

Turning Pain into Blessing

“I didn’t know that I would never see my Dad again,” she spoke softly, her brown eyes looking into the distance. Leah,* a little eight-year-old girl, described to her camp counselor just how confusing it was for her the day she heard that her father died in a terror attack. Leah* describes the day that her home was filled with people and her mother took her into the bedroom and told her about her father’s death. “I didn’t go to the funeral,” she says, “They gave me a choice and I chose to go to my cousin’s house. Thinking about that makes me very sad.”

Many Israelis lost their lives during Operation Protective Edge over two years ago. In commemoration a collage of photographs of those victims was widely shared on social media. When I look at this patchwork of loss, I cannot help but envision how this image would enlarge exponentially with all the photographs of those who were negatively impacted by such loss of life—all the bereaved mothers, fathers, husbands, wives and children. Moreover, I think about the empty seats under the *sukkah* during this Feast of Tabernacles, as families in Israel come to terms with yet another year of senseless terrorist attacks. Terror is a shattering act which leaves ripples in the hearts of those affected. The lasting trauma on family and friends is often irreparable. Israelis never want to forget those who have given their lives for a better Israel. Neither do we forget these precious lives lost, and with your help Bridges for Peace can assist those affected by terror to transform their pain into something better.

The Ripple Effect

According to the Israel Trauma Coalition, for every person who is killed or physically wounded, another 27 suffer psychological trauma and anxiety that require treatment. Earlier this year Members of Knesset questioned the Israeli Health Ministry’s capability to cope with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) victims in a wartime scenario, with calls for each city to have a state center for treating PTSD victims. After Operation Protective Edge, 40% of the children in the Gaza border town of Sderot suffered from symptoms of anxiety, fear and PTSD. This is a reality of life in Israel which many of us have never had to face. To live in a constant state of threat is affecting the people of Israel, and even more so, the most vulnerable —the children.

Trauma of Terror

Terror is an act of hate that can destroy families. Most families are not equipped with the coping mechanisms to deal with their trauma in the healthiest way. The effects of terror eventually manifest in the behavior of every victim. Children are more vulnerable as often they do not have the emotional

(* Name has been changed.)

maturity to deal with the fear and anxiety which they feel. While adults may reach out to a counselor in order to work through their emotions, children bury their trauma inside, shutting down emotionally. It takes specialized programs and attention for children to begin to process their grief and make a decision to share their inner turmoil.

Love and Support

We had the privilege of spending a morning at Camp Koby, a summer camp for children affected by terror, run by the Koby Mandell Foundation. Through various therapy components, Camp Koby has found new ways to assist terror-affected children to process their traumatic experiences. Camp Koby gives children like Leah the opportunity to open up about their feelings, to process their grief and gives them a place to feel that they belong. At this camp their story of loss is not strange, but a shared pain with so many others. It was wonderful to see these children, affected by the most painful experience in life, joyful once again. To hear about the close bonds that they had formed with the other children and then also the support and strength they gained from the camp counselors.

You can be a Blessing

Through the Victims of War fund, Bridges for Peace partners with the Koby Mandell Foundation to sponsor programs like Camp Koby. This is one of many projects that Bridges for Peace undertakes to support victims of terror. Your gift will not only support anguished children, but also minister to anyone touched by terrorism. These needs include building bomb shelters in at-risk communities, helping burn victims, assisting those left handicapped and contributing other items these individuals require.

"You have turned for me my mourning into dancing; You have put off my sackcloth and clothed me with gladness..." (Ps. 30:11).



Photos by Jonathan Feldstein/Koby Mandell Foundation

You can reach out with God's unfailing love to those who are victims of terror. You can help the people of Israel to not only prepare for any threats they may face, but also to assist those whose lives have been irrevocably changed by terrorism. Your assistance will help Israel's children victimized by horror and hatred overcome their trauma and live normal, productive lives. Please give generously.

Blessings from Israel,
Rebecca J. Brimmer
International President and CEO

BRIDGES FOR PEACE Your Israel Connection...

Victims of War

US \$50 US \$100 US \$500 US \$1,000 US \$ _____ (other)

- Enclosed is \$ _____ for your **GREATEST MINISTRY NEED.**
 I wish to make an ongoing financial commitment: \$ _____ monthly

Greatest Israel Need Any size gift \$ _____	Victims of War Any size gift \$ _____
Karmiel Center Any size gift \$ _____	Dental/Medical Aid Any size gift \$ _____
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Adoption Program _____ x US \$65/month Requires a one-year commitment \$ _____	Bomb Shelters Any size gift \$ _____
Feed a Child _____ x US \$65/month Requires a one-year commitment \$ _____ Any size gift \$ _____	Arab Family Assistance Any size gift \$ _____
Adopt an Israeli Town _____ x US \$150/month (or more) Requires a one-year commitment \$ _____	Programs and Materials (US \$25 per year) \$ _____
Project Rescue _____ x US \$400 or any size gift \$ _____	The Land of the Bible Experience (Educational Center) \$ _____
Project Tikvah (Hope) _____ x US \$45 (or more) \$ _____	Christian Leaders Forum _____ x US \$90 per individual \$ _____
Save an Israeli Life _____ x US \$25 per life \$ _____	Zealous8:2 (Young adults) Any size gift \$ _____
Immigrant Welcome Gifts Any size gift \$ _____ (Bibles, blankets, kitchen sets)	Zealous8:2 Scholarship Any size gift \$ _____
New Immigrant Fund Any size gift \$ _____	Volunteer Support I wish to make a monthly commitment. (Name _____) \$ _____
Cheer Basket _____ x US \$25 each basket \$ _____	Vehicle Fund Any size gift \$ _____
School Starter Kit _____ x US \$7 each kit \$ _____	
Home Repair Any size gift \$ _____	
TOTAL \$ _____	
Enclose amount in US dollars or your currency equivalent. Indicate your currency symbol.	

Payment Options

- Check:** Make checks payable to Bridges for Peace. US and Canadian gifts are tax-deductible. Credit-card gifts can be processed in Australia, Canada, Israel and the US.
 PayPal: Go to www.bridgesforpeace.com and click on "Blessing Israel."

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- I will pray for Israel and the Jewish people.
 I also need your prayers, which I have attached.
 I have placed Bridges for Peace in my will to bless future generations.
 Please send me information on your Bridges for Peace travel programs.
 Please send your publications to my friend(s), whose name(s) and address(es) is/are attached.