

SHABBAT ACROSS

רמה

NOVEMBER 3-4, 2023



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Ramahniks



SHABBAT BLESSINGS • ברכות השבת

Candlelighting

Baruch ata Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, asher kidshanu b'mitzvotav vitzivanu l'hadlik ner shel Shabbat.

Shalom Aleichem

Shalom aleichem mal'achei hashareit mal'achei elyon mimelech malchei ham'lachim, ha-kadosh baruch hu
Bo'achem l'shalom mal'achei hashalom mal'achei elyon mimelech malchei ham'lachim, ha-kadosh baruch hu
Barechuni l'shalom mal'achei hashalom mal'achei elyon mimelech malchei ham'lachim, ha-kadosh baruch hu
Tzeitchem l'shalom mal'achei hashalom mal'achei elyon mimelech malchei ham'lachim, ha-kadosh baruch hu

Kiddush

Yom ha-shishi. Vay'chulu hashamayim v'ha-aretz v'chol tz'va'am. Vay'chal Elohim bayom hash'vi'i milachto asher asa. Vayishbot bayom hash'vi'i mikol milachto asher asa. Vay'varech Elohim et yom hash'vi'i vay'kadesh oto. Kee vo shabbat mi-kol m'lachto asher bara Elohim la'asot. Savri maranan v'rabanan v'rabotai. Baruch ata Adonai, Eloheinu melech ha-olam, borei p'ri hagafen.
Baruch ata Adonai, Eloheinu melech ha-olam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'ratza vanu, v'shabbat kod'sho b'ahava uv'ratzon hinchilanu, zikaron l'ma'aseh b'reishit. Ki hu yom t'chila l'mikra-ay kodesh, zaycher l'tziat mitzrayim. Ki vanu vacharta v'otanu kidashta mikol ha'amim. V'shabbat kod-shi-cha b'ahava uv'ratzon hinchal tanu. Baruch ata Adonai, mi'kadesh ha Shabbat.

Netilat Yadayim (Handwashing)

Baruch ata Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, asher kidshanu b'mitzvotav vitzivanu al n'tilat yadayim.

Hamotzi

Baruch ata Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, hamotzi lechem min ha'aretz.

נר של שבת

ברוך אתה ה' אלהינו מלך העולם אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו להדליק נר של שבת.

שלום עליכם

שלום עליכם מלאכי השרת מלאכי עליון ממלך מלכי המלכים הקדוש ברוך הוא
בואכם לשלום מלאכי השלום מלאכי עליון ממלך מלכי המלכים הקדוש ברוך הוא
ברכוני לשלום מלאכי השלום מלאכי עליון ממלך מלכי המלכים הקדוש ברוך הוא
צאתכם לשלום מלאכי השלום מלאכי עליון ממלך מלכי המלכים הקדוש ברוך הוא

קידוש לליל שבת

יום הששי. ויכלו השמים והארץ וכל צבאם: ויכל אלהים ביום השביעי מלאכתו אשר עשה. וישבת ביום השביעי מכל מלאכתו אשר עשה: ויברך אלהים את יום השביעי ויקדש אתו. כי בו שבת מכל מלאכתו אשר ברא אלהים לעשות: סברי חברי

ברוך אתה ה' אלהינו מלך העולם בורא פרי הגפן:

ברוך אתה ה' אלהינו מלך העולם. אשר קדשנו במצותיו ורצה בנו. ושבת קדשו באהבה וברצון הנחילנו. זכרון למעשה בראשית. כי הוא יום תחלה למקראי קדש זכר ליציאת מצרים. כי בנו בחרת ואותנו קדשת מכל העמים ושבת קדשך באהבה וברצון הנחלתנו: ברוך אתה ה' מקדש השבת:

נטילת ידים

ברוך אתה ה' אלהינו מלך העולם אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו על נטילת ידים.

המוציא

ברוך אתה ה' אלהינו מלך העולם המוציא לחם מן הארץ.

PRAYERS AND SONGS • תפילות ושירים

Prayer

Rabbi David Wolpe

El Maleh Rachamim Compassionate God,
We pray not to wipe out haters but to banish hatred.
Not to destroy sinners but to lessen sin.
Our prayers are not for a perfect world but a better one
Where parents are not bereaved by the savagery of sudden attacks
Or children orphaned by blades glinting in a noonday sun.
Help us dear God, to have the courage to remain strong, to stand fast.
Spread Your light on the dark hearts of the slayers
And Your comfort to the bereaved hearts of families of the slain.
Let calm return to Your city Jerusalem, and to Israel, Your blessed land.
We grieve with those wounded in body and spirit, pray for the fortitude of our sisters and brothers,
and ask You to awaken the world to our struggle and help us bring peace.

Source: Facebook, October 8, 2023

Prayer for Israel

Rabbis Nicole Guzik and Erez Sherman

Ribono shel olam, Master of the Universe, this morning as we ended the Torah with a lamed and began the Torah with a bet, we are reminded that our lev, our heart is in your hands.
Our broken, confused, agonizing hearts.
Give us the strength to cradle Eretz Yisrael through this unfathomable time in Jewish history.
God, reunite children with parents, grandparents with children, friends with community, sisters with brothers. Babies who cry for their homes.
May the wounded, physically, emotionally, spiritually find healing in the coming days, months, years.
Let the bereft understand they are not alone. Not today, nor tomorrow.
For this journey of grief will be long.
God, you hold our shattered, fractured, punctured hearts.
The heart of a Jewish nation.
The heart of the Jewish people.
God, you hold our heart. Piece together our broken slivers, slivers of compassion, mercy and love.
One by one, shard by shard, never the same.
No, never the same but always United.
Remind us today, tomorrow and the days to come, we are forever Am echad b'lev echad,
one people with one heart.
Amen.

This prayer was offered at the Los Angeles Community Vigil for Israel on Sunday, October 8, 2023.

Prayer of Mothers for Life and Peace

Rabbi Tamar Elad-Appelbaum and Sheikha Ibtisam Mahameed
English translation by Rabbi Amichai Lau-Lavie

God of Life
Who heals the broken hearted and binds up their wounds
May it be your will to hear the prayer of mothers
For you did not create us to kill each other
Nor to live in fear, anger or hatred in your world
But rather you have created us so we can grant permission to one another to sanctify
Your name of Life, your name of Peace in this world.

For these things I weep, my eye, my eye runs down with water
For our children crying at nights,
For parents holding their children with despair and darkness in their hearts
For a gate that is closing, and who will open it before the day has ended?¹

And with my tears and prayers which I pray
And with the tears of all women who deeply feel the pain of these difficult days
I raise my hands to you please God have mercy on us
Hear our voice that we shall not despair
That we shall see life in each other,
That we shall have mercy for each other,
That we shall have pity on each other,
That we shall hope for each other

And we shall write our lives in the book of Life
For your sake God of Life
Let us choose Life.

For you are Peace, your world is Peace and all that is yours is Peace,
And so shall be your will and let us say *Amen*.

מלך חפץ בחיים
הרופא לשבורי לב ומחבש לעצבותם
שמע נא תפילת אמהות
שאתה לא בראתנו על מנת שנהרוג זה בזה
ולא על מנת שנחיה בפחד, כעס ושנאה בעולמך
אלא על מנת שנדע לתת רשות זה לזה לקיים את שמך
שם חיים
שם שלום בעולם.

על אלה אני בוכיה עיני עיני יורדה מים
על ילדים בוכים מפחד בלילות
על הורים אוחזים עולליהם ויאוש ואפלה בלבם
על שער אשר נסגר ומי יקום ויפתחהו טרם פנה יום.

ובדמעות ובתפלות שאני מתפללת כל הזמן
ובדמעות כל הנשים שכואבות את הכאב החזק בזמן הקשה הזה
הריני מרימה את ידי למעלה אנא ממך אדוני רחם עלינו
שמע קולנו ה' אלהינו בימי הרעה האלה שלא נתייאש
ונראה חיים זה בזה
ונרחם זה על זה
ונצטער זה על זה
ונקווה לזה לזה

ונכתוב את חיינו בספר החיים
למענך אלהים חיים.
תן שנבחר בחיים.
כי אתה שלום וביתך שלום וכל אשר לך שלום
וכן יהי רצון ונאמר *אמן*.

¹ Translation of this line by Rabbi Dalia Marx

Source: <https://opensiddur.org/?p=9158>

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Prayer for the Welfare and the Return of Israel's Captured and Missing from Among Our Family

God of Israel, our Rock and our Redeemer, God of Mercy, of Compassion, we pray, we plead that You return these precious and beloved people the captured and the missing, who have cruelly and heartlessly been torn from their homes and carried off to our enemy's territory.

We are terrified contemplating their fate, horrified at the thought of the sufferings of the missing and captured, who are not yet within our power to reach. And so we plead before You: Source of Mercy, be at their side, support them, protect them, and quickly bring them back to the embrace of their families and all who love them as You have declared: "...Behold, I will restore the captives of Jacob's tents, and have mercy on their dwelling places..." (Jeremiah 30:18)

We beseech you, Adonai, quickly fulfill Your word: "Here, I am with you, I will watch over you wherever you go and will bring you back to this land, indeed I will not leave you until I have done what I have said for you."

Source: Masorti Israel and the Rabbinical Assembly in Israel

Prayer for Israel

Avinu she-ba-shamayim, stronghold and redeemer of the people Israel: Bless the State of Israel, [that it may be] the beginning of our redemption. Shield it with Your love; spread over it the shelter of Your peace. Guide its leaders and advisors with Your light and Your truth. Help them with Your good counsel. Strengthen the hands of those who defend our holy land. Deliver them; crown their efforts with triumph. Bless the land with peace and its inhabitants with lasting joy. And let us say: Amen.

Source: Lev Shalem for Shabbat and Festivals, Rabbinical Assembly

תפלה לשלום ולחזרתם של הנעדרים והשבויים בין אחינו ואחיותינו

אלהי ישראל, צור ישראל וגואלו, אל רחום וחנון, בתפלה ובתחנונים אנו פונים אליך להחזיר בשלום לבתיכם את יקירי עמך השבויים והנעדרות שנעקרו ביד אדונית מבתיכם ונחטפו אל ארץ אויב.

חרדים אנו לגורלם ומבעתים מהמחשבה על מה שעובר על הנעדרים והנעדרות, השבויים והשבויים שלנו אך ידינו קצרו מלהושיע ועל כן נושאים אנו תחנונו לפניך: אב הרחמים, היה נא בעזרם והגן בעדם והשיבם במהרה לחיק משפחותיהם ויקריהו כמו שאמרת: "הנני שב שבות אהלי יעקוב ומשפנתי ארחם" (ירמיהו ל:יח).

אנא ה' קים במהרה את מאמר הכתוב

והנה אנכי עמך ושמרתיו בכל אשר תלך והשבתיך אל-האדמה "הזאת כי לא אעזבך עד אשר אם-עשיתי את אשר דברתי לך (בראשית כח:טו) ו"שובו בנים לגבולם אמן כן יהי רצון.

תפלה לשלום מדינת ישראל

אבינו שבשמים צור ישראל וגואלו ברוך את-מדינת ישראל [שתהא] ראשית צמיחת אלתנו. הגן עליה באברת חסדך ופרש עליה סכת שלומך. ושלח אורך ואמתך לראשיה שריה ויועניה. ותקנם בעצה טובה מלפניך. חזק את-ידי מגני ארץ קדשנו והנחילם אליהנו ישועה ועטרת נצחון תעטרם ונתת שלום בארץ ושמחת עולם ליושביה ונאמר אמן

Prayer for the Israeli Defense Forces

May the one who blessed our ancestors, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah bless the soldiers of the armed forces and security forces of the army of Israel who on the ground, in the air and at sea protect the Land.

May God grant that they defeat the enemies who rise up against us. May God protect our soldiers from all harm and danger, from all injury and illness, and may God afford blessing and success to all their missions.

Regarding them, may the words of the Torah prove true: For Adonai Your God, who goes before You, shall join you to battle your foes and aid you to be victorious. And let us say, Amen.

Source: Weekday Lev Shalem, Rabbinical Assembly forthcoming

תפילה לחיילי צה"ל

מי שברך אבותינו אברהם יצחק ויעקב, ואמותינו שרה רבקה רחל ולאה, / הוא יברך את חיילי צבא ההגנה לישראל ואנשי הבטחון, העומדים על משמר ארצנו וערי אלהינו, מגבול הלבנון עד מדבר מצרים, ומן הים הגדול עד לבוא הערבה, ביבשה באויר ובמים. יתן יהוה את אויבינו הקמים עלינו נגפים לפניהם. הקדוש ברוך הוא ישמר ויציל את חיילינו מכל צרה וצוקה ומכל נגע ומחלה, וישלח ברכה והצלחה בכל מעשה ידיהם. ידבר שונאינו תחתיהם ויעטרם בכתר ישועה. ובעטרת נצחון. ויקים בהם הכתוב:

כי יהוה אלהיכם ההלך עמכם להלחם לכם עם אויביכם, להושיע אתכם. ונאמר אמן.

Acheinu

Acheinu kol beit Yisrael.
Ha'netunim b'tzara u'vashivya.
Ha'omdim bein ba'yam
u'vein ba'yabasha.
Ha'makom ye'rachem aleihem
V'yotzi'em mi'tzara lir'vacha.
U'me'afela l'ora.
U'mishibud li'geulah.
Hashta ba'agala u'vizman kariv.

אחינו

אחינו כל בית ישראל
הנתונים בצרה ובשביה
העומדים בין בים
ובין ביבשה
המקום ירחם עליהם
ויציאם מצרה לרוחה
וימאפלה לאורה
ומשעבוד לגאולה
השתא בעגלא ובזמן קרוב.

B'Shem HaShem

B'shem HaShem elohei Yisrael.
Mi'mini Michael u'mismoli Gavriel.
U'milfanai Uriel u'me'achorai Rephael.
V'al roshi shechinat El.

בשם ה'

בשם ה' אלהי ישראל.
מימיני מיכאל. ומשמאלי גבריאל.
ומלפני אוריאל. ומאחורי רפאל.
ועל ראשי שכנינת אל.

תפילות ושירים • PRAYERS AND SONGS

Darkeinu

Or haner nimhal b'or hayarei'ach
al hakar sa'areich shafuch
bachalon tzameret eitz porei'ach
v'hasheket chazar. Ro'im l'fi hachiyuch.

Sa'ara hayta, hinei chalfa la
ufanayich shuv rog'ot kifnei hayam.
Im ha'or nosif lalechet hal'a,
Od haderech raba. Hamasa adayin lo tam.

Lo kala hi, lo kala darkeinu
v'einayich lifamim ko nugot.
Od sadot porchim yesh lifaneinu
od harim g'vohim v'tzon'nei p'sagot.

R'sisim shel or b'dimotayich
v'chiyuch shuv m'gashesh darko eilai.
Kol hatov odenu lifanayich
simi rosh al k'teifi, tni li yadeich b'yadi.

Od m'at yitam haner, ligvoha
od m'at yuvas hasheket hamvorach.
Hamulat hayom tatchil lifko'a
lo telchi l'vadeich, ani eh'yeh sham itach.

Lo kala...

דַּרְכֵינוּ

מילים: יעקב רוטבליט
לחן: יזהר אשדות

אור הַנֵּר נִמְהַל בְּאוֹר הַיָּרֵחַ
עַל הַכָּר שְׁעָרְךָ שְׁפוּף
בְּחֵלוֹן צְמֶרֶת עֵץ פּוֹרֵחַ
וְהַשְּׁקֵט חֲזַר. רוֹאִים לְפִי הַחַיּוּךְ.

סְעָרָה הִיְתָה, הִנֵּה חֲלָפָה לָהּ
וּפְנִיךָ שׁוֹב רוֹגְעוֹת כְּפָנֵי הַיָּם.
עִם הָאוֹר נוֹסִיף לְלַכֵּת הַלְּאָה,
עוֹד הַדֶּרֶךְ רַבָּה. הַמַּסַּע עֲדִין לֹא תָם.

לֹא קָלָה הַיָּא, לֹא קָלָה דַּרְכֵנוּ
וְעֵינֶיךָ לְפַעֲמִים כֹּה נוֹגוֹת.
עוֹד שְׂדוֹת פּוֹרְחִים יֵשׁ לְפָנֵינוּ
עוֹד הָרִים גְּבוּהִים וְצוֹנְנֵי פְסָגוֹת.

רְסִיסִים שֶׁל אוֹר בְּדַמְעוֹתֶיךָ
וְחַיּוּךְ שׁוֹב מְגַשֵּׁשׁ דְּרָכּוֹ אֵלַי.
כָּל הַטוֹב עוֹדְנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ
שִׁמִּי רֹאשׁ עַל כְּתָפֶיךָ, תְּנֵי לִי יָדְךָ בְּיָדִי.

עוֹד מְעַט יֵתֵם הַנֵּר לְגוֹעַ
עוֹד מְעַט יוֹכֵס הַשְּׁקֵט הַמְּבֻרָךְ.
הַמְּלַת הַיּוֹם תִּתְחַיֵּל לְבָרֵעַ
לֹא תִלְכִּי לְבִדְדָה, אֲנִי אֶהְיֶה שָׁם אִתָּךְ.

לא קלה...

Im Eshkachech

Im eshcachech, Yerushalayim, tishkach yemini.
Tidbak lishoni, lichiki, Im lo ezkerechi,
Im eshcachech, Yerushalayim, tishkach yemini.
Tidbak lishoni, lichiki, Im lo ezkerechi,

im lo a'a'leh, et Yerushalayim al rosh simchati.
al rosh, al rosh simchati.

אִם אֶשְׁכַּחֲךָ

מילים: תהלים קל"ז:ה-ו

אִם אֶשְׁכַּחֲךָ יְרוּשָׁלַם תִּשְׁכַּח יְמִינִי
תִּדְבַק לְשׁוֹנֵי לַחֲכֵי אִם לֹא אֶזְכְּרֶכֶּי
אִם לֹא אֶעֱלֶה אֶת יְרוּשָׁלַם עַל רֹאשׁ שְׂמֹחַתִּי.

תפילות ושיירים • PRAYERS AND SONGS

Lu Yehi

Od yesh mifras lavan ba'ofek
mul anan shachor kaved
Kol shenevakesh - Lu Yehi.

Ve'im bacholonot ha'erev
Or nerot hachag ro'ed -
Kol shenevakesh - Lu Yehi.

Lu Yehi, Lu Yehi, Ana, Lu Yehi
Kol shenevakesh - Lu Yehi.

Ma kol anot ani shomei'a
Kol shofar vekol tupim
Kol shenevakesh lu yehi

Lu tishama betoch kol eileh
Gam tefila achat mipi
Kol shenevakesh lu yehi

Lu yehi...

Betoch sh'chuna ktana mutzelet
Bait kat im gag adom
Kol shenevakesh lu yehi

Zeh sof hakayitz, sof haderech
Ten lahem lashuv halom
Kol shenevakesh lu yehi

Lu yehi...

Ve'im pit'om yizrach mei'ofel
Al rosheinu or kochav
Kol shenevakesh lu yehi

Az ten shalva veten gam ko'ach
Lechol eileh shenohav
Kol shenevakesh - lu yehi

Lu yehi...

לו יהי

עוד יש מפרש לבן באפק
מול ענן שחור כבד,
כל שנבקש - לו יהי!

ואם בחלונות הערב
אור נרות החג רועד,
כל שנבקש - לו יהי!

לו יהי - לו יהי - אנא לו יהי,
כל שנבקש - לו יהי!

מה קול ענות אני שומע?
קול שופר וקול תפים,
כל שנבקש - לו יהי!

לו תשמע בתוך כל אלה
גם תפלה אחת מפני,
כל שנבקש - לו יהי!

לו יהי...

בתוך שכונה קטנה מצלת
בית קט עם גג אדום,
כל שנבקש - לו יהי!

זה סוף הקיץ סוף הדרך
תן להם לשוב הלום,
כל שנבקש - לו יהי!

לו יהי...

ואם פתאם יזרח מאפל
על ראשנו אור כוכב,
כל שנבקש - לו יהי!

אז תן שלוח ותן גם כח
לכל אלה שנאהב,
כל שנבקש - לו יהי!

לו יהי...

תפילות ושיירים • PRAYERS AND SONGS

Meheira

Meheira Hashem Elokeinu
Od Yishama Be'arei Yehuda
U'vechutzot Yerushalayim
U'vechutzot Yerushalayim

Kol Sason Vekol Simcha.
Kol Chatan Vekol Kallah.
Kol Mitzalot Chattanim Mechupatam
Une'arim Mimishteh Neginatam

מהרה

מהרה ה' אלקינו
ישמע בערי יהודה
ובחוצות ירושלים
ובחוצות ירושלים

קול ששון וקול שמחה.
קול חתן וקול כלה.
קול מצהלות חתנים מחפתם ונערים ממשתה נגינתם

Mizmor I'David (Psalm 23)

Mizmor le'David,
Hashem ro-i lo echsar.
Binot desheh yarbitzeini, al mei menuchot
yenahaleini.
Nafshi yeshovev yancheini bemagalei tzedek
lema'an shemo.
Gam ki elech be'gei tzalmavet, lo ira ra ki atah imadi,
shivtechah u'mishantechah hemah yenachamuni.
Ta'aroch lefanai shulchan neged tzor'rai
dishanta vashemen roshi, kosi rivaya.
Ach tov va'chesed yirdifuni kol yemei chayai
ve'shavti be'veit Hashem l'orech yamim.

מזמור לדוד

מזמור לדוד,
ה' רעי לא אחסר.
בנאות דשא ירביצני,
על-מי מנחות ינהלני.
נפשי ישובב, ינחני במעגלי צדק
למען שמו.
גם כִּי-אֵלֶךְ בְּגֵיא צַלְמוֹת לֹא-אִירָא רָע כִּי-אִתָּה עִמָּדִי,
שִׁבְטְךָ וּמִשְׁעַנְתְּךָ הִמָּה יִנְחָמֵנִי.
תַּעֲרֹךְ לִפְנֵי שְׁלֹחַן נֶגֶד צָרָרִי
דִּשְׁנַת בִּשְׁמֵן רֹאשִׁי בּוֹסֵי רוּחִי.
אֵךְ, טוֹב וַחֲסֵד יִרְדְּפוּנִי כָּל-יְמֵי חַיִּי,
וְשִׁבְתִּי בְּבֵית-ה' לְאֶרֶךְ יָמִים

Yehi Shalom

Y'hi shalom becheylech shalva b'armenotayich

יהי שלום

מילים: תהילים קכב:ז
יהי-שלום בחילך שלוה בארמנותיך.

V'ha'er Eineinu

V'ha'er eineinu b'Toratecha
V'dabek libeinu b'mitzvotcha
V'yached l'vaveinu l'ahava u'l'yirah et sh'mecha
V'lo nevosh l'olam va'ed.

והאר עינינו

והאר עינינו בתורתך.
ודבק לבינו במצותך.
ויחד לבבנו לאהבה וליראה.
את שמך
ולא נבוש לעולם ועד.

Rabbi Josh Cohen, *oleh*

I feel as if we are on Noah's Ark, traveling forward without a compass, racing just ahead of the catastrophe that is chasing right behind us. We are bobbing in the water, trying to stay afloat, looking for a ray of sunshine through the dark clouds.

I cannot answer basic questions anymore without feeling some sense of numbness. Phone calls from far away, from best friends for many years to those who are mere acquaintances checking in to see if we are all right. The simple question "How are you doing?" sends me into an almost panic state. I don't want to cry, afraid I won't be able to stop the tears once they begin flowing. How does one answer that question given what we see in front of us, what we hear on the news, and what we have lived each day for the past two weeks?

In short, we are not okay. We are not okay because I don't know how to answer my seven-year-old son, born here, raised here, who only knows this place as home (rightfully so) when he states more than asks the question, "Are terrorists going to kill us too?"

We are not okay. This is our home—אין לי ארץ אחרת—I don't have another home or another land or another place to go. We made aliyah over a decade ago so that this place could be our home. We have created a wonderful community here, with great friends, with parks where our kids play and grow and live life.

We are not okay when we hear booms from the Iron Dome and wait to see if we will have to seek shelter in our home's protected room. We are not okay when it has become standard practice for our boys to sleep each night in the bomb shelter. And we are not okay when we know that there are hostages in Gaza, unaccounted for, injured, but at the forefront of our minds.

But sometimes we are okay. Like when the call went out that the family of a fallen soldier in our town was sitting shiva and someone mentioned that there didn't seem to be a lot of people visiting the family. When I went for Mincha that afternoon, the line to get into the building was 100+ people long. Everyone was commenting on how they came to let the family know they were not alone. In a packed home with a family I did not know and with over 75 people we davened Mincha. And then we heard others, outside, on the street. And we saw buses of Haredim and teenagers. And people from the neighborhood. Hundreds lined the street, davening with us and with the family, showing the strength of not just the neighbors and the community, but the strength of Am Yisrael.

Sometimes I feel as if we are on Noah's Ark, traveling forward without a compass, racing just ahead of the catastrophe that is chasing right behind us. We are bobbing in the water, trying to stay afloat, looking for a ray of sunshine through the dark clouds.

We continue to pray each day and night for those who were murdered because they were Israelis and Jews, for the return of the hostages, for the well-being of our soldiers, and for a quick and definitive end to this war. עם ישראל חי.

Orly Tamir, *olah*

Since 6:30 a.m. on October 7, my mind and body have gone through every emotion possible— fear, anger, and even moments of pride. While this horrible reality that we as Israelis have been living in has been quite literally hell on earth, seeing how we, as a nation, have found ways to drop everything and come together to support one another is what keeps me going.

I have the privilege of working at Nefesh B'Nefesh as an aliyah advisor. The amount of love and support that I have received from my olim has been like nothing I have ever experienced—our conversations about planning and documents turned into conversations about life, family, and hope. Last week, I had the privilege of greeting 25 olim chadashim at the airport when they landed in Israel. Suddenly, singing לשבועות טובים took on a whole different meaning. Between signing forms and discussing their next steps, each of us found ourselves crying with feelings of pain and joy, pride and fear.

Every night I find myself singing אחינו immediately after reciting שמע ישראל. My soul aches for my people and my country and, simultaneously, my people and my country heal my soul.

To the rest of the Ramah community, no matter where you are, please use your voice and your feet. Stand up for us, show up for us, and be our voices online and in person to those who lack understanding of the truth. We need you.

Rebecca Isenberg, *current lone soldier*

“הנה לא ינום, ולא יישן - שומר ישראל”

‘Behold, He that keeps Israel does neither slumber nor sleep.’ (Psalms 121)

As a commander for basic training for at-risk youth at Michve Alon, a regular part of my job is taking my soldiers to Har Herzl and Yad Vashem. The outing is called a “יום תרבות,” or “culture day.” So on October 5, I gave a tour around the Har Herzl National Cemetery. That day, Har Herzl was full of workers setting up for a ceremony to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Yom Kippur War, a war that put the fate of the Jewish State in question. Fifty years and one day later, terror took our country by surprise again. I have nothing to say about what happened on October 7, 2023, other than that my heart broke. Less than one week later, I have dozens of soldiers returning to Har Herzl, and not for a “יום תרבות.” I’ve stood by my best friends as they got phone calls that no one should have to hear. Rockets keep us awake. My entire lone soldier and Garin Tzabar families are risking their lives, whether it be on guard duty or on the front lines.

And yet, my kibbutz and my friends are opening their doors to soldiers and evacuated civilians. The amount of texts from friends, family, educators, and Ramahniks from around the world has not ceased or slowed. There is a collective need to protect our nation. Wherever you are, keep up the emotional support, donations, and Israel education. Your family in Israel needs you as a ‘שומר ישראל,’ whether you’re in uniform or not.

Moria Lehman-Roth, *shlich*a

My family and I had such a happy summer at Ramah Wisconsin. But without a doubt, the summer was colored with the anticipation of what was to come next in our life, our move back to Israel after four years of being shlichim in Milwaukee. The question we were asked most this summer was “Are you happy to go back?” Our answer was always the same: “Yes, we are happy, and while we know the transition will be difficult in many ways, we also know that we are going back to our home.”

We landed in Israel in mid-August and started a period of adjustment. Getting used to new habits, new schedules, new schools and workplaces. We were reconnecting to our old lifestyle and also realizing how much we and our homeland have changed. After about two months, everyone felt much more settled down, happy to go back to school after the long Sukkot break, and excited to start the routine of “אחרי החגים” - after the holidays.

Then came October 7, and the world turned upside down.

On the morning of Shabbat, we woke up to the sound of a siren, a loud and scary sound, usually unfamiliar to residents of Jerusalem, certainly for those who just landed from the USA. There were families, babies, old people, neighbors of many backgrounds, and plenty of different languages all gathered in the bomb shelter—a microcosm of Israeli society. We spent the morning at home, played board games, tried to relax together, and ran downstairs to the shelter whenever the siren was heard. With every gathering in the shelter, we started forming connections with the neighbors and even held a Torah reading together. But as time passed, we became more exposed to the news, the horrible details of what was happening dawning on us.

After Havdalah, we called our families and our loved ones, checking in on those called back to the army and those living close to the border. My girls asked to go to sleep with their shoes on, wanting to be ready if a siren were to go off in the night. But even without sirens, it was still a sleepless night for me as I was glued to the news. That became my nightly routine, watching as the casualty count grew higher and the horrific stories were revealed.

Since then, more than two weeks have passed. This week, kids in Jerusalem started returning to school for shorter days as a first sign of trying to add back some normalcy and routine into children's lives. After-school activities have also returned, public libraries are open, friends are coming over, and we are doing our best to keep our kids' lives vibrant and close to normal.

The situation is far from being resolved, and the heartbreaking stories keep coming. I feel a moral obligation to listen to the stories and to remember all those lost, but I also know I have to limit myself and protect my children from the harsh details.

Many citizens of Israel are evacuated from their homes, hurt and traumatized in so many ways. I am thankful that we are currently safe in Jerusalem and have some normalcy when so many others around us cannot even start to rebuild their lives.

Working and keeping busy has kept us going. I am a teacher myself and I was so happy to go back to teaching in school. Seeing the students and spending time with them has been one of the most strengthening experiences. It's been amazing being able to teach classes that have nothing to do with the situation, and also essential to create the space to share thoughts, emotions, and fears. The school has been organizing many volunteering opportunities for our students to babysit, carry out activities for children of evacuated families, make sandwiches, and bake cookies for families and soldiers. At home, my kids have been walking the dogs of families whose family members were drafted.

The feeling of connection between the people of Israel that comes with a situation of war is heartwarming. In addition, the amount of support from our friends far away was amazing and extremely strengthening. I received calls and messages from camp friends and Milwaukee friends, Jews and non-Jews alike. Each one of those check-ins is so meaningful. It helps us feel less alone in this difficult reality.

People are asking how we are and it's a difficult question to answer these days. While we are safe, we are not okay. The poet Haim Guri wrote: "שלומי בשלום עמי"—I am as my people are. Some moments everything feels dark and hopeless. We try to hang on to the good, to think of things that will cheer us up, to cheer others up, to pray and hope that good will prevail over evil.

Tzur Harari, *shaliach*

I want to share with you my personal feelings and experience from the dark day that was Shabbat, October 7. My friends and I had been traveling for the past two months since camp ended. We had just arrived in northern Colombia and at 11:30 p.m. local time, we started receiving pictures of terrorists walking around the city of Sderot. I read in my family group chat that alarms were going off in our kibbutz. At first, we thought that this was routine. (Just six months ago there had been a different round of fighting.) But we started receiving more and more graphic pictures of hundreds of terrorists in Israel. The news channels started talking about a surprise attack by Hamas. I talked with my mom and she said the whole family was home. My older brother went out with the security team to protect our kibbutz. My friends and I quickly returned to our hotel because we were terribly worried about the whole situation. All night we watched the news and talked with friends from the kibbutzim that had been taken over by terrorists—all of whom were waiting to hear from their families. I was scared and worried about my family at home and for my brother who was no longer answering the phone. There was no electricity or cell reception, just Wi-Fi. My kibbutz was very lucky; both the security team and the border guards eliminated terrorists at the kibbutz gates and fences.

The photos and reports during the following days had a big impact on us. I thought about what could have been the fate of my kibbutz and my family. Being so far away from them was unbearable. Most of our kibbutz was soon evacuated to the town of Chadera. My family stayed on the kibbutz, my brothers guarded the kibbutz, and my mother was in the operations room.

We decided that there was no way we could continue with our trip. We were looking for all kinds of ways to return to Israel; we wanted to return as soon as possible. After five days, we were able to get back home to Israel. I went straight to the kibbutz to help guard it and was waiting for my tzav shemona (call-up notice for the Army reserves) to arrive. It was a hard transition from vacation to war. May we know quieter days.

Daniel Livingston, *oleh*

The last year here was already one of the most difficult there's been for the country: protests, politics, many of us feeling the pressure of being in the middle of a decisive struggle for Israel's future. And then my roommates and I woke up to sirens at 6:30 or so on the morning of Simchat Torah. To the horrific reports that followed on the news. And just a few hours later, there we were, my friends from reserves and me—religious and secular, right and left, from every corner of the country and every walk of life, rolling down the highway in our artillery pieces, understanding that for all our differences: it's up to all of us. Together. Indeed, some of the reactions from around the world in the following days—especially in contrast to those within Israel and the Jewish world—only served to reinforce the feeling that push comes to shove, we, Jews in Israel and around the world, are often all we've got.

Over the coming days, I noticed that while some people chose to disconnect from the news to stay calm, sane, and focused on the task at hand in the army, others needed to know what was going on, to try and understand, process, and grieve. Personally, I found myself with the urge to talk with and connect many of my Jewish friends around the world with what was going on. Not only because that's a positive thing to do, but as a way of processing and feeling I was contributing something I was in a position to do.

Something that came up in many of these conversations was the impossibility of squaring the immensity of the failure, the tragedy of October 7, with the stories of incredible heroism from that day. How can so many people—parents, kids, soldiers—display such heroism in the face of such horror, and yet such a horrific tragedy and failure occur? There are no simple answers, at least not yet. But one of my former chanichim (campers) did touch on something that perhaps unbeknownst to him, is at the core of the nature of remembrance in Israel. The idea that the tragedy of loss isn't merely the past—who someone was—but also the loss of the futures of those who in moments of immense tragedy, showed themselves to be among the best of us. And that it will be up to us to carry forward the legacy of those best among us, so their light in the world isn't extinguished. That is how we put the idea of “may their memories be a blessing” into action. I only hope we can live up to that.

On another, more tangible note, the incredible outpouring of support we here in the army have received from our fellow Israelis and Jews around the world has been inspiring. We are one people, with one homeland, and a history that teaches us that only together can we survive and thrive. We know that for all the shortcomings we have had and will have, and any differences we may have, we know that in the face of scenes that echo the worst in our people's history and demand we stand up for the idea of “Never Again,” that millions stand behind us. We feel you in this darkness. And as one of my friends recently wrote, while the struggle ahead of us will be tough, we have no intention of letting you down.

STORIES FROM ISRAEL • סיפורי ישראל

Noam Bonen, *shaliach*

I'm 24 years old from Jerusalem and I'm studying to be a social worker.

On October 6, I celebrated Simchat Torah in the center of Jerusalem with my family and friends and if someone had told me what would happen the following day, I would not have believed them.

I was woken up on October 7 by a siren, and from there, the horror movie began. In the blink of an eye, almost all my friends were drafted back into the army, most still in their Shabbat clothes.

We lost more than 1,400 citizens, soldiers, kids, Holocaust survivors, and many young adults, just like me, with bright futures ahead of them. Entire families are gone. Kids were left orphans. Parents with no children. Fiancés who weep over the graves of their beloved. They are all heartbroken. We are all, as Am Yisrael, crying with them.

I grew up in a small town in the North knowing war, but this time is different. This time we are fighting for our existence. We are fighting for dignity, morality, and humanity.

You probably have heard President Joe Biden mentioning Golda Meir's famous quote, "We don't have anywhere else to go." This is our bleeding, beautiful, cherished country. So we will keep fighting for justice, so we can raise our children peacefully.

In two weeks, Am Yisrael was united in an incredible way. People opened their homes for families from the South, babysat little kids who survived the horror, packed dozens of packages of food and sent it to soldiers, and bought new clothes and furniture for people who lost everything they ever owned in fires.

We learned, once again, what kindness is and that we are stronger together.

We feel the love and strength from our brothers and sisters around the world and it just makes us even stronger.

I want to thank the entire Ramah community for your prayers, donations, and empowering messages. And say once again—AM ISRAEL CHAI.

We cannot wait for the day that we can welcome you all back in our beautiful, bereaved land, that will yet again rise from the ashes and flourish.

Besorrot tovot to all.

Aliza Zeff, olah and director of Tichon Ramah Yerushalayim (TRY)

A little after 8:00 on October 7, an air raid siren sounded in Jerusalem. From there, the life and country we knew became a memory. It's hard to believe that just a few days ago we were arguing over politics and our fractured government...it all became so trivial within these moments of anguish.

We spent the rest of that morning trying our hardest to dance with our community and the Torah. By Mincha, there were almost no men in the room between the ages of 17 and 40; they had all been called to base.

Of course, the first 24 hours were mostly a blur of confusing information, posters of missing people, and families frantic to hear from their loved ones. It felt similar to the hours after 9/11.

We now spend our days mostly at home, my kids back on "Zoom school." The volunteering happening in this country is like nothing I've ever seen, people cooking and collecting clothing for those displaced from their homes, gathering the many supplies our soldiers need, and helping out at the hospitals. This Shabbat I will be hosting one of the 20,000 families that have been displaced, one of my kids swept the floors of Hadassah Hospital, and my second youngest signed up to draw a portrait of one of our fallen heroes. It is truly a nation of family, and where two weeks ago we were completely fractured, we're now 100% available to fulfill every need.

My kids attended two funerals at Har Herzl this week, neither of which were for people they knew personally. One funeral, for a lone soldier from Russia, was delayed because there weren't enough people to proceed; before they knew it, over 1,000 people showed up. The second was for the brother of a classmate of my eldest. He died throwing grenades back at Hamas terrorists, likely saving 14 people. His friend, Hersh Goldberg-Polin, whose mom I love dearly and have worked with for six years at Ramah Israel, was injured and subsequently abducted by Hamas.

I am not the best at praying. But I find myself saying my own made-up private prayers at any time, day and night. I light up when I get messages from people. They do help. This morning, I woke up to find a membership to an online yoga website from a close friend in Philadelphia. As I write this, my friend just sent us a Wolt gift card, the Israeli version of Uber Eats, because cooking dinner has been feeling so overwhelming. These little things, the check-ins from people from all walks of my life, are propping me up.

It is exhausting. It is scary. And it's a strange world where I have to keep telling myself that thousands of Israelis have it so much worse than I do. My husband isn't called to reserve duty. My children aren't yet serving. I live in Jerusalem, mostly out of immediate harm's way. And yet. My heart breaks anew every few hours, the tears flow again like it's the first time. And it feels unreal but also wonderful to say that there isn't any other place I'd rather be. אין לי ארץ אחרת.

