

Mother's Day Reminds Us of Protection and Comfort

"Ima, Ima, I'm scared."

That's what my 11-year-old daughter said to me recently (using the Hebrew for "mother"), as she crawled into my bed in the middle of the night. My daughter is usually the tough one of my four children—the strong, witty, independent one of her siblings. But that night, she was a scared little girl, in need of comfort.

I asked her what she was scared about, and she broke down, sobbing. 'I can't get the picture of the siblings out of my mind,' she tearfully said. And I understood exactly what she was referring to.

In recent weeks, four sets of siblings have been killed. An Israeli brother and sister washed away in a flash flood during the Passover holiday. And three sets of Jewish siblings—two sets of brothers and two sisters—were murdered in terrorist attacks in the Holy Land. Pictures of these young, beautiful siblings have been circulating across the news and social media. The pain is simply too much to bear.

I held my daughter tight, kissed her forehead and tried to ease her pain and fear, to let her know that she can put her worries on me.

As a mother of four children who made *aliya* nearly 18 years ago and has chosen to raise my children in Israel, I am well aware that each of my babies will one day serve in the Israeli Defense Force, which I'll admit, frightens and worries me. But, as a mother of children in Israel who both experience the enormous blessing of living in their biblical homeland, along with the hardships, I have always found comfort in the words of the prophet Isaiah: "As a mother comforts her child, so

will I comfort you; and you will be comforted over Jerusalem” (Isa. 66:13, NIV). That is my Bible verse. Often, I feel like Isaiah is speaking directly to this momma right here.

And, that night, as I sat in bed comforting my daughter, I offered her that biblical sentiment—that just as I am here to protect her, so is God. God is with *each* of us. No matter where we are, we are in His hands. He shelters us. He watches over us. He protects us. And that is because God loves us, as a mother loves her child. I can’t always be there with my children to watch over them, but it feels awfully good to know that God is!

This year, Mother’s Day has taken on a special meaning. With so many mothers in Israel mourning their children, I’m holding my children a little closer—and I feel them hugging me back in a special, close way.

But it doesn’t need to take tragedy to open our eyes to the value of our mothers. What’s godly about mothers is that they are there for their children in all situations; when they can’t find their second shoe, when they need a warm and comforting home-cooked meal, when they provide middle-of-the-night snuggles when life just seems too hard to handle alone.

So, on this Mother’s Day, let us also celebrate the mothers in our lives—who protect us and who love us. And let us all, as mothers and as people of faith, find inspiration and strength in God’s Word, that no matter what frightening and sad things are going on in the world around us, we are safe in His hands.

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