

Warm Support for Israeli Soldiers in a Heatwave

Israel is undergoing a heatwave set to last much of the month. Because most Israeli men and women serve in the army, there's a special relationship with the soldiers as our sons and daughters. Because of the heatwave, and a significant anniversary this week, there's a grassroots way for friends all over the world to show appreciation to the young men and women in service. The Genesis 123 Foundation decided to provide cool refreshments to make them feel appreciated.

This is a personal story, on many levels.

August is hot, but this month, temperatures will spike well above 100 degrees. Through its "Bless a Soldier" program, the Genesis 123 Foundation is offering people the opportunity to provide cold drinks, sweet watermelon and ice cream to bless the soldiers and keep them cool. Sponsors can also help an ice cream truck to visit an army base.

In addition to sending cool treats, people are invited to send warm wishes. When donating to sponsor the treats, everyone can also send a personal note to be delivered with the refreshments.

Because its mission to build bridges between Jews and Christians and Christians with Israel, this program adds extra meaning. Israelis have stepped up to donate and ask if Genesis 123 can deliver to their children or grandchildren serving in remote areas on the Lebanese or Syrian border or in the middle of the Negev desert, where it's especially hot.

Building bridges between Jews and Christians, this is a really great way through which Israelis can appreciate the support of Christians from all over the world, who are not just supporting soldiers in general, but specifically the children

and grandchildren of those who are also donating within Israel. What a nice opportunity to support our soldiers together.

This week is also the anniversary of the end of the Second Lebanon War—and another personal story.

My family vacationed in northern Israel the week after the war ended, at a hotel on the Sea of Galilee. One day, I packed the back of our minivan with as many bottles of drinks as I could fit. We began heading north. My kids wanted to know where we were going. The further north, the more obvious it was where we were going. Tanks and armored personnel carriers were all over the place. Acres of fields were burned due to devastating fires created by rockets. Metal road signs showed the scars of bolts and ball bearings that had been packed into the rockets to inflict the maximal damage. Lebanon, here we come.

Soon we were on a dirt road. Out of nowhere, two soldiers stepped out of some bushes where they must have been keeping cool from the brutal heat. They told me I couldn't drive any further. I got out of the car, opened the back and said, "We came here to give you these drinks."

My kids helped unload the car. The soldiers were speechless. In gratitude, they gave my children bullet casings from the ground where we were standing as a gift, underscoring how close we were to the border—a strange but meaningful souvenir.

I told my kids why this is what we do. They are all our sons and daughters, our brothers and sisters. That's what we did this week, an "only in Israel experience."

Listen to this episode of *Inspiration From Zion* on Charisma Podcast Network to hear more. {eo}

Jonathan Feldstein was born and educated in the U.S. and immigrated to Israel in 2004. He is married and the father of six. Throughout his life and career, he has been blessed by

the calling to fellowship with Christian supporters of Israel and shares experiences of living as an Orthodox Jew in Israel. He is president of the Genesis 123 Foundation which builds bridges between Jews and Christians and writes regularly for a variety of prominent Christian and conservative websites. Inspiration From Zion is the popular webinar series and podcast that he hosts. He can be reached at inspirationfromzion@.

Read articles like this one and other Spirit-led content in our new platform, CHARISMA PLUS.