



WORLD ZIONIST ORGANIZATION
THE DEPARTMENT OF IRGOON
AND ISRAELIS ABROAD



From Agony to Harmony

A CEREMONY MARKING
THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF THE OCTOBER 7TH EVENTS

Ceremony program concept and production:
The Department of Irgoon and Israelis Abroad

The photographs that accompany the texts are from "Here Comes the Sun" - a photography exhibition produced by the Department that seeks to present the story of the Gaza Envelope while looking ahead with hope

Dear Communities*

We are pleased to present this suggested program for "From Agony to Harmony" - a **commemoration ceremony** which will mark the first anniversary of the October 7th events that shook our world.

What does the ceremony include

The ceremony consists of: readings, songs, testimonies, videos that can be screened in the background, and traditional prayers that have been revised following the events. Whether between or against the backdrop of the texts/songs, we recommend that you show segments from the videos that will enrich the ceremony. For your convenience, those videos have been consolidated and numbered on the next page.

Open to changes

The suggested program is, of course, just a 'skeleton' that is open to changes and adaptations based on the nature of your community, the time frame, and the venue at your disposal.

Ceremony duration

Our recommendation is that the ceremony not exceed one hour. When planning it, it is worth timing yourselves and adapting the program to the predefined time frame.

Photography exhibition - "Here Comes the Sun"

Ahead of Israel's last Independence Day, the Department produced an exhibition of photographs from the Gaza Envelope that offers a glimmer of hope and rebirth. The exhibition is entitled: Here Comes the Sun.

The exhibition can be an excellent fit for the event. The photographs can be hung at the entrance to and/or inside the gathering place. You can register to receive the exhibition in a digital format ready for printing. Please use the following link: <https://www.tfaforms.com/5112441>

A sharing wall

Another idea is to install a large wall at the entrance to the event, which invites participants to share their personal thoughts, either in writing or through drawings.

White construction paper can be attached to an existing wall, next to which you can place markers/crayons that any participants who wish to add something to the wall can use. Alternatively, you can bring a 'portable' wall that can move and be used in various places and events.

Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions, and we will gladly be of assistance.

Our email address: wzo.israelis@gmail.com

Wishing all of us peaceful days!

**The Department of Irgoon and Israelis Abroad
The World Zionist Organization**

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A List of the Videos and Recommendations for the Ceremony

The numbers assigned to the videos correspond to the order of the different parts of the program. The same numbers appear in the ceremony booklet next to the texts and songs they relate to. That will enable you to incorporate the videos in the right place.

Please note the recommended segments of the videos. The other segments are not relevant or inappropriate.

1. The ceremony should start with the first 90 seconds of the documentary - [Black Sunrise](#) (00:15-01:40) from the Nova festival - from celebration to destruction.
2. After reading the opening passage - "This is How it Happened" - it is advisable to screen the first three minutes of the video: "The Seventh of October War - A War Journal / Local Testimony". During those three minutes, a series of images will appear which underscore the extent of the horrors and the destruction on the kibbutzim. [For the video, click here](#) (00:00-02:45)
3. A video produced by the Soroka Medical Center, which describes October 7th from the perspective of the intake of the wounded. [For the video, click here](#) (00:50-04:40). (we highly recommend adhering to the suggested time frame and not showing the beginning and end of the video because they are promotional).
4. While reading the poem "Never Again" and singing the song "Sea of Tears" - it is advisable to show images from the funerals, which are taken from the video: "A War Journal / Local Testimony". [For the video, click here](#) (13:50-18:25)
5. In the section dealing with the Nova festival, we suggest starting with the first segment of the film #NOVA - which contains a chilling phone conversation between a daughter and her father. [For the video, click here](#) (00:40-01:25)
6. While reading the stories of the bravery, we recommend that you show the pictures of the heroes and heroines. The following links are to pictures whose use has been authorized:
 - ◆ [Tali Hadad](#)
 - ◆ [Aner Shapira](#)
 - ◆ [Nasreen Yousef](#)
 - ◆ [Rami Davidian](#)
 - ◆ Members of the Kalmanson family - for [Elhanan's picture](#)
 - ◆ The all-woman tank crew - for [a picture](#) of the tank that the female soldiers drove
 - ◆ The retired generals - [Israel Ziv](#), [Noam Tibon](#), [Yair Golan](#)
 - ◆ Avi, Avi and Emanuel, [United Hatzalah](#) - for a picture of the ambulance
7. In the section dealing with the hostages, it is important to review and update the text based on the actual developments regarding this matter.
8. In the section dealing with the hostages, you can show images from the video "A War Journal / Local Testimony", photographs relating to the campaign for the return of the hostages to Israel. [For the video, click here](#) (8:26-19:45)
9. In the section dealing with Diaspora Jewry, it is fitting to show a video edited by the Department, which includes rallies, protests, demonstrations and displays in which Israelis and Jews across the globe took part. [For the video, click here](#) (01:00-02:00)
10. Instead of, or in addition to, reading the piece by Liat Franco, you can show segments from the video that include various testimonies by Israelis who live in different countries around the world. - [For the video, click here](#) (Because the video is long, it is advisable to show only select segments).
11. After reading the texts about Israelis in the Diaspora, you can show segments from "Jews Worldwide Donate Gear to Soldiers." A reminder: show only the cited segments because the others deal with topics that are not relevant to the ceremony. [For the piece, click here](#) (00:00-01:00, 02:10-03:43)
12. While singing "We Don't Need" in the background you can show images taken from the video A War Journal / Local Testimony, and specifically the segments that describe how Israeli civilians mobilized right after the massacre. [For the video, click here](#) (21:10-22:20)



This is How it Happened¹



On October 7, 2023, the Shabbat of Simchat Torah, Israel experienced the deadliest terrorist attack in its history.

At 6:29 in the morning, under a heavy barrage of rocket fire, thousands of Hamas terrorists invaded Israel and disabled the early detection system along the fence that separates the Gaza Strip from Israel.

Riding on vehicles and equipped with weapons, they infiltrated IDF bases, kibbutzim in the Gaza Envelope, and the nearby towns. By air and on foot, they made their way to the Re'im Park, where thousands of Israelis were partying at the Nova festival.

Sticking to a meticulous plan, they took control of the main roads, making it difficult for Israeli first responders to approach the area and attack anyone who tried to escape.

Everywhere they reached, the Hamas terrorists displayed unimaginable brutality. They murdered senior citizens, women, and children indiscriminately, entire families. They raped, they mutilated bodies, they looted everything they could get their hands on, and, before leaving, set homes and other property on fire, in addition to burning people alive.

Hundreds were taken hostage to the Gaza Strip.

The State of Israel and the IDF were caught off guard. It was late afternoon before large and organized IDF forces reached the communities that were under attack. Operating under impossible conditions, they displayed unmatched heroism and engaged the terrorists. Only after 48 long hours of bloody combat did they manage to completely eliminate the threat.

It was one of the finest hours of many people who acted from their hearts and their conscience, while risking their lives. Some did not survive.

It was one of the finest hours of Israel's civil society, which from the brink of disaster on October 7th joined forces immediately.

Of men and women on the front lines and on the home front. Of Israelis who live in the Diaspora and suddenly felt the ground ripped from beneath their feet. Some got on planes, and many others mobilized in their places of residence to help with fundraising, to help increase awareness about the hostage crisis, and did so for the good of their community, for the good of their home.

During the October 7th attack, 860 civilians (nearly half of them at the Nova festival) and 578 soldiers, law enforcement officers, firefighters, Shin Bet personnel, and first responders were murdered*. Thousands were wounded, of which hundreds were in critical condition. 251 people were abducted to the Gaza Strip, including children, women, senior citizens, foreign nationals, and soldiers. Around 50% are still there.

* The numbers are revised from time to time as a result of new forensic and intelligence-related evidence obtained on the ground.

② We have gathered here to mark the first anniversary of the October 7th events - events that are unparalleled by any means or measurement. Events whose resulting shockwaves and upheavals in Israel's civil society and among Israelis and Jews across the globe were among the most difficult we ever experienced.

One Human Tissue

Lyrics and music: Moti Hamer

When I shall die,
something of mine, something of mine
will die in you, will die in you.

When you'll die,
something of yours, something of yours in me
will die with you, will die with you.

Because all of us, yes all of us
are all one living human tissue
and if one of us
goes from us
something dies in us -
and something, stays with him

If we'll know, how to comfort, how to comfort
the hostility, if only we'd know.

If we'll know, how to quiet our rage
(if we'd know how to quiet)
upon the fury of our humiliation, to say sorry.
If we'd know how to start from the beginning.

Because all of us...

Source: www.hebrewsongs.com

Rikma Enoshit Achat

Kshe'amut,
Mashehu mimeni, mashehu mimeni
Yamut bechah, yamut bechah.

Kshetamut,
Mashehu mimchah bi, mashehu mimchah bi
Yamut itchah, yamut itchah.

Ki kulanu, ken kulanu
Kulanu rikmah enoshit achat chayah
Ve'im echad me'itanu
Holech me'imanu
Mashehu met banu -
Umashehu, nish'ar ito

Im ned'a, eich lehargiya eich lahargiya
Et ha'eivah, im rak ned'a.

Im ned'a, im ned'a lehash'kit et ze'ameinu
(im ned'a lehash'kit)
Al af elboneinu, lomar slichah.
Im ned'a lehat'chil mehat'chalah.

Ki kulanu...

We'll all rise now for a moment of silence in memory of
the October 7th victims.



Following the events of October 7th, Yaoz Sever (an
Israeli author, businessman, and media and public
relations personality who is the CEO of My Team Group),
wrote a new version of Yizkor. Please rise for the
recitation of Yizkor.

Yizkor The People of Israel

May the People of Israel remember its sons and daughters,
the loyal and the brave, the soldiers of the Israel Defense
Forces, the first responders, the members of the intelligence,
security, and law enforcement communities, and the civilians
who risked their lives during the events of the Black Shabbat,
who ran to lead the forces that saved the people from the
murderers, the savages, from the terrorist organizations.

May Israel remember and be blessed by its offspring, and
mourn the radiance of the youth, the preciousness of the
bravery and the sanctity of the will and the self-sacrifice.

May it remember the bravery of the kibbutzim, the moshavim
and the cities, which stood guard until they had no strength
left.

May it remember the officers who led the forces, the soldiers,
the father and mother who, with their bodies, defended their
families, but were unable to save them.



Songs till now

Lyrics: Natan Yonatan
Music: Nachum Heiman

we were given a time extension
until our time stops.
There were rains and light
what more can you want,
what more can you want
those more beautiful than you and I
those more beautiful than you and I
the Earth took.

Songs till now
minute after minute
short, loving and painful
but the last
final and long
final and long
the sun dial and the sand
the sun dial and the sand
got to the line.

Songs till now
at the height of the peak
even the air starts to be thin
but to you and me
words still remain
words still remain
to remember how we were here
to remember how we were here
when the garden will be closed.

Songs till now
the weeping and the laughter
people's voices, the stars of time.
The sun and the sea
the bread, the world
the bitter and the sweet
and all that was - we will leave
and all that was - we will leave
to live within the song.

Source: www.hebrewsongs.com

Shirim Ad Kan

Shirim Ad Kan
Shirim ad kan
nit'nah lanu arkah
ad shehazman shelanu ya'atzor.
Hayu g'shamim ve'or
mah od efshar lir'tzot,
mah od efshar lir'tzot
yafim mimeni umimech
yafim mimeni umimech
ha'adamah lak'chah.

Shirim ad kan
dakah achar dakah
k'tzarot ve'ohavot vecho'avot,
aval ha'achronah
sofit va'arukah
sofit va'arukah
sha'on hashemesh vehachol
sha'on hashemesh vehachol
higi'u ad hakav.
Shirim ad kan
begovah hapisgah
gam ha'avir mat'chil lihyot dalil,
aval lachem veli
od nish'aru milim
od nish'aru milim
liz'kor eich shehayinu kan
liz'kor eich shehayinu kan
k'sheyisager hagan.

Shirim ad kan
habechi vehatz'chok
kolot ha'anashim, koch'vei hazman.
Hashemesh vehayam
halechem, ha'olam
hamar vehamatok
vechol mah shehayah nash'ir
vechol mah shehayah nash'ir
lichyot betoch hashir.

In the fields around Kibbutz Be'eri,
Photographer: Amnon Arad





Many kibbutzim and communities were severely harmed on October 7th. Three of them were critically hurt: Nir Oz, Be'eri, and Kfar Aza.

Shay-Li Atari, a young vocalist who lived on Kfar Aza together with her husband, Yahav Wiener z"l, and their infant daughter, Sheya, recounted the horrors that she experienced:

"The explosions and the shooting started at 6:30 in the morning. We quickly realized that those were not regular rocket sounds, and from our WhatsApp group, we understood that terrorists had infiltrated. We closed the safe room door, after which voices and yelling in Arabic started. After hearing the terrorists outside our home, my husband and I went into quiet mode and communicated in pantomime. Using our hands, we agreed that if the terrorists come inside - he would hold onto the door, and I would escape with Sheya, our month-old baby.

They started opening the window of the safe room, and a hand of one of the terrorists made it inside. Then they began pushing the window frame. Yahav held onto the window, and I ran outside through the safe room door with Sheya in my arms. She slept the entire time and didn't wake up. I started running and wanted to go into my neighbors' house. I knocked on the door, but they didn't answer. I hid in the bushes, and after that, behind doors. After I heard them approaching again, I went inside the neighbor's storage unit. The shooting continued, and I put flower boxes on top of us, and for self-defense grabbed a hammer and a chisel.

But then, Sheya started crying and they started coming in our direction. Every one of Sheya's cries was just like prey for them. They heard her crying and began to get closer. I ran outside and knocked on the neighbors' door, who were able to see me thanks to the cameras. I went into the safe room with them, together with their three children.

We had some milk that had gone sour and water, and all of us shared them. My daughter barely agreed to eat any of it, but it was all we had because I was unable to nurse her. Instead of a pacifier - I gave her my finger.

I allowed myself to fall apart only when they came to rescue us from the safe room, and that was after the security forces rid the area of terrorists. I tried thinking about where my husband was, and started feeling guilty for not telling him to come with me."

When they arrived at the hospital, Atari's daughter was not in good condition after having inhaled smoke. "The terrorists burned down homes and the smoke penetrated the safe room, and all of us inhaled it. I also feared that Sheya had been injured due to my running and shaking her from side to side. But she was okay. Her condition stabilized."

During the days that Yahav's fate was still unknown, Shay-Li said: "If my husband comes back alive and wants to live in the Gaza Envelope - I'll do it. Even if he'll want to live in hell, I'll follow him. The important thing is that he be alive."

Yahav's body was found three days later. He was 37 at the time of his death.

(Shay-Li's account was posted by Ran Boker on Ynet on October 9, 2023)

Shay Li-Atari performed the song "In Our Kindergarten." Its lyrics and music, which were written by Iftach Kerzner during Operation Protective Edge, took on prophetic meaning after the events of October 7th.



Children from the Eitan kindergarten after returning home to Bnei Netzarim. Photograph: Adi Yarchi

In Our Kindergarten

📺 Lyrics and music: Iftach Kerzner
 Performed by: Shay-Li Atari

In our kindergarten, there are plenty of kids
 Some of them I love, some of them I do not know
 But who haven't heard about the bravery of Ran?
 He's the fastest on the sand, the strongest in the kindergarten
 But he has this one secret that he's afraid to tell
 That he's so in love with one of the girls

So on cold nights
 With a flashlight under the blanket, they talk
 And he tells her what she means to him
 His whole world is protected beneath the blanket

In our kindergarten, there are many groups
 Some are popular, some not so much
 But who haven't heard about the swing jumpers?
 They get applause, they're being taught how to land
 Their flags are raised, they're the pride of the whole area
 Only sometimes when they jump too far, they forget to return

So on cold nights
 With a flashlight under the blanket, they talk
 And he tells her what she means to him
 His whole world is protected beneath the blanket

In our kindergarten, we say goodbye happily
 For the day is not long and we meet again tomorrow
 Except those who suddenly don't come back anymore
 I was told they just moved out to beyond the clouds

So on cold nights
 With a flashlight under the blanket, they talk
 And he tells her what she means to him
 She cries when he offers her to be his whole world
 On the night before the war

In our battalion, there are plenty of kids
 Some of them I love, some of them I'll never get to know

Etslenu Bagan

Etslenu bagan yesh hamon yeladim
 Et chelkam ani ohev, et chelkam ani lo makir
 Aval mi lo shama al ha'omets shel Ran?
 Hu hachi mahir bachol, hu hachi chazak bagan
 Aval yesh lo sod echad shepachad hu legalot
 Shehu kol kach me'ohav be'achat hayeladot

Az beleilot karim
 Im panas mitachat lasmicha, hem medabrim
 Vehu megaleh la ma hi bishvilo
 Kol olamo mugan mitachat lasmicha

Etslenu bagan yesh harbe chavurot
 Yesh ka'eleh nechshavim, yesh ka'eleh shepachot
 Aval mi lo shama al koftsei hanadnedot?
 Meri'im lahem kapaim, melamdin otam linchot
 Muramim al ness hadegel, ga'avat kol ha'ezor
 Rak lifamim kshehem koftsim rachok hem
 shochachim lachzor

Az beleilot karim
 Im panas mitachat lasmicha, hem medabrim
 Vehu megaleh la ma hi bishvilo
 Kol olamo mugan mitachat lasmicha

Etslenu bagan nifradim besimcha
 Ki hayom lo aroch venifgashim shuv machar
 Chuts me'eleh shepit-om lo chozrim yoter lagan
 Amru li shehen rak avru dira me'ever la'anani

Az beleilot karim
 Im panas mitachat lasmicha, hem medabrim
 Vehu megaleh la ma hi bishvilo
 Hi bocha kshehu matsia la lihiyot kol olamo
 Ba'erev shelifnei hamilchama

Etslenu bagdud yesh hamon yeladim
 Et chelkam ani ohev, et chelkam ani lo akir

Source: <https://lyricstranslate.com>

③ Due to its location, the Soroka Medical Center was the first to take in the hundreds of people who were wounded on October 7th. The testimony provided by the emergency room staff tells the story of the horrific tragedy, but also of the strengths of Israel's civil society.



Sivan was among the scores of people who were murdered on Kfar Aza, along with her boyfriend, Naor Hasidim.

Sivan's father, Shimon Elkabets, wrote the poem "Never Again" in her memory.

Never Again⁴

by Shimon Elkabets

Most terrifying is the longing
That lands on you without warning
It makes you cry at the most ill-timed moment
Right when you have a bag of items at the checkout

What stings the most is the feeling of guilt
Why weren't you with her in the moments of terror
In the hours she was under fire and blood
All she wanted is for you
to say that everything will be okay
Never again our parents told us
Never again our leaders promised
Never again we told our children
Only the world is no longer there for us

Most terrifying is the longing
Why weren't you with her
All she wanted is for you
to say that everything will be okay
Never again our parents told us
Never again our leaders promised
Never again we told our children
Only the world is no longer there for us
We're left on our own
Most terrifying is the longing
Is the longing



Yehoshua Yehoshua, the father of Captain Itay Z"l, with his son's comrades who fought side-by-side with him when he was killed. Photograph: Rabia Basha



Sea of Tears

📺 Lyrics: Zemirah Chen

Music: Raffi Gabai (for the video, click here)

Long are the nights since the day you went
spring like fall is so gray
and memories in the heart simply already forgotten
and a prayer, truthful prayer that you'd return.

Sea of tears in my two eyes,
my heart screams, come back to me.
My voice breaks the silence,
if only you'd hear, you'd hear.

How desolate is my room since the day you left,
the heart of the clock on the wall fell silent
and lonely in the corner is the chair you loved,
without you the world is so orphaned.

Sea of tears...

I'll return my child - so you promised,
just wait for me and remain mine
all this time you'd only sent me one letter
the pages faded a while ago, as has my hair.

Sea of tears...

Source: www.hebrewsongs.com

Yam Shel Dma'ot

Arukim haleilot miyom she'halachta,
ha'aviv kmo hastav kol kach afor,
uvavev zichronot min hastam kvar shachachta,
ut'filah, tfilah kenah shetachazor.

Yam shel dma'ot bishtei einai,
libi zo'ek shuvah elai.
Koli shover et had'mamah,
hatishm'a, hatishm'a.

Mah shomem hu chadri miyom she'azavta,
hasha'on she'al hakim libo nadam.
Uvoded bapinah hakise she'ahavta,
bil'adecha ha'olam ko meyutam.

Yam shel dma'ot...

Od ashuv yaldati - atah ko hivtachta,
rak chaki li vesheli hish'ari
im hazman rak michtav yechidi li shalachta,
hadapim dahu mizman, gam se'ari.

Yam shel dma'ot...

5 369 young Israelis were brutally murdered at the Nova festival. Young Israelis who came to celebrate life and, instead, found their death at the festival. The terrorists often used 'double-tap' tactics to kill them. After raping some of the women and mutilating their bodies, they then set the bodies on fire. Dozens of the partygoers were abducted to the



An excerpt from the testimony provided by Assistant Commissioner Shlomit Landes, who heads the Investigation Division at the Israel Police:

"We saw the young women wearing their stylish jeans or comfortable salwar pants, the girls with the tattoos who were there to party...women's shoes... the long hair, the dreadlocks, the clothes they intended to wear to work or celebrate in, or just to be with the kids.

"We saw the shiny glitter nail polish. We learned that gel nail polish is resistant, even to horrors. What used to be a symbol of hope and personal grooming for women, became the symbol of a life and femininity cut short and abuse.

"Here, women...will not tell you what happened. We are unable to help them get closure...most of the witnesses to the horrors were also murdered.

"It appears that we still don't know the scope and magnitude of the horrors. But we have to tell the enlightened world, which talks a lot about the right to live in security and women's rights, about everything that happened here on October 7th."

כשצלצלת רעד קולך

מילים: נתן זך, לחן: חנן יובל

כשצלצלת רעד קולך

ואני ידעתי שאני אבל בגללך

ולא היה לי צורך לשמוע את דברך

כי כשצלצלת רעד קולך

ואני ידעתי שאני אבל בגללי

ולא היה לך צורך לשמוע את קולי

כי כשצלצלת רעד קולך

ואני ידעתי שאת כבר אינך

Following the October 7th massacre, Rabbi Tamar Elad-Appelbaum, and the Israeli rabbinical student, Sarah Segal-Katz, wrote this special E-I Maleh Rachamim prayer:

E-I Maleh Rachamim

E-I Maleh Rachamim
God of Compassion,
In a universe that lacked compassion
Grant tender rest
Beneath the wings of the Shekhinah.
In the broken spheres of human radiance
To the souls of every one of the injured
And the violated in the horrors
of the pogrom Of October 7.
For the fear
That fell upon each man and woman,
elders, youth, and children;
Our mouths do not know how to scream
Or put it into words.
For we lament and mourn
For them, for us,
Because of this our hearts are faint
because of these our eyes grow dim
Woe to us, for we are broken
Woe, for our homes were shattered
Our souls and bodies tormented
And our faces darkened.
Therefore, Compassionate One
Reveal our torment to the world and for all time
And from one end of the earth to the other
May the silenced voices utter:
Guard our souls in the Land of Life
For life is our heritage
May we come in peace to healing
Please God, heal all the injured.
Please God, heal the families and caretakers.
Please God, hear and heal us all.
And let us say, Amen.

Source: <https://www.hartman.org.il>

Hurricane

🎵 Lyrics: Avi Ohayon and Keren Peles
Music: Stav Beger, Avi Ohayon and Keren Peles
Performed by: Eden Golan

Writer of my symphony
Play with me
Look into my eyes and see
People walk away but never say goodbye
Someone stole the moon tonight
Took my light
Everything is black and white
Who's the fool who told you boys don't cry?

Hours and hours, empowers
Life is no game, but it's ours
While the time goes wild

Every day, I'm losin' my mind
Holdin' on in this mysterious ride
Dancin' in the storm, I got nothin' to hide
Take it all and leave the world behind
Baby, promise me you'll hold me again
I'm still broken from this hurricane
This hurricane

Livin' in a fantasy
Ecstasy
Everything is meant to be
We shall pass, but love will never die, mm

Hours and hours, empowers
Life is no game, but it's ours
While the time goes wild

Every day, I'm losin' my mind
Holdin' on in this mysterious ride
Dancin' in the storm, I got nothin' to hide
Take it all and leave the world behind
Baby, promise me you'll hold me again
I'm still broken from this hurricane
This hurricane

This hurricane

לא צריך מילים גדולות
רק תפילות
אפילו אם קשה לראות
תמיד אתה משאיר לי אור אחד קטן

Lo tzarich milim gdolot
Rak tfilot
Afilu im kashe lir'ot
Tamid ata mash'ir li
Or echad katan

Source: <https://eurovisionworld.com/eurovision/2024/israel>

⑥ The events of October 7th brought us countless stories of unsurpassed bravery. Even though months have elapsed since that awful Shabbat, unbelievable stories continue to be revealed, nearly every day, about the courage displayed by Israelis, who left everything behind and risked their lives in order to save others.

Women and men, young and older adults, soldiers and civilians. Amazing stories of bravery continue to emerge from the huge darkness:

Tali Hadad from Ofakim, a mother of six who sent her son to the battlefield and followed him there. After he was wounded, she kept a level head and evacuated him. And then afterward, under fire, continued to evacuate other wounded people.

Aner Shapira, a soldier serving in the IDF who attended the Nova festival. While dozens of young people were hiding in a portable bomb shelter, Aner stood at the entrance and, with his bare hands, tossed out grenade after grenade that had been thrown into the shelter. He continued to do so until he was killed.

Nasreen Yousef, a Druze woman who is a resident of Yated, left her safe room and displayed extraordinary courage when she confronted the Nukhba terrorists who were tied up in her backyard. Posing as a Muslim woman, she spoke with the terrorists and cunningly extracted critical information from them, which she then passed on to IDF forces. By doing so, she saved her community.

Rami Davidian, a Patish resident, drove back and forth in his truck from the Nova festival site for hours, all the while under fire, and managed to rescue hundreds of young people that day.

Members of the Kalmanson family (the "Elhanan Team") comprised of Elhanan, Menachem, and Itiel, who decided to leave their home in Otniel and go to Kibbutz Be'eri. Without receiving any orders, for 16 straight hours, they rescued family after family, and in total around 100 members of Be'eri who were under siege in their homes.

Elhanan was killed in battle, and the team was awarded a special 2024 Israel Prize for Civilian Heroism.

An all-woman tank crew made history after plowing ahead with their tank towards Kibbutz Sufa and Kibbutz Holit. Together with other commando units, they eliminated the threat posed by the terrorists at the two kibbutzim.

The retired generals Israel Ziv, Noam Tibon, and Yair Golan, all in the seventh decade of their lives and years after not bearing arms, left the comfort of their homes and quickly and fearlessly made their way to the communities in the Gaza Envelope. They killed terrorists and rescued civilians and some of the wounded.

Avi Gian, Avi Yudkowsky, and Emmanuel Skaat, United Hatzalah volunteers, boarded their ambulance and rushed to the south. They ignored the roadblocks, went from one horrific scene to another, and rescued wounded people for more than a day. The entire time, bullets were flying over their heads and everything was in a state of chaos.

We're unable to tell you all the stories of the thousands of heroines and heroes who were rays of light amid the huge darkness. We're able to tell just a few.

Today, we remember them as well. We can praise for their acts of courage, and embrace the families of those who fell while being there for us.



7 On October 7th, 251 men, women, senior citizens, children, babies, soldiers and foreign nationals were abducted from the State of Israel to the Gaza Strip by Hamas terrorists. Dozens of the Israelis are also citizens of 33 other countries.

Hersh Goldberg-Polin was one of them. The son of Jon Polin and Rachel Goldberg, he was born in California and made Aliyah with his family when he was seven.

On the morning of October 7th, Hersh was at the Nova festival. At 8 am, about an hour after the launch of the attack, he sent a text to his family, saying "I love you." Ten minutes later, he added: "I'm sorry." Hersh found refuge in the portable bomb shelter that would later be called The Bomb Shelter of Death. Hamas terrorists repeatedly threw grenades inside. During the attack, Hersh's arm was blown off from the elbow. He managed to tie a tourniquet around his injured arm. Survivors from the portable bomb shelter shared that they had seen Hersh and other Israelis being abducted by the terrorists and put on a truck.

18 days after the abduction, Hersh's mother, Rachel Goldberg, delivered a poignant speech at the United Nations.

"...So here I live in a different universe than all of you, she said. "We seem to live in the same place, but I, like all of the mothers and all of the fathers, and wives and husbands, and children and brothers and sisters and loved ones of the stolen, we actually live on a different planet.

And the very cruelest of questions each of us is asked every single day, without intended malice, is 'how are you?'

Well, picture your own mother. And then picture her being told that there are only two options: you are either dead, or you had your arm blown off and you were kidnapped by gunpoint into Gaza. And no one knows where you are or if you bled to death...

Picture your own mother...

And that is my answer to you when you ask 'how are you?'

That is how all of us here on our planet feel. This planet of beyond pain, our planet of no sleep, our planet of despair, our planet of tears."

In the months that have elapsed since October 7th, a few dozen hostages have been released. Another handful were rescued by IDF forces in heroic operations. Others were shot or killed in captivity.

Since the beginning of the war, the Government of Israel has been negotiating the release of the hostages with Hamas. They have not been able to reach an agreement that will bring all the hostages home.

All Jews are praying for their safe return.



A Song of Ascents

🎵 Lyrics: Psalm 121, Music: Yosef Karduner

I will lift up mine eyes unto the mountains:
from whence shall my help come?

My help cometh from the Lord,
who made heaven and earth.

He will not suffer thy foot to be moved;
He that keepeth thee will not slumber.

Behold, He that keepeth Israel
doth neither slumber nor sleep.

The Lord is thy keeper;
The Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand.

The sun shall not smite thee by day,
nor the moon by night.

The Lord shall keep thee from all evil;
He shall keep thy soul.

The Lord shall guard thy going out and thy coming in,
from this time forth and forever.

Source: www.hebrewsongs.com

Shir Lama'alot

Esa einai el heharim:
me'ayin yavo ezri?

Ezri me'im Adonai
ose shamayim va'aretz.

Al yiten lamot ragleicha
al yanum shomrecha.

Hineh, lo yanum - velo yishan
shomer yisrael.

Hashem shomrecha
Hashem tzil'cha al yad yeminecha.

Yomam hashemesh lo yakeka
veyareyach balailah.

Adonai yishmorcha mikol ra'ah
yishmor et nafshecha.

Adonai yishmor tzetcha uvo'echa
me'ata ve'ad olam.

Refrain Thy Voice From Weeping ③

🎵 Lyrics and music: Idan Raichel

For in the nights your sleep wanders
And every dream is of terror
So tilt your ears to quiet
All grace and pity
Will rise, here it comes

Because your soul is kept for him
Indeed the hour is close
until robbed in your arms
he will fall at the end of the road
When they return to their borders

Just refrain your voice from crying
And your eyes from a tear
Because the gate will open
and he will come storming through
When they return to their borders
(x2)

Up to the streams of water
Through what is left of your strength
If he will return us then we will return
Refrain your voice from crying
There is hope for your end

Source: www.hebrewsongs.com

Min'i Kolech Mibechi

Ki baleilot sh'natech nodedet
Vechol chalom hu lemora
Teti az et oznech lasheket
Kol chesed rachamim
Od ya'aleh hineh hu ba

Ki bishvilo nafshech nishmeret
Harei k'reva hi hasha'ah
Ad sheshadud bizr'ootayich
Yipol besof haderech
Ksheyashuvu lig'vulam

Rak mini kolech mibechi
Ve'einayich midim'ah
Ki hasha'ar yipatach lo
Veyavo bo bise'arah
Ksheyashuvu lig'vulam
(x2)

Ad el nachalei hamayim
Derech she'erit kochech
Im yashivenu az nashuva
Mini kolrch mibechi
Yesh tikva la'achritech

9 The events of October 7th shook not only the citizens of the State of Israel. No Jew or Israeli worldwide was able to avoid being drawn into the tragedy.

Despite the rising wave of antisemitism, Jews and Israelis in many countries tirelessly devoted themselves to multiple initiatives aimed at increasing global public awareness about the plight of the hostages. They courageously took part in large-scale rallies in support of the State of Israel and the return of the hostages.



10 "An Israeli in the Diaspora" / Liat Franco

Being an Israeli in the Diaspora is trying to pretend 'routine' when your mindset is in the war.

It's driving, dropping off, picking up, doing errands 'on autopilot' when your body is in the war.

Every single cell in your body is tense 24/7.

One day follows another. The numbers rise. The days go by.

And you're on autopilot.

It's wanting to scream so that everyone will know what's going on in your home, but remaining silent.

It's answering questions like "is your family okay?" with a laconic reply - "my home is not okay."

Not breathing, choked with tears.

...

That's what being an Israeli is.

...

It's being moved by every stranger who expresses support.

Who smiles at you with kind eyes. Who asks how you're feeling. Being thankful, thankful, thankful for that.

It's searching all the time for more information, more facts, and feeling empty whenever you're not connected.

The trees are in the same place. The sun is shining. People are smiling. But your home is in danger.

To try and fill the gap with hope. "It will be okay" and realizing that it's the most Israeli that it gets.

That's being an Israeli in the Diaspora.

It's wanting to help, to make a difference. To receive dozens of messages. Dozens of groups. Dozens of projects.

To be wary. So it doesn't reach the enemy. To communicate only with people you know.

...

Being an Israeli in the Diaspora is to be war-conscious but in an induced coma. Paralyzed. In pain. Alone.

It's seeing another Israeli and hugging her, without words. We feel the same thing.

Being an Israeli in the Diaspora is yelling to our brothers and sisters in Israel that we are there. Just like them.

Frightened, hoping. And with them.

Simply just far away.



A Place for Worry

▶ Lyrics: Yehonatan Geffen
Music: Matti Caspi

At the edge of the heavens and the desert
there's a faraway place full of wild flowers
a small place, wretched and insane
a faraway place, a place for worry.

Over there they say what will happen
and think about all that has happened.
God sits there and sees
and guards over all that He created.

It's forbidden to pick the garden flowers
It's forbidden to pick the garden flowers
and worrying, terribly worried.

Source: www.hebrewsongs.com

Makom LeDe'agah

Bik'tzeh hashamaim uvesof hamidbar
yesh makom rachok male pirchei bar
makom katan, aluv umeshuga
makom rachok, makom lide'agah.

Omrin sham mah sheyikrah
vechoshvim al kol mah shekarah.
Elohim sham yoshev vero'eh
veshomer al kol mah shebara.

Asur liktof et pirchei hagan
asur liktof et pirchei hagan
vedo'eg, vedo'eg nora.

Speeches in support of Israel that were made by non-Jewish leaders around the world were especially notable and moving. One of them was the speech delivered by Eric Adams, the Mayor of New York, at a vigil held outside the United Nations Headquarters.

"We are not all right when we see young girls pulled from their home and dragged through the streets. We are not all right when we see grandmothers being pulled away from their homes and children shot in front of their families. We are not all right when right here in the City of New York you have those who celebrate at the same time when the devastation is taking place in our city. "We are not all right when Hamas believes that they are fighting on behalf of something and their destructive, despicable action that carried out. We are not all right when we still have hostages who have not come home to their family. We are not all right, and we're not going to say we have a stiff upper lip and act like everything is fine. Everything is not fine!

Israel has a right to defend itself, and that's the right that we know. Your fight is our fight. Your fight is our fight. And right here in New York we have the largest Jewish population outside of Israel. This is the place that our voices must raise and cascade throughout the entire country. We will not be all right until every person responsible for this act is held accountable...

"This was intentional. This was bitter. This was nasty. This was something that shows Hamas must be disbanded and destroyed immediately. And so I say to you, I'm not here because I'm your mayor. I've been in Israel as a state senator, I protected the community of the city in general but specifically the Jewish community as a police officer. I stood with you as borough president. And now I'm here today to say not only am I the chief executive of this city, but I'm your brother. I'm your brother. Your fight is my fight."

(To watch the video, [click here](#))



Please rise for the recitation of the
Mourner's Kaddish

Mourner's Kaddish

Glorified and sanctified by God's great name throughout
the world
which he has created according to His will
May He establish his kingdom in your lifetime and during
your days, and within the life of the entire House of Israel,
speedily and soon;
and say, Amen.

May His great name be blessed forever and to all eternity.
Blessed and praised, glorified and exalted, extolled and
honored, adored and lauded be the name of the Holy
One, blessed be He, beyond all the blessings and hymns,
praises and consolations that are ever spoken in the
world; and say, Amen.

May there be abundant peace from heaven, and life, for
us and for all Israel; and say, Amen.

He who creates peace in His celestial heights,
may He create peace for us and for all Israel; and for all
the inhabitants of the world; and say, Amen.

11 October 7th marks the first anniversary of the
horrific events that shook our world. This has been
one of the most difficult years in our history. But
at the same time, we rediscovered the strength of
the Jewish people. This wonderful people, who in
times of distress unite and mobilize and give their
best to every task at hand. To see all the sectors
in the Israeli public and in the Diaspora helping
the evacuees, the wounded and the soldiers was
nothing less than remarkable.

Many Israelis who were overseas rushed to return to
Israel and join the troops.

Many of those who live in the Diaspora sought every
possible way to extend assistance, raise money,
send equipment, provide emotional support, and
advance countless other initiatives.



All Jews are Responsible for Each Other Stories of the Lone Soldiers

Around 7,000 lone soldiers are currently serving in the IDF. Over half of them made Aliyah on their own (without their parents or families). They did so because they wanted to contribute to the country, out of a sense of genuine Zionism, although they were not required to enlist in the army. 10 lone soldiers were killed while defending the communities during the October 7th massacre. Three others were at the Nova festival when they were murdered.

There is not enough time to tell the stories of all the young heroes who lost their lives. We chose to focus on a few of them:



Sgt. Rose Lubin z"l immigrated to Israel from Atlanta at the age of 18 with the Garin Tzabar program of the Israel Scouts. She enlisted in the army and was deployed in the Border Police. Superintendent Dor Biton, her commanding officer, shared the following: "She lived on Kibbutz Sa'ad, and on October 7th joined the emergency standby team.

She guarded the front gate of the kibbutz to prevent the terrorists from breaking in. To a large extent, Kibbutz Sa'ad was saved thanks to the emergency standby team, and she was part of that team." Rose was killed about a month later in a stabbing attack in East Jerusalem. She was 20 at the time of her death. Rose told people that she was only five when she started dreaming about becoming a fighter. She lived to fulfill her dream - to serve in the most combat position possible.



Sgt. Nathaniel Young z"l was a lone soldier from England. He served in Golani's 13th Battalion and was one of the 41 soldiers from the battalion who were killed in the terrorist attack. His commanding officer shared the following: "He was supposed to deliver a lecture to new recruits about the importance of serving in a combat unit. He dreamed of joining the Oketz Unit - the IDF's canine unit. Nathaniel was an amazing person."

After sitting shiva in Jerusalem, his parents decided to fulfill Nathaniel's wish and made Aliyah to Israel from England.



Staff Sgt. Binyamin Lev z"l grew up in an Israeli-French family. He decided to return to Israel and enlist in the army. Binyamin led an ultra-Orthodox lifestyle and served in the Hetz Company - comprised of ultra-Orthodox paratroopers. Because he enlisted in the army after the age of 21, he was supposed to serve for only two years. He was scheduled to be discharged in December 2023. His mother, Yehudit, shared the following about him:

"On Shabbat morning, October 7th, his commanding officer asked for volunteers from the unit to come and help in the fighting in the south. He wanted Binyamin to be one of them because he was an excellent marksman." Binyamin was killed by a bullet in the battle that took place on Kibbutz Kfar Aza. He was 23 at the time of his death.



Sgt. Maj. Amir Fisher z"l was six years old when his family left Israel and moved to Ghana. At the age of 18, he made Aliyah on his own. He passed all the premilitary assessments and screenings, enlisted in the IDF, and was deployed in the Duvdevan Special Forces Unit. According to his girlfriend, Lior, "he really loved the army. He gave everything he could to his country, and fought bravely until the very end. If given the choice, he probably would have done everything the exact same way." Amir was 22 at the time of his death.

Israeli society applauds and salutes its lone soldiers. Tens of thousands of Israelis have accompanied lone soldiers on their last journey. They attend the funerals and come to the shiva, and warmly embrace the grief-stricken families who have come from abroad.

*The photographs of the fallen soldiers were taken from the IDF website.

We Don't Need ¹²

🎵 Lyrics: Avi Koren
Music: Shmuel Imberman

Our eyes are already dry from the tears
and our mouth is left mute of sound,
Tell me, what else can we ask for,
we have already asked for everything,

Give us rain in its due time,
and scatter flowers for us in the spring,
And let him come back to his home,
we don't need more than that.

We have already hurt a thousand scars,
and we hid a sigh deep inside,
Our eyes are dry,
please tell us we passed the test.

Give us rain in its due time,
and scatter flowers in the spring,
Let her be with him again,
we don't want more than that.

We have already covered one grave and another,
We've buried our hearts among the cypresses,
In a minute the sigh will burst out,
accept it as a personal prayer.

Give us rain in its due time,
and scatter flowers in the spring,
And let us return and see him,
we don't want more than that.

Source: www.hebrewsongs.com

Anachnu Lo Tz'richim

Kvar yavshu eineinu mid'maot,
ufinu kvar notar ilem mekol.
Mah od nevakesh, emor mah od?
Kim'at bikashnu lanu et hakol.

Et hageshem ten rak be'ito,
uva'aviv pazer lanu prachim,
veten sheyachazor shuv leveito,
yoter mizeh anachnu lo tz'richim.

Kvar ka'avnu elef tzalakot,
amok bifnim histarnu anachah.
Kaver yavshu eineinu milivkot -
emor shechvar amadnu bamivchan.

Et hageshem ten rak be'ito,
uva'aviv pazer lanu prachim,
veten lah lihyot shenit ito -
yoter mizeh anachnu lo tz'richim.

Kvar kisinu tel ve'od echad,
tamanu et libeinu bein broshim.
Od me'at tifrotz ha'anachah -
kabel zot kit'filah me'od ishit.

Et hageshem ten rak be'ito,
uva'aviv pazer lanu prachim,
veten lanu lashuv velir'oto
yoter mizeh anachnu lo tz'richim.





We recently celebrated Rosh Hashana Eve 5785-2024.

For hundreds of years now, Jews have said the following at the start of every new year: "May the year end and its curses, may the year begin with its blessings." And this year we ask for that all the more!

Let us say a prayer for the return of each and every one of the hostages. For the full recovery of the wounded. For the safe return of our soldiers from all the fronts. Let us say a prayer for peace in the State of Israel, our dear and beloved country.

Prayer for Peace in Israel

Rock and Redeemer of Israel, bless the State of Israel,
the first manifestation of our redemption.
Shield it with Your lovingkindness, and envelop it in Your peace.
And bestow Your light and truth upon its leaders, ministers and advisors,
Ang grace them with Your good counsel, and strengthen the hands
of those who defend our holy land,
And grant them deliverance, and adorn them in a mantle of victory.
Ordain peace in the land and grant its inhabitants eternal happiness.
Be near to all the people of Israel throughout the lands of their dispersion.
Plant within their hearts the love of Zion, and may those of our people who
are so inspired come to Jerusalem, Your city, which bears Your name.
Spread Your spirit over all the inhabitants of our land.
Uproot hatred and hostility, jealousy and evil.
And plant in our heart love and brotherhood, peace and friendship.
And speedily fulfill the vision of Your prophet: "Nation will not lift up sword
against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore." (Isaiah 2:4)

The poem "Wings of Spirit" was written by Rabbi Abraham Isaac HaCohen Kook, and it was later put to music.

According to Rabbi Kook, people should always aspire to reach a higher place, to ascend and to transcend, and believe in their power. And if they will have faith, their strengths will carry them higher and higher like the spirit.

Wings of Spirit

Lyrics: Rabbi Abraham Isaac HaCohen Kook
Music: Avigail Uziel-Amar (for the video, click here)

Human,
Ascend towards the heights, ascend!
For you have the strength.
You have wings of spirit, wings of mighty eagles.
Do not forsake them, lest they forsake you.
Seek them, and they will find you immediately

Source: <https://www.reformjudaism.org.uk>

Kanfei Ruach

Ben Adam,
aleh le'malah aleh
Aleh le'mala, aleh ben adam
Aleh le'mala aleh

Ki koach az lecha, yesh lecha kanfei ruach
Yesh lecha kanfei ruach
Kanfei nesharim abirim,

Drosh otam -
Al techachesh bam,
Pen yechachashu lecha
Drosh otam, drosh ben adam,
Ve'yimatzu lecha miyad

Hallelujah

Lyrics and music: Leonard Cohen

Now I've heard there was a secret chord
That David played, and it pleased the Lord
But you don't really care for music, do you?
It goes like this, the fourth, the fifth
The minor fall, the major lift
The baffled king composing Hallelujah

Hallelujah
Hallelujah
Hallelujah
Hallelujah

Your faith was strong but you needed proof
You saw her bathing on the roof
Her beauty and the moonlight overthrew you
She tied you to a kitchen chair
She broke your throne, and she cut your hair
And from your lips she drew the Hallelujah

Baby, I have been here before
I know this room and I've walked this floor
I used to live alone before I knew you
I've seen your flag on the marble arch
Love is not a victory march
It's a cold and it's a broken Hallelujah

Hallelujah, Hallelujah
Hallelujah, Hallelujah

There was a time you let me know
What's really going on below
But now you never show it to me, do you?
And remember when I moved in you
The holy dove was moving too
And every breath we drew was Hallelujah

Hallelujah, Hallelujah
Hallelujah, Hallelujah

You say I took the name in vain
I don't even know the name
But if I did, well really, what's it to you?
There's a blaze of light
In every word
It doesn't matter which you hear
The holy or the broken Hallelujah

Hallelujah, Hallelujah
Hallelujah, Hallelujah
I did my best, it wasn't much
I couldn't feel, so I tried to touch
I've told the truth, I didn't come to fool you
And even though
It all went wrong
I'll stand before the Lord of Song
With nothing on my tongue but Hallelujah

Hallelujah, Hallelujah...

Psalm 27 ends with the verse "Hope for the Lord, be strong, and He will give your heart courage, and hope for the Lord."

We have no choice but to hope. To hope for better days, because there is nothing above hope.

Let it Be

Lyrics and music: Naomi Shemer

There is still a white sail on the horizon
Opposite a heavy black cloud
All that we ask for - let it be
And if in the evening windows
The light of the holiday candles flickers

All that we ask for - let it be

Chorus:

Let it be, let it be,

Please-let it be

All that we ask for - let it be.

Let it be, let it be,

Please, let it be

All that we ask for - let it be.

What is the sound that I hear

The cry of the shofar and the sound of drums

All that we ask for-let it be

If only there can be heard within all this

One prayer from my lips also

All that we ask for - let it be

Chorus

Within a small, shaded neighborhood

is a small house with a red roof

All that we ask for, let it be

This is the end of summer, the end of the path

Allow them to return safely here

All that we ask for - let it be

Chorus

And if suddenly, rising from the darkness

Over our heads, the light of a star shines

All that we ask for, let it be

Then grant tranquility and also grant strength

To all those we love

All that we ask for - let it be

Chorus

[Source](#)

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.

Pizmon:

Lu Yehi, Lu Yehi,

Ana-Lu Yehi

Kol shenevakesh-Lu Yehi.

Lu Yehi, Lu Yehi, Ana, Lu Yehi

Kol shenevakesh-Lu Yehi.

Mah kol anot ani shomei'ah

Kol shofar ve'kol tupim

Kol shenevakesh-lu yehi

Lu tishamah betoch kol eileh

Gam t'filah achat mipi

Kol shenevakesh-lu yehi

Pizmon

Betoch sh'chuna ktana mutzelet

Bayit kat im gag adom

Kol shenevakesh lu yehi

Zeh sof hakayitz, sof haderech

Ten lahem lashuv halom

Kol shenevakesh- lu yehi

Pizmon

Ve'im pit'om yizrach mei'ofel

Al rosheinu or kochav

Kol shenevakesh lu yehi

Az ten shalvah veten gam ko'ach

Lechol eileh shenohav

Kol shenevakesh-lu yehi

Pizmon

Hatikvah

Kol od ba'le'vav p'nima

Nefesh yehudi ho'miyah.

U'lefa-atei mizrach kadimah

Ayin le'Tziyyon tzofiyah.

Od lo avda tikva-teinu,

Ha'tikvah bat sh'not al-payim

Lih-yot am chofshi b'ar-tzeinu

Eretz Tziyyon v'Yerushalayim.

As long as within our hearts

The Jewish soul sings,

As long as forward to the East

To Zion, looks the eye -

Our hope is not yet lost,

It is two thousand years old,

To be a free people in our land

The land of Zion and Jerusalem.

The fields of Kibbutz Kfar Aza. Photograph: Rabia Basha

ההסתדרות הציונית העולמית
המחלקה לארגון
וקשר עם ישראלים בתפוצות



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From Agony to Hope Discussion Circle

Before or after the "From Agony to Hope" ceremony, you can also hold a facilitated discussion circle for adults, during which you use texts to discuss topics that interface with the October 7th events. To conduct such a discussion circle, you should arrange a quiet venue in advance that is suitable for gathering in a circle, print copies of the texts for the expected number of participants, and choose a group leader who is experienced in facilitating discussions on topics of this nature.

"An Israeli in the Diaspora" / Liat Franco

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It's driving, dropping off, picking up, doing errands 'on autopilot' when your body is in the war.
Every single cell in your body is tense 24/7.
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Not breathing, choked with tears.

...

That's what being an Israeli is.

...

It's being moved by every stranger who expresses support. Who smiles at you with kind eyes. Who asks how you're feeling.
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The trees are in the same place. The sun is shining. People are smiling. But your home is in danger.
To try and fill the gap with hope. "It will be okay" and realizing that it's the most Israeli that it gets.

That's being an Israeli in the Diaspora.
It's wanting to help, to make a difference. To receive dozens of messages. Dozens of groups. Dozens of projects.
To be wary. So it doesn't reach the enemy. To communicate only with people you know.

...

Being an Israeli in the Diaspora is to be war conscious, but in an induced coma. Paralyzed. In pain. Alone.
It's seeing another Israeli and hugging her, without words. We feel the same thing.
Being an Israeli in the Diaspora is yelling to our brothers and sisters in Israel that we are there. Just like them.
Frightened, hoping. And with them.
Simply just far away.



- What has been your experience as Israelis/Jews who live outside Israel since the outbreak of the war?
- Do certain things look different because you're not in Israel?

In addition to, or instead of, reading what Liat Franco wrote, you can watch a video made by KAN on October 19, 2023, which includes an assortment of testimonies by Israelis who live in different countries around the world - [click here](#) to watch the video. (Because the video is long, it is advisable to focus on select segments from it). (The same questions are relevant to a discussion after watching the video).

Let the Memorial Hill Remember Instead of Me Yehuda Amichai

Let the memorial hill remember instead of me,
that's what it's here for. Let the park in-memory-of remember,
let the street that's-named-for remember,
let the well-known building remember,
let the synagogue that's named after God remember,
let the rolling Torah scroll remember, let the prayer
for the memory of the dead remember. Let the flags remember
those multicolored shrouds of history: the bodies they wrapped
have long since turned to dust. Let the dust remember.
Let the dung remember at the gate. Let the afterbirth remember.
Let the beasts of the field and birds of the heavens eat
and remember.
Let all of them remember so that I can rest.

Downloaded from: www.allpoetry.com



- What is your strongest memory from October 7th?
- Do you share the feeling that dealing with memories is exhausting? Is it perhaps better to avoid dealing with memories and commemorations as much as possible?
- In what ways are 'remote' memories different from memories when you're actually there (or maybe there is no difference)?