

## Trump announces Israel, Hamas reached Gaza deal, hostages to be released 72 hours after signing

*The deal is expected to be signed in Egypt on Thursday afternoon, sources in the Hamas terrorist organization told Lebanese outlet Al Mayadeen.*

By [CORINNE BAUM](#), [JERUSALEM POST STAFF](#), [AMICHAEL STEIN](#) OCTOBER 9, 2025 01:54 Updated: OCTOBER 9, 2025 04:24



Hostage families, activists protest at the Prime Minister's Residence in Jerusalem, October 5, 2025. (photo credit: Chaim Goldberg/Flash90)

**Negotiators in Egypt reached a deal to free the remaining hostages in Gaza and eventually end the Israel-Hamas War, US President Donald Trump announced early Thursday morning.**

**"I am very proud to announce that Israel and Hamas have both signed off on the first Phase of our Peace Plan," Trump wrote.**

**"This means that ALL of the Hostages will be released very soon, and Israel will withdraw their Troops to an**

**agreed upon line as the first steps toward a Strong, Durable, and Everlasting Peace."**

**Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu stated that he will bring the cabinet for a vote on the deal Thursday.**

N12 News, citing a senior American official, stated that the **hostages will be released 72 hours after the cabinet approves the deal.**

"The whole world has come together on this one, Israel, every country has come together. This has been a fantastic day," Trump told Reuters in a brief telephone interview.

"This is a great day for the world. This is a wonderful day, a wonderful day for everybody," he said.

**Trump, Netanyahu congratulate each other on Gaza deal**

**Netanyahu and Trump spoke shortly after the president announced the deal on Thursday.**

**A press release from the Prime Minister's Office said the two "held a very emotional and warm conversation, congratulating each other on the historic achievement of signing the agreement for the release of all the hostages."**

"The **Prime Minister thanked President Trump for all his efforts and for his global leadership**, and President Trump congratulated the Prime Minister for his determined leadership and the actions he led," the release added.

**Israeli officials are preparing for a visit by President Trump on Sunday.** He will reportedly address the Knesset.

**In a later Fox News interview, Trump said that he believed Iran would be part of the Middle East peace he brokered after he ended the war in June.**

The president said Iran was "one month, maybe two months away from having a nuclear weapon" before he acted, claiming "if I allowed that to happen, this deal would not have been possible."

Trump said Iran "blessed the deal" and he's had "very good conversations" with the country. He told Netanyahu, "Israel cannot fight the world," and credited taking out Iran's nuclear capability as key to the agreement.

"It's brought the whole world together. I've never seen anything. It's so good for Israel," Trump said.

**Living hostages to be released in a single batch**

The agreement **means that Hamas will release all of the remaining 20 living hostages within the next 72 hours. A Hamas source told al Araby al Jadeed that all of them will be released in a single batch during the first phase of the deal.**

The deal is expected to be [signed in Egypt](#) on Thursday afternoon, sources in the Hamas terrorist organization told Lebanese outlet al Mayadeen.

However, the release of the remaining deceased hostages might be delayed, as Israel has doubts that

Hamas can locate all of them.

The [Israel-Hamas War](#) began over two years ago after the Palestinian terror group killed over 1,200 Israelis and kidnapped 250 men, women, and children to the Gaza Strip on October 7, 2023.

<https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/article-869838>

## Mediators seek Thursday deal to free living hostages, begin Gaza ceasefire — sources *Trump says he plans to travel to region this weekend if agreement inked; Hamas tells interlocutors it's committed to securing Barghouti's release*

By [Jacob Magid](#) and [Nava Freiberg](#)

Today, 11:39 pm



An Egyptian woman watches the news on a local channel in Cairo on October 8, 2025, showing images of top negotiator for the Palestinian Hamas movement Khalil al-Hayya (C) arriving in Sharm el-Sheikh for talks on ending the Gaza war.

**Mediators are currently planning for an agreement to be signed on Thursday between Israel and Hamas that will see the immediate release of remaining living hostages in exchange for a Gaza ceasefire, an Arab diplomat and a second source briefed on the ongoing negotiations in Egypt told The Times of Israel on Wednesday.**

**Once the ceasefire is in place, Hamas will then be able to gather the bodies of the dead hostages for their subsequent return to Israel,** the sources said.

There are **currently 48 hostages remaining in Gaza, 20 of whom are believed to be alive.**

The agreement the mediators are planning to finalize on Thursday will be on what stakeholders are referring to as the **“first phase” of US President Donald Trump’s plan for** ending the war, the sources said.

Top officials from Israel and Hamas along with counterparts from mediating countries — the US, Egypt, Qatar and Turkey — were in Sharm el-Sheikh on Wednesday in order to close remaining gaps in the negotiations after technical talks were held by lower-level teams on Monday and Tuesday.

**Trump said Wednesday that a deal ending the Gaza war is “very close”** and that he plans to travel to the region this weekend if an agreement is reached.

“We have a team of great negotiators, and they are unfortunately great negotiators on the other side also,” Trump said during an event at the White House.



US President Donald Trump speaks during a roundtable meeting on antifa in the State Dining Room at the White House, October 8, 2025, in Washington. (AP Photo/Evan Vucci)

**He reiterated that the Arab and Muslim world is on board with his plan. “Our final negotiation is with Hamas. And it seems to be going well.”**

**“If that’s the case, we’ll be leaving, probably on Sunday, maybe Saturday,” Trump added.**

**Hamas said to provide info on living hostages**

**With an agreement on the hostage-release phase of the US plan for ending the war in Gaza appearing close, Hamas has provided information on “roughly 20 living hostages,”** Israeli officials told Channel 12. The Wednesday report added that the terror group says it is still searching for some of the dead hostages — Israel has confirmed the deaths of 26 of the 48 remaining captives.

**Three Israeli officials told CNN on Wednesday that Hamas might not be able to find all the dead hostages.** Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has known for months that this is the case, according to the officials.

**One official said that seven to nine bodies might not be retrieved, while another put that figure**



at between 10 and 15. The assessments are based on Israeli intelligence and information that is coming out of talks in Egypt, the report said, though there is no way to know the exact figure.

The Times of Israel previously [reported](#) that the terror group has, in the past, told mediators it does not know where some of the bodies of slain hostages are located.

Under the proposed deal, Israel is to begin releasing Palestinian security prisoners once the hostage-release phase is completed.

Two hundred and fifty of the remaining 303 Palestinian prisoners serving life sentences in Israeli jails will be released, along with 1,700 Palestinians who have been detained in Gaza since October 7, 2023, including all women and children from Gaza held in that timeframe. Many of those detainees have been held by way of a controversial policy called administrative detention, without due process. For every slain hostage released by Hamas, Israel will release the remains of 15 deceased Gazans that it is holding.

Channel 12 reported that the understanding currently appears to be that once Hamas hands over all of the living hostages and all the dead hostages it can locate, and makes clear it is not holding any as bargaining chips, the prisoner releases will follow.

Israel will not free Hamas Nukhba terrorists who directly participated in the October 7 massacre, the report said. But there will be some “flexibility” on the issue of the release of some heavyweight terrorists serving life terms, many of whom Israel has refused to free in past deals.

**Hamas committed to securing Barghouti’s release**

The Arab diplomat told The Times of Israel that decisions regarding the identities of the Palestinian prisoners slated for release won’t be made until the final minutes before a deal is signed in order to avoid drawn-out negotiations.



*A man walks past a mural depicting the Palestinian leader Marwan Barghouti, with a message that reads in Arabic, ‘See you soon,’ on Israel’s separation barrier in the West Bank city of Bethlehem, August 20, 2025. (AP Photo/Mahmoud Illean)*

Hamas is committed to securing the release of former Fatah leader Marwan Barghouti as part of the agreement with Israel to end the war, a source familiar with the matter told The Times of Israel.

Hamas’s leadership has relayed to interlocutors that “Barghouti’s fate remains absolutely central to these talks,” the source said.

Barghouti is currently serving life in prison for planning attacks during the Second Intifada that killed five civilians. He has denied the crimes he was

convicted of while rejecting the Israeli court’s jurisdiction.

The 66-year-old has been described as a potential successor to Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, as he has appeal among broad swaths of the Palestinian population, while maintaining support for a two-state solution. This tells you that character of the “PA” group which is essentially that of Hamas. This is a disgusting concession and a travesty to the families of those he has orchestrated the murders in the past. rdb

**Optimistic mediators**

Despite potential snags, the indirect talks are trending positively toward an agreement within the next day or two, a Palestinian source familiar with the negotiations told The Times of Israel earlier Wednesday.

Turkey’s Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan expressed optimism that a deal could be reached as soon as Thursday evening.



*A vehicle passes in front of the International Conference Center where Israeli and Hamas officials are set to hold indirect talks Wednesday, Oct. 8, 2025. (AP Photo)*

The talks are focused on the release of the remaining 48 hostages in exchange for a total of roughly 2,000 Palestinian prisoners along with a partial Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza

**Strip**, the source said, adding that **issues pertaining to Hamas's disarmament and the post-war management of Gaza will be finalized in subsequent rounds of negotiations.**

**Hamas is again seeking guarantees from the mediators that Israel won't resume the war after it releases the hostages, the Arab diplomat says, adding that the group is also seeking for the deal to institute a timeline for Israel's withdrawal** from Gaza, as opposed to making the pull-out completely performance-based and under the discretion of various stakeholders.

Under the emerging deal, **there will be 'cosmetic changes' to the lines of the interim IDF withdrawal as drawn on a map released by the White House last week**, which showed the military deployed in some 57 percent of the Gaza Strip, Channel 12 reported.

According to the network, **Israel's government has already begun drafting the decision proposal that will be brought to a vote.**

**Egypt's President Abdel Fattah el-Sissi invited Trump to come to Egypt for a potential signing ceremony. If it takes place on Friday, it would coincide with the announcement of the winner of the Nobel Peace Prize** — an award Trump has long sought and claims he deserves. **Surprise, Surprise, Surprise. Who would have even thought that. Rdb** <https://www.timesofisrael.com/mediators-seek-thursday-deal-to-free-living-hostages-begin-gaza-ceasefire-sources/>

## 'We will bring them all home': Netanyahu to convene gov't for Gaza deal vote

*Israel, Hamas agreed on maps of the IDF's withdrawal from Gaza • PM Netanyahu: With God's help, we will bring them all home*

By **JERUSALEM POST STAFF** OCTOBER 9, 2025 02:00 Updated: OCTOBER 9, 2025 02:42



*Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and US President Donald Trump embrace in the White House in Washington, September 29, 2025. (photo credit: REUTERS/JONATHAN ERNST)*

**Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu vowed to bring all hostages home shortly before US President Donald Trump announced early on Thursday that Israel and the Palestinian terrorist group Hamas had agreed to a deal to end the war in Gaza and release all remaining hostages.**

"With God's help, we will bring them all home," Netanyahu said shortly before US President Donald Trump's announcement.

**Netanyahu added that he would convene the government tomorrow to vote on the deal.**

A source with knowledge told *The Jerusalem Post* that the **two parties have agreed on maps of the IDF's withdrawal from the Gaza Strip, and have mostly agreed on the details of the release of Palestinian prisoners.**

The **deal will be signed at noon in Egypt, Saudi Arabian outlet Al-Hadath reported.**



Before Trump's announcement, images of the negotiators shaking hands circulated on Arab media, showing **the head of IDF's hostages headquarters Maj.-Gen. Nitzan Alon shaking hands with Qatari Prime Minister Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al Thani.**

*Nitzan Alon shakes Qatari PM al-Thani's hand, reportedly after negotiations ended early Thursday morning. (credit: SECTION 27A COPYRIGHT ACT)*

**What are the details of Donald Trump's Gaza deal?**

A Palestinian source told al-Araby al-Jadeed that all of the remaining **20 living hostages** will be released in a single batch during the first phase of the deal.

Sky News Arabia reported that the parties landed on a full ceasefire deal with a gradual withdrawal of the Israeli army from 70% of Gaza alongside a simultaneous release of prisoners.

An agreement was reached on all the provisions and implementation mechanisms of the first phase of the Gaza ceasefire agreement, which will lead to ending the war, the release of Israeli hostages and Palestinian prisoners, and the entry of aid, Qatar's foreign ministry spokesperson, Majed Al-Ansari, said on Thursday. The details will be announced later, Ansari added in a post on X. <https://www.jpost.com/middle-east/article-869839>



## **Hamas to release 20 living hostages at once as part of Gaza deal, Arab media report** *Hamas is also reportedly willing to "freeze" weapons, but not fully disarm, according to Arab media, citing the Egyptian Intelligence Bureau.*

By MAARIV, [JERUSALEM POST STAFF](#) OCTOBER 8, 2025 23:41 Updated: OCTOBER 9, 2025 01:49



*Gunmen stand guard at the funeral of Marwan Issa, a senior Hamas deputy military commander who was killed in an Israeli airstrike during the conflict between Israel and Hamas, amid a ceasefire between Israel and Hamas, in the central Gaza Strip, February 7, 2025. (photo credit: AGUSTIN MARCARIAN/REUTERS)*

**Hamas agreed to release all living hostages together and to delay the release of the remains of the deceased hostages once a deal is reached in Egypt, Al Jazeera reported on Wednesday evening, citing a senior Palestinian source.**

**A Palestinian source later told al-Araby al-Jadeed that all of the remaining 20 living hostages will be released in a single batch during the first phase of the deal.**

This **comes as another round of talks in Egypt draws to a close for the day**, the Qatari outlet added. Negotiators reportedly discussed the lists of prisoners to be released and guarantees to prevent a return to fighting after the hostages are freed.

**Hamas is also reportedly willing to "freeze" weapons, but not fully disarm**, according to Arab media, citing the Egyptian Intelligence Bureau. **What does that mean?? Freeze weapons.**  
**rdb**

The Palestinian terror group also **reportedly said that it would not hand over its weapons to non-Arab intermediaries.**



*Palestinian prisoners who were released in a hostage deal between Israel and Hamas arrive to the West Bank city of Ramallah, February 15, 2025. (credit: FLASH90)*

**Hamas says prisoner lists exchanged during Egypt talks**

**This comes after Hamas confirmed on Wednesday that prisoner lists were exchanged as part of ongoing indirect talks aimed at reaching a ceasefire agreement.**

The negotiations, according to a statement by the group, are focused on **three main points: ending the war, the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the Gaza Strip, and the exchange of prisoners.**

**Hamas official Taher al-Nunu said** that his delegation had

“presented the necessary positivity and responsibility” to advance efforts toward an agreement.

Hamas also reportedly demanded **"written, not verbal, guarantees"** of Israel's commitment to the proposed ceasefire agreement.

Amichai Stein contributed to this report. <https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/article-869837>

## **Egyptian President Sisi invites Trump to signing ceremony if peace deal completed**

**"It would be truly wonderful if, should an agreement be reached, you could attend its signing," Sisi said in a message directed to Trump.**



*U.S. President Donald Trump speaks while meeting with Egypt's President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi on the sidelines of the annual United Nations General Assembly in New York City, New York, U.S., September 23, 2019. (photo credit: JONATHAN ERNST/REUTERS)*

**Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi said on Wednesday that he had invited US President Donald Trump to attend a signing ceremony if a peace deal for Gaza succeeds.** The invitation was widely reported in regional Arabic media, such as *Al-Ain* and *Al-Arabiya*, as a sign of optimism about the possible end to fighting

in [Gaza](#).

The **Egyptian leader made the comments during a televised speech** at an Egyptian Police Academy graduation ceremony. “It would be truly wonderful if, should an agreement be reached, you could attend its

signing,” he said in a message directed to Trump.

Sisi **believes the talks in Sharm el-Sheikh are progressing positively**. His comments came amid reports that Egypt’s General Intelligence chief, the Qatari prime minister and foreign minister, and the director of Turkey’s National Intelligence Organization are all in Sinai for the talks.

An Israeli and US delegation are also present. Sisi wants the two-year war in Gaza to end. It has [deeply affected Egypt](#).

**'Very encouraging developments'**

**Al-Arabiya noted that Sisi said “Negotiations are currently underway in Sharm el-Sheikh to end the war, and** our hearts are with these negotiations. I note with great appreciation and respect President Trump’s genuine desire to end the war during the current round of negotiations.” He added, “The news I’ve received from the



Sharm el-Sheikh meetings is encouraging, and we hope to seize the opportunity and ensure that the war ends in the current round of negotiations.” *Al-Arabiya*

also noted **that “the Egyptian President stressed that no one can threaten the Egyptian state, affirming its ability to overcome any challenge and confront any threat.** Al-Ain media noted that “Egyptian

President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi affirmed that there are very encouraging developments in the talks to end the war in Gaza and called on his American counterpart to attend the signing of a ceasefire agreement in Egypt, if one is reached.”

Sisi also said “There are important envoys sent by President Trump to Sharm el-Sheikh. I received very encouraging words that I would like to announce to the Egyptians, the region, and the world: They are coming with a strong will, a strong message, and a strong mandate from President Trump to end the war during the current round of negotiations. I hope all participants seize the opportunity to end the war.”

## Hamas says hostages, prisoner lists exchanged in latest ceasefire negotiations



*Hamas confirms prisoner list exchange as part of ongoing ceasefire negotiations focused on ending the war, withdrawing Israeli forces from Gaza, and releasing long-term inmates.*

*By JERUSALEM POST STAFF OCTOBER 8, 2025*

*11:59 Updated: OCTOBER 8, 2025 22:15*

*Hamas official Taher al-Nunu in Gaza City in 2009. (photo credit: OLIVIER LABAN-MATTEI/AFP via Getty Images)*

**Hamas confirmed on Wednesday that prisoner lists were exchanged as part of ongoing indirect talks aimed at reaching a ceasefire agreement.**

**the group, are focused on three main points: ending the war, the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the Gaza Strip, and the exchange of prisoners.**

**Taher al-Nunu, media adviser to the head of Hamas’s political bureau, said the delegation had “presented the necessary positivity and responsibility” to advance efforts toward an agreement.**

Mediators, he said, were “making great efforts to remove any obstacles,” and that “a spirit of optimism prevails among all parties.”

The **statement added that the exchanged prisoner lists were based on previously agreed criteria and figures.**



**Palestinian sources who spoke to Ynet said the issue of prisoner releases has taken on new urgency, particularly following the submission of updated lists by Hamas earlier Wednesday.** The sources pointed to increased Turkish involvement, with Ankara pushing for specific individuals to be included, as well as Hamas’s demand to release prisoners serving long or life sentences. **MARWAN BARGHOUTI is brought into court by police for his judgment hearing in May 2004, at which he was convicted on five counts of murder in terrorist attacks. (credit: David Silverman/Reuters)**



**A senior Palestinian official told Ynet that efforts are underway to raise the number of life-sentence prisoners to be released from 250 to 300. The Palestinian Prisoners Club says 303 individuals are currently serving life sentences in Israeli prisons,** including some incarcerated before the Oslo Accords.

**“For these prisoners, this could be their last chance to go free,” the official said.** Keep in mind that Yahyah Sinwar was a prisoner released in exchange for Gilad Shaleet. **These prisoners are all committed terrorist most with blood on their hands. This is an affront the relatives of their victims. rdb**

**According to the official, Turkish mediators are also pressing Israel to avoid vetoing specific names and to drop demands for deportation to third countries.** “The most important thing is their release,” the source said, noting that the list includes Arab-Israeli prisoners serving lengthy terms.

#### **Deportation remains a point of contention in negotiations**

“Deported prisoners are technically released, but they face many difficulties—especially those staying in Egypt,” the official said. “They hold no citizenship, cannot move freely, and Egypt serves as a transit point to other destinations in Europe or countries such as Pakistan that accept Palestinian prisoners.”

The official also said that most prisoners released in previous deals have not returned to terrorism or political activity, and many now reside abroad with limited involvement in Palestinian affairs.

<https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/article-869761>

## **Singing, cheering, anticipation mix at Hostages Square after deal to free captives**

*Tel Aviv plaza, long the hub of hostage rallies, sees singing, dancing, praise for Donald Trump, and continued wariness hours after agreement announced*

By [Ben Sales](#) Today, 4:00 pm

**Just weeks after the massacre of October 7, 2023, Dana Felz-Russo came to what was becoming known as Hostages Square, in central Tel Aviv, with a table and a box of 200 T-shirts a friend had printed — aiming to raise awareness for the 251 hostages who had recently been kidnapped to Gaza.**

**On Thursday morning, nearly two years later, Felz-Russo stood cheering and hugging with seven other women under a broad tent displaying a dizzying array of merchandise: T-shirts in Hebrew and English, pins, hats, jewelry, posters, tote bags and more. Yellow umbrellas reading “Now!” were sold out amid intermittent rain.**

Since she first began selling the apparel — with proceeds going to support advocacy efforts for the hostages — she’s built a squad of 110 volunteers who staff several points of sale 12 hours a day, seven days a week.

They call themselves the “Shirt Team.” And they hope that soon, their work will be done. Like thousands of others coming to Hostages Square on Thursday morning, they were celebrating the announcement of a deal just hours earlier to bring home the 48 captives still held by terror groups in Gaza — the people who have been the focus of their efforts for many long months.

“I hope we can close up and go home,” she said to applause from a small crowd of onlookers. Afterward, in an interview, she added that if and when the hostages come back, “I think we’ll change the symbols to, ‘We returned them, and now we’re living.’”



That mix of cautious optimism and euphoria pervaded Hostages Square on Thursday, as relatives of hostages and their supporters filled the plaza both to celebrate and anticipate the deal. It was announced in the early hours of the morning on Thursday and was due to be ratified by the government in the evening. The hostages — some 20 living, at least 26 thought to be dead — are meant to come home within the subsequent 72 hours.

*Dana Felz-Russo, left, and other volunteers selling merchandise at Tel Aviv’s Hostages Square celebrate an agreement to bring back the 48 remaining captives on October 9, 2025 (Ben Sales/Times of Israel)*

At the square, a giant clock continued to count the 733-plus days during which the hostages have been in captivity. An image of an hourglass stood with the sand collected at the bottom. But in the crowd, there was a feeling that a difficult era was ending, and that the return so many had hoped for was finally at hand.

“There have been so many moments of longing and suffering here,” said Misha Nataf, who came to Hostages Square from Haifa along with his wife Yaara and their 10-month-old son, Ilan. Nataf said that, aside from the period surrounding his baby’s birth, he’s traveled down from Haifa to the square every week.



“We came here as a corrective, in order to really celebrate with everyone, and it’s really exciting,” he said. “It was important for me to be here today.”

He added: “The time for repair and redemption, and for rebuilding, has come, that we should build a better world and a better society.”

*Yaara, Misha and baby Ilan Nataf at Hostages Square in Tel Aviv on October 9, 2025. (Ben Sales/Times of Israel)*

Tamar Hertanu, who came from the suburb of Kiryat Ono with her three grandchildren, also said it felt like a moment to show up.

“The younger generation also needs to know about the difficult thing we’ve gone through, that we’re at the end of now,” she said. “We talk about it with them already in language they understand: the difficult thing that the people of Israel went through, and our revival.”



*Einav Zangauker, mother of hostage Matan Zangauker, reacts to a hostage deal at Hostages Square in Tel Aviv on October 9, 2025. (Maya Levin / AFP)*

Another weekly rally attendee, Rachel Shani Stopper, said she came from work, and found herself doing something she hadn’t done there before — belting out songs and dancing with friends.

Shortly after a downpour sent the crowd scrambling under awnings and tents, Shani Stopper and a few others were in the middle of the plaza leading a group in Israel and Jewish standards — from “Hava Nagila” to “L’shana Haba’a,” a song projecting optimism about the year to

come.

Sometimes they danced in place. At other moments, they joined in a classic Israeli folk dancing circle, the dancers joining together at intervals.

**“For two years we’ve held the sadness, pain and frustration, and now it’s just coming out, you can’t control it,” she said. “Yes, we’re waiting to see them here,** but the happiness that it’s signed that there’s an agreement, that brings it all out.”

Avi Loenstein, who came with his wife Ofra Zion, also skipped work to come to the square. “I’m here every Saturday night,” he said. “This is the first time I’m coming here with a smile.”



*Israelis celebrate the announcement of a deal to free all hostages, end the war in Gaza at Hostages Square in Tel Aviv on October 9, 2025 (Ben Sales/Times of Israel)*

Others were more hesitant, waiting for the hostages to come home before rejoicing.

“We’ll hope for the best,” said Alon Shirizly, a frequent attendee at rallies to free the hostages who was sporting a multicolored *Tembel* hat and a red shirt that said, “Without them, home is gone.”

**“We’re only at the beginning of a very long road,” he said. “For the moment, there’s euphoria,**



**but we need to remember that we need to bring back 20 living hostages, and another 28 fallen who may not be found."**

After the hostages return, he said, he plans to take a break. "The time has come to rest after two years in the streets," he said, adding, "First of all, I want to see everyone here."



*Rallygoers in Tel Aviv's Hostages Square on October 9, 2025. (Ben Sales/Times of Israel)*

Rotem Cooper, son of slain hostage Amiram Cooper, said at the square that he had "distorted" feelings, but is hoping for a measure of "closure" following the announcement of the deal.

"You don't make any preparations, you take it one day at a time," he told reporters. "We want to get some closure. We're not trying to forget... but we want some small closure and to focus more on building."

His father, according to the IDF, was murdered in captivity after being taken hostage. Rotem's mother, Nurit, was also taken captive but released weeks after the attack in a humanitarian gesture.



*Alon Shirizly (right) and a friend celebrate news that Israel and Hamas reached a hostage deal in Gaza, Tel Aviv's Hostages Square, October 9, 2025. (Ben Sales/Times of Israel)*

**Israel expects that a number of the slain hostages' bodies may not be found or returned. Rotem said he is focusing on supporting the living hostages to be released**, including those from Nir Oz, which his father co-founded.

"My only preparations are to cancel everything on my calendar and to be here for the families, first of all for the living hostages," he said. "First thing, let's receive them."

If the terror group does not return his father's body, he said, "It's too horrible to think about."

*Rotem Cooper, son of murdered hostage Amiram, speaks at Hostages Square on October 9, 2025; (Ben Sales/Times of Israel)*

He also had harsh words for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

"We failed as a society, certainly the leadership," he said. "And above all, the prime minister doesn't get points because he's bringing my father back in a body bag."

Of his father, Rotem said: "He's a person who established the state, established the kibbutz. He should not have met his end like this."

*Miki Ziv waves US and Israeli flags in Tel Aviv's Hostages Square on October 9, 2025. (Ben Sales/Times of Israel)*

The one leader to get praise from across the crowd was US President Donald Trump, whom many credited with bringing the deal to fruition. One was Miki Ziv, a protest regular who said she'd been standing in the square since 5 a.m.

Ziv was waving large Israeli and American flags while wearing a pink visor reading "TRUMP LAS VEGAS"





in capital letters, a souvenir relatives brought back from the US for her. The American flag, she said, belongs to a friend traveling in Thailand who asked her to take care of it for him.

She was also critical of her own government's handling of the crisis.

**“We understood that Trump would bring back the hostages and that’s what happened, unfortunately,” she says. “We trusted our own government, but God wanted this and Trump gave it a big push for things to happen here.”**

Of the US president, she added: “Whoever steps out of line a bit, they succeed, so hats off to him.”

Others showed up at the square in tribute costumes to Trump. One wore what appeared to be a paper mask of the president’s head, a loose-fitting black suit and tie, and Israeli and American flags. Another wore a red-and-white striped dress and a star-spangled blue hat, and carried a huge sign reading “We [heart] Trump.”



*A man wearing a mask of US President Donald Trump celebrates news of a hostage deal in Gaza, Tel Aviv's Hostages Square, October 9, 2025. (Ben Sales/Times of Israel)*

**Trump has been framing the deal as a gateway to broader Middle East peace.** For now, many of the attendees at the plaza were more focused on the immediate task of welcoming the hostages home, and providing a fitting burial to those who have been slain.

But some people took a moment to consider what would happen to Hostages Square once there are no more hostages.

“I would like to come back to regular life,” Tel Aviv Mayor Ron

Huldai said in a brief interview. “This is it. This is a public square, and life changes.”

But Felz-Russo hopes that the square where she has spent so much of the last two years will retain a little of what it has become — and that it will also open the door to hope.

“I want there to be a memorial to October 7 here, that we’ll always remember those who fought, those who we abandoned, those we weren’t there for,” she said. “And those who returned, that we’ll be happy, and go back to living.” <https://www.timesofisrael.com/singing-cheering-anticipation-mix-at-hostages-square-after-deal-to-free-captives/>

## IDF prepares to receive living, deceased hostages at Camp Re'im

*According to Walla, the preparations included arranging for proper personal equipment and hygiene infrastructure, refreshing orders and procedures.*

*By JERUSALEM POST STAFF, AMICHAEL STEIN OCTOBER 8, 2025 19:40 Updated: OCTOBER 9, 2025 06:06*



*IDF prepares to receive hostages returned from Gaza in hostage deal, January 18, 2025. (photo credit: IDF SPOKESPERSON'S UNIT)*

**The IDF has completed most of its preparations for receiving the Gaza hostages, living and deceased, in Camp Re'im near the Gaza border, a source told Walla on Wednesday.**

**According to Walla, the preparations included arranging for proper personal equipment and hygiene infrastructure, refreshing orders and procedures, and preparing for the arrival of the absorption teams.**

**Israel ‘cautiously optimistic’ as hostage talks continue**

**Israeli officials told The Jerusalem Post on Tuesday that they were “cautiously optimistic” at the end of Monday’s talks.**

The first round of negotiations between the Hamas terrorist organization and mediators over the hostage deal was “characterized by positivity,” according to sources cited by the [Qatari](#) news network Al Jazeera on Tuesday.

*Former hostages and hostage families gather at the Sukkah of Hope in Washington DC to commemorate the two-year anniversary of Hamas's October 7 massacre (credit: Yoav Ginsburg/ Walla)*





The terror group confirmed on Wednesday that prisoner lists were exchanged as part of ongoing indirect talks aimed at reaching a ceasefire agreement.

Additionally, reports indicated that Hamas on Wednesday demanded "[written, not verbal, guarantees](https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/article-869822)" of Israel's commitment to the proposed ceasefire agreement. <https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/article-869822>

## Hospitals gear up to receive returning hostages after over 734 days in Gaza captivity

**Health Ministry says it asked Red Cross to try to ensure hostages aren't suddenly overfed by captors as it can cause medical issues; forensic teams prepping for bodies of slain captives**

By [Diana Bletter](#)

Today, 1:51 pm



*Dr. Noya Shilo, head of the Return to Life Center at Sheba Medical Center, walks with two hostages released from Gaza captivity in February 2024. (Courtesy/Sheba Medical Center)*

**Before Sheba Medical Center took in 46 hostages released from Hamas captivity in November 2023 and early 2024, Dr. Noya Shilo, head of the hospital's Return to Life Center for hostages and their families, said there was no "protocol and few guidelines in medical literature for how to handle this."**

**But on Thursday, a Sheba spokesperson said the hospital was "in the midst of final preparations" to receive some of the approximately 20 living hostages returning from Hamas captivity.**

In its statement, the Health Ministry also said the health system has issued "specific guidelines" to the designated hospitals, adapting the protocol to the expected medical condition of the hostages after more than 734 days in captivity.

The preparations, led by Dr. Hagar Mizrahi, head of the Medical Division at the ministry, are based on "lessons learned from previous releases and rescue operations."

In addition to Sheba, Tel Aviv Sourasky (Ichilov) Medical Center in Tel Aviv, and Beilinson Medical Center in Petah Tikva have been designated as medical centers receiving the returnees. If urgent medical care is required, freed hostages may be taken to Soroka University Medical Center in Beersheba or Barzilai Medical Center in Ashkelon, which are closer to Gaza.

The National Center of Forensic Medicine (Abu Kabir) is completing preparations to receive the bodies of the fallen hostages, as it has in previous cases, where it will confirm their identities.



The 48 hostages held in Gaza: First row, from left: Rom Braslavski, Gali Berman, Ziv Berman, Elkana Bohbot, Matan Angrest, Avinatan Or, Yosef-Haim Ohana, Alon Ohel. Second row, from left: Eitan Mor, Segev Kalfon, Nimrod Cohen, Maxim Herkin, Eitan Horn, Evyatar David, Guy Gilboa-Dalal, Bipin Joshi. Third row, from left: Dror Or, Tamir Adar, Matan Zangauker, Bar Kupershtein, David Cunio, Ariel Cunio, Tamir Nimrodi, Omri Miran. Fourth row, from left: Manny Godard, Sgt. First Class Ran Gvili, Sahar Baruch, Uriel Baruch, Sonthaya Oakkharasri, Ronen Engel, Muhammad Alatrash, Guy Illouz. Fifth row, from left: Joshua Mollel, Sgt. Itay Chen, Col. Asaf Hamami, Tal Chaimi, Aryeh Zalmanovich, Inbar Heiman, Sgt. Oz Daniel, Lt. Hadar Goldin. Bottom row, from left: Yossi Sharabi, Sudthisak Rinthalak, Maj. Lior Rudaeff, Amiram Cooper, Cpt. Daniel Perez, Cpt. Omer Neutra, Eliyahu Margalit, Eitan Levy. (Combo photo by Times of Israel; pictures: Courtesy)

### Refeeding Syndrome

**The Health Ministry said that several weeks ago it contacted the Red Cross, requesting that hostages, who are thought to have been starved during their captivity, not be overfed before their return, as Hamas may do to try to hide their previously emaciated state.**

According to the **ministry, after prolonged starvation, a sudden increase in food intake can lead to what is known as refeeding syndrome, which may cause neurological, respiratory, and cardiac complications.**

**None of the hostages has been visited by Red Cross officials during their time held captive in Gaza.**



*Hamas-held hostage Evyatar David filmed digging what he says he fears will be his own grave in a tunnel in Gaza, in a Hamas propaganda video that his family cleared for publication on August 2, 2025.*

**The Health Ministry also said that it has instructed hospitals to care for the returnees in a separate hospital area, apart from other patients, including the emergency room.**

**Each returnee will be treated in a private room, together with family members or other trusted individuals. The area should include both a general shared space for gatherings and separate private areas for rest and family**

meetings, the ministry said.

**Given the long duration of captivity, the ministry stressed the need to carefully review and deepen understanding of each person's medical history,** including complications from lack of treatment during their time in captivity.



*Freed hostage Agam Berger (right) reunites with her parents Shlomi and Merav at an IDF facility next to the Gaza border on January 30, 2025. (IDF)*

**A preliminary medical exam will be performed immediately upon arrival to rule out urgent conditions.**

**It should be done, "if possible, in the presence of a family member or trusted companion,"** the ministry said.

A follow-up examination will be conducted later, after family reunification, in coordination with security officials, to complete the full medical evaluation.

Each returnee will be examined by a nurse and a specialist in emergency medicine, and, as needed, by specialists in other relevant fields.

Hospitals must also receive information about medical care and food intake provided immediately upon the returnees' arrival in Israel. The ministry stressed that hospitals should consult senior medical specialists before making treatment decisions.



During hospitalization, the ministry recommended creating a stable multidisciplinary support team including a treating physician, consulting doctors, nurse, social worker, psychiatrist, psychologist, dietitian, and a forensic doctor.



*Relatives of hostage Tal Shoham watch his release by the Hamas terror group as they wait at the Rabin Medical Center in Petah Tikva on February 22, 2025 (Haim Zach/GPO)*

**This team will hold joint discussions as needed to build a comprehensive, personalized treatment plan.**

At Beilinson Hospital, Dr. Michal Steinman, director of nursing, said that the staff's preparation to receive nine hostages in February 2024 was like “[detective work](#).”

“We went system by system, ears, eyes, mouth, hair, skin, kidneys, urine, whatever it is, muscles, to think what is happening to a person who is under those conditions of captivity,” Steinman said.

At the hospitals, the ministry said that a psychiatric evaluation will be conducted within 24 hours of hospital admission. Any unusual mental symptom will be examined jointly with the treating physician to rule out physical causes presenting as psychological distress.

A psychiatrist will then lead the mental health management, including observation, guidance for the medical team, trauma-sensitive care, coordination with security officials, and support for the returnee and family.



*A still from a video released by Hamas's armed wing showing hostages Yocheved Lifshitz, left, and Nurit Cooper before their release from captivity, October 23, 2023. (screen capture)*

A dietitian will guide families about refeeding syndrome risks, conduct a full nutritional assessment including history, blood tests, weight and height, to define the former hostages' needs, and develop a daily nutrition plan adjusted according to clinical progress.

#### **Ensuring a stable transition after captivity**

After evaluation and treatment, the hospital staff will decide whether further hospitalization is needed or whether to discharge the returnee for ongoing daily care.

The ministry recommended that the returnee and family remain in the hospital for at least four days in the dedicated treatment area to ensure a stable transition.

“The return from captivity requires immediate medical evaluation and treatment in hospital, followed by long-term physical, mental, and social care and monitoring after discharge,” the ministry wrote. “The response must be comprehensive, ongoing, and personalized, while maintaining strict privacy.”

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/hospitals-gear-up-to-receive-returning-hostages-after-over-734-days-in-gaza-captivity/>

## **Hamas attempts raid on army post in Gaza City outskirts; IDF says 3 gunmen killed**

**Five operatives emerge from tunnel, approach encampment before being struck by air force; military scanning for 2 who fled; special probe launched into earlier grenade accident**

By [Emanuel Fabian](#)

Today, 9:47 pm



*Weapons left behind by Hamas operatives following an attempted raid on an army post in central Gaza, October 8, 2025. (Israel Defense Forces)*

**Hamas operatives tried to raid an Israel Defense Forces position on the southern outskirts of Gaza City on Wednesday, the military said, the latest in a series of recent**

**attempts by the group to attack army sites in the Strip.**

The **incident took place at an army encampment near the Netzarim Corridor area of central Gaza**, south of Gaza City, where troops of the Golani Brigade's reconnaissance unit were stationed.

**Five Hamas gunmen emerged from a tunnel and approached the post, according to preliminary findings by the military.**

**The IDF said the troops, with air support from the Israeli Air Force, struck and killed at least three of the gunmen. Scans** were being carried out to locate the other two operatives, who, according to an initial IDF probe, likely fled back into the tunnel.

The **military said no soldiers were injured in the incident.** It also published images showing weapons left behind by some of the gunmen.

Defense Minister Israel Katz had visited troops in Gaza City's Sabra neighborhood shortly before Hamas launched an attack on the nearby army position.

Katz's office said the defense minister was briefed by commanders on the IDF's activities in the area and he "praised them for their powerful actions, which created the conditions for negotiations to secure the release of all the hostages and the achievement of the war's objectives."



*Defense Minister Israel Katz (center) speaks with officers, including Southern Command chief Maj. Gen. Yaniv Asor (right) and 36th Division commander Brig. Gen. Moran Omer, in Gaza City, October 8, 2025. (Ariel Hermoni/Defense Ministry)*

**The attack came amid ongoing indirect ceasefire talks in Egypt between Israel and Hamas. Both Palestinian and Israeli sources said Wednesday that the sides are close to inking a deal on ending the war in Gaza.**

Hamas in recent weeks have stepped up its attacks on army encampments in Gaza. Military officials believe the terror group is seeking to capture soldiers or cause heavy casualties to the IDF to influence the talks.

On October 2, during Yom Kippur, a Hamas gunman managed to breach an army post in Israel's buffer zone in central Gaza — some 800 meters from the Israeli border — and open fire on troops, the IDF said.

After a gun battle with the soldiers at the post, the gunman was killed. An officer was seriously wounded, and two other troops, including a reservist, were lightly injured in the battle, according to the military.

Days earlier, on September 30, a Hamas gunman who approached an Israeli army position in Gaza City was killed by troops, the military said.



*IDF troops of the 36th Division operate in Gaza City in a handout photo issued on October 8, 2025. (Israel Defense Forces)*

**A day prior, on September 29, Hamas made two attempts to raid an army encampment in Gaza City. In the first attempt, two gunmen were identified approaching the position and were killed in a drone strike, the IDF said.**

An hour later, a cell of five Hamas operatives managed to breach the encampment and set off two explosive devices against a tank. Troops at the encampment exchanged fire with the gunmen, killing at least two of them — one by tank shelling

and one in a close-quarters gun battle, according to the IDF.

The attack left [five soldiers seriously injured](#) and six others lightly hurt.

**Army orders special probe into grenade accident in Gaza**

**Meanwhile, on Wednesday, the chief of the Southern Command, Maj. Gen. Yaniv Asor, and the chief of the Ground Forces, Maj. Gen. Nadav Lotan, ordered the establishment of a panel of experts to examine an accidental grenade blast in the southern Gaza Strip a day prior, which wounded three reservists, including two seriously.**

The military said the team will be headed by the commander of the 5th Reserve Brigade, a colonel.



The incident took place at around 8 a.m. on Tuesday at an IDF post in the Khan Younis area. A grenade exploded due to unclear circumstances inside a room where soldiers were residing and sleeping.

The IDF on Saturday paused all offensive operations in Gaza, with Israeli and Hamas representatives in Egypt for indirect negotiations on the return of the remaining 48 hostages, the release of Palestinian security prisoners, and an end to the war. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/hamas-attempts-raid-on-army-post-in-gaza-city-ouskirts-idf-says-3-gunmen-killed/>

## Nobel Institute says peace committee finalized its pick on Monday

***The recipient this year was selected before US president announced a deal aimed at ending the Gaza war; expert says he's '100% sure' Trump isn't this year's winner***

By [AFP](#) and [Tol Staff](#) Today, 1:16 pm



***A Nobel medal is displayed during a ceremony in New York on Dec. 8, 2020. (Angela Weiss/Pool via AP)***

OSLO, Norway — The Norwegian Nobel Committee, which awards the prestigious peace prize, held its final meeting on Monday, the Nobel Institute said Thursday, a day ahead of the announcement of the 2025 laureate.

This means a decision was made about the laureate or laureates before the conclusion of an agreement between Israel and Hamas, which included a ceasefire and the release of hostages amid the war triggered on October 7, 2023, with the Palestinian terror group's devastating attack on Israel.

The deal, seen as a major step toward ending the two years of war in Gaza, was struck under pressure from US President Donald Trump, who has made no secret of the fact that he believes he is worthy of the Nobel Peace Prize, a proposition backed by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, President Isaac Herzog and Opposition Leader Yair Lapid.

"The last meeting of the Nobel Committee took place on Monday," Erik Aasheim, spokesman for the Norwegian Nobel Institute, told AFP.

Comprised of five members, the Nobel Committee typically makes its decision several days or even weeks before and meets one last time in the run-up to the official announcement.

"The final touches were made on Monday, but we never disclose when the Nobel Committee makes its decision," Aasheim added.

No further committee meetings are scheduled before the laureate's name is revealed on Friday at 12:00 p.m. Israel time (0900 GMT), he explained.



"There will be a laureate this year," he said, even as some experts have speculated that the Nobel Committee — due to the deteriorated geopolitical situation — might refrain from awarding the prize.

***US President Donald Trump speaks during a roundtable meeting on antifa in the State Dining Room at the White House, October 8, 2025, in Washington. (AP/Evan Vucci)***

Claiming a role in resolving multiple conflicts, Trump has repeatedly asserted since his return to the White House in January that he deserves the nod.

He recently said that it would be "a big insult" to the United States if he were not given the prize.

In July, Netanyahu told Trump during their meeting in the White House that he had [nominated the US president](#) for the coveted prize, even though nominations for this year closed in February. Trump was nominated by others before the deadline, however.

On Thursday, after Trump announced overnight the agreement on a ceasefire, Herzog [said](#) there is "no doubt" that his counterpart deserves the prize, and Lapid later concurred. On Monday, families of hostages held in Gaza [urged the Norwegian Nobel Committee](#) to give the peace prize to Trump for his efforts to secure the release of their loved ones.

The agreement between Israel and Hamas "has absolutely no impact" on the choice of the 2025 laureate because "the Nobel Committee has already made its decision," historian Asle Sveen, a specialist in the Nobel Prize, told AFP.

**“Trump will not win the prize this year. I’m 100 percent certain,” he said.**

He emphasized that the US president had long “given free rein” to Netanyahu to bomb Gaza and had provided significant military aid to Israel.

This year, 338 individuals and organizations were nominated for the Peace Prize, which in 2024 was awarded to Nihon Hidankyo, a group of survivors of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings campaigning against nuclear weapons.

On October 7, 2023, Hamas led thousands of terrorists to invade southern Israel, killing 1,200 people, mostly civilians, abducting 251 people as hostages to Gaza, and opening the still ongoing war. Trump has made ending the war and freeing the remaining hostages still in captivity a central plank of his administration’s foreign policy.

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/dampening-trumps-chances-nobel-institute-says-peace-committee-finalized-its-pick-on-monday/>

**This is a profound OP ED by Greenfield and really addresses the entire problem of Islam and the ME situation. It is a heinous spiritual battle. rdb  
OP ED**

## The Spiritual War of Oct 7

Wed, 8 Oct 2025 6:22 PM PST by Daniel Greenfield



**It’s all a lie.**

**The Oct 7 massacres were not carried out to create a ‘Palestinian’ state, to break out of an ‘open air prison’ in Gaza or any of the lies the media has systemically deluged us with.**

**They did it to capture Jerusalem.**

**That’s why Hamas named the operation ‘Al-Aqsa Flood’ after the victory mosque formerly planted by Muslim invaders on the site of the Jewish Temple. That’s why Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh began his Oct 7 invasion speech with complaints about Jewish presence prayers at the Temple site near the Al-Aqsa mosque. That’s why the Hamas emblem features the Al-Aqsa mosque between two crossed swords. Israeli soldiers who**

served in Gaza reported seeing those same images in homes around Gaza after the Islamic Jihadist group had spent a generation riling up the Muslim population to launch a holy war to conquer Jerusalem.

**And it’s not just Hamas.**

**Arafat had constantly proclaimed his vision of “millions of martyrs marching to Jerusalem.”**

That line is still broadcast by Palestinian Authority media [which declares](#) it to be their great mission.

**Muslims in Gaza are not dying to create a state that polls show most of them don’t believe will ever exist. They’re killing and dying in a religious Jihad to take over Jerusalem.**

**Every effort to create a ‘Palestinian’ state failed because a state was never the real goal, but a means to the real end, the capture of Jerusalem and its holy sites. The idea that the panoply of fake nationalism, flags, ministries, and an anthem, are just a false front for a religious crusade may be incomprehensible to secularized western nations, but Islam is religious, not nationalistic.**

There is **no ‘Palestinian’ cause, only a Jihadist cause** that hides behind it, the way that it hides behind so many other facades, civil rights, social justice, political change, that are just masks.

Why do the Jihadist groups want Jerusalem so badly? For the same reason Islam wanted Constantinople, captured Athens and turned the Parthenon into a mosque and then wrecked it during the Great Turkish War, and why ISIS has repeatedly threatened [to conquer Rome](#).

Muslims have Mecca. Why do they need Jerusalem, Athens and Rome?

**Islam is a great thousand year darkness obsessed with eliminating all light. Its followers are convinced that if they eliminate every religion and culture, seize its important sites or, like the WTC**



**on 9/11 or the Buddhas in Afghanistan, destroy them, there will be no alternative to Islam.**

**Unable to win a religious debate, Islam always turns to religious war** as if murder were faith.

The **real story of Oct 7 is not the one you have heard about in the media. It's a spiritual war by an enemy determined to drown out the light of Jerusalem**, the light of hope and faith, in murder, hate and moral inversion that transforms victims into perpetrators and terrorists into innocents, that inverts everything, replaces truth with lies, and convinces the world to worship evil.

The **Jews have long been the canaries in the coal mines of civilization**. Here is how that spiritual war between good and evil played out amidst the soldiers, civilians and hostages in Israel.

Keith Siegel, an American from North Carolina who had been kidnapped from his home along with his wife, spent 484 days as a hostage, and described turning to G-d. He didn't know many prayers, but he began to say what he remembered including the words of 'Shema Yisrael.' "Hear O Israel, the Lord is Our God, the Lord is One" which had been recited by martyrs about to die for their faith.

**"There was a moment when I told myself, 'I'm not going to pray to Allah,'"** his wife Aviva recalled. **"Even though I was forced to, they would pray in front of us, and it wasn't clear who they were praying to. I moved my lips, but I wasn't truly praying.** They were so cruel to us, and I couldn't understand it. How can you pray and be so evil? I just don't get it."

**Agam Berger, another hostage, had her faith restored when she dreamed of a prayer book, a siddur, and then one came her way. "How do you explain that? That's not chance.** That's faith," her mother said.

The media and the woke left and woke right have launched an unprecedented propaganda machine to make Israel seem monstrous and its war **senseless. And in the face of that, Israelis have turned to G-d, convinced that there is meaning and purpose even in the face of that evil.**

"G-d, I speak to you now," the father of Sergeant Yisrael Natan Rosenfeld, said at his funeral. "People who know me know my doubts, they know my fights. **When you have grandparents who went into gas chambers and parents who had great sores and pains after the Second World War. We lost six million people. It is hard to sit down and say, 'Yes, there is a G-d and I believe and I'm convinced.'** But I'm standing here at the moment where I have to make a decision, and my decision is: G-d, you're above us, it all has a purpose, a much bigger purpose than we know about."

"Like in the Book of Esther, where invisible threads are woven by a Master's hand into a redemptive story – so too we have seen small parts come together into a great picture of miraculous victory: the beepers, the radios, Nasrallah, Assad's collapse, Trump, Iran. A new biblical chapter is being written in our days. You will never be able to read it, my son, but you will surely be one of its heroes," Rabbi Tamir Granot [wrote to his fallen son](#) Amitay: a platoon leader.

Last summer, Rabbi Granot [officiated at the](#) wedding of his son's fiancée who had been introduced to her new husband by the mother of another fallen soldier. It's not natural, he admitted, "but then ours is a people whose path often travels the supernatural. And when you take that into account, then, yeah, it's pretty natural for us."

**The war as seen from Israel is very different from the way it is seen in the media and on social media. It's not the story of endless internet squabbling, but as Rabbi Doron Perez of World Mizrahi, who lost one of his sons and whose other son was wounded on October 7, recently wrote, "a young generation that many had characterized as a self-absorbed TikTok generation emerged as a remarkable generation of self-sacrifice and selfless commitment to our country and cause.** A generation no less heroic than the defenders of 1967 and 1973, the founders of the State of Israel, the Maccabees, and perhaps even King David's army."

In **Israel, the story isn't about world opinion, it's the story of volunteers cooking meals, soldiers returning to duty, mothers raising children on their own, and people living with the reality that they may have to run to shelter any moment, and yet believing that there is a purpose to all this.**

They know that they are **fighting another battle in an ancient war between good and evil.**

**"We know that the power of life which we so deeply believe in will ultimately triumph over those who celebrate death," Rabbi Perez said at the** funeral of his son Daniel, after being left with nothing to bury other than his bloody shirt. "The blood of our son that we buried, this blood will overpower the spilling of blood. We know with certainty that those who believe we are all created in G-d's image will defeat those who have lost any semblance of that image."

Those who know history also know that **this is not a new war and it has nothing to do with Gaza, the**

**Six Day War in 1967 or even Israel's successful fight for independence in 1948.**

During the **High Holy Days**, among the penitential prayers that are read is a 13th century liturgical poem by an otherwise unknown Jewish man writing about the Islamic occupation.

**"Those who have made Moloch their king, rule over me,"** he bemoans. **"Those who serve abominations have befouled my lands."** The prayer goes on to describe how **"I have wept and shed tears from the yoke of Ishmael's children"** who **"call a prophet a man who never prophesied"** while preventing me from **"ascending to Jerusalem during festivals"**.

**"How can the enemies of all that is pure reside in Zion,"** the prayer asks. **"How came they to dwell in my temples and made themselves a dwelling there?"** It prays, **"remember us and recall us with your salvation from those who worship things that are not you. Hurl them out and swallow them up from your holy dwelling place. And I through your great kindness will at last enter your house."**

Hamas ascribed the leading cause of its assault on Oct 7 to Jews entering the former site of the Temple Mount which the Muslim invaders claimed as their own. **Countless peoples of all religions visit the Vatican. Bethlehem operates under Muslim rule. And people of all religions visit Hindu and Buddhist holy sites. Non-Jews, including President Trump and the Pope, visit the Western Wall. Why is Islam obsessed with driving people away?**

**"My house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples." Isaiah 56:7 envisions the day when everyone will pray there. That is a vision that Hamas, the Muslim world and the UN are obsessed with blocking.**

Why was Hamas, a Muslim Brotherhood terror group, so obsessed with Jews entering the site of the Temple Mount that it launched a catastrophic war that claimed thousands of lives?

Under colonial rule, Jews were forbidden to even blow the shofar at the climax of Yom Kippur at the bottom of the Western Wall which had been reduced to a trash heap under Muslim rule.

"Eyewitness accounts told of a white-bearded Chassid in a black caftan running for his life, chased by a mob through an alleyway leading to the Western Wall. The pursuers brandished clubs, sabers, and daggers, and howled: 'Death to the Jewish dogs!' and 'Allahu Akhbar!'"

**67 Jews were killed in these Muslim massacres, not over Gaza, but over Jews praying.**

This is not just a matter of ancient history. The Biden administration repeatedly [warned](#) Israel not [to allow Jews to enter the](#) Temple Mount or to pray there.

"Some Jewish groups escorted by Israeli police at the Temple Mount performed religious acts such as prayers," a more recent State Department report on religious freedom complained, while attacking religious freedom. **"In most cases, Israeli police acted to prevent them from praying and removed** them, but in other cases, some of which were documented on social media in photos and videos, the police appeared not to notice the acts of prayer."

"Far-right Israeli minister prays at Jerusalem's most sensitive holy site," an outraged CNN headline stormed.

What is it that evil and darkness fears the most? Beneath all the lies, it will always show us.

**Hamas killed over 1,000 people and would have killed millions more to seize Jerusalem and stop prayers to G-d. It took hostages and then tried to pressure them into converting to Islam.**

**This is a spiritual war in which evil uses the tools of moral inversion to make darkness seem like light and turn light into darkness, to make monsters into heroes, to celebrate the worst crimes, and to make the most horrifying atrocities into the moral high ground of mankind.** What drives this war? Fear. And what is it that darkness fears above all else? **Darkness fears the light.**

Hitler's Mufti, one of the allies of the Muslim Brotherhood before it officially spawned Hamas, justified his Jihad against the Jews by claiming that they were plotting the "rebuilding of the Temple that is called Solomon's Temple." In one poll, 52% of Muslims claimed that Israel was planning to rebuild the Temple even though the country had no intention of any such thing.

**"Why Israel is closer than ever to building the Third Temple," Middle East Eye, a Qatari propaganda site that often promotes Hamas, warned. Last year, an Al Qaeda bulletin also warned that Israel was about to "rebuild the third temple."**



In Judaism, the Temple can only be rebuilt by G-d, not by man. If Israel had wanted to build a temple, it had nearly 60 years in which to get it done

What do Hamas and its Islamic terrorist allies really fear?

**Evil fears our bullets less than it fears our faith.** It does everything possible to convince us that evil is good and we are evil. Its greatest victory is when we come to believe it. As too many do.

But when we reject evil and turn to G-d, it boils with rage and commits atrocities to terrify us. But underneath the crimes and lies, it is possessed by the terror of the day when “the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and they shall come to Zion with song” (Isaiah 51:11) and “So said the Lord: I will return to Zion, and I will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem; and Jerusalem shall be called the city of truth, and the mount of the Lord of Hosts be the holy mountain” (Zechariah 8:3).

That is the fear and the hate at the heart of the Islamic Jihad. They don't kill us, torture us and terrorize us because they believe they're right, but because they fear they are wrong.

***Daniel Greenfield is a Shillman Journalism Fellow at the David Horowitz Freedom Center. This article previously appeared at the Center's [Front Page Magazine](https://bkdvyk-zgpyh.campaign-view.com/ua/viewinbrowser).***

<https://bkdvyk-zgpyh.campaign-view.com/ua/viewinbrowser>



**BS"D**

#### **STEP BY STEP**

STEP BY STEP: Good news is that many friends and supporters of Lev U'Neshama (Heart and Soul) donated towards the Education Fund project to provide basic school supplies for actually 350 children within our Lev U'Neshama families.

We are grateful that the school supply part of our effort has been successful.

According to the Israel Population and Statistics office, Tzfat's population is about 40,000, and one third live at the poverty level. We do what we can so at least the children within our struggling LUN families can get the things they need.

Every week we are providing new sport shoes and eye exams/eyeglasses to the children on our request list. However, previous donations are rapidly dwindling. I am reaching out now before the fund has been emptied and we will have to say "no" to additional requests.

We work with two local shoe merchants who give Lev U'Neshama a discount but they advised us the cost of the shoes has increased. Also, we work with an accredited optician in town who also gives us a discount but his cost is stable.

Lev U'Neshama is an Israeli registered non-profit charity organization, volunteer run, no business expenses whatsoever and every \$ goes into our programs.

Shoes: \$45 per pair regular and \$60 for First Steps, baby shoes.

Eye Exam/Eyeglasses: \$60 per child.

Your support is urgently requested.

You can send donations to:

East Texas Biblical Prophecy Forum which is a 501-3C ministry and receive a tax credit statement

**Or use the Zelle US to US bank transfer system (contact me at [mortsmo@aol.com](mailto:mortsmo@aol.com) for bank information.**

**US Donors may also send checks made payable to Simcha Smolensky, my son, who is also a volunteer. Send to:**

**Rabbi Simcha Smolensky, 6739 N Mozart St Chicago IL 60645**

**Your support will be appreciated.**

Yaffa Smolensky, Volunteer Program Manager