

Shabbat Shalom!  
Good to see you all.

Before October 7, the State of Israel looked different. I'm not just talking about the sadness that exists right now, and the grief that is felt in the air. I'm talking about a feeling of chaos, among the citizens and in the government. Before October 7 there were protests almost every day, fighting in the news about who is right and what is best to do, a lot of political confrontations that don't always end in a pleasant way.

Sometimes you could really feel the hatred between people, the lack of respect for each other. But after October 7, the State of Israel does not look the same at all. Besides the terrible pain and shock that the country and the world suffered, the relationship between people changed. There is extensive and very exciting civil action. From a situation where people are not ready to talk to each other, today they volunteer together for the sake of the country. Every day many people go to do farming in the fields in the south. Without this help, the farmers won't be able to pick all the fruits and vegetables, and those fields will rot completely, in a very short time.

My family goes every week, on Friday, to help a different farmer each time. In our conversation before Friday dinner, they tell me about the people they met this time, how many people are coming and what an amazing thing it is to see people's spirit and willingness to volunteer. Since the beginning of the war, the citizens of Israel have volunteered in every possible organization, and it only makes me think how crazy it is that the citizens of the country are doing more than the country itself. What a huge power and impact we have as a society, when we use it for good things.

Besides helping in agriculture, there are many people who volunteer in other organizations. One of them is MDA- Magen David Adom, an organization I'm very familiar with.

For 4 years I was part of MDA, which is a branch of the Red Cross. I volunteered on ambulances and trained trainees to go on ambulance shifts in the future. The experience of volunteering filled me with so much joy, and a sense of meaning. Today, I'm sitting at home and just dying to go and help in what I can, at the blood donation stations, at the hotline for medical calls and of course in the field.

My friends from MDA who have not yet been drafted, volunteer every day. I had the chance to talk to a good friend who does shifts near the Gaza Strip, and I was shocked by what he said. With all the desire to contribute and help as much as possible, he did not expect to see the sights he saw, he never wanted to witness such a thing. During volunteering, we sometimes come across difficult cases, but despite our maturity it's hard to see how painful the world can be. But he remains to volunteer on the ambulance, and to do more shifts, because he wants to help.

And there is nothing more exciting than seeing the actions of the citizens of Israel in the last month. The true and pure desire of people to contribute and make it easier for soldiers, the families of the hostages and all those affected by the war.

Next month I am supposed to visit Israel, and I am so excited to feel this atmosphere, which I'm sure will also give me strength and hope for a better future.

Thank you all, and Shabbat Shalom