

In the Face of Terror, Israel's Faith Remains Steadfast

The entire country is gripped with concern, and on the spiritual front—war. “They are lucky that the nation of Israel has unified and come together because of them,” the families of Gil-ad, Naftali and Eyal told me during my recent visit to their homes.

To an untrained ear, this sentence, which includes the word “lucky,” may sound strange. But in the world of inner strength, predicated not only on our security forces’ physical efforts but also on spiritual efforts, this sentence strikes at the heart and amazes those who hear it.

Faith in the Creator, by its very nature, tells us there are things that the human mind cannot understand, and with that we must see the light in everything that happens in our lives. Since the day of their abduction last Thursday, Jewish communities across the globe have held prayer vigils, have read Psalms and have dedicated ceaseless Torah study sessions. This is not specific to one sector of the population or another, is not gender-based and is not a matter of being religious or not; people from across all sectors in Israel and include all types.

I thank God for the opportunity to have participated in two prayer rallies at the Western Wall, and I tell you, my soul was moved to no end at seeing the Israeli people—men, women and children—standing as one in prayer, issuing a cry to the gates of heaven for our boys. Believe it or not, but the families gain strength from all the prayer services organized for their sons, who have already become all of our sons.

Secular people also joined the spiritual campaign this week. A

man from Tel Aviv, who has several family members who have become religious and whose decision he has struggled to accept, phoned the Shaer home in Talmon. He said that as a result of the spiritual outpouring and national unity he was moved to join the prayers.

Yeshiva students are also at the Shaer home, holding prayer and study sessions 24 hours a day. The women of the community have rallied to provide help and support. The situation at the Yifrach home in Elad is similar. The Frenkel family received a phone call this week from a Jewish man who said he wore tefillin for the first time in years in order to help the effort to bring the boys home.

I received a similar call on Tuesday from friends of Eyal Yifrach, who studied with him at the high-school yeshiva and now want to hold Torah study sessions at the family's home. They asked me to discuss the matter with the yeshiva heads and ask their permission to allow the students to miss class for this purpose.

In these days of security tensions, incidentally, during which the question of national strength has returned to the agenda, the Israeli people are proving that national strength lies in faith. And faith cannot be broken, even in the face of abductions and terror.

In the Passover Haggadah we read: "Had he brought us before Mount Sinai but not given us the Torah, it would have been sufficient." Rabbi Zvi Yehuda Kook used to say that God gave us the Torah at Mount Sinai only after the entire people of Israel stood as one, with one heart, at the foot of the mountain.

Unity among the people of Israel brought us the Torah, and this time, God willing, it will bring us the return of our boys safe and sound.

Rabbi Eli Ben-Dahan is the deputy religious services

minister.

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