

From Mourning to Resilience: Community Rabbis Face Israel at War

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In memory of Moshe and Eliad Ohayon z"l. inspiring community leaders in life and in death, who fell protecting their home.

When he first heard that war had broken out, Rav Yehuda Gilad was holding a Sefer Torah. At Kibbutz Lavi, near Tiberias, where Gilad serves as rabbi, no siren went off to disturb their holiday morning. Yet his description of Simchat Torah morning reflects the dilemmas community rabbis across Israel faced in those early hours, as dancing turned into mourning:

I was dancing with a Sefer Torah in my arms when the head of Kibbutz Lavi's security team placed his hand on my shoulder, and whispered in my ear, "Rav Yehuda, keep dancing, but listen closely as I need your advice. Two hours ago, a war broke out in the south. Dozens of terrorists have infiltrated and taken control of a number of settlements. Hundreds of rockets are falling in the area, and as far as Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. The Home Front Command has instructed us to maintain our routine, but to be prepared for the possibility of a second front opening up in the north. Should we stop the *hakafot* and inform everyone of the situation, or is it unnecessary for the time being?"

I fell silent, completely in shock despite not yet knowing the full magnitude of what had happened. I asked if the leadership of the kibbutz and the local emergency team were aware of the situation. He confirmed that they knew; we decided together to continue the

dancing.

Our feet were dancing but our hearts were crying. I looked around at the spirited dancers, young and old, who were rejoicing for Simchat Torah without knowing that our country was experiencing one of its darkest hours.

When they began calling up soldiers and reservists, and when terrifying rumors started circulating (we thought they must surely be exaggerated), we officially announced the situation to the community. I instructed anyone who might be called up by the IDF to turn on their cell phones and check if they had been told to report to their units. Minutes later, many of them were in uniform, on their way to the front lines.

Jews will never dance the same way again on Simchat Torah. Gilad's description highlights two defining characteristics of this war: like the Yom Kippur War 50 years ago, this war broke out on a Jewish holiday, placing Israel's religious rituals and holiday cycle at the center of its symbolic narrative. Secondly, with hundreds of thousands of Israeli citizens conscripted within 24 hours, this is a war of community mobilization. Israeli community rabbis and leaders are standing at the crossroads of this Jewish symbolism and mobilization.

Rabbinic work relies on a unique toolbox, combining ancient Torah with contemporary community and harnessing the power of protective prayer and therapeutic ritual, while also holding fast to the pillars of intellectual rigor, moral clarity, and emotional presence. In times of war, the need for spiritual and communal leadership increases tenfold. After the calamity of the October 7 attacks, Israeli resilience—our ability to withstand sustained trauma and bounce back powerfully—is needed more than ever, and both rabbis and spiritual communities play a crucial role in building it up.

Am K'she Oref: Between the Battlefield and the Home Front

The term “home front” captures the challenge of explaining this war beyond the boundaries of Israel. Popularized in England during World War I and II, the expression “home front” refers to the civilian community's ability to sustain multiple attacks, as the British Isles did during those wars. In America, the term has not been relevant since the 19th century, with one brief but unforgettable exception for the 9/11 attack. But in Israel, no sea or ocean separates us from our enemies. The gap between the battlefield and the home front is never greater than 60 minutes, and it can be as short as 60 or even 15 seconds. My Jerusalem neighborhood of Talpiot can switch from feeling like a distant home front to a full-on battlefield in a matter of seconds. That happened in 1929, 1948, and 1967, and now, since October 7, we fear it could happen again. One of the admitted aims of Hamas and Hezbollah in this war is turning all of Israel into a battlefield.

Fittingly, in Hebrew, the words used for battlefield and home front suggest the distance from the back of your neck to your nose. The battlefield is called the *hazit* (literally, “face”), and the home front is called *oref*, the back of the neck. This word is best known from the term עַם קָשָׁה עֵרֶךְ, *am k’she oref*, “a stubborn-necked people,” which Jews have so often rightly been called, as recently as this year, during the internal strife over Israel’s democracy.

Israel must now become again an *am k’she oref*, but in a new sense: a nation with the most resilient of home fronts, the most resilient back-of-the-neck, as our faces head into battle.

This essay focuses on rabbinic work on the home front, seeking to portray some of the moments my colleagues and I have faced as we sought to comfort the bereaved, to support the families of those serving on the battlefield, and to build communal resilience among the country’s citizens and the Jewish people at large. Most of the stories come from my own corner of the Jewish world—liberal Orthodoxy and post-denominational spaces. Normally, this kind of Judaism is confined to specific Israeli neighborhoods, but like so much that has changed as Israel once again faces a sustained external threat, internal divisions have been sidelined, allowing for new partnerships and surprising collaborations. The most delicate silver linings have appeared during these darkest of times. War is often a catalyst for change, and the groundwork for tomorrow’s Israel is being laid by today’s actions.

Following the trajectory of weeks since Simchat Torah, in this essay I trace five expanding rings of communal work: the bereaved who have lost their loved ones; the families of those at the front; the pained circles of hostages and survivors; wider Israeli society and the story it tells; and the connection among Jews the world over.

This is a record of the small moments of *avodat hakodesh*, holy work, that my generation of community rabbis is undertaking as we humbly join the lines of first responders and community builders in seeking to serve our country and our people in this time of need.

Unable to Bury, Unable to Speak: Israel’s Private and National *Aninut*

וַיִּדְם אֶהָרִן.

And Aaron was speechless.

(Leviticus 10:3)

The funerals did not begin immediately. In fact, it took almost a week before the first civilian casualties could be identified and then buried. In those long and painful days, families found themselves in an often-overlooked *halakhic* status, *aninut*: the awkward and gut-wrenching gap between death and burial. Rabbi Joseph Dov Soloveitchik described *aninut* as “an outcry, a shout, or a howl of grisly horror and disgust.”

The rules of *aninut* are derived from Aaron's deafening silence after his sons are killed in the book of Leviticus. *Halakhah* ritualizes this silence, proclaiming that during *aninut*, one is exempt from prayer, from reciting the *shema* and laying *tefillin*, indeed, exempt from all divine and social positive obligations, until the burial can take place. During *aninut*, God understands that no prayer can be uttered, no meaning can be made.

The tragically prolonged period of *aninut* forced upon the bereaved families this October was not caused by bureaucratic mishandling. The delay was a direct result of the calamitous number of dead. Well-rehearsed emergency protocols, which now seem optimistic, had planned for a maximum of 300 bodies a day. No one was ready for four times that number. Crews of trained rabbis and *chevra kadisha* members volunteered to serve as angels of mercy by identifying the dead. Because they were committed to the most punctilious protocols to avoid tragic errors, the identification took days. Working impossible shifts at the IDF rabbinate base, Camp Shura, these men and women practiced *hesed shel emet*, the truest act of kindness, in the face of the most inhumane horrors. In a [painful piece in Haaretz](#), Rabbi Prof. Nerya Guttel, one of the reservists, described how the words of *Unetane Tokef* rang in his ears as they worked: מי ישלנו ומי יתיסר "Who in peace and who in torment."

The delay in identifying bodies also created painful *halakhic* dilemmas. In the battle to save the town of Ofakim, a father and son had left Simchat Torah services to fight off a truck full of terrorists before being killed side by side. By Wednesday, the son's body had been identified, but not the father's. Strict custom is to bury a body as soon as possible, and the *chevra kadisha* scheduled the son's funeral for Thursday evening. But the family pleaded: Let us bury them together. Chief Rabbi Yitzchak Yosef gave the final ruling: *halanat ha-met*, the delay of burial, is justified in such a case. The next day, the father's body was identified, and at 10:30 on Friday morning, I found myself standing with hundreds of people to say farewell to these two men who fought like lions to protect their city. Rabbi Benny Lau opened his eulogy with a searing verse: אהו ואת בנו לא תשחטו ביום אהד "Do not slaughter him and his son in one day." (Lev. 22:28) But at this point, we knew that this shattering reality was not a rare occurrence, as whole families had been killed on the same day. This was one of the first of hundreds of funerals that took place over an excruciating two weeks, slowly releasing the families from *aninut* and allowing them to put their dearest to rest.

Technically, the status of *aninut* applies only to the bereaved families themselves. But in essence, all of Israeli society was in an agonizing national moment of *aninut*. Our dead were lying before us, yet we could not bury them. Like Aaron, our gaze was frozen on the bodies of our fallen loved ones, and we were silent, we could not speak. Ironically, the fact that there is a word, *aninut*, for our wordless national status, has been an island of consolation in a sea of grief.

Miles away from Israel, in her Shabbat sermon at Central Synagogue in New York one week after the murderous attacks, Rabbi Angela Buchdahl suggested another set of words for this

wordless status: אין מילים, *ein milim*, “we have no words,” she called out. Buchdahl analogized this tragic moment to the shift on Simchat Torah from Sefer Devarim—so full of words—to the *tohu vavohu*, the chaos and calamity, of the opening of Sefer Bereishit. Only when God begins to utter words can chaos become order. Buchdahl’s words resonated throughout Israel as **a video of her sermon circulated across Israeli social media feeds**, and then, with Hebrew subtitles added, went viral. At that moment in Israel, we needed an American rabbi to help us say, in Hebrew: *ein milim*. There are no words. That is the essence of *aninut*, and it was felt from the avenues of New York to the streets of Ofakim.

The Israeli Onion: Forming Rings of Support for those on the Front Lines

*One whose dead is laid out before him
is exempt from the Shema, from prayer, and from tefillin.*

*The pallbearers and their replacements,
and all those who are needed to carry the bier,
are exempt from reciting the Shema;
those who are not needed to carry the bier are obligated.*

These and those are exempt from prayer.

(mBrakhot 3:1)

In the days after the attacks, it felt like everyone personally knew someone affected by the attacks or called to military service. Yet not everyone was equally close to tragic loss or heroic challenge. As Israelis scurried to be of service, the question quickly arose: if I am not in an immediate ring of loss, what is my role in this moment? If my family has not been mobilized to war, what am I to do now?

The mishnah above from tractate Berakhot describes the work of bereavement as an ordering of the community into layers of grief and obligation. It delineates three discrete rings, each with its own role and code of conduct. The mishnah opens with “one whose dead is laid out before him.” Trapped in the horrific first line of grief, the *aveilim*, the bereaved, are fully exempt from any other obligation. Their sole role is to grieve. The second ring, the pallbearers, are understood as all those who serve the bereaved, holding the bed of grief so the family can mourn their loss. The third circle, “those who are not needed to carry the bier,” are nonetheless included in the order of bereavement. This third circle is also crucial. They carry the dual role of supporting the bereaved and the pallbearers on the one hand and maintaining the necessary routines of society in the meantime. Serving in the third circle (and the fourth and the fifth and so on), is often most confusing. I am not needed, what role am I to play? The logic of this mishnah offers sage rabbinic advice and wise community guidance: arrange yourselves in rings of support, recognizing that we all have a role to play in the larger communal task.

The theoretical framework of the mishnah became an organizing principle for us, not only regarding bereavement, but also as communities mobilized to support the war effort. With 300,000 citizens called up for service, we were now a country at war. Some waited to be told what to do, but many simply jumped in and formed new rings, taking on new responsibilities in the many sudden vacuums of need.

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Like many communities, my synagogue in Jerusalem, Kehillat Klausner, quickly worked to support the families of the conscripted, arranging ourselves in rings of service and support. By the Monday following Simchat Torah, a contact person from the community had been designated to serve as the first circle of support for each family in which a parent or a child had been sent off to war. An additional circle was put in place to support the supporters. Other community members volunteered for roles like driving reservists to distant bases, shopping and raising funds. Israeli society had become like the rings of an onion, giving inward support, and being supported from without.

Two weeks in, we were at Parashat Noach, with its metaphors of evil, flooding rain, and the search for solid ground. When I arrived to give my weekly class at Yeshivat Machanayim, I mentioned the metaphorical rings of the onion to the Rosh Yeshiva, Rabbi Sarel Rosenblatt. He offered a different metaphor, inspired by the weekly portion: When light breaks, it can become scattered, or, if the right prism is present, it can bend itself into a colorful spectrum. Our job as community leaders is to serve as a prism through which shattered light can become ordered again, creating a *keshet be'anan*—a rainbow among the clouds.

Lu Yehi, Let It Be: Praying with the Families of Hostages and Survivors

וַיִּשְׁמַע אַבְרָם כִּי נִשְׁבָּה אָחִיו

*And Abram heard that his brother
was taken hostage*

Genesis 14:14

As the dust settled and we entered the third week after Simchat Torah, it became clear that beyond the shock of the initial attack, and the developing ground incursion in Gaza, we faced the horror of more than 200 hostages abducted into Gaza. In the week's Torah portion, Lech Lecha, the relatively inconspicuous story about Lot, Abraham's nephew, being taken hostage, took on new relevance. Upon hearing the news, Abraham forms a local coalition of kings and heroically rescues Lot and his family. Yet when telling of Abraham's mobilization, the Torah describes Lot not as Abraham's nephew, but as his brother: "And Abram heard that his brother was taken hostage." The Torah intimates that in times of crisis, all degrees of separation become closer. Every hostage becomes your brother and sister, your son and daughter, your grandfather and grandmother.

In those early weeks, it felt like all Israeli society—and Jews the world over—had this same Abrahamic intuition, resulting in the arrival of truckloads of everything from tactical vests to baked goods. One Friday, a small delegation from our synagogue drove the three minutes it takes to get from Talpiot to Kibbutz Ramat Rachel. A short distance, but worlds apart. We came to offer a hug of solidarity and support to the Engel family, whose son Ophir was kidnapped by Hamas. We came with homemade *challot* in hand for the Engels' Shabbat meal and were flustered and overjoyed to discover that the whole kitchen had already been inundated with homemade loaves from across Israel. The children of Abraham, and we among them, had sought to show this family that, as far as we were concerned, "our brother was taken hostage."

For many communities, this was not a reach. Our friends down the road at the Hakhel community watched in horror as their newly appointed gabbai, Jon Polin, and his wife Rachel Goldberg, took in the news of their son Hersh having been taken hostage. By Simchat Torah afternoon, volunteers from the community were running a full-blown operation from the Goldberg-Polin living room, tracking down his whereabouts. For weeks, the community has convened by Zoom nightly to pray and sing with Jon and Rachel and their daughters. At the time of this writing, the prayers and diplomatic pleas have gone unanswered.

Standing in solidarity with those in the first ring of suffering has also led to larger creative initiatives. When a team of rabbinical students at the Beit Midrash for Israeli Rabbis, a joint program of the Hartman Institute and the Midrasha in Oranim, heard that their fellow student, Avi Dabush, and his community in Nirim had been evacuated to hotels in Eilat, they immediately sent a rabbinic delegation.

Avi had spent 30 hours trapped in his safe room in Kibbutz Nirim, while terrorists murdered his neighbors and burnt down their homes. What can a group of inter-denominational rabbis offer secular Israelis whose homes were just savaged by unthinkable evil? They quickly crafted a unique ritual space, staying attuned to the needs of the survivors themselves. Moving from hotel

to hotel across Eilat and later the Dead Sea and further north, they offered song and prayer to the survivors of Kibbutz Nirim, Kfar Azza, Reim, Kerem Shalom, Ofakim, and Sderot, and the survivors responded to the healing power of music, Hebrew verse, and human connection. As Hazzan Nerya Knafo later [described it in a Facebook post](#):

We met hundreds of people from eleven different kibbutzim and towns, in six different hotels. Some wanted to say Kaddish for their murdered relatives, some wanted to pray for the healing of the wounded, some for the hostages. Others wanted to *bensch Gomet* together. With all of them we prayed for the success and protection of our soldiers, and for peace to all.

There were moments in which we sat in silence with three kibbutz members in the lobby and moments in which we sang with dozens. Moments in which they shared their tears and moments in which they cried silently. Moments in which the songs stung with pain and moments when they were overcome with joy. The stories told were big and small, some expressing tremendous power and others reflecting utter and complete powerlessness.

Each of the stories could have been turned into a whole movie.

We performed this strange tour of sorts in a group of ten men and women rabbis and rabbinical students, each bringing their strength and sensitivity. We supported each other with a glance of the eye, a hug, a kind word, some food. We knew we were on an important mission and pushed all other things aside.

At the end of each meeting, we hugged the survivors, looked them in the eyes, and promised aloud: we are a resilient people. We will stand by you as we rebuild your dignity, your trust, and your homes.

Many graduates of the Beit Midrash and other rabbis joined subsequent initiatives. I had the privilege of joining a prayer circle in Kibbutz Ein Gedi on the Saturday night two weeks after the attacks. We met with the survivors of Kibbutz Holit, where 14 of the 84 Kibbutz members had been slaughtered in their homes. We offered consolation with Israeli music and worked to ward off the darkness with a Havdalah service. When we began singing Naomi Shemer's anthem, *Lu Yehi*, famously written in the depths of despair during the 1973 war, Miriam from Holit burst into tears, saying: "When I saw you on the lawn with your guitars and your *kippot*, at first I thought, oh no, those religious people. What can they offer me? But then you came with an open heart and with Naomi Shemer. I used to find very little to connect to in her songs. Those are the words of the older generation, they don't speak to me, I used to think. But then we sang this verse:

In a small shady community,
a modest house with a red roof

all that we ask, let it be.

Summer ending, the journey too,
let them return now to their home
all that we ask, let it be.

All of a sudden I realized,” Miriam said, “this is my story. I used to have a modest house with a red roof. But I don’t have that anymore. All I have is a prayer: *Let them return now to their home*. I’ve been avoiding crying these past two weeks. But thanks to this prayer circle, I could cry properly for the first time.”

In that moment, I felt as though the gears were shifting, as Miriam—and all of us witnesses there—were able to move beyond *aninut* and *shiva*. The unspeakable had been verbalized, the sorrow over the home that was no longer had been articulated, and only now the prayer for what might be, *lu yehi*, could be uttered.

Torah in Times of Solidarity: Widening the Moral Imagination

As a community rabbi, one must ask each week: What is the Torah that must be taught at this time? During times of war, what emerges is a Torah of solidarity and connectedness, a Torah of moral judgment, a Torah of empowerment, of putting oneself at personal risk for a higher cause. But solidarity can make us myopic, and self-righteousness often blinds the eye to a wider framework. As the Israeli and Jewish rings of solidarity tightened, it became clear that it was crucial for Israel’s rabbis and storytellers to include stories of those who we often overlook. The bravery of Haredi first responders and of Bedouin families who saved Jews under fire—even as they themselves suffered grave losses from Hamas, including multiple hostages—must also be told.

Arab citizens of Israel, many of whom found themselves caught between their concern for family members in Gaza or the West Bank, and their sense of belonging to Israeli society, also require our attention. We must amplify stories such as the one about two Arab Israeli football teams that began their match with a moment of silence in memory of the Israelis killed by Hamas. These will be crucial narratives as we seek to rebuild Israeli society. A society’s ethos is shaped in the high temperatures of wars and crises. The wider we cast our net of storytelling, the wider the ethos of Israeli solidarity can become.

But what about Palestinian residents of this land who do not support Hamas, yet find themselves in the impossible crucible of the IDF’s attack and their own captivity under Hamas’s sinister rule in Gaza? What words does the Torah have to help us examine this moment? Even as Israel is forced to bend with the power of *din*, judgment, I asked my community to not lose the prayer of *hesed*, of compassion, for all of Abraham’s sons. When the weekly Torah portion of Vayera

arrived, I focused on Abraham's prayer for the people of Sodom. Even when Abraham understands that Sodom must be destroyed, he still prays for *rachamim*, for mercy, over them. When we reached Parashat Chayei Sarah, the image of Isaac and Ishmael coming together to mourn their father despite their differences raised the possibility of a prayer for the time when building peace between rival brothers would again be possible.

Aharon and Hur: Holding Each Other's Arms Up High

וַיְדִי מֹשֶׁה כְּבָדִים וַיִּקְחוּ אָבֶן וַיִּשְׁימוּ תַּחְתָּיו וַיֵּשֶׁב עָלֶיהָ

וְאַהֲרֹן וְחֹר וְחֹר תְּמַכּוּ בְּיָדָיו מִזֶּה אֶחָד וּמִזֶּה אֶחָד

וַיְהִי יָדָיו אֲמוּנָה עַד בֹּא הַשָּׁמֶשׁ

Now Moses's hands were heavy.

They took a stone and placed it under him, and he sat on it.

Aaron and Hur supported his hands, one from this side, and one from that side; and his hands were faithful until sunset.

Exodus 17:12

As Israel reached 30, and then 40 days since Hamas's murderous attacks, it became clear that Hamas is not attempting to threaten Israel's military might. Instead, Hamas, Hezbollah, and Iran's other proxies have their sights aimed on Israel's social resilience. As the Israeli strategists put it, this is not an existential threat (איום קיומי), but rather an existential "gnawing" (פְּרֻסוֹם קִיּוּמִי), slowly and methodically undermining Israeli resilience. In this kind of war, there is no difference between the *hazit*, the battlefield, and the *oref*, the home front. In fact, as with the attacks in Be'eri and Ofakim, sleepless nights and fear-filled living rooms are the aims of these attacks. Understanding this strategy means that our counterstrategy must place individual and community resilience at the center. It is community leaders—rabbis and social workers, musicians and poets, journalists, and social media influencers—who are key to building that resilience. Moreover, because of the sense of support a worldwide coalition gives us in Israel and in light of emerging threats and attacks on Jews around the world, the campaign for communal resilience is one in which all world Jewry has a role.

Community rabbis and leaders are well practiced in the wisdom and strategies of increasing resilience, and we know how to work in tandem with diverse communities to build that resilience where it is most needed. We must approach this challenge together—the rings of the onion holding each other tight, the light of the prism turning from scattered light into one unbroken rainbow.

For one night, I was lucky enough to experience that rainbow myself. When Rabbi Inbar Bluzer Shalem asked if I could join her in organizing a prayer circle for a group of New York rabbis who were coming on an emergency UJA mission, I immediately said yes. I admitted to her it was for the most selfish of reasons: I too wanted to be held by a group of spiritual leaders in prayer. We invited a diverse group of Jerusalem rabbis and prayer leaders to join us. We knew we wanted to do two things that night: to pray together for Am Yisrael in this terrible moment, and to support each other as community leaders.

There are so many who need a prayer and a blessing during this terrible time: soldiers, hostages, and the wounded in Israel, as well as those being targeted by hate and violence in America and the world. Rabbis are called to galvanize others for prayer, support, and solidarity, but who prays for the rabbis? Who will hold the community leaders? We decided to begin the prayer circle with a prayer for each other.

First, Dr. Erica Brown of Yeshiva University stood up. She reminded us of the war with Amalek, the heinous enemy who attacked our weakest links at a time of great surprise. Joshua's sword was needed for this war, but Moses's staff was also needed. Moses held his hands high just as those on the home front, in communities across Israel, are keeping their hands in the air in support of those in battle. But it is hard to keep one's hands held high. It is hard to hold faith in such moments. That is where Aharon and Hur came in. They ascended the hill with Moses and kept his hands held high until the evening came. We are here to keep your hands held high, Erica said. In that moment, everyone felt their hands lifting higher.

Then Rabbi Dr. Shraga Bar-On offered an addition to her prayer. Amalek attacked us in Refidim, which the Talmud interprets as the place of *רָפִיּוֹן יְדֵיִם*, a place of forlorn, exhausted, *refe*, hands. Our Israeli hands are exhausted. Your arrival here, said Shraga, allows us to hold our hands up high again. Because you are here with us. We need all three circles to overcome this attack—those holding the sword of Joshua, those holding the staff of Moses, and those holding Moses's hands up in the air. But this is not just our struggle, it is an attack on humanistic values everywhere. So, in other ways, you are Moses, and we are trying to keep your hands in the air, too. Let us pray that like Moses's hands, *וְיָהִיוּ יְדֵינוּ אֶמּוּנָה עַד בּוֹא הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ*—our hands will remain faithful, until the sun of this battle sets.

With our hands held high by each other, we prayed for the State of Israel, for the IDF, for the wounded, and for the hostages. The prayer ended with Buchdahl and a group of Jerusalem prayer leaders, Sefaradi and Ashkenazi, secular, Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform, in a **rendition of "Al Kol Eileh."** By the end of it, there wasn't a dry eye in the room. I thought of what I had learned from Miriam of Kibbutz Holit, who had lost her home but not her resilience. She found it in reaching back to her cultural and spiritual assets, with her community singing around her. Shemer's words mixed with the words of Torah that night, and together they felt

more relevant than ever.

As we face the harrowing weeks and months to come, we need our assets of resilience: God's words of light that come out of the chasm of *tohu va'vohu*, Noah's prism that bends light into rainbows, Abraham's solidarity with his hostage brother and his undying compassion for all human life, and Moses, Aharon, and Hur working as a team to keep our hands faithful and the battle true. At this moment, the Jewish people need their community leaders more than ever. Leaders of Torah, culture, and spirit. Faithful leaders who can collaborate to keep one another's arms held high. May our hands remain faithful until the sun of this battle sets.