



SHALOM HARTMAN מכון
INSTITUTE הרטמן שלום

Resources for Commemorating October 7 in Community

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This document is a database of resources that might be used in a communal commemoration of the first anniversary of October 7. It contains rituals, songs, texts, reflections, and prayers, as well as suggested outlines, to use for gatherings on October 7 itself or as the basis for a *tekes hama'avar*, a ritual to transition from Shemini Atzeret, a day of solemnity, into Simchat Torah, a day of celebration. We also created [slides](#) with all of the texts in this document for your use. We hope you will adapt these resources to meet the needs of your community in marking this year of mourning.

These resources supplement “Memory and Hope: Rituals for Tishrei 5785,” a ritual framework to help us welcome a new Jewish year while holding the weight of the first anniversary of October 7. Through the leadership of Hagit Bartuv and Rivka Rosner of the Shalom Hartman Ritual Center in Israel, “Memory and Hope” is an at home memorial candle-lighting ceremony to accompany each of the seven occasions for candle-lighting in Israel from Rosh Hashanah through Simchat Torah. We hope these memorial candles will be lit in Jewish homes both in Israel and outside of Israel throughout the month of Tishrei, giving us a shared framework to remember and to hope.

Because “Memory and Hope” was created as a resource for Jews in Israel and outside of it, it sometimes caters to the needs of one group more than the other. For example, there are only seven candles, but outside of Israel, many of us will light nine candles in the same timeframe. Similarly, while the ritual primarily focuses on themes of Israelis, Israeli Jews, and the Jewish people, for this supplemental resource designed to support the needs of North American Jewish communities, we felt it was important to include texts with universal messaging, including grief over the suffering of Palestinian civilians. Read more about the development of these ritual resources on our [Notes for the Field blog](#).

These resources were prepared in August so that they would be useful in planning gatherings in October. While we hope that the situation in October is very different from what it is now, we included prayers for the return of the hostages, for the safety of IDF soldiers, and for peace, as well as texts about the hostages’ plight and the ongoing conflict. We pray that when you use

this material in October, the hostages will be home and the region will be at peace such that you will not need to use those texts.

If you have questions about this ritual and how it might work for your community, please contact Rabbi Jessica Fisher (jessica.fisher@shalomhartman.org) or Masua Sagiv (masua.sagiv@shi.org.il).

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Table of Contents

I. <u>Memory and Hope: Rituals for Tishrei 5785</u>	
a. Memory and Hope: Rituals for Tishrei 5785	5
II. <u>Songs for this Moment</u>	
1. <i>Qinat</i> Be'eri (A Lamentation for Be'eri), Yagel Haroush	7
2. <i>Tachzor</i> (Return), The Idan Raichel Project with Roni Dalumi	8
3. <i>Shvurei Lev</i> (The Brokenhearted), Chanan Ben Ari	9
4. <i>Lo Choshevet Al Machar</i> (Don't Think About Tomorrow), Yael Jaeger	10
5. <i>BaShana HaBa'a</i> (Next Year), Ehud Manor and Nurit Hirsh	12
6. <i>Ani VeAtah</i> (Me and You), Arik Einshtein	13
7. <i>Acheinu</i> (Our Siblings), Weekday Liturgy	14
8. <i>Lema'an Achai</i> (For the Sake of My Kin), Psalm 122	14
9. <i>Im Eshkachech</i> (If I Forget You), Psalm 137	14
III. <u>Texts of Grief and Mourning</u>	
1. Layers of Grief, Abraham Joshua Heschel	15
2. The War on Families, Netanel Ellinson	16
3. Nowadays One Has to Check, Avital Liman	20
4. Prayer for Grief and Faith on the Anniversary of October 7, Avi Dabush	21
5. Our Lives and Futures Are Inextricably Linked, Leah Solomon	23
IV. <u>Texts of Transition: From Mourning to Hope</u>	
1. Vision, Chen Artzi Srur	24
2. We Will Laugh Again, Yonatan Cohen	25
3. An Optimistic Letter to Avigail and her Family, Tair Mordoch	27
4. May the All-Merciful Bring Peace Between the Sons of Jacob and the Sons of Ishmael, Mishael Zion	29
V. <u>Prayers</u>	
1. <i>Yizkor</i> – A Memorial Prayer for October 7, Binyamin Holzman	31
2. Prayer for the Hostages, Mishael Zion	32
3. Prayer for the Welfare of the IDF Soldiers, Bini Talmi	33
4. Prayer for the Wounded, Mishael Zion	34
5. Prayer of Mothers for Life and Peace, Tamar Elad-Appelbaum and Ibtisam Maḥamee	35
6. Psalm 130	37
VI. <u>Suggested Outlines for Using These Resources</u>	

a. Communal Gathering on October 7 – Model 1	38
b. Communal Gathering on October 7 – Model 2	40
c. <i>Tekes Hama'avar</i> (Transition Ceremony) for Shemini Atzeret/Simchat Torah	42

Memory and Hope: Rituals for Tishrei 5785

"Memory and Hope: Rituals for Tishrei 5785" can take place alongside the traditional candle-lighting for the high holidays, Sukkot, Shemini Atzeret/Simchat Torah, and Shabbat in the month of Tishrei, or as a standalone ritual.

While "Memory and Hope" was created to meet the needs of individuals in their homes, we also encourage you to incorporate the candles and their themes into your communal commemoration. You can find suggestions for how to do this in the outlines at the end of this document.

Click [here](#) to access "Memory and Hope: Rituals for Tishrei 5785" in English and Hebrew. Read more about the ritual [here](#).

Songs for this Moment

The songs in this section were either written in the past year, have taken on new meaning in Israeli society, or are ancient Jewish words of peoplehood, grief, and comfort.

For “*Qinat Be’eri*,” “*Tachzor*,” “*Shvurei Lev*,” and “*Lo Choshevet Al Machar*,” we linked to music videos, which you could play as audio or as a video for your ceremony.

For “*BaShana Haba’a*,” we included context about the origin of the song and why we think it would be a powerful addition to sing as a community this year.

“*Ani VeAtah*” took on new meaning and can be a prayer of hope and direction for us in this moment.

Finally, “*Acheinu*,” “*Lema’an Achai*,” and “*Im Eshkachech*” offer opportunities for communal singing anchored in liturgy and Psalms.

1. *Qinat Be'eri (A Lamentation for Be'eri)*, Yagel Haroush, translated by Yosef Goldman and Josh Fleet

“*Qinat Be'eri*” was written by Yagel Haroush, a singer, musician, poet, and composer, shortly after the attacks on October 7. He wrote this song in the style of lamentations traditionally sung on Tisha b'Av and echoing many of the themes of *Eikhah* (Lamentations). The piece initially circulated on social media and was later performed by the Jerusalem Orchestra as part of a series of pieces responding to the horrors and grief of October 7. View the music video for this song [here](#).

Eikhah – Alas! my well has turned into my grave
And the day of my light has become my darkness
And all fruit has been destroyed and my singing overturned
My eyes pour forth water from the depth of my brokenness

Eikhah — Torah so orderly and arranged
So full of splendor did not come to our aid
And on the day of her exalting, I have lost my standing
My eyes pour forth water from the depth of my brokenness

Eikhah — Israel on a day of calling to God
Life was requested but chaos received
Elder and infant wallow in blood
His festival desecrated by a merciless enemy
My eyes pour forth water from the depth of my brokenness

Eikhah — mothers, girls, and young women
Taken into captivity as in the days of pogroms
And fences were breached righteous sheep
And the dancing ceased and the songs of my singers
My eyes pour forth water from the depth of my brokenness

And *eikhah* — I wonder, you who enobled her —
How long shall a nation live in upheaval
How long shall her stature be brought low to the ground
And now, arise to kindle my lamp
And from the wellsprings of your mercy heal my
brokenness
And my eye that pours forth will water Be'eri

אֵיכָה בְּאֵרֵי הַפֶּקֶה לְקַבְּרֵי
וְיוֹם מְאוֹרֵי הַפֶּדָּה שְׁחוּרֵי
וְהַשְּׁחַת כָּל פְּרִי וְנִהְפֶּדֶד שִׁירֵי
עֵינַי נוֹבְעָה מִיָּם מֵעֵמֶק שְׁבָרֵי.

אֵיכָה תּוֹרָה עֲרוּכָה וְסֻדּוּרָה
וְכָל פְּאֲרָה לֹא עָמַד לְעִזְרָה
וּבְיוֹם הַדָּרָה הַשְּׁחַת תְּאָרֵי
עֵינַי נוֹבְעָה מִיָּם מֵעֵמֶק שְׁבָרֵי.

אֵיכָה יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּיוֹם קְרוּא אֵל
וְחַיִּים שׁוֹאֵל וּמְהוּמָה קֶבֶל
זָקֵן וְעוֹלָל בְּדָם מִתְגוֹלָל
וְחָגוּ חֵלֶל אוֹיֵב אֶכְזָרֵי
עֵינַי נוֹבְעָה מִיָּם מֵעֵמֶק שְׁבָרֵי.

אֵיכָה אֲמָהוֹת וְיִלְדוֹת וּנְעוּרוֹת
בְּשָׁבִי מוֹלְכוֹת כְּבִימֵי פְרָעוֹת
וְנִפְרָצוּ גְדָרוֹת צֶאֱן וְיִשְׁרוֹת
וּפְסָקוּ מְחולוֹת וּנְגִינּוֹת מְשׁוֹרְרֵי
עֵינַי נוֹבְעָה מִיָּם מֵעֵמֶק שְׁבָרֵי.

וְאֵיכָה אֲתִמָּה בּוֹרָא רוּמָה
עַד אֵן אֲמָה תִּהְיֶה מְהוּמָה
עַד אֵן קוּמָה תִּשְׁפַּל אֲדָמָה
וְעֵתָה קוּמָה לְהֵאִיר נְרֵי
וּבְעֵינַי רְחִמֶיךָ תִּרְפָּא שְׁבָרֵי
וְעֵינַי הַנוֹבְעֵת תִּשְׁקָה בְּאֵרֵי.

2. *Tachzor* (Return), The Idan Raichel Project with Roni Dalumi

“*Tachzor*” was written and released just weeks after October 7. It is addressed to an unnamed hostage, begging him to come home safely. Idan Raichel wrote, “We are a bereaved country that will rise and flourish through the power of longing, through the hope that they will return, out of pain and honor for those who will never return. They will live in our hearts forever. We will continue to be a tower of light for one another.” View the music video for this song [here](#).

The exhausted hours that refuse to let time run
The legs like lead that find no reason to move
The days and nights like the faces in the pictures
Everything stops when you're not here

I wake up from a dream and sense you close by
and call for you in the middle of the night

Come back, come back today
I so wanted you to come
Oh, if only you would show up unannounced
today
I am a lighthouse
That in the distance, you might appear again
If only you would show up unannounced today

השעות העייפות שלא נותנות לזמן לרוץ
הרגליים הכבדות שלא מוצאות סיבה
ללכת
הימים והלילות כמו הפנים שבתמונות
הכול עוצר מלכת כשאתה לא כאן

ומתעוררת מחלום ומרגישה אותך קרוב
ואז קוראת לך מתוך הלילה

תחזור, תחזור היום
כל כך רציתי שתגיע
הלוואי תבוא בלי להודיע עוד היום
אני מגדל של אור
ממרחקים ששוב תופיע
הלוואי תבוא בלי להודיע עוד היום

3. *Shvurei Lev* (The Brokenhearted), Chanan Ben Ari

View the music video for this song [here](#).

Who knows every pain
who repairs every broken heart
creates light and darkness
makes peace and war

Who sits in judgement
covers in mercy
pardons and forgives
sees all and knows all

And who will heal my heart
for whom am I longing
like a sea that has no shore
just tell me who
who will embrace me and ensure
that I will not give up in the end

Who was, is, and will be
who takes and gives renewed life
opens arms
grows wings

And who will heal my heart
for whom am I longing
like a sea that has no shore
just tell me who
who will embrace me and ensure
that I will not give up in the end

מי יודע כל כאב
מי רופא לשבורי לב
יוצר אור וחשך
עושה שלום ומלחמה

מי יושב על כסא דין
מתכסה ברחמים
מוחל וסולח
מביט ויודע

ומי ירפא לבי
אל מי אני מתגעגע
כמו גם שאין לו חוף
רק תגיד לי מי
מי יחבק אותי ויבטיח
שאני לא אפגע בסוף

מי הנה הנה ויהיה
מי ממית ומחיה
פותר ידים
מצמיח קנפים

ומי ירפא לבי
אל מי אני מתגעגע
כמו גם שאין לו חוף
רק תגיד לי מי
מי יחבק אותי ויבטיח
שאני לא אפגע בסוף

4. *Lo Choshevet Al Machar* (Don't Think About Tomorrow), Yael Jaeger

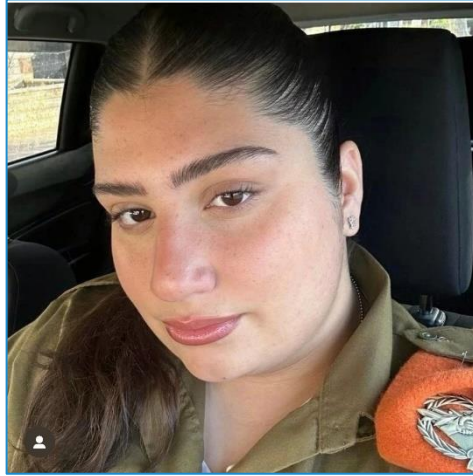


Image from @remember_lior_levy

"*Lo Choshevet Al Machar*" was written in memory of Corporal Lior Levy z"l, a 19-year-old from Dimona, who was killed on October 7 when her base in Urim was attacked by Hamas soldiers. Lior's sister, Eden, contacted the Israeli singer Yael Jaeger, asking her to write a song that would memorialize her sister and bring her comfort. Eden wrote that Lior "was a hero and full of light, spreading light everywhere, as her name is, she was Lior." The lyrics are drawn from conversations between Yael and the Levy family, as well as from eulogies and stories people shared about Lior. As Yael wrote when she shared the song, "Amidst all of the deep pain and grief of this year for which there are no words, the national and the individual merge." While this is a song written about Lior and for Eden, it also represents the magnitude of the individual and collective loss on October 7. View the music video for this song [here](#).

For me, you are a ray of light
Never to return, never again to shine
A light upon my path

You will be like a bird
Like one for whom the sea, the
Mediterranean
Is burned into their memory

You don't think about tomorrow
You no longer have any reason to.
Who will keep my secrets now?
Even if there wasn't always forgiveness

את לי קרן אור
שלא יחזור, שלא יאיר
ויכוון לי את הדרך

את תהיי כמו ציפור
כמו שמי הים, התיכון
חקוקה בזכרון

את לא חושבת על מחר
כבר אין לך סיבה
מי ישמור את הסודות שלי עכשיו
גם אם לא תמיד הייתה סליחה
ידענו שתמיד נסלח
תמיד נסלח

We knew that we would always forgive
We would always forgive

We still hear the laughter in the distance
And the right words I sought

You appear in dreams
Out of the yearning pain I felt

You don't think about tomorrow
You no longer have any reason to
Who will keep my secrets now?
Even if there wasn't always forgiveness
We knew that we would always forgive
We would always forgive

Lior my love
I yearn for you
I feel your absence so strongly
Please send me the strength
To live a life without you
Watch over me from above
I promise that your light will shine in me
forever
I love you, sister.

You don't think about tomorrow
You no longer have any reason to.
Who will keep my secrets now?
Even if there wasn't always forgiveness
We knew that we would always forgive
We will always forgive

עוד שומעים את הצחוק למרחקים
ואת המילים הנכונות שחיפשתי

את מופיעה בחלומות
מתוך כאב געגועים שידעתי

את לא חושבת על מחר
כבר אין לך סיבה
מי ישמור את הסודות שלי עכשיו
גם אם לא תמיד הייתה סליחה
ידענו שתמיד נסלח
תמיד נסלח

ליאור אהובה שלי
אני מתגעגעת אלייך
את כל כך חסרה לי
בבקשה תשלחי לי כוחות
לחיות חיים בלעדייך
תשמרי עלינו מלמעלה
אני מבטיחה שהאור שלך יאיר בי לנצח
אני אוהבת אותך, אחותי.

את לא חושבת על מחר
כבר אין לך סיבה
מי ישמור את הסודות שלי עכשיו
גם אם לא תמיד הייתה סליחה
ידענו שתמיד נסלח

תמיד נסלח

5. BaShana HaBa'a (Next Year), Ehud Manor and Nurit Hirsh

Israeli songwriter Ehud Manor wrote the lyrics to the song “BaShana Haba’a (Next Year)” in 1970, two years after his young brother, Yehuda, was killed in battle, and a year after his father passed away. In his book, *I Have No Other Country*, Manor says that the impossible is made real in the song: all his family, those alive and dead, are sitting together on the porch like they always used to, watching the familiar views: the fields, the grapes, the roads. When musician Nurit Hirsh was asked to compose the song, she wrote the music in a slow tempo to reflect Manor’s longing, but later changed it to the upbeat tune we know today. We suggest singing this song at the end of the ritual, in its original slow tempo, as a soft and gentle prayer for a better year to come. We could also imagine singing this song twice, first slowly and then upbeat, as part of a *tekes hama’avar*, transitioning from the solemnity of Shemini Atzeret and the anniversary of last year’s attacks and into the celebration of Simchat Torah.

Next year we will sit on the balcony
And count migrating birds.
Children on vacation will play catch
between the house and the fields.

You'll see, you'll see
How good it will be
next year.

Red grapes will ripen by evening
and will be served chilled at the table.
And languid winds will carry to the crossroads
old newspapers and a cloud.

You'll see, you'll see...

Next year we will spread out our hands
towards the radiant light.
A white heron like a light will spread her wings
and within them the sun will rise.

You'll see, you'll see...

בְּשָׁנָה הַבָּאָה נֵשֵׁב עַל הַמַּרְפֵּסָה
וְנִסְפּוֹר צְפוּרִים נוֹדְדוֹת.
יְלָדִים בְּחוֹפְשָׁה יִשְׁחָקוּ תּוֹפְסֵת
בֵּין הַבַּיִת לְבֵין הַשָּׂדוֹת.

עוֹד תִּרְאֶה, עוֹד תִּרְאֶה
כִּמָּה טוֹב יִהְיֶה
בְּשָׁנָה, בְּשָׁנָה הַבָּאָה.

עֵנָבִים אֲדוּמִים יִבְשִׁילוּ עַד הָעֶרֶב
וְיוֹגְשׁוּ צוּנָנִים לְשׁוֹלְחָן.
וְרוּחוֹת רְדוּמִים יִשְׂאוּ אֶל אִם הַדְרֵךְ
עֵתוֹנִים יִשְׁנִים וְעָנָן.

עוֹד תִּרְאֶה, עוֹד תִּרְאֶה...

בְּשָׁנָה הַבָּאָה נִפְרוֹשׁ כַּפּוֹת יָדֵינוּ
מוֹל הָאוֹר הַנִּיגָר, הַלָּבָן
אֲנִפָּה לְבָנָה תִּפְרוֹשׁ בְּאוֹר כְּנָפֵינוּ
וְהַשֶּׁמֶשׁ תִּזְרַח בְּתוֹכָן.

עוֹד תִּרְאֶה, עוֹד תִּרְאֶה...

6. *Ani VeAtah (Me and You)*, Arik Einshtein



Image from Hersh's family

Arik Einshtein's "*Ani VeAtah (Me and You)*" was sung at a vigil in New York City on Sunday, September 1, 2024 after hearing the news that six hostages were murdered in Gaza within days of their bodies being recovered. One of the hostages, Hersh Goldberg-Polin z"l, was buried on September 2 where his father, Jon Polin, shared that this song was reflective of Hersh, someone who "always sought ways to make the world better... how appropriate that the crowd was singing '*Ani veAtah neshanah et ha'olam. You and I will change the world.*'"

Hersh Goldberg-Polin is an American Israeli who was taken hostage from the Nova Music Festival on October 7. After celebrating Simchat Torah with his family in Jerusalem on October 6, Hersh travelled to Kibbutz Re'im for the Nova Festival, with his friend Aner Shapira, who was killed protecting Hersh and others hiding in a bomb shelter. Hersh lost his arm in the grenade blast that killed Aner. His parents, Jonathan Polin and Rachel Goldberg, have been vocal advocates, speaking around the world on behalf of all the hostages.

Me and you, we will change the world
Me and you, then all the others will come
It was already said before
It doesn't matter
Me and you, we'll change the world.

Me and you, we'll try from the beginning
It will be bad for us,
Never mind, it's not terrible
It was already said before
It doesn't matter
Me and you, we'll change the world.

אָני וְאַתָּה נִשְׁנֶה אֶת הָעוֹלָם
אָני וְאַתָּה אֲזוּ יְבוֹאוּ כָּבֶד כּוֹלָם
אָמְרוּ אֶת זֶה קִדְּם לְפָנַי
זֶה לֹא מִשְׁנֶה
אָני וְאַתָּה נִשְׁנֶה אֶת הָעוֹלָם

אָני וְאַתָּה נִנְסָה מֵהַתְּחִלָּה
יְהִיָּה לָנוּ רַע, אִין דְּבַר זֶה לֹא נוֹרָא
אָמְרוּ אֶת זֶה קִדְּם לְפָנַי
זֶה לֹא מִשְׁנֶה
אָני וְאַתָּה נִשְׁנֶה אֶת הָעוֹלָם

אָני וְאַתָּה נִשְׁנֶה אֶת הָעוֹלָם
אָני וְאַתָּה אֲזוּ יְבוֹאוּ כָּבֶד כּוֹלָם

Me and you, we'll change the world
Me and you, then all the others will come
It was already said before
It doesn't matter
Me and you, we'll change the world.

אָמְרוּ אֶת זֶה קִדְּם לְפָנַי
זֶה לֹא מִשְׁנָה
אֲנִי וְאַתָּה נִשְׁנָה אֶת הָעוֹלָם

7. *Acheinu* (Our Siblings), Weekday Liturgy

[As for] our siblings, the entire House of Israel who remain in distress and captivity, whether on sea or on land, may God have compassion on them, and bring them from distress to relief, from darkness to light, from servitude to redemption, at this moment, speedily, very soon.

אֲחֵינוּ כָּל בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל, הַנִּתְּוִנִים בְּצָרָה
וּבְשִׁבְיָה, הָעוֹמְדִים בֵּין בַּיָּם וּבֵין בַּיָּבֵשׁ,
הַמְּקוּם יָרַחַם עֲלֵיהֶם, וַיּוֹצִיאֵם מִצָּרָה לְרוּחָה,
וּמֵאֲפֵלָה לְאוֹרָה, וּמִשְׁעֶבֶד לְגֵאֲלָה, הַשְׁתָּא
בְּעִגְלָא וּבְזִמּוֹן קָרִיב.

8. *Lema'an Achai* (For the Sake of My Kin), Psalm 122

For the sake of my kin and friends,
I pray for your well-being;
for the sake of the house of Adonai our God, I
seek your good.

לְמַעַן אַחֵי וְרֵעֵי
אֲדַבְּרָה נָא, אֲדַבְּרָה נָא, שְׁלוֹם בְּדָךְ
לְמַעַן בֵּית ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ
אֲבַקֶּשׁה טוֹב לְךָ

9. *Im Eshkachech* (If I Forget You), Psalm 137

If I forget you, O Jerusalem,
let my right hand wither;
let my tongue stick to my palate
if I cease to think of you,
if I do not keep Jerusalem in memory
even at my happiest hour.

אִם אֶשְׁכַּחְךָ יְרוּשָׁלַיִם, תִּשְׁכַּח יְמִינִי.
תִּדְבַק לְשׁוֹנֵי לְחֻפֵי אִם לֹא אֶזְכְּרְכִי,
אִם לֹא אֶעֱלֶה אֶת יְרוּשָׁלַיִם עַל רֹאשׁ שְׂמִחָתִי.

Texts of Grief and Mourning

1. Layers of Grief, Abraham Joshua Heschel

ישנה דרשה חסידית שמתארת שלוש רמות של שכול. הרובד הראשון הוא הדמעות, הבכי, האופן הפשוט והשכיח ביותר שדרכו אנו מביעים צער. הרובד השני, מעט נעלה יותר, הוא השתיקה. הרובד השלישי, הנעלה ביותר לפי הדרשה, הוא השיר. הבכי- הוא הכאב שלנו, השתיקה- האומץ שלנו, ואילו השיר הוא חיינו. אנו מהללים את אלה שאפשרו לנו חיים והעניקו לחיים משמעות- באמצעות השיר.

There is a Hasidic homily that describes three levels of grief. The first level is tears, crying—the simplest and most common way people express sorrow. The second level, slightly more elevated, is silence. The third level—which the homily describes as the greatest of all—is song. Crying expresses our pain; silence, our courage; but singing expresses our life. In song, we praise those who made our lives possible and who grant our lives meaning.

2. The War on Families, Netanel Ellinson

Netanel Ellinson is an educator, author, and Israeli social activist, married to Neta, and the father of five children. He lives in Yeruham and serves as a reserve soldier in the Paratroopers Reconnaissance Unit. Netanel [wrote this reflection as a post on his Facebook page](#) following the murder of Noa and Nir Barnes z"l by a Hezbollah rocket on July 10, 2024. In the post, he listed families that were destroyed this year, and others added more and more names in the comments section. As Israeli society grapples with large-scale collective mourning that is still unfolding, this post—both the original content and its evolution in the comments section—reflects the important roles social media and civil society played in Israel this year.



Image from Netanel Ellinson's Facebook post

על המשפחות הישראליות הגדולה. על המשפחות שהתאחדו בליל החג כדי לשמוח יחד. על כמה חשוב להשקיע באהובינו. על בני הזוג שנסעו בנוף היפה שבגולן, ועל מה הם דיברו, אולי על זוטות של יום יום מי עושה קניות מחר, אולי דברי חיבה של אנשים שנשואים כל כך הרבה זמן ומכירים כל ניואנס. ואני מהרהר בכמה יסודית המשפחה בישראל. בכך שגם יציאת מצרים הייתה בדגם משפחתי. בליל היציאה ממצרים לא היה כינוס המוני, אבל גם לא פרטים בודדים- אלא- העם למשפחותיו. בהתאמה, את העם העברי לא הוציא רק משה- אלא משפחה שלמה: אהרון, מרים ומשה. הדגם של היציאה משעבוד לחירות היה הדגם המשפחתי.

I've been thinking about what it means for all of Israel to be a family; about the families who gathered to celebrate the holiday together; about how important it is to invest in our loved ones; about the couple driving through the beautiful Golan Heights, what they might have been talking about, perhaps every day concerns, like who is going to go grocery shopping this week,

or perhaps the sort of expressions of love only possible for people who have been married a long time and know everything about one another; and about how the Exodus from Egypt was also structured around the family model. On the night of the Exodus, the Jews did not gather *en masse*, nor did they spend the night alone as isolated individuals. Rather, the nation gathered as families. Quite fittingly, the Exodus was not led by a lone Jew, Moshe, but by a whole family: Aharon, Miriam, and Moshe. The shift from slavery to freedom was based on the family unit.

כך גם בבית שני, בנחמיה פרק ד, הפרק המכונן שמתאר את תקומתה של ירושלים, החזית בנויה ממשפחות משפחות:

”וְאֶעְמִיד אֶת הָעָם לְמִשְׁפָּחוֹת עִם חֲרֵבְתֵיהֶם רְמַחֵיהֶם וְקִשְׁוֹתֵיהֶם.”

והמלחמה הזו, מלחמת המשפחות, המלחמה שבה משפחות שלמות משלמות את המחיר הכי כבד שיש, מזכירה לי עד כמה חשובה המשפחה שלי. עד כמה צריך לחזק עוד ועוד קשר. עד כמה צריך פרופורציות, ועד כמה שום דבר לא מובן מאליי.

The return to Zion in the Second Temple era worked similarly. In the fourth chapter of Nehemiah, which depicts the restoration of Jerusalem, Nehemiah organizes the “front line” by family:

“I stationed the people by families with their swords, their lances, and their bows.” (Neh. 4:7)

This war, the war on families, the war where entire families are paying the highest price, reminds me how important my family is to me, how important it is to build and strengthen my relationships. How important it is to have a sense of proportion, and how I can never take anything for granted.

משפחת שלמות שנמחקו: משפחת סימן טוב: תמר קדם, יהונתן, והילדים שחר ארבל ועומר. משפחת קוץ: ההורים לבנת ואביב, והילדים רותם, יונתן ויפתח. משפחת קאפשיטר: ההורים זיניה ודינה והילדים אלין ואיתן.

Entire families that were wiped out: The Siman Tov family: Tamar Kedem, Yehonatan, and their children, Shachar, Arbel, and Omer. The Kotz family: Livnat and Aviv, and their children, Rotem, Yonatan, and Yiftach. The Kafshitar family: Jeniah and Dinah, and their children, Alin and Eitan.

משפחת שלמות שכמעט ונמחקו: משפחת שרעבי: האמא ליאן, הבנות נוייה ויהל (אלי שרעבי האב, חטוף וגורלו אינו ידוע). משפחת בירה: ההורים יסמין ואורון ובנותיהם תאיר ותהל. בנם נותר לבדו, בלי הורים ובלי אחיות. משפחת אבן: ההורים רינת וחן, והבנים אלון ועידו (שני ילדים נותרו בחיים). משפחת זוהר: ההורים יניב ויסמין והילדות קשת ותכלת (הבן אריאל נותר בחיים). משפחת אלקורען: ארבעה ילדים נהרגו מרקטה: אמיל, ג'ואד, מחמד, ומאלק. משפחת חצרוני: התאומים ינאי וליאל, הסב המטפל- אביה, והדודה המטפלת- אילה (נותרה

אם התאומים, שירה). משפחת ביבס- גורל לא ידוע: ירדן ושירי ההורים ולידיהם אריאל וכפיר.

Families that were almost entirely wiped out: The Sharabi family: Lianne, and her daughters, Noya and Yahel (Eli, their father, was taken captive, and his fate is unknown). The Birah family: Jasmine and Oron, and their daughters, Tair and Tahel. Their son alone survived, without parents or sisters. The Even family: Rinat and Chen, and their sons, Alon and Ido (two more sons survived). The Zohar family: Yaniv and Yasmin, and their daughters, Keshet and Tekhelet (their son, Ariel, survived). The Alkoran family: Four sons were killed by a rocket: Emil, Joad, Mohammad, and Mallack. The Chetzroni family: The twins, Yanai and Liel, their grandfather/caretaker, Aviah, their aunt/caretaker, Ayalah (the twins' mother, Shira, survived). The Bibas family: Yarden and Shiri, and their sons, Ariel and Kfir. Their fate is unknown.

זוגות שנרצחו יחד: נח ומעינה הרשקוביץ, בארי. עמיר ומתי וייס, בארי. רפי ואורית סבירסקי, בארי. סמי ועפרה קידר, בארי. אביתר ולילך קיפניס, בארי. יצחק וחנה סיטון עם בנם טל, בארי. דרור ויונת אור, בארי. מני ואיילת גודארד, בארי. מרינה ואיגור לוסב, בארי. זאב וזהבה הקר, בארי. שמוליק ויהודית וייס, בארי. מרסל ודרור קפלון, בארי. מרדכי נווה ויונה פריקר, בארי. יונה כהן, אוהד כהן, מילה כהן, בארי (סבתא, בן, נכדה). סרגיי וויקטוריה גרדסקול, אופקים. יפתח ומריה יאחנגילוב אופקים. ולדימיר וסוניה פופוב, אופקים. דולב ואודיה סויסה, שדרות. רונית ורולאן סולטן, חולית. שחר ושלומי מתיאס, חולית. מאיר ולוי אלחרר, חולית. עינב ומטיאס בורנשטיין, כרמיאל. אבנר ומיה גורן, ניר עוז. גיודי וגדי חגי, ניר עוז. יוסי ומרגיט סילברמן, ניר עוז. בלהה ויעקובי ינון, נתיב העשרה. איילת ניר ושלמה מולכו, נתיב העשרה. רותי ואריה אקוני ובתם אור, נתיב העשרה. יזהר וגילה פלד עם בנם דניאל, כפר עזה. איתי והדר בריצ'בסקי, כפר עזה. רם ולילי איתמרי, כפר עזה. רועי וסמדר עידן, כפר עזה. אביב ודורית ורטהיים, כפר עזה. איתן ותמי זיו, כפר עזה. יגאול וסינדי פלש, כפר עזה. אורלי ודוד שוורצמן, כפר עזה. נעם ליקים ודקלה ערבה, יחד עם בנה של דקלה תומר, נחל עוז. איתי ואיתי זק יחד עם בנם שגיא, כיסופים. אדיר ושירז תמס, חולון. נאגיי וגל עבדוש, קרית עקרון. עינב ואור לוי, ראשון לציון (עינב נרצחה, אור- נחטף וגורלו לא ידוע). נועה וניר ברנס, אורטל

Couples who were killed together: Noah and Meina Hershkovitz, Be'eri. Amir and Mati Weiss, Be'eri. Rafi and Orit Svirsky, Be'eri. Sami and Ofra Kedar, Be'eri. Evyatar and Lilach Kipnis, Be'eri. Yitzhak and Hanna Siton with their son Tal, Be'eri. Dror and Yonat Or, Be'eri. Meni and Ayelet Goddard, Be'eri. Marina and Igor Losev, Be'eri. Ze'ev and Zehava HaKar, Be'eri. Shmulik and Yehudit Weiss, Be'eri. Marcel and Dror Kaplan, Be'eri. Mordechai Naveh and Yonah Friker, Be'eri. Yonah Cohen, Ohad Cohen, Mila Cohen, Be'eri (grandmother, son, granddaughter). Sergey and Viktoria Gradskul, Ofakim. Yiftach and Maria Yakhangilov, Ofakim. Vladimir and Sonia Popov, Ofakim. Dolev and Oudiya Suissa, Sderot. Ronit and Rolan Sultan, Holit. Shachar and Shlomi Matias, Holit. Meir and Liz Elharar, Holit. Einav and Matias Bornstein, Karmiel. Avner and Maya Goren, Nir Oz. Judy and Gadi Hagi, Nir Oz. Yossi and Margit Silverman, Nir Oz. Bilha and Ya'akobi Yinon, Netiv HaAsara. Ayelet Nir and Shlomo Molcho, Netiv HaAsara. Ruti and Aryeh Akoni with their daughter Or, Netiv HaAsara. Yizhar and Gila Peled with their son Daniel, Kfar Aza. Itay and Hadar Brichovsky, Kfar Aza. Ram and Lili Itamari, Kfar Aza. Roy and Smadar Idan, Kfar Aza. Aviv

and Dorit Wertheim, Kfar Aza. Eitan and Tami Ziv, Kfar Aza. Yigael and Cindy Plesh, Kfar Aza. Orly and David Schwartzman, Kfar Aza. Noam Likim and Dikla Arava, along with Dikla's son Tomer, Nahal Oz. Itay and Eti Zak, along with their son Sagi, Kissufim. Adir and Shiraz Tamam, Holon. Najji and Gal Abdush, Kiryat Ekron. Einav and Or Levy, Rishon LeZion (Einav was murdered, Or was kidnapped and his fate is unknown). Noa and Nir Barnes, Ortal.

3. Nowadays One Has to Check, Avital Liman

Avital Liman is a kindergarten teacher. After October 7, she went to the Dead Sea to volunteer with the evacuated children living in hotels there. Translation by Michael Bohnen, Heather Silverman, Rachel Korazim.

In the evacuees' hotel
By the Dead Sea
She carefully gathers
The doll's hair with a ribbon,
She attaches a sparkling pipe cleaner
To the ribbon,
And then she asks: "Tell me, am I alive?
And how would they know if I were dead?"
What would you say
to a four-year-old girl?
"Only the living can hug.
Come, let's hug and see if
We're alive."
Later she says:
"Tomorrow morning, let's check again."

בְּמִלּוֹן הַמְּפֻנִים
בְּיָם הַמֵּלַח
הִיא אוֹסֶפֶת יָפָה יָפָה
אֶת שֵׁעַר הַבִּבְּה בִּסְרִט,
קוֹשֶׁרֶת מִמְּנִיקָה מְקֻטְרוֹת מְנַצְנֵץ
עַל הַסְּרִט,
וְאִזּוֹ שׁוֹאֵלֶת: "תִּגִּידִי, אֲנִי חַיָּה?
וְאִיךָ יוֹדְעִים שְׁאַנִּי מְתָה?"
מָה הֵייתֶם עוֹנִים
לִילְדָה בֵּת אַרְבַּע?
"רַק מִי שְׁחִי יָכֹל לְהִתְחַבֵּק.
בּוֹאִי נִתְחַבֵּק וְנִרְאֶה אִם
אֲנַחְנוּ בְּחַיִּים."
אַחַר כֵּן הִיא אוֹמְרֶת:
"גַּם מָחָר בִּבְּקָר נִבְדֹּק."

4. Prayer for Grief and Faith on the Anniversary of October 7, Avi Dabush

Avi Dabush was ordained as a rabbi by the Beit Midrash for the Israeli Rabbinat of the Shalom Hartman Institute and HaMidrasha in Oranim. He is one of the founders of the Negev Council and the Movement of the Periphery. Avi is the executive director of Rabbis for Human Rights. He was displaced from his home on Kibbutz Nirim, on the border of Gaza, after the attack on October 7.

“Exalted and sanctified is the human being, the tractate of whose life in our world is coming to an end.”¹

Exalted and sanctified are all our dead on Simchat Torah 5784.

Exalted and sanctified are all the dead from the war within Israel and beyond its fences and borders, all our dear friends who went into captivity and will never return, all the shattered and destroyed families who might not be joined together again:

They are not alone.

We are with them.

“God full of mercy dwells on high”
and we who dwell in dust
and our hearts full of mercy
for all creatures and all creations
Like our ancestor Jacob, we pray not to die in battle, but also not to kill.

Like our ancestor Abraham, we look for the righteousness within us and for the righteous in every place,
as long as the light shines.

“I believe with complete faith...
and even though it may tarry,
even so, I await it every day.”
I believe that it is within our power to do,
to repair,

יִתְגַּדֵּל וְיִתְקַדֵּשׁ הָאָדָם,
אֲשֶׁר מִסִּכְתַּת חַיּוֹ בְּעוֹלָמְנוּ בָּאָה אֶל סוּפָהּ [1]
יִתְגַּדְלוּ וְיִתְקַדְשׁוּ כָל מֵתֵינוּ בְּשִׂמְחַת תּוֹרָה
הַתְּשֵׁפִי”

יִתְגַּדְלוּ וְיִתְקַדְשׁוּ כָל מֵתֵי הַמַּלְחָמָה
בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל וּמַעֲבַר לַגְּדֵרוֹת וּלְגִבּוֹלוֹת
כָּל חֲבֵרֵינוּ הַטּוֹבִים אֲשֶׁר הִלְכּוּ לְשִׁבִי וְלֹא
יִחְזְרוּ עוֹד
כָּל הַמְּשִׁפְחוֹת שֶׁנִּשְׁבְּרוּ וְהִתְרַסְקוּ
וְאוֹלֵי לֹא יֵאוּחוּ עוֹד
הֵם לֹא לְבַד
אֲנַחְנוּ אִיתָן

אֵל מְלֵא רַחֲמִים, שׁוֹכֵן בְּמְרוֹמִים
וְאֲנוּ שׁוֹכְנֵי עֶפְרַיִם
וְלִיבְנוּ מְלֵא רַחֲמִים
עַל כָּל הַבְּרוּאִים וְכָל הַיְצוּרִים
כִּיעֲקֹב אֲבִינוּ אֲנוּ מִתְּפַלְלִים שֶׁלֹּא לָמוֹת בַּקֶּרֶב
אֲבֵל גַּם לֹא לְהַרְוֵג
כְּאַבְרָהָם אֲבִינוּ
אֲנַחְנוּ מַחְפְּשִׁים אֶת הַצְּדִיקוֹת בְּתוֹכֵנוּ
וְאֵת הַצְּדִיקִים בְּכָל מְקוֹם
כָּל עוֹד דּוֹלֵק הָאוֹר

אֲנִי מֵאֲמִין בְּאַמוּנָה שְׁלֵמָה...
וְאֵף עַל פִּי שְׂפִיתֵי מְהִמָּה
עִם כָּל זֶה אֶחְפָּה לּוֹ בְּכָל יוֹם
אֲנִי מֵאֲמִין שֶׁבְּכּוּחֵנוּ לַעֲשׂוֹת
לְתַקֵּן
וְלִשְׁנוֹת

לְמִי שֶׁאִינוּ מֵאֲמִין - קֶשֶׁה לַחֲיוֹת הַשָּׁנָה [2]
אֲנִי מֵאֲמִין שֶׁבְּכּוּחֵנוּ לִיְפוֹל מִיּוֹאֲשִׁים שְׁלוֹשׁ
פַּעֲמִים בְּיוֹם
וּלְקוֹם בְּאַמוּנָה - אַרְבַּע

¹ Ehud Rabin, “Kaddish from Kibbutz Ein Hahoresh.”

and to change.

For someone who does not believe, this is a difficult year to live.²

I believe it is within our power to fall down in despair three times a day and to stand in faith four.

I believe that in the end, goodness will prevail within us

and around us.

Believe in peace.

Believe in justice.

Believe in human dignity,
wherever it is.

Love truth and peace.

Believe in the vision of the prophets and the vision of the Declaration of Independence.

Believe in humanity and its fierce spirit.³

Believe in our shared strength

to do

and to change

for the better.

אני מאמין שסוף הטוב לנצח
בתוכנו
ומחוצה לנו
מאמין בשלום
מאמין בצדק
מאמין בכבוד האדם
באשר הוא
אוהב את האמת והשלום
מאמין בחזון הנביאים
ובחזון מגילת העצמאות
מאמין באדם וברוחו העזה[3]
מאמין בכח המשותף שלנו
לעשות
ולשנות
לטובה

² Lea Goldberg, "For One Who Does Not Believe."

³ Shaul Tchernichovsky, "I Believe."

5. Our Lives and Futures Are Inextricably Linked, Leah Solomon

Leah Solomon is the Chief Education Officer at Encounter. This excerpt originally appeared in [*In Every Generation: A Haggadah Supplement for 5784*](#).

Since October 7, many Jews in Israel and throughout the world have felt not only more vulnerable and afraid, but also more alone than ever before.

For six months, we have experienced a sense of unrelenting trauma, pain, and heartbreak as we grapple with the brutality of the October 7 attacks and the horrifying reality of more than 100 Israelis still being held hostage in the depths of Gaza. And we have watched as much of the world seems not only to have forgotten our pain and fear, but to have turned against us, painting Israel—and sometimes even those who care about Israel—as genocidal aggressors. It is understandable that when we are feeling abandoned, attacked, and consumed with fear for our own people, we might find it difficult to truly see or care about Palestinians in Gaza. Though our minds know the magnitude of their suffering, our hearts, overflowing with our own pain, may struggle to hold space for the awareness that their lives, too, have been shattered...

Before October 7, although we knew that Jewish history has seen many tragedies, few of us alive today had experienced such a cataclysm. Never, until now, were we confronted with the excruciating task of holding another people's suffering even as our own is so vast and raw, let alone doing so when the perpetrators of the atrocities against us are members of that very people, and when the suffering of that people is being inflicted in large part by our own.

Yet, it is not despite this connection, but in profound awareness of it, that we must compel ourselves to see.

Two peoples live in this land, and both are here to stay. As Jews we have an even greater obligation to care about and to strive to end Palestinian suffering—not only because no human being deserves to suffer as Gazans are suffering, and not only because we should strive to be the kind of people who care about such suffering, but because our lives and futures are inextricably linked.

The horrors of this year have shown us that our suffering, too, is inextricably linked to the suffering of our neighbors: neither Jews nor Palestinians anywhere in the world will live in safety until we all do; and none of us will be truly free until all of us are free. Expanding our hearts' capacity to hold the suffering of Gazans who are desperately hungry and in need is the first step in charting a path toward a better future, so that all Jews and Palestinians in Israel, Gaza, and throughout the world, might live in security and freedom.

Texts of Transition: From Mourning to Hope

1. Vision, Chen Artzi Sror

Chen Artzi Sror is a journalist at *Yediot Ahronot* and Director of the Mandel Program for Leadership in Jewish Culture.

חַיֵּב אָדָם לְרֹאוֹת אֶת עֲצָמוֹ
כְּאִלוּ הוּא יֵצֵא מִבְּאֵרֵי. מִכְּפַר עֵזָה. מִשְׂדֵּרוֹת. מֵאֶפְקִים.
לְזָכֵר וְלֹא לְשַׁכַּח עַד לַיּוֹם אַחֲרוֹן.
לֹא כְּדֵי לְהִזִּין אֶת הַפֶּחַד - לְהִפְדֹּד, כְּדֵי לְכוּנֵן אֶת הַתְּקוּהָ.
עַד יֵשְׁבוּ זְקֵנִים וְזִקְנוֹת בְּמִשְׂדָּאוֹת בְּאֵרֵי, וּרְחוֹבוֹת הָעִיר
שְׂדֵרוֹת יִמְלְאוּ יְלָדִים וְיִלְדוֹת מְשַׁחֲקִים.
הַבְּתִים הַשְּׂרוּפִים יִצְבְּעוּ מִחֲדָשׁ, הַנִּירִים יִחְרְשׁוּ וְהַעֲגָבִיּוֹת יִקְטְפוּ.
הָאִיּוֹם הַקִּיּוּמִי יוֹסֵר.
זוֹהִי לֹא נְבוֹאָת נְחָמָה, זוֹהִי תְּכֵנִית עֲבוֹדָה.

Every person is obligated to see themselves

as if they came out of Be'eri, out of Kfar Aza, out of Sderot, out of Ofakim.

They are obligated to remember and never forget until the last day.

This is not meant to cultivate fear—on the contrary, it is meant to create hope.

Once again, the elderly will sit in the fields of Be'eri, and the streets of the city of Sderot will be filled with children playing.

The burnt houses will be repainted, the fields will be plowed, and the tomatoes will be harvested.

The existential threat will be removed.

This is not a prophecy of consolation; this is a plan of action.

2. We Will Laugh Again, Yonatan Cohen

Yonatan Cohen, rabbi of Congregation Beth Israel in Berkeley, California and a senior rabbinic fellow of the Shalom Hartman Institute, is the uncle of 19-year-old Lt. Yoav Melayev z”l, who was killed while defending his base on October 7, saving the lives of over 70 soldiers and civilians stationed at his outpost. Yoav’s family describes him as a man with words and melody in his heart. He was meek and sensitive, full of joy for life, with a captivating and playful smile on his face. Talented in many fields, thorough, scholarly, with a sense of humor, and a creative cook, Yoav was a beloved older brother, a loving partner, a devoted friend, a wonderful eldest son, a magnetic commander, and a leader. Read the full article from *Notes for the Field* [here](#).

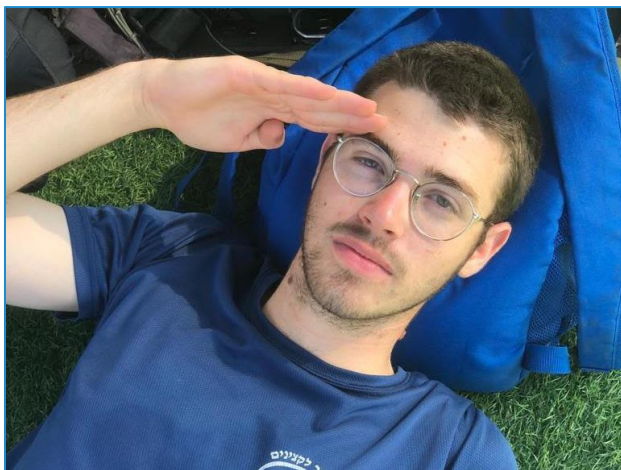


Image from Yoav’s family

[In the Torah, when] Sarah heard the news that she, an old woman, would bear a child, she laughed. Avraham, too, famously laughed when he was told that Sarah would bear a child in old age. Their laughter gave their Yitzchak, Isaac, his name—it means “he will laugh.”

... *Hanitzchak*? Will we ever laugh?

I hear and recognize Sarah and Avraham’s laughter in new and old ways now.

It is a self-deprecating laughter. The laughter of wisdom, experience, and old age. This laughter gives perspective. It also creates some distance when things begin to overwhelm our senses and our ability to fully process or integrate.

It is also a laughter developed out of challenge and adversity. It’s a laughter we bring out as a self-defense. A preventive laughter that fills the void before our scoffers and true enemies are given the chance to laugh.

It is, I think, a laughter that sometimes reveals our sense of hopelessness. It comes out when it seems like there's nothing left to do but laugh. And yet, at the very moment that this laughter comes out, it exposes our sense of hopefulness. After all, look, we can still laugh!

At the shiva [for my nephew, Yoav, who was killed on October 7], we laughed the laughter of Abraham and Sarah—wise and experienced, preemptive and self-preserving, hopeless and reaching for hope, all at the same time.

... the name Isaac, Yitzchak, is written in the future tense. The name doesn't mean "Abraham laughed" or "Sarah laughed" or for that matter, that anyone laughed in the past. Instead, it means, "he will laugh." Or maybe even, "there will be laughter."

Let me say this with hope, with faith, and in all seriousness: We will laugh. There will be laughter.

It doesn't seem that way now. It shouldn't seem that way now. But if any child should ask you: "After all this, will we still laugh?"

You tell them: *Nitzchak*. Surely, we will laugh.

And even now, even as we cry, we can still draw perspective, strength, and yes, even faith from the laughter of Abraham and Sarah.

And as Israel wraps herself in the sackcloth of mourning and the clothes of war, in our prayers we already know: וַיִּתְּשַׁח לְיוֹם אֲהָרֹן, a day of laughter will ultimately also come.

May it be so hastily in our day.

3. An Optimistic Letter to Avigail and her Family, Tair Mordoch

Smadar and Roei Idan z"l were murdered on October 7 in Kibbutz Kfar Azza. Their three children survived, but 3-year-old Avigail was taken hostage by Hamas. At the end of November, Avigail was released as part of the hostage deal and was reunited with her siblings. After Avigail's release, Tair Mordoch, an Israeli entrepreneur, wrote her [this open letter](#).



היי אביגיל,

אנחנו לא מכירות, אני תאיר, ובתמונה זאת המשפחה המורחבת והיפה שלי. האיש במרכז התמונה, עציון, אבא שלי. גם הוא כמוך, בן קיבוץ. גם הוא כמוך, יתום מאב ואם מגיל 3.

אבא שלי האהוב נולד ב' ה' באייר תש"ח. אליעזר בן נבט, סבא שלי, לוחם הפלמ"ח, קיבל את ההודעה על הולדת בנו באותו הערב, תוך שהוא לוחם לשחרור מצודת כח. הלוחמים החליטו שמסוכן לאליעזר לצאת הביתה לראות את הבן, והחליטו שיצא בבוקר. בלילה, פגע פגז על חדר הלוחמים ושלושה נהרגו, אליעזר היה ביניהם. אליעזר לא זכה לראות את בנו היחיד, אמא של אבא שלי, דינה, נפטרה 3 שנים אחר כך מסרטן. אבא שלי נותר יתום. הוא אומץ, על ידי הדודים שלו בקבוצת כנרת וחי כל חייו שם, עד היום.

Hi Avigail,

We don't know each other, I am Tair, and in this picture is my beautiful extended family. The man at the center of the picture, Etzion, my dad, is like you, a child of a *kibbutz*; like you, orphaned from his father and mother from the age of 3.

My beloved father was born on the 5th of Iyar 1948. Eliezer ben Nevet, my grandfather, Palmach warrior, received the message on the birth of his son that night, while he was actively fighting to free Metsudat Koach. The fighters decided that it was too dangerous for Eliezer to go home and

see his son, and they decided he would leave in the morning. During the night, a bomb hit the room of the fighters, and three soldiers were killed, Eliezer among them. Eliezer didn't get to see his only son. My father's mother, Deena, died three years later from cancer. My father was left an orphan. He was adopted by his aunt and uncle in the Kinneret Group and lived there all his life, to this day.

אני רוצה שתדעי, שאבא שלי, הוא האיש הכי אופטימי וחמוד ומצחיק שאני מכירה ומלא שמחת חיים ובאהבה. יחד עם אמא שלי, הם הקימו משפחה גדולה ויפה, 5 ילדים אנחנו ו - 13 נכדים.

ואנחנו, דווקא בגלל החיים שלו, משפחה מיוחדת, שייכת לכאן, לארץ הזאת, ולמדינה הזאת. מחוברים אליה ואחד לשניה מאד.

I want you to know that my father is the most optimistic and sweet and funny person that I know, and he's filled with happiness and love. Together with my mother, they created a big and beautiful family, 5 children and 13 grandchildren.

And we, *davka*, especially because of his life, are a special family, belonging here, to this country, and this state. Connected to it and to each other.

בכל שנה, ביום הזיכרון, אנחנו עולים יחד עם אבא שלי, לקבר של אבא שלו ואז הולכים הביתה לכנרת, וחוגגים לאבא שלי יום הולדת אני תמיד אומרת שאנחנו זה סיפורה של המדינה.

אני מאחלת לך, אביגיל, שיגדלו אותך באהבה, בטוחה שתהיי מוקפת במשפחה וחברים טובים והאחים שלך המתוקים והאמיצים.

ותדעי שיש לך גם עם שלם ואוהב מאחוריך.

Every year, on Yom HaZikaron (Memorial Day), we go together with my father to his father's grave and then we go home to the Kinneret and celebrate my father's birthday. I always say that we are the story of this country.

I wish for you, Avigail, that you will be raised with love and that you will be safe, surrounded by family and good friends and your sweet and brave siblings.

And know that you have an entire loving people behind you.

4. May the All-Merciful Bring Peace Between the Sons of Jacob and the Sons of Ishmael, Mishael Zion

Mishael Zion is rabbi and founder of Kehillat Klausner in Jerusalem and founding director of the Mandel Leadership Institute's Program for Leadership in Jewish Culture. He is formerly a fellow of the Kogod Research Center at the Shalom Hartman Institute in Jerusalem. He is the co-author of *Israeli Haggadah* and *A Night to Remember: The Haggadah of Contemporary Voices*.

הַרְחֵם הוּא יִשְׁכַּן שְׁלוֹם בֵּין בְּנֵי יַעֲקֹב וּבֵין בְּנֵי יִשְׁמָעֵאל.

ככה אגיד גם השבת עם ילדיי, ככה לימדו אותי הוריי. למרות הכל ובגלל הכל. איפשהו שם בסוף ברכת המזון, בין הרחמן יברך את מדינת ישראל ויגן עליה לבין הרחמן יזכנו לימות המשיח. בקשה שמקומה בין שאר התקוות היהודיות שלנו על המקום הזה. בקשה שלא מוותרים עליה באף שבת, גם בשבתות קשות מנשוא, שבתות בהן קשה להאמין שזוכה לראות את השלום הזה, כמו שקשה להאמין שזוכה לראות את המשיח. ועם כל זה אחכה לו בכל יום שיבוא...

May the All-Merciful bring peace between the sons of Jacob and the sons of Ishmael.

This is what I will say this Shabbat with my children, this is what my parents taught me. In spite of everything and because of everything. Somewhere at the end of the *benching*, between "May the All-Merciful bless and protect the State of Israel" and "May the All-Merciful make us worthy of the days of the Messiah." A request that is located among our other Jewish hopes for this place. A request that is not given up on any Shabbat, even on unbearably difficult *Shabbatot*, *Shabbatot* when it is hard to believe that we will live to see this peace, just as it is hard to believe that we will live to see the Messiah. Nevertheless, I yearn every day for his coming...

גם במלחמה, אינני מפסיק להתפלל גם על השלום. הרי בסוף, נחייה פה במרחב הזה כל בני אברהם. וכן, זה מורכב: את אויב החמאס ותומכיו עלינו להשמיד. במעשיהם העידו על עצמם שהם בחרו בדרכו של עמלק. אבל עם שאר בני ישמעאל עלינו למצוא את הדרך לשלום. ועלינו למצוא את הדרך שנאמין זה לזה שפנינו גם לשלום. לכן על אמונה בסיסית זו לא אוותר. וזה מורכב, וקשה להשגה, ולכן מתפללים על זה. תפילה פשוטה וכנה, תפילה שלא מוותרים עליה לעולם, תפילה שפונה אל הרחמן, ומתחננת לרחמים. רגע לפני טבח שמחת תורה קראנו בקהלת שעת לְאֶהָב וְעַת לְשָׂנֵא, עַת מְלַחְמָה וְעַת שְׁלוֹם. כעת אנו בעת מלחמה, ובעת שנאה. אוהבי ה' - שינאו רע. אין שלום בלי מוכנות לצאת למלחמה. אבל אוי ואבוי לנו אם לא נזכיר לעצמו גם את עת השלום, ונמשיך לבקש: הַרְחֵם הוּא יִשְׁכַּן שְׁלוֹם בֵּין בְּנֵי יַעֲקֹב וּבֵין בְּנֵי יִשְׁמָעֵאל.

Even in war, I don't stop praying for peace, as well. After all, in the end, all the children of Abraham will live here in this place. And yes, it is complex: we must destroy the enemy Hamas and its supporters. In their actions, they proved themselves to have chosen the way of Amalek. But with the rest of the sons of Ishmael, we must find the way to peace. And we must find the way to

believe in each other, that we also seek peace. Therefore, I will not give up this basic belief. And it is complex, and difficult to achieve, so we pray for it. A simple and sincere prayer, a prayer that you never give up, a prayer that turns to the All-Merciful and begs for mercy. Just before the Simchat Torah massacre, we recited in Ecclesiastes that there is a time for love and a time for hate, a time for war and a time for peace. Now we are in a time of war, and a time of hatred. Lovers of God hate evil. There is no peace without a readiness to go to war. But woe betide us if we do not also remind ourselves of the time of peace and continue to ask: May the All-Merciful bring peace between the sons of Jacob and the sons of Ishmael.

Prayers

1. Yizkor – A Memorial Prayer for October 7, Binyamin Holzman

This prayer was published by the Shalom Hartman Institute's Ritual Center [here](#).

May God remember the pure souls of the victims of the Simchat Torah massacre of 5784. The murdered men and women, the elderly and children, including the stranger and the resident, in the *kibbutzim*, the moshavim, and the cities, in the homes, at the festival, and on the roads. The brave-hearted civilians and soldiers who rushed to defend the towns. The emergency squad fighters and those posted at the fence, the police officers and security forces, and the members of the rescue teams.

May Israel remember and mourn the wisdom of the elders, the love of the parents, the radiance of the youth, and the innocence of the children. Remember their sacrifice and let their merit stand for us and for all of Israel. Oh land, do not cover their blood. May they rest in peace in their final resting places. And let us say: Amen.

יִזְכֹּר אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַנְּשָׁמוֹת הַטְּהוֹרוֹת שֶׁל
חֻלְלֵי טֵבַח שְׂמַחַת תּוֹרָה תּשפ"ד. אֶת
הַנֶּרְצָחִים וְהַנֶּרְצָחוֹת, אֲנָשִׁים וְנָשִׁים זְקֵנִים
וְטוֹף, וּבָהֶם גַּם הַזֶּר וְהַתּוֹשֵׁב, בְּקִבּוּצִים,
בְּמוֹשָׁבִים וּבְעָרִים, בְּבָתִּים, בְּמִסְבָּה
וּבְדַרְכִּים.

אֶת אֲמִיּוֹת הַלֵּב, אֲזָרָחִים וְחִילִים, שֶׁנִּחְלְצוּ
לְהִגָּנַת הַיְשׁוּבִים. אֶת לוחמי כְּתוֹת הַכּוֹנְנוֹת
וּמִצְבֵי הַגָּדָר, אֶת לוחמי הַמְּשַׁטָּרָה וְכוּחוֹת
הַבְּטָחוֹן, וְאֶת אֲנָשֵׁי כּוּחוֹת הַחֲלוּץ וְהַהַצְלָה.
יִזְכֹּר יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְיֵאָבֵל עַל חֲכָמַת הַזְּקֵנִים, עַל
אֲהַבַת הַהוֹרִים, עַל זִיו הָעֲלוּמִים וְעַל
תְּמִימוֹת הַיְלָדִים. זְכֹר לָנוּ עֲקֵדְתְּם וְתַעֲמֹד
לָנוּ וּלְכָל יִשְׂרָאֵל זְכוֹתְּם, אֲרָץ אֵל תִּכְסִי
דָּמָם. יִנוּחוּ בְּשָׁלוֹם עַל מִשְׁכְּבוֹתְּם. וְנֹאמַר
אָמֵן.

2. Prayer for the Hostages, Mishael Zion

This prayer was published by the Shalom Hartman Institute's Ritual Center [here](#).

May the One who blessed our ancestors, Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov, Moshe and Aharon, David and Shlomo, Sarah, Rivkah, Rachel and Leah, bless and protect and guard those who were abducted and taken hostage, the missing and the kidnapped, who were taken from their homes, their villages and their *kibbutzim*, from military posts and from fields of dance. And who are now in grave danger, in hostile and foreign locations, in the hands of messengers of destruction. For we, and all the people of Israel, are praying on their behalf. May the Holy Blessed One have compassion upon them and bring them out from darkness and the shadow of death; break their bonds and deliver them from distress; and redeem them speedily, returning them to their families, their towns and homes, and to fields of dance and joy. May this verse be fulfilled in them: "Those redeemed by God will return; they will enter Zion with singing, and everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away." And let us say: Amen.

מי שְׁבַרְךָ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ אֲבָרְהָם יִצְחָק וְיַעֲקֹב
יוֹסֵף מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן דָּוִד וּשְׁלֹמֹה, וְאַמְוֵיתֵינוּ
שָׂרָה רִבְקָה רָחֵל וְלֵאָה הוּא יְבָרְךָ וְיִשְׁמֹר
וְיִנְצֵר אֶת הַנֶּעְדָּרִים וְאֶת הַחֲטוּפִים אֲשֶׁר
נִלְקְחוּ מִבְּתֵיהֶם, מִיְשׁוּבֵיהֶם וּמִקְבוּצֵיהֶם,
מִמְצָבֵי הַצָּבָא וּמִמְרֻחְבֵי הַמַּחֲוֹל,
וְשִׁנְמֻצָאִים כָּעֵת בְּסַכְנַת חַיִּים, בְּמַרְחָב זָר
וְעוֹיֵן, בְּיַד מַלְאָכֵי חַבְלָה מְסַכְנִים בְּעִבּוֹר
שְׂאֵנוּ וְכָל עַם יִשְׂרָאֵל מִתְּפִלָּלִים בְּעִבּוֹרָם,
הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא יִמְלֵא רַחֲמִים עֲלֵיהֶם,
וְיוֹצִיאֵם מִחֹשֶׁךְ וְצִלְמוֹת וּמוֹסְרוֹתֵיהֶם
יִנְתַּק וּמִמְצוּקוֹתֵיהֶם יוֹשִׁיעֵם, וְיִשְׁיֵבֵם
מְהֵרָה לְחֵיק מְשֻׁפְחוֹתֵיהֶם, לְיִשׁוּבָם
וּלְבִיתָם, וְלִשְׂדוֹת שְׂמֻחָתָם וּמְחוּלָם. וְיִקְרֵם
בָּהֶם מִקְרָא שְׂפָתוֹב: וּפְדוּיֵי ה' יִשׁוּבוּן וּבָאוּ
צִיּוֹן בְּרִנָּה וְשִׂמְחַת עוֹלָם עַל רֵאשִׁים. שְׁשׁוֹן
וְשִׂמְחָה יִשְׂגוּ וְנִסּוּ יִגּוֹן וְאַנְחָה.
וְנֹאמַר אָמֵן.

3. Prayer for the Welfare of the IDF Soldiers, Bini Talmi

This prayer was published by the Shalom Hartman Institute's Ritual Center [here](#).

We pray that you go and return in peace and safety to all your desired destinations, and find serenity wherever your soul leads you, and grace, kindness, and compassion.
May you not be thwarted by any tribulations you may encounter on your way.
May your deeds be good—your paths true and your actions pure.
Find strength to pass the tests of fire, and safety to traverse the coming days. And when you return here, weary, we will embrace you quietly and lovingly, wordlessly. We will see in your eyes, in the fading flames, the embers of the spirit of compassion and the noble and gentle soul that has endured.

תְּפִלָּה יֵשׁ בָּנוּ שְׁתַּלְּכוּ וְתָבוֹאוּ בְּשָׁלוֹם
וּבְבִטְחָה אֶל כָּל מְחֻזּוֹת חֲפָצְכֶם. וְשָׁקֵט
תִּמְצְאוּ בְּכָל שְׂתֵלֶךְ נַפְשְׁכֶם וְחוֹן וְחֶסֶד
וְרַחֲמִים.
שְׁלֵא יוֹכְלוּ לָכֶם כָּל פְּרַעַנְיּוֹת שְׁמֵתְרָגְשׁוֹת
וּבְאוֹת בְּדַרְכְּכֶם.
יְהִיו מַעֲשֵׂיכֶם טוֹבִים – נְתִיבְכֶם אֶמֶת
וּפְעֻלְכֶם תְּמִים.
כִּחַ מִצְאוּ לְעֵבֶר אֶת מִבְחָנֵי הָאֵשׁ וּבִטְחָה
לְהֵלֵךְ לִימֵים הַבָּאִים.
וּכְשֶׁתָּשׁוּבוּ לְכָאן, עֵינַיִם, בְּדַרְךְ הָעוֹלָה
נִחְבֵּק אֶתְכֶם שְׁקֵטִים וְאוֹהֲבִים, חֲסֵרֵי מְלָה
נִרְאָה בְּעֵינֵיכֶם, בֵּין הַלְהָבוֹת הַדּוֹעְכוֹת אֶת
נִיצוֹצוֹת נְשִׁמְתָה שֶׁל הַחֲמֵלָה וְאֶת יְפֵי הַנֶּפֶשׁ
שְׁלֵא חֲדָלָה

4. Prayer for the Wounded, Michael Zion

This prayer was published by the Shalom Hartman Institute's Ritual Center [here](#).

May the One who blessed our ancestors, Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov, Moshe and Aharon, David and Shlomo, Sarah, Rivkah, Rachel, and Leah, bless and heal all those wounded in the war and related incidents, soldiers and civilians, tourists and laborers, young and old.

May the Holy Blessed One have compassion upon them to restore them to health and to cure them, to strengthen them and to invigorate them, and may God hasten to send them from heaven a complete recovery to all their organs and their sinews, among all the other sick people of Israel, a healing of spirit and a healing of body; at this moment, speedily, and very soon, and let us say: Amen.

מי שברך אבותינו אברהם יצחק ויעקב
משה ואהרן דוד ושלמה ואבותינו שרה
רבקה רחל ולאה הוא יברך וירפא את כל
פצועי המלחמה והתקריות, חילים
וחילות, אזרחים ואזרחיות, תיירים
ופועלים, זקנים וילדים.

הקדוש ברוך הוא ימלא רחמים עליהם
להחלימם ולרפאתם ולהחזיקם
ולהחיותם, וישלח להם מהרה רפואה
שלמה מן השמים לכל איברייהם ולכל
גידיהם בתוך שאר חולי ישראל, רפואת
הנפש ורפואת הגוף, השתא בעגלא ובזמן
קריב. ונאמר אמן.

5. Prayer of Mothers for Life and Peace, Tamar Elad-Appelbaum and Ibtisam Maḥamee, translated by Amichai Lau-Lavie

God of Life
Who heals the brokenhearted and binds
up their wounds
May it be your will to hear the prayer of
mothers.
For you did not create us to kill each
other
Nor to live in fear, anger, or hatred in your
world
But rather you have created us so we can
grant permission to one another
to sanctify Your name of Life, your name
of Peace in this world
For these things I weep, my eye, my eye
runs down with water
For our children crying at night,
For parents holding their children with
despair and darkness in their hearts
For a gate that is closing, and who will
open it while day has not yet dawned?
And with my tears and prayers which I
pray
And with the tears of all women who
deeply feel the pain of these difficult days
I raise my hands to you
please, God, have mercy on us
Hear our voice that we shall not despair
That we shall see life in each other,
That we shall have mercy for each other,
That we shall have pity on each other,
That we shall hope for each other
And we shall write our lives in the book of
Life
For your sake, God of Life
Let us choose Life.

מלך חפץ בחיים
הרופא לשבורי לב ומחבש לעצבותם
שמע נא תפילת אמהות
שאתה לא בראתנו על מנת שנהרוג זה בזה
ולא על מנת שנחיה בפחד, כעס ושנאה
בעולמך
אלא על מנת שנדע לתת רשות זה לזה
לקיים את שמך
שם חיים, שם שלום בעולם.
על אלה אני בוכיה עיני עיני יורדה מים
על ילדים בוכים מפחד בלילות
על הורים אוחזים עולליהם ויאוש ואפלה
בלבם
על שער אשר נסגר ומי יקום ויפתחהו
טרם פנה יום.
ובדמעות ובתפלות שאני מתפללת כל
הזמן
ובדמעות כל הנשים שכואבות את הכאב
החזק בזמן הקשה הזה
הריני מרימה את ידי למעלה אנא ממך
אדוני רחם עלינו
שמע קולנו ה' אל-הינו בימי הרעה האלה
שלא נתייאש
ונראה חיים זה בזה
ונרחם זה על זה
ונצטער זה על זה
ונקווה לזה לזה
ונכתוב את חיינו בספר החיים
למעןך אל-הים חיים.
תן שנבחר בחיים.
כי אתה שלום וביתך שלום וכל אשר לך
שלום
וכן יהי רצון ונאמר אמן.

For you are Peace, your world is Peace,
and all that is yours is Peace

And so shall be your will, and let us say
Amen.

6. Psalm 130

A song of ascents. Out of the depths I call You, God.
God, listen to my cry; let Your ears be attentive to my plea for mercy.
If You keep account of sins, Adonai God, who will survive?
Yours is the power to forgive so that You may be held in awe.
I look to Adonai; I look to God; I await God's word.
I am more eager for Adonai than watchmen for the morning, watchmen for the morning.
O Israel, wait for God; for with God is steadfast love and great power to redeem.
It is God who will redeem Israel from all its iniquities.

שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת מִמַּעְמְקִים קְרָאתִיךָ יְהוָה :
אֲדַנִּי שְׁמָעָה בְּקוֹלִי תִהְיֶינָה אָזְנוֹיךָ קְשׁוּבוֹת
לְקוֹל תַּחֲנוּנָי :
אִם-עֲוֹנוֹת תִּשְׁמְרֶינָה אֲדַנִּי מִי יַעֲמֹד :
כִּי-עֲמַךְ הַסְּלִיחָה לְמַעַן תִּגְרָא :
קִוִּיתִי יְהוָה קִוְיָתָה נַפְשִׁי וְלֹדְבָרוֹ הוֹחֵלְתִּי :
נַפְשִׁי לֹא-אֲדַנִּי מִשְׁמָרִים לְבַקֵּר שְׁמָרִים לְבַקֵּר :
יַחַל יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל-יְהוָה כִּי-עַם-יְהוָה הִתְקַסַּד
וְהִרְבָּה עֲמוֹ פְדוּת :
וְהוּא יַפְדֶּה אֶת-יִשְׂרָאֵל מִכָּל עֲוֹנוֹתָיו :

Suggested Outlines for Using These Resources

This section is intended to help you think about how to structure a communal ritual for the anniversary of October 7 (either on October 7 or on Shemini Atzeret/Simchat Torah) using the "Memory and Hope" ritual and the resources in this document. Each of the three models below is introduced by a short description and approximate time frame. We encourage you to adapt the material and framework to suit your community's needs.

1. Communal Gathering on October 7 – Model 1

Model 1 for a gathering on October 7 can be used in a variety of settings (synagogues, schools, JCCs, etc.) and denominational contexts. It is designed as an expanded, communal version of the "Memory and Hope" ritual, such that each of the seven candles in that ritual are lit in a communal gathering (rather than at home) with readings, songs, and prayers to accompany each of the seven. Depending on how many of the elements you use in each of the sections, this ceremony would take approximately 60-90 minutes. The ritual assumes the use of technology to view or listen to recorded music but could be done without. We encourage inviting volunteers to light candles or read texts.

- I. Introduction framing this year and the *ner neshama* (soul/memorial candle)
- II. Memory
 - a. Light the candle for memory and read the reflection (in "Memory and Hope" ritual)
 - b. Introduce and play music video for "Qinat Be'eri" (p. 7) or "Lo Choshevet al Machar" (p. 10)
 - c. Recite "Yizkor – A Memorial Prayer for October 7" (p. 31)
- III. Pain
 - a. Light the candle for pain
 - b. Read red "Cleared for Publication" (in "Memory and Hope" ritual) and/or one of the texts from the "Grief and Mourning" section of this document:
 - i. "Layers of Grief" (p. 15)
 - ii. "The War on Families" (p. 16)
 - iii. "Nowadays One Has to Check" (p. 20)
 1. Encourage people to hug one another, according to their comfort at the end of the ceremony if you read this poem
 - iv. "Prayer for Grief and Faith on the Anniversary of October 7" (p. 21)
 - v. "Our Lives and Futures Are Inextricably Linked" (p. 23)
 - c. Play song or video of "Shvurei Lev" (9)
- IV. Courage and Bravery
 - a. Light the candle for courage and bravery
 - b. Read the reflection for courage and bravery (in "Memory and Hope" ritual) and/or:
 - i. "Vision" (p. 24)

- ii. "An Optimistic Letter to Avigail and Her Family" (p. 27)
 - iii. "Prayer for the Welfare of the IDF Soldiers" (p. 33)
- V. Peoplehood
 - a. Light the candle for peoplehood
 - b. Read the reflection for peoplehood or "Coat of Many Colors" (in "Memory and Hope" ritual)
 - c. Sing "Acheinu" (p. 14), "Lema'an Achai" (14), or "Im Eshkachech" (14)
- VI. Healing
 - a. Light the candle for healing
 - b. Read the reflection or poem (in "Memory and Hope" ritual)
 - c. Recite
 - i. "Prayer for the Wounded" (p. 34)
 - ii. "Prayer for the Hostages" (p. 32)
 - d. Play song or video of "Tachzor" (p. 8)
- VII. Peace
 - a. Light the candle for peace
 - b. Read the peace reflection from "Memory and Hope" ritual and/or
 - i. "Prayer for Grief and Faith on the Anniversary of October 7" (p. 21)
 - ii. "Our Lives and Futures Are Inextricably Linked" (p. 23)
 - iii. "May the All-Merciful Bring Peace Between the Sons of Jacob and the Sons of Ishmael" (p. 29)
 - c. Recite one of the following
 - i. "Prayer for Peace" (in "Memory and Hope" ritual)
 - ii. "Prayer of Mothers for Life and Peace" (p. 35)
- VIII. Hope
 - a. Light the candle for hope
 - b. Read the reflection or poem (in "Memory and Hope" ritual) and/or:
 - i. "We Will Laugh Again" (p. 25)
 - c. Chant Psalm 130 (p. 37) responsively (if the war is still ongoing and the hostages are still in captivity)
 - d. Listen to or sing "BaShana HaBa'a" (p. 12) slowly as a closing prayer for the hope of a different future

2. Communal Gathering on October 7 – Model 2

Model 2 for a gathering on October 7 can be used in a variety of settings (synagogues, schools, JCCs, etc.) and denominational contexts. It is designed as a ceremony that moves from grief to hope, using the lighting of a memorial candle as an anchor for the ritual. Along this arc, it weaves prayer, reflection, music, and poetry to map the journey of this year, creating a space for communal mourning on this anniversary and beginning to dream about a future of peace and healing. Depending on how many of the elements you use in each of the sections, this ceremony would take approximately 60-90 minutes. The ritual assumes the use of technology to view or listen to recorded music but could be done without. We encourage inviting a range of volunteers to light candles or read texts and communal singing as part of offering one another strength.

- I. Introduction and framing of this anniversary moment and ritual
- II. Light one memorial candle
 - a. Using framing of *ner neshama* as both a candle to honor the memory and the soul of those who were killed on October 7 and as a light that buoys the souls of the living and those gathered today
 - i. Can use the introduction to “Memory and Hope” ritual as part of this framing
 - b. “*Yizkor* – A Memorial Prayer for October 7” (p. 31)
- III. Choose three or four themes to trace an arc from memory to hope through the ritual, for example:
 - a. Memory and mourning
 - i. Listen to or watch “*Qinat Be’eri* (A Lamentation for Be’eri)” (p. 7)
 - ii. Read “Cleared for Publication” (in “Memory and Hope” ritual)
 - iii. Listen to or watch “*Tachzor* (Return)” (p. 8)
 - iv. Recite “Prayer for the Hostages” (p. 32) (if the hostages are not yet home)
 - v. Sing “*Acheinu*” (p. 14) together
 - vi. Read “Prayer for Grief and Faith on the Anniversary of October 7” (p. 21) or “Our Lives and Futures Are Inextricably Linked” (p. 23)
 - vii. Chant Psalm 130 (p. 37) responsively (if the war is still ongoing and the hostages are still in captivity)
 - b. Healing and hope
 - i. Read “Nowadays One Has to Check” (p. 20)
 1. Encourage people to hug one another, according to their comfort at the end of the ceremony if you read this poem
 - ii. Recite “Prayer for the Wounded” (p. 34)
 - iii. Sing “*Lema’an Achai*” (p. 14)
 - iv. Recite “Prayer of Mothers for Life and Peace” (p. 35)
 - v. Sing “*Oseh Shalom*”
 - vi. Read “Horizon” (in “Memory and Hope” ritual)

- c. Listen to or sing “*BaShana HaBa’a*” (p. 12) slowly as a closing prayer for the hope of a different future

3. *Tekes Hama'avar* on Shemini Atzeret/Simchat Torah

This outline is recommended for Erev Simchat Torah, before the festivities begin. It is designed as a synagogue-based ritual and does not use technology or lighting memorial candles, though you could incorporate those elements if appropriate for your community. Choosing one element from each of the sections below could take approximately 30 minutes, while choosing all the pieces below would take approximately 60-75 minutes. We encourage inviting volunteers to lead different elements of the ritual and to embrace communal singing as part of offering one another strength.

- I. Introduction and framing of this anniversary moment and ritual
 - a. Anniversary on the Hebrew calendar
 - b. Difference between here and Israel (where it took place on Simchat Torah), but we will separate it so that Shemini Atzeret, which can be translated as the “eighth day of solemn assembly,” will be the container for our grief, and we will transition into Simchat Torah as a day of celebration of Torah, life, and Jewish peoplehood
- II. Memory and Mourning
 - a. Read “Cleared for Publication” (in “Memory and Hope” ritual)
 - b. Recite “*Yizkor* – A Memorial Prayer for October 7” (p. 31)
 - c. Sing Psalm 23
 - d. Read “The War on Families” (p. 16)
 - e. Read “Prayer for Grief and Faith on the Anniversary of October 7” (p. 21) or “Our Lives and Futures Are Inextricably Linked” (p. 23)
- III. Peoplehood
 - a. If the war is still ongoing and the hostages are still in captivity
 - i. Recite “Prayer for the Hostages” (p. 32)
 - ii. Chant Psalm 130 responsively (p. 37)
 - iii. and/or “Prayer for the Welfare of the IDF Soldiers” (p. 33)
 - b. Read “Coat of Many Colors” (in “Memory and Hope” ritual)
 - c. Sing “*Acheinu*” (p. 14) together
- IV. Peace
 - a. Recite one of the following
 - i. “Prayer for Peace” (in “Memory and Hope” ritual)
 - ii. “Prayer of Mothers for Life and Peace” (p. 35)
 - b. Sing “*Oseh Shalom*”
- V. Hope
 - a. Read “Horizon” (in “Memory and Hope” ritual)
 - b. Open the ark and take out all Torah scrolls and form a line to “draw the horizon”
 - c. Together, sing “*BaShana HaBa'a*” (p. 12) slowly as a closing prayer for the hope of a different future
 - d. After singing “*BaShana HaBa'a*” slowly, sing it up tempo and do a *hakafa* around the sanctuary, shifting from longing into the miracle of this moment: one year

later, being gathered as a community, hugging Torah scrolls, and entering a new year

- e. Return Torah scrolls to the ark and proceed with Simchat Torah