**"רוּחוֹת קָרִים סוֹעֲרִים**

**אַךְ נָרוֹתַי בּוֹעֲרִים.**

**הָלְאָה רוּחוֹת רָעִים!**

**יֵשׁ עוֹד שֶׁמֶן פֹּה מְעַט**

**נֵר הַחַשְׁמוֹנָאִים!"**

(Hanukkah candles, unknown)

**וַיְּהִי אוֹר**

**Vayehi Or**

**(there shall be light)**

**Light and Courage stories from the past and present**

Introduction

Hanukkah, the festival of light, radiates warmth and light amid cold and dark days. Above all, it symbolizes light and heroism, which resonates with the fundamental urge for survival in us, and implores us to find the shining light. This year, it holds special meaning for those seeking light in these dark times. This pamphlet invites you to unify small lights into one big beam of light. With the candle lighting, let's gather together, lets sing together, share stories of heroism, and send rays of hope to those taken hostages. This collection in your hands is both a canvas and vessel, a symbol of our strength and resilience, lighting the path to a hopeful future.

חג החנוכה הוא חג של אור. בלב ימי הקור והחושך הוא מבקש להוסיף חום ואור. המשמעות הסמלית שנושא חג החנוכה כחג של אור וגבורה, נעשית השנה לצורך קיומי שלנו – המבקשים בתוך הימים הקודרים למצוא אור גדול.

המניפה שבידיכם, מזמינה אתכם לחבר יחדיו את האורות הקטנים לאור אחד, אור איתן.

לצד הדלקת הנרות אנו מזמינים אתכם להתכנס יחד, לשלוח קרני אור ותקווה לחטופים, לשיר יחד, ולספר מסיפורי האור והגבורה שהתגלו בימים הללו.

ראו באסופה שבידיכם מצע וכלי, שעליו ניתן להוסיף וממנו ניתן לגרוע.

**What's in the pamphlet?**

* The candle lighting ceremony with special tuning and prayers for the safety of the hostages
* An invitation to sing together
* Light stories from those days adapted for young children
* Stories of light and heroism for youth and adults
* Collaborative game 'Around the Dreidel'

**Hanukkah candle lighting**

**Bracha**

Baruch atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, asher kid’shanu b-mitzvotav, v-tzivanu l’hadlik ner shel Hanukkah.

Baruch atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, she-asah nisim la-avoteinu v-imoteinu ba- yamim ha-heim ba-z’man ha-zeh.

On the first night of Hanukkah add this blessing:

Baruch atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, shehecheyanu v-ki’y’manu v-higianu la-z’man ha-zeh.

Hanerot halalu anu madlikin

Al hanisim ve'al hanifla'ot

Ve'al hatshu'ot ve'al hamilchamot,

Sheh asita lavoteinu Bayamim haheim, bazman hazeh.

Al yedei kohanecha hakdoshim.

Vechol shmonat yemei Chanukah

Hanerot halalu kodesh hen,

V'ein lanu reshut lehishtamesh bahen, Ela lirotam bilvad.

Kedei lehodot ulehallel

leshimcha hagadol al nisecha,

Ve'al niflotecha, ve'al yeshuatecha.""

In hopes that the light will shine on the hostages we’ll sing

**"Acheinu kol beit yisrael,**

**Acheinu kol beit yisrael, han'tunim b'tzara, b'tzara uvashivyah, haomdim bein bayam uvein bayabasha. Hamakom Y'racheim, Y'racheim Aleihem v'yotziem mitzara lirvacha, umi'afaila l'orah umishiabud lig'ulah, hashta ba'agala uvizman kariv.".**

(from the davening)

**"In its time make it rain,**

**When spring comes, the flowers bloom.**

**Make it that they will come home again,**

**More than this we shall not ask."**

 (avi koren; shmoel imberman; shlomo artzi)

**Let's Sing**

**Shabehi Maoz

Maoz tzur yeshuati,**

**Lecha nae leshabeach**

**Harchek, harchek, leyad beyti,**

**Hapardesim natnu reach**

**Avo baminharot uvamtzudot uvam-arot**

**Uvenikrot tzurim uvimchilot afar.**

**Eysham belev halayla, daruch vacharishi,**

**Tzofe bi mevakesh nafshi.**

**Maoz tzur yeshuati,**

**Mivtzar ikesh vekisheach.**

**Atzey shaked leyad beyti**

**Omdim beloven poreach.**

**Avo baminharot uvamtzudot uvam-arot**

**Uvenikrot tzurim uvimchilot afar.**

**Eysham belev halayla**

**Daruch vacharishi,**

**Mabit bi mevakesh nafshi.**

**Maoz tzur yeshuati,**

**Bikrav eyn ketz yenatzeach.**

**Elay Ayelet achoti chiyuch**

**Ayef teshaleach.**

**Avo baminharot uvamtzudot uvam-arot**

**Uvenikrot tzurim uvimchilot afar.**

**Eysham belev halayla**

**Daruch vacharishi,**

**Orev li mevakesh nafshi.**

**Avoy lo meuktzi,**

**Veavoy lo midivshi,**

**Avoy limevakesh nafshi.**

Stories of Light for Children(1)

After the Yom Kippur War! Follow Me to Duty! At the age of 95…

The Story of Ezra Yachin

With the outbreak of the war, reserve soldiers immediately responded to the army's call, and stepped up to join in the defence of the State of Israel and for the wellbeing and security of its citizens.

The mobilization of reserves saw a significant increase, with many citizens already exempt from reserve duty volunteering to join and requesting the army to allow them to contribute to the service.

Among these volunteers was a unique individual, Ezra Yachin. Ezra was a fighter even in the days of the initial resistance movements, in the times preceding the establishment of the State of Israel. He then participated in the battles of the War of Independence and was severely injured.

Despite being 95 years old, Ezra could not sit at home when he saw the young soldiers and reserve soldiers gathering for war. He joined the reserves, aiming to boost their spirits and motivate them for the crucial mission ahead. With an impassioned voice, he declared, 'Even this time – we will triumph!'"

Stories of Light for Children (2)

Preparing food with Meaning

The Story of Eyal Shani

Eyal Shani is a renowned Chef. From a young age, he had a dream: to open an upscale restaurant that would win awards and be considered one of the best in the world.

After many years, he accomplished one of his biggest dreams! His restaurant in New York earned a Michelin star (a testament to being one of the best in the world).

Everyone expected him to go to New York from Israel and participate in the celebratory ceremony. However, Eyal insisted on staying in Israel. "Indeed, it's a dream come true for me," he said, "but I have much more important things to do, like feeding soldiers."

Since the outbreak of war, Chef Eyal Shani prepares thousands of meals every day for soldiers. "It's the first time in my life that my food truly has meaning," he said, "I've never felt such pride in being an Israeli as in these moments!"

Stories of Light for Children (3)

Giving From the Heart

The Story of Hila Shiloni

In times of war, there are circles, circles in need of assistance, encouragement, and strength: the soldiers on the front lines; individuals directly and indirectly affected; farmers whose work has been disrupted; healthcare professionals working around the clock, and many more. The spirit of Israel has proven itself above and beyond these days, as countless people volunteered and joined circles of action and giving.

So did Hila Shiloni. Hila wanted to join the circle of giving. With her abundant sensitivity, she realized that the point is not just the items themselves but the positive feeling that accompanies them: the warmth and love, the humanity and renewed faith in the way we as a nation can come together. Therefore, she decided to open a donation center where anyone in need could request anything they need: a trip, a musical instrument to uplift the soul, computer games, and more. Each item is beautifully packaged with a personal note attached. The feeling is more of a gift than a donation."

"Stories of Light for Children (4)

A Cycle of Giving

The Story of Inas and Alaa

Inas and Alaa own a bicycle shop in the city of Tayibe near Kfar Saba. With the outbreak of war, upon hearing that families from the western Negev region, living close to the combat zone, had evacuated their homes and moved into temporary structures, they decided to donate 50 pairs of bicycles to the children settling in the new community. They knew it would bring joy to the children to go out and enjoy riding bikes.

Not everyone saw this act of kindness in a positive way. Extremist individuals from the Arab community believed that Arabs should not help Jews in any way. One night, they broke into the couple's shop and set it on fire.

When Yonatan, a young Israeli entrepreneur who happened to be on an overseas trip at the same time, heard about what happened to the couple, he immediately launched a fundraising campaign to help them rebuild their store. He successfully raised the amount needed to restore the shop. The couple was deeply moved by Yonatan's initiative and, even before renovating the shop, decided to donate more pairs of bicycles to displaced children!"

**Around The Dreidel**

Similar to the traditional "spin the dreidel" game where each side of the dreidel represents a word, here the words, unlike the original game, invite us to share positive, uplifting, and enlightening things that lift the spirit during the days of the war in which we find ourselves:

נ – Nes (Miracle): Share a marvelous story, a miracle performed by a person or a heavenly miracle that you've experienced these days or a miracle you are hoping for.

ג – Giborah (Heroism): Share a story of heroism, in the broad sense of selflessness and personal sacrifice for the sake of others (not only heroism in the military sense) that left an impression on you.

ה – Hodaya (Gratitude): Share whom you feel thankful for, starting from the family circle, the community circle, etc.

פ – Pizmon (Song): Share a song and its chorus that accompanies you these days and uplifts your soul a bit. You can sing it together.

**Stories of Light and Courage**

True heroism is revealed even in the mundane aspects of everyday life. We are accustomed to attributing heroism to the military, for an understandable reason; a soldier is required to accept the possibility of bringing the ultimate sacrifice, the sacrifice of life. However, this is not the only definition. Cowardice is not the opposite of heroism, but rather selfishness. The self-centered person can be bold, but not a hero. Heroism is primarily a moral measure... it is the highest form of integrity, rooted in the foundation of love for others."

(Yitzhak Sade)

Since the outbreak of the war during the joyous festival of Simchat Torah on October 7, 2023, acts of light and bravery have been revealed by many individuals: in the battlefield and in the realm of civilian life. Women and men; elderly and young; secular, religious, and ultra-Orthodox; Jews and Arabs alike.

During the Hanukkah holiday, we seek to add light to the world, and strengthen ourselves through the stories of light and bravery that have been revealed in their various forms during the days of the war. From countless stories, we have chosen, with thought and compassion, only eight stories, against the eight days of the holiday, representing many more stories like them.

**Stories of Light and Courage for Youth and Adults (1)**

**One for All! - The Story of Eden Nimri**

Eden could have chosen to be an outstanding swimmer and pass up combat service in her military duties. Instead, she chose the most meaningful service she could, joined the airforce, and proceeded to the prestigious pilot training to eventually become an officer in the air force’s UAVs (Unmanned Aerial Vehicles) female combat unit.

On the morning of October 7th, she jumped out of bed to the sound of explosions and alarms at the Nachal Oz base where she served. From this moment on she operated as a combat leader. She and her unit ran with their weapons to the protected space where six unarmed female reconessence soldiers were at. When they reported on the radio that there was an infiltration of terrorists onto the base, Eden immediately took command and showed leadership. She positioned herself alone at the entrance of the protected space while the other soldiers stayed back. Eden maintained visual contact with her four team members and silently ordered them to be ready with loaded weapons, so as to be able to neutralize any terrorist who would come in. Moments later the terrorists arrived, throwing grenades towards Eden’s position. Eden remained in position and engaged in a heroic firefight with the terrorists, allowing the other ten soldiers to seek retreat into safety and save their lives.

At the age of 23, Eden left behind parents, two sisters, and a boyfriend."

**"Stories of Light and Courage for Youth and Adults (2)**

**Creating a Garden in the Midst of Hell**

The Story of Maya Haleper

Maya Halper worked at the nature party in Re'im on the Black Saturday. When the terrorists arrived and began to attack the partygoers, Maya tried to find a hiding place among the bushes. There, she promised herself not to succumb to despair and to muster all her strength to breathe, acknowledge the present, and take control of what was happening inside her.

"Every time thoughts of pressure, fear, anger, or revenge came to mind," she recounts, "I stopped, took a breath, and found at least three things to be grateful for in my current moment. Thank you for the bush... thank you for the birds singing to me... and thank you to myself for functioning so amazingly in the situation I am in right now."

After safely emerging, she shared her story and added, "I don't have the answer to how to bring about world peace, but I did manage to bring about peace and a paradise garden to myself in the midst of the hell I was in. As long as we breathe, we win."

**"Stories of Light and Courage for Youth and Adults (3)**

**To Help the Livestock**

The Story of Dudik Landa

Dudik Landau, a dairy farmer for 50 years in Kibbutz Kalia, immidiatelly, upon the outbreak of the war, understood how he could assist the best and quickest way.

As a dairy farmer, he grasped the significance of the inability of the kibbutz members in the surrounding area to reach the kibbutz's cowsheds to tend to the cows. Despite the tense and dangerous days in the region, he got into his car and arrived at Nahal Oz.

"As soon as the war broke out, I grabbed a Kornit (an agricultural vehicle), put helmets on our heads, went south, and we arrived at Nahal Oz. The cows were in the milking parlor, there was no one to take care of them, they were in distress – it was cruel and painful for the animals. We released them and the young calves, and fed them. We need to help each other; we have no other land!"

In this action, Dudik also contributed to the economic future of the kibbutz and its ability to recover in the future."

**Stories of Light and Courage for Youth and Adults (4)**

**To Rescue the Wounded Under Fire**

The Story of Tali Hadad

On the joyous morning of Simchat Torah, Tali Hadad awoke in Ofakim to the sound of cries and gunfire beneath her house. Itamar, her soldier son, immediately left the house and was among the first to encounter the terrorists who had infiltrated the town. Tali, hearing the gunfire and shouts, waited to see ambulances arriving to evacuate the wounded. However, no ambulance came. Tali decided to go out herself and evacuate the wounded. 'I had a goal, to extract as many wounded as possible, because there was no rescue and no salvation... It was clear to me that this is what needed to be done!'

During her first trip, she loaded four wounded onto her car. One of them was her own son, who was seriously injured. She arrived at the hospital with the wounded and immediately returned – to evacuate more injured people. She traveled back and forth and evacuated 12 wounded people under fire, saving their lives. Only when rescue forces arrived in the town did she manage to be with Itamar, her son, take care of him, and stand by his side."

**Stories of Light and Courage for Youth and Adults (5)**

**Protecting Home: Stop the Terrorists at Any Cost - The Story of Amichai Vayitzan**

On the joyous evening of Simchat Torah, at Kibbutz Kerem Shalom, a community where both religious and secular residents live together in harmony, they danced together in admiration. In the morning, the kibbutz members awoke to the sounds of gunfire. While all the residents gathered in the protected area, members of the emergency first responders of the Kibbutz went out to fight the terrorists who had entered the kibbutz. Amidst the battle, Amichai Vayitzan, one of the members of the emergency responders, sent WhatsApp messages to his wife, in which he sounded calm and reassured. He emphasized to his wife that what matters is to ensure that the children feel good and dance because today is the joyful holiday of Simchat Torah.

During the battle, the terrorists reached a family home with six children. They blew up the entrance door to the protected area and severely injured the father. However, members of the emergency class arrived, rescued the family, and managed to drive the terrorists out of the kibbutz.

Two members of the emergency responders fell in the battle that day: Amichai Vayitzan, 33 years old, married and father of five, and Yedidia Raziel, 31 years old, married and father of three." May their memory be a blessing.

**Stories of Light and Courage for Youth and Adults (6)**

**My Home – Your Home**

**The Story of Ari Wolf**

Due to the conflict in the southern and northern regions of the country, many communities in areas under fire had to flee and were displaced, and their residents sought new shelter. Some were evacuated to hotels. However, others found themselves struggling to find a place to stay. The initiative "My Home – Your Home" by the World Zionist Organization led to many connections between Jews from Israel and around the world who donated vacant apartments and homes for hosting those in need.

Ari Wolf and his family, Americans who made Aliyah to Israel, are a beautiful example of this connection between Israeli citizens and their Jewish brothers and sisters overseas. Ari Wolf's family had an apartment that remained vacant after the passing of his mother, and the fact that his father and the elder son no longer came to Israel. When he heard about the initiative, despite hesitating to offer an apartment to people he didn't know for an unknown period, he turned to his other siblings, and they all agreed unanimously that this was the significant contribution they could make at this time, for the sake of the displaced residents."

**Stories of Light and Courage for Youth and Adults (7)**

**We all live in one country!**

**The Story of Yosef Aldiazna**

Yosef Aldiazna, a bus driver from Rahat, set out early on Friday morning to pick up partygoers from the festival in Re’im. On the way, he heard continuous gunfire, yet he continued to drive. He persisted until someone stopped him and said he must stop, not risking himself. However, Yosef continued despite everything.

He reached the party area and loaded as many people onto his bus as possible. Along the way, he saw two more injured individuals. He stopped, picked them up as well, and rushed them to the hospital. After several hours of driving through unconventional routes, he managed to exit the danger zone and reach a secure location. Yosef, who set out for a completely ordinary day of driving, found himself in the midst of a rescue operation under fire, saving the lives of 30 people! ״I did the humane thing, and the people I saved are human beings like me. We all live in one country, and I was almost the only one who could save them!'"

**Stories of Light and Courage for Youth and Adults (8)**

**Taking Care for the Home Front!**

**The Story of Chana Eiram and Bracha Shagav**

The horrendous attack during the joyous celebration of Simchat Torah and the ensuing war that followed shook the entire nation of Israel. crowds of soldiers left their homes to join the reserves, leaving many households with only one parent to take care and tend to the children. Even within the ultra-Orthodox community, a disruption was felt as many sought ways to become more involved in broader circles of volunteering and action.

Two ultra-Orthodox women, Chana Eiram and Bracha Shagav, recognized that this was an area where they, as women from the ultra-Orthodox sector, whose spouses mostly did not enlist in the reserves, could contribute and assist.

They established a volunteer system called "Iron Sisters," designed to aid all those families, with parents volunteering in the defence of the State of Israel. Within 30 hours, over 3,000 volunteer women joined. "Support and assistance are provided personally and warmly from sister to sister," they explain, "in all the areas needed for her and her family, thus forming a network of sisters across the diverse sectors of the people of Israel!"