

בד"צ דק"ק שכונת קראון הייטס

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- FREE TRANSLATION -

Isru Chag Sukkos, 5784

To all Crown Heights Residents—*kan tzivah Hashem es habrachah*:

In response to overwhelming questions brought forward in these trying times, we offer the following directives:

1. First and foremost, strengthen *Emunah* and *Bitachon*. Though we do not understand Hashem's ways, we are cognizant of the principle that everything Hashem does is ultimately for the best. It is actually our certitude that can affect this goodness to be expressed in a relatable and revealed manner, as per the aphorism of our Rebbes (the telling of which also gives us the power to enact): "*Tracht gut vet zein gut*—think positively and it will be good!"

Each of us is thus enabled to influence and strengthen our family members and friends by comforting and uplifting them with our positive attitude (which *simchah* in itself has the power of mollifying Hashem's judgments), drawing from the many assurances of our prophets and the words of *Chazal* about the imminence of the Geulah, especially as emphasized by the Rebbe in many *sichos* that focus on this topic—and not, *chas veshalom*, sharing any negative talk.

2. Refrain, as much as possible, from getting caught up in following the news, and specifically, avoid completely those sites that share graphic footage of the genocide and capture. It serves no practical purpose, and to the contrary, can cause depression, anxiety and lasting trauma.

3. Participate in public gatherings of Torah, *tefillah*, and *tzedakah*—also within each family, focusing on the recital of the 12 *pessukim* by children, as the *possuk* in Tehillim promises: it is from the mouths of babes that we garner strength to destroy the enemy.

4. Add in saying Tehillim, copiously, as directed by the *Rabbanim* in Eretz Yisrael.

The Torah states clearly (in Tehillim) that without Hashem's guardianship, any human surveillance is for nought. However, it is self-evident that we must do all we are able to within the natural setting for our nation's security, as is the *psak* of Shulchan Aruch, regarding border cities, where, should the enemy come even with innocuous requests, we transgress Shabbos to go to battle with them, for that location could prove a launching ground for conquering the land. In a similar vein, Halachah declares that we are obligated to kill in self-defense, and not engage in negotiations and compromise. And especially, we have the overriding principle of guarding

the integrity of our Holy Land, as is proclaimed in the Rashi at the very beginning of this week's *parshah* (the beginning of the whole Torah, which was read on the actual day of the attack): "Should the nations of the world tell the Jews, 'You are robbers for you captured the Land from the seven nations!' you should respond, 'Look, the entire world belongs to Hashem...He saw it fit to take it from them and give it to us!'"

It is certainly momentous that these events unfolded on the day of Shemini Atzeres, which is celebrated as an expression of Hashem's love for the Jewish people—as in the parable of the king who parties with all his subjects for seven days, but when they depart, he tells his closest people, "Stay one more day, just you and me!" We are subsequently confident and trusting in a complete victory for the Jewish nation. As we are assured by the commentary of the Baal Shem Tov on the *possuk*, "it is a time of צרה (misfortune), and **from within it** we will be rescued," that not only will we eventually be saved, but from the actual hardships will come our delivery. The word צרה can be rearranged to read צהר—a bright light. And such was our experience in the Yom Kippur War fifty years ago.

May Hashem fulfill now that which we davened for over and over throughout the days of this past Yom Tov (and especially on Simchas Torah itself), that our enemies scatter and our haters flee. Additionally, we should experience what we just read in the *kriah* on Simchas Torah (in Moshe's final brachos to *Bnei Yisroel*): "May his hands do battle for him, and may You be a help against his adversaries...(and) strike the loins of those who rise up against him and his enemies, so that they will not recover." And, "He will gore peoples together [throughout all] the ends of the earth; ...tear the arm [of his prey, together] with the head." Further: "Your locks are iron and copper." (Rashi explains that this *possuk* refers to the border cities of Eretz Yisroel that block in the enemy and prevent them from advancing into the land, as if sealing its gates with locks and bolts of iron and copper.) And finally: "He expelled the enemy from before you, and said, 'Destroy!' ...you will tread upon their (the enemy's) heights."

May it be Hashem's Will that the words of the *Navi Yeshayahu* be fulfilled and we will no longer hear violence (המס) in our Land, nor robbery or destruction within our borders, and only goodness and kindness will find us—may it be immediately and publicly. Most especially, may we experience, heartily and joyously, the complete and everlasting Geulah through Moshiach משיח . תיכף ומיד

Signed,

Horav Avrohom Osdoba
Member of Badatz

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