

## YAD L'AMI – DAY 320 – 22-08 - 2024

**We were ready for it to begin.** The shelter was set up kitted out with food supplies and water for a few days. Everyone was waiting for Shabbat. Nothing. No, but perhaps it will start on Monday or Tuesday. Yes, and it has been like this for a few weeks. An attack is coming. Iran and Hezbollah bombard Israel daily with threats of attack. Hezbollah continues to rocket and shell northern communities. But life goes on. We do our daily work and help where necessary. Currently, I close myself off from all threats and I pray that I may be in the right place at the right time. We will see. It is bizarre. It is an 80-km drive to the south and 150 kms to the north, where war continues on a daily basis. The GPS usually does not work anywhere north of Hadera. When approaching Haifa, Waze indicates that you are in Beirut, Lebanon. For safety reasons, they say, but in the meantime we are returning to navigating with road maps.

### **News of the day:**

- Terrorist kills Israeli in Samaria with hammer
- More than 75 launches from Lebanon, resulting in many fires in the north
- The Israeli army, in cooperation with Shin Bet, recovered the bodies of 6 hostages, which were discovered in a tunnel under the city of Khan Yunis in southern Gaza. Abducted alive on October 7, 2023 and after months of suffering, now murdered by Hamas
- Foiled bomb attack attempt in Tel Aviv. The terrorist transporting the heavy bomb died when the bomb exploded prematurely.
- Iran and Hezbollah threaten every day. They say: 'Israel can expect an attack.' Israeli citizens told: 'There are no restrictions on normal activities but be alert.'
- So many houses in the north bombed again.
- Mohammad Azzam, 34, a doctor at Soroka Hospital in Be'ersheva, who pledged allegiance to ISIS, has been arrested.

**And I could go on and on. I deliberately write about things that happen in Israel because most newspapers don't bother to report them.**

**319 days in captivity.** Medical reports are now being published on how the abductees who returned from the horrors of 50 days of Hamas captivity have suffered so much health damage and are still dealing with the medical and psychological consequences of their captivity. The situation of the abductees, who have now been in captivity for 319 days, will be even more serious. Today we have seen that the elderly do not survive. Even a young and healthy person cannot survive after hundreds of days of extreme hunger, thirst and dehydration, infections, injuries, abuse, and sitting in dark tunnels under harsh environmental conditions. After a while, the physical and mental reserves are worn out. The people who are still in the hands of Hamas are in imminent mortal danger. According to medical teams, time is running out and we must not lose any more days; we need to speedily bring them home to Israel, the living for rehabilitation and the dead for burial. So, let the United States put pressure on Hamas! They are being used as Sinwar's guardian angels. It's time for the USA to increase the pressure on Hamas!

### **It's outrageous**

What has been happening in northern Israel since October 7? Since Israel entered Gaza, Hezbollah has fired around 8,000 rockets and more than 200 drones at Israel. More than 43 Israelis have been killed, and 271 more have been injured, some seriously. Due to about 800 fires ignited by rocket fire, more than 40,000 hectares of beautiful nature reserve have been reduced to ashes. The area has become almost uninhabitable and very dangerous. Why has the country had to endure this misery for 10 months? Jews are allowed to be strong, to defend themselves, but only to a certain extent. What country would allow its citizens to be attacked in this way? **None!** Yet Israel is being asked to restrain itself.

**Western leaders, led by President Biden, should make every effort to pressure Hezbollah and Hamas until they surrender.**

Should Egypt not be ashamed that so many tunnels have been discovered under the Gaza border leading into Egypt? Tunnels through which trucks can pass to transport weapons. Israel is forced to subordinate itself to the United States, otherwise the money and weapons tap will be turned off.

For Israel's own security, for the Palestinians, for the entire region and for the world, Israel cannot stop now. Israel's victory is a victory for freedom, for democracy, for all that is good and just, while a victory for Hamas is a victory for barbarism, for terror, for murder and rape.

**"It seems that no one understands that Israel is fighting a war for its survival."**

Remember that there are still 109 hostages in Hamas hands. Once they release them, the war is over for now.

### **The South**

Apart from some kibbutzim that are very close to the Gaza border, residents of the south need to go back to their homes. Schools will start again on September 1. In the meantime, we are trying to provide help with all kinds of courses and therapies; the lives of many young people have been turned upside down.

In the wake of October 7, there are thousands of people who are suffering severely from depression, anxiety, and have adjustment problems with returning to society after their military service.

More than 10,000 wounded Israelis have been admitted to hospitals and other institutions. On average, 1,000 are added to this number each month. There are also many thousands who are physically impaired, have lost limbs, or have been paralyzed. In wartime, there is so much grief and loss on both sides. So many families are completely falling apart because of all the stress. Yes, and that is why the war must end. But how? No one knows or sees that the end is in sight.

**Just imagine:** Gaza is about 40 kms long and 6 to 12 kms wide (365 square kms) with more than 500 kms of underground tunnels. Jeeps and scooters, and trucks in some tunnels, drive unhindered from place to place with their weapons and missiles through the 500 kms of tunnels. In some places, the tunnels are 4 floors underground. So there is a very big problem. The terrorists hide in schools and hospitals, which are supposedly places of safety for people. It is terrible for the Gazans, who are forced to move again and again when ordered to by the Israeli military, in order to prevent civilian death when they attack terrorists. As soon as they are allowed to return, the terrorists also return and fire rockets from the same locations. Then, once again, the people need to evacuate when the military needs to combat the terrorists. Finally, every now and then, someone stands up in Gaza and shouts that Israel must get rid of Hamas; tragically, we don't see that person again the next day—assassinated by Hamas. Humanly speaking, you don't see a solution.

**Samaria and Judea.** Israel no longer underestimates the enemy and is alert on all fronts. In Samaria, in particular, there are regular raids in cities such as Tulkarm and Jenin. Both Samaria and Judea appear to have a large group of Hamas supporters, and quantities of weapons continue to be discovered. There are regular attacks at the Bethlehem checkpoint and on the road to Jerusalem, or firebombs or stones are being thrown or shots are being fired.

**I can see that the country is tired.** There is no longer progress in some things and the situation just doesn't improve. Many therapists are serving in the military, making it difficult to follow through with civilian projects. We, too, are tired due to so many sad stories. When a friend's daughter, who is 5 years old, says, "Daddy, I dreamed that they kidnapped me last night," it's heartbreaking. The parents feel guilty that they live in the south. But where can they go? North? Not an option. Are other places safer?

One feels abandoned by the world. Left alone. **Nobody cares.** If God does not intervene, there is little hope. There is so much hatred towards the Jewish people here in the country and in the world at large there is more anti-Semitism than there has ever been. Why?

**We are so grateful for God's word,** which is a light on our path, providing hope. According to Jeremiah 31, the people of Israel will not disappear. God says: "If the sun, the moon and the stars cease to exist, and if the heavens and the foundations of the earth can be measured, then Israel, the people of God, will cease to exist." We have many abilities but we will not make it alone. Can we measure the heavens? He has the last word and one day HE will say: "ENOUGH." **Pray for Israel!**

**With warm greetings and many thanks for your sympathy and support, it is heartwarming!** *Ria Doekes*

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