva

Reuven ben Rochel

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to miss the minyan was all so that I could make a minyan to help these people. (Truthfully, maybe this is so, but maybe not. Had I not been the tenth man, they would have called another guy and they would have gotten a minyan anyway. It just so happened that Hashem arranged for me to be the tenth man both because they needed a minyan and I did too).

As I settled into the davening, I noticed an older man who I recognized. I couldn't believe that I'd know anyone in Plantation, Florida, but something about him looked familiar. Keeping my thoughts to myself, as I finished Mincha, the man came over to me. "You're Rabbi Wallerstein, right?" "I'm not speaking tonight," I said, trying to play down any requests. "No, you're Rabbi Wallerstein. You know, my grandchildren were in your class." I then put it together and figured out who it was. "I'd like you to be the Chazan for Arvit," he said.

That wasn't the only encounter I'd have that evening at the shul.

After I finished Maariv and started making my way out the door, a man accompanied me. Quickly, he turned to chatting with me. "So you're a rabbi and a rebbe?" "Yeah, I am," I said. "I wanted to tell you who I am," he then added. I didn't think I knew him. After telling me his name, nothing registered, and I could tell he was surprised. "You don't recognize my

name?" I shook my head. "I was on the Israeli Olympic Soccer team five times. Doesn't ring a bell?" Half-jokingly I told him that if someone is not on the Yankees or Giants, I don't know their name. With that, he began telling me about himself.

"I was on a team when I was pretty young, and as it happened, I sustained an injury. From that point on, I was never as good as I used to be. But then my father passed away, and I started saying Kaddish."

As he said those words, I began to sense where he was going with the story. We tend to think that the Kaddish said by a child when their parent passes away is for the parent. And while that is true, the impact it has on the child is tremendous. Hundreds of thousands of Jewish people have become baalei teshuva later in their life when they had no choice but to go to shul. Even those who are irreligious feel that for that year, they owe their parents to say Kaddish. Coming to shul, meeting people, giving tzedakah and keeping Shabbos becomes one of the last chances a person has to do teshuva. So many times, through saying Kaddish, the child returns to Yiddishkeit. They're not only helping their parent, but they are helping themselves.

"As I started saying Kaddish for my father," continued the former Olympian, "I realized something

profound. I used to walk into the sports arena and hear 50,000 people scream my name. You know what I do now? I'm a Chazan. I don't have 50,000 people screaming my name, but I have hundreds of people screaming Amen."

As I heard this, all I could think to myself was "Wow." To this former world-class soccer player, hearing Amen when he davens in front of the shul gives him more appreciation and happiness than when he used to walk into an arena where there were thousands of people enamored with him. Now they scream Hashem's Name.

After the man told me this, I fully realized why I ended up in Plantation, Florida. It wasn't as much because they needed me for a minyan; Hashem could have arranged that someone else be the tenth man. It was because I needed to hear this from this former Olympian.

If you make it your business not to miss davening with a minyan, Hashem will give you the siyata dishmaya not only to make the minyan, but to learn something from every minyan you go to. And that day I learned a lesson I will never forget.

"I don't have 50,000 people screaming my name, but I have hundreds of people screaming Amen."

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## Rabbi Dovid Goldwasser

### A Letter to the Hostages

**B**efore the Jewish people accepted the Torah, each one called out, "Naaseh V'Nishmah—We will do and we will hear." Since each individual said this, why did they need to say "Naaseh V'nishmah—We will do and we will hear," which is in the plural tense. They should have

said "E'eseh v'eshmah—I will do and I will hear."

The Kotzker Rebbe answers that the nation expressed themselves this way because it is the responsibility of every Jew to feel for their fellow Jew. It is every Jew's job to be sensitive to the needs of a fellow person, to feel their pain and celebrate

their joyous occasions. We are enjoined to be totally one with all the members of Klal Yisrael. Therefore, when it came the time to receive the Torah, each one said Naaseh V'Nishmah. There was an outpouring, because everyone wanted to receive the Torah and knew that their fellow Jews felt

the same. As such, the language of their acceptance encompassed all their fellow Jews in the same breath.

I'd like to share with you a letter. It is a letter, the likes of which I have never written in my entire life. It is a letter to the hostages.

To my brothers and sisters,

As I begin to write you this letter, my heart is full of hope that with the help of Hashem, you will soon be reunited with the rest of Klal Yisrael. All of you, collectively and individually, are constantly in our thoughts and in our minds. We pray for you during each and every one of the three tefillos, the three times every day that we pray. Many pray for you throughout the day because it's simply impossible to alter our state of mind and not think of your well-being and your health. Each of us has come to learn your names. We know your picture. We recognize your faces. They are emblazoned in our hearts. All the billboards all over the world have your pictures and have a plea for your release. We need each one of you. And because of that, we read your names daily from lists that are circulated worldwide. We pray for you with the deepest feeling and emotion. You are our family, our brothers, our sisters, our mothers, our grandmothers, our fathers, our grandfathers, our sons and our daughters. In fact, our family is not whole until the time when we are reunited with each and every one of you.

In truth, there has never been such dedication among Klal Yisrael, among good people around the world who are devoted in heart and soul to this particular cause. Before we go to sleep every night, our thought is the hope that a bul-

letin that will announce your release will pierce the news airwaves in the morning. Our first thought when we wake up in the morning is the welfare of our missing brethren. At every public gathering, at every simcha, at every location and every event, special Tehillim (Psalms) are recited on your behalf. Your absence has created a vacuum within the hearts of Klal Yisrael that cannot be filled until each and every one of you is returned safely.

With the release of the 105 hostages, people all over the world were driven to redouble their efforts and do everything humanly possible to secure your release. Many people have undertaken observance of specific mitzvot. Many have begun to light Shabbat candles and to observe the mitzvah of hafrashat challah (separating challah). Many people have organized Torah learning sessions in your merit, and accepted upon themselves to be more careful in shemirat ha'lashon (guarding their tongue). Each of us is trying to be a better human being, more pure, more honest, more ethical, more moral, and kinder. It is all in your honor. I dare say it's because of each of you that the world has changed for the better. The profound effect that you have had on all of us is indefinable. It's beyond words. With prayers to help them in their efforts on your behalf, your family members have been reaching out worldwide with appeals in the media, holding prayer vigils and rallies. With their eloquence, their sincerity, their dedication, their great love, their unending patience, faith and their tears, they have aroused boundless empathy and compassion.

Let us hearten ourselves with the words of the great tzaddik R' Nach-

man of Breslov, "Even in the most concealed places, certainly Hashem is found there. Even in the most difficult, challenging times and darkest of places, Hashem says, 'I stand with you.'" Even though you go through such difficult travails and difficult challenges, we believe in Divine Providence. I think that Rav Nachman of Breslov penned these words for you right now. Our Father in Heaven is with you. We are all with you because we know our destiny is inextricably bound.

May we soon see the fulfillment of the prophecy of Yeshayahu Ha-Navi: "The redeemed of Hashem will return and come to Zion with glad song and with eternal gladness upon our heads. There will be joy and gladness. Sadness and sighing will flee forever."

I leave you with one special request, if I may. Little Kfir ben Shiri has become the international face of all of those being held hostage. Tens of thousands of orange balloons were released throughout the world in honor of Kfir's first birthday. Please try in some way to relate to little Kfir the contents of this letter and to tell him that there are a million people waiting to give him a birthday present.

With a prayer to the Almighty: "Do it for the sake of all of the schoolchildren, the pure and the holy. Do it for the sake of those little children that didn't do anything wrong, that never sinned. Do it for their sake, if not for our sake."

I am waiting with all of Klal Yisrael to greet you, to hug you, to make the blessing on your return.

From the bottom of my heart,  
Dovid Goldwasser

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](mailto:info@torahanytime.com).

# Rabbi Shlomo Farhi

## Employee of Hashem

I remember a fellow from my yeshiva years who would clean the beit midrash every single Friday. One Friday, I introduced myself and asked if he worked in the yeshiva. To me it seemed like he was a janitor. "I have another job," the man replied, "but every Friday I come to the beit k'neset to mop the floors and show kavod to the synagogue. My wife and I have been trying to have children, and I took this on as a zechut." I was so touched when I heard this.

It's a big segulah to have children or have any of your prayers answered when you clean the beit k'neset. When you sweep and mop the floors and thereby humble yourself and show glory

to G-d, that shows Hashem that you are an employee of His. You may not be able to afford a private jet, but if you are on the company credit card and the company needs you somewhere, they'll pay for it. When you work for G-d, it doesn't matter at what point of the totem pole you are. G-d's credit card has enough miles and enough points for you to buy anything. If you are struggling to afford a zechut you need for something, what should you do? Go to work for Hashem.

A while later, I came back to visit the yeshiva to visit one of my brothers, and noticed a man praying in the back. "How are you doing?" I asked. "My name is Shlomo." The fellow began introducing himself,

until it registered. "I know who you are," I said. This was the same fellow who had been cleaning the beit k'neset years before. "How do you know who I am?" he asked. "I was in yeshiva here when it first opened, and I've been praying for you ever since." "I have three children now," he finally told me, a feeling of satisfaction on his face. "Are you still cleaning the beit k'neset?" "Yes," he whispered.

How can we honor a beit k'neset? Pay attention to it, respect it and show reverence when inside it. Hashem resides within a beit k'neset. Cleaning the beit k'neset is one aspect of honoring it. How you speak in a shul, if you speak in a shul, and what you speak about are all parts of respect and shows deference to its sanctity.

Honor Hashem's home and take care of it, and He will honor you and take care of you.

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# Rabbi Paysach Krohn

## The Pink Balloons

I'd like to share with you a story I learned about from Dr. Meir Wikler. In one apartment complex, there was a family who had just given birth to a little girl. Wishing to send a heartwarming mazel tov to the new parents, some of the neighbors decided to purchase a whole bunch of pink balloons and place it outside the family's front door.

The following day, one of the fellows who had brought the balloons came to see if the balloons were there, and surprisingly they weren't. Knocking on the door, he asked the young couple if they had received the balloons and if perhaps there was something wrong. The husband invited the man in-

side and began to explain.

"The balloons are right here. We love the balloons and thought the gesture was so nice." "So why didn't you leave them out there next to the door?" asked the neighbor. "There's somebody on this floor," the husband went on, "and they haven't had any children yet. We thought that when they come up the stairs and see the balloons, it'll be such a painful reminder that they don't have kids. That's why we brought them inside."

How beautiful is that. But the fellow had one question, a good question in fact.

"Downstairs, there are carriages, strollers and toys. That couple sees things every day that remind them

of children." The husband, though, had his response to that too. "When you got married, did you have children right away?" "Yeah, we had a child almost a year after we got married," replied the fellow. "Well, that's why you can't understand it. You see, my wife and I didn't have children right away. It took a couple years until we had our first child, and now Baruch Hashem we have a nice family. But somebody who had children right away might not be able to appreciate the pain that it is for those families who don't have children right away. And that's perhaps why you can't understand it."

Every little memento and reminder was taken into consideration by this husband.

That's true care. That's true thoughtfulness.



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# Bring Them Home!

## Names of Hostages in Gaza

(Updated: 13 Adar I)

קרונה בת אירינה (ארייב)	ליאור בן מיכל (רודאיף)	אריאל בן סילביה מוניקה (קוניו)	אבינתן בן דיצה תרצה (אור)
רום בן תמר (ברסלבסקי)	לירי בת שירה (אלבג)	אריאל בן שירי (ביבס)	אביתר בן גליה (דוד)
רומי בת מירב (גונ)	מישל בן סולמירה (ניסנבאום)	בר אברהם בן ג'וליה (קופרשטיין)	אברהם גלעד בן ליאת (מונדר)
רון בן חנה (בנימין)	מקסים בן טלה (הרקין)	גד משה בן שרה (מוזס)	אגם בת מירב (ברגר)
שגב בן גלית (כלפון)	מתן בן ענת (אנגרסט)	גיא בן מירב (גלבווע דלאל)	אוהד בן אסתר (בן) עמי)
שגיא בן נעמית (חן דקל)	מתן בן ירדנה (צנגאוקר)	גלי בן תמר (ברמן)	אוהד בן אסתר (יהלומי)
שירי בת מרגיט (ביבס)	נדב בן חנה (פופלוול)	דוד בן סילביה מוניקה (קוניו)	אור בן טלי (לוי)
שלומי בן רוזיטה (זיו)	נועה בת ליאורה (ארגמי)	דולב בן יעל (יהוד)	אורי בן עינב (דנינו)
שלמה בן מרסיל (מנצור)	נמרוד בן יקי (כהן)	דורון בת סימונה (שטיינברכר)	אוריאל בן נעמי (ברוך)
תמיר בן חירות (נמרודי)	נעמה בת איילת (לוי)	דניאל שמעון בן שרון (פרץ)	איתי בן חגית (חן)
	עדן בת שרית (ירושלמי)	דניאלה בת אורלי (גלבווע)	איתן בן רות אדית (הורן)
	עודד בן בלהה (ליפשיץ)	דרור בן דורית (אור)	איתן אברהם בן אפרת (מור)
	עוז בן מירב (דניאל)	הירש בן רחל (גולדברג פולין)	אלון בן עידית (אהל)
	עומר בן ניבה (ונקרט)	זיו בן תמר (ברמן)	אליה בן סיגי (כהן)
	עומר בן שלי (שם) (טוב)	חיים בן נחמה (פרי)	אליהו בן חנה (שרעבי)
	עומר מקסים בן אורנה אסתר (נאוטרה)	חן חנן בן ורד (יבלונקה)	אליקים שלמה בן אבישג (ליבמן)
	עידו בן כוכבה (קלדרון)	טל בן ניצה (שוהם) קורנגולד)	אלכס בן אוקסנה (לובנוב)
	עידן בן יעל (אלכסנדר)	יאיר בן רות אדית (הורן)	אלכסנדר ששה בן ילנה (טרופנוב)
	עידן בן דלית (שתיוי)	יגב בן אסתר (בוכשטב)	אלכסנדר בן נינה (דנציג)
	עמירם בן שרה (קופר)	יוסף חיים בן מרים (אוחנה)	אלמוג בן אורית (מאיר ג'אן)
	עמית אסתר חיה בת אילנה אלן (בוסקילה)	יורם בן בלה (מצגר)	אלמוג בן נירה (סרוסי)
	עמרי בן אסתר ורה (מירן)	יצחק בן אנטה (אלגרט)	אלעד בן חנה (קציר)
	צחי בן דבורה (עידן)	יצחק בן גילה (גלרנטר)	אלקנה בן רוחמה (בוחבוט)
	קית' שמואל בן גלדיס (סיגל)	ירדן בן פנינה (ביבס)	אמילי תהילה בת אמנדה פרנסיס (דמארי)
		כפיר בן שירי (ביבס)	אנדריי בן יבגניה (קוזלוב)
		כרמל בת כנרת (גת)	ארבל בת יעל (יהוד)