



Heroes and Heroines of Light The Stories



Shani Teshuva

kibbutz Zikim

Zikim is a place with many miracle stories from that Black Sabbath. From my 10-minute delay in leaving for the bike ride in the direction of Netiv Ha'Asera (the delay that saved my life), to the swift reaction of the emergency squad, to the rockets that fell and did not explode on our street, and more. A story about amazing children who were in the safe room from 6:30 a.m till 9:30 p.m., living under a crazy barrage of rockets and since then coping with living a different and new life in the Jerusalem hills.



Hila Fakliro

Nova survives

The story of Hila's survival and escape, from the Nova Party, in uncertainty and danger to her life, until reaching the settlement of Patish.

In the early morning hours we found ourselves instructed to lie on the floor due to the continuous rocket attacks in the area. Amidst the chaos, the police directed us to enter our cars and evacuate the premises. As I reached the road outside the party venue, blocked on both sides and surrounded by uncertainty, the rockets persisted in their ominous presence. Forced to take cover due to the perceived threat of terrorists, we were soon instructed to resume our journey in the cars.

As we moved forward, a sudden wave of people running towards us, warning of imminent danger, created a scene of panic. Gunshots echoed from both the front and the back, prompting the police to advise us to abandon our cars, enter the secured area, and run eastward. Brief stops along the way offered only momentary relief, as the sound of gunfire persisted. The ensuing four-hour journey on foot, with two armed police officers as our escorts, covered 15 kilometers without water. Finding refuge in Moshav Patish, graciously hosted by a local family, we remained in hiding until the situation became clearer.

Ofer and Rony Kisin

Kerem Shalom



Simchat Torah celebrations in Kerem Shalom united residents from all walks of life. Amid prayers and dancing, Moshe Yedidia Raziel led a spirited rendition of "Am Yisrael Chai." The next morning, red alarms rang, and the standby squad, trained for emergencies, swiftly assembled.

Facing dozens of terrorists breaching the kibbutz, the 15-member force, including Amichai Yisrael Witzen and Yedidia Raziel, fought fiercely for six hours. Witzen, a father of five, maintained calmness, urging his wife to ensure their children celebrated the holiday. Tragically, Witzen and Raziel were killed in action.

The kibbutz medical team worked tirelessly amidst ongoing fighting, treating the wounded. IDF reinforcements arrived at 1 p.m., securing full control of the kibbutz by evening. The fallen heroes Witzen and Raziel, both from Psagot, saved the kibbutz, preventing terrorists from entering civilian homes.

Their bravery is a lasting symbol of dedication. May Amichai Israel Witzen and Yedidia Raziel Rosenberg Rest In Peace.



Batia Holin

Kibbutz Kfar Azza

I was in the "safe room" at home with my husband from Saturday, 7 October 2023, at 6:30 a.m, until we were rescued on Sunday morning. During the day, I managed to join IDF forces on the kibbutz and save an entire neighborhood thanks to technology and resourcefulness.

My daughter was also staying at her house with her children, and on Saturday afternoon we lost contact with her. We didn't know what had happened to her and my grandchildren until they were evacuated on Sunday afternoon, a few hours after us. All this while I was running among the soldiers at the rescue point and begging someone to go to rescue my family. Another son of mine was at home on the kibbutz and was rescued late Sunday afternoon.



Rotem Holin

Kibbutz Kfar Azza

My two children and I stayed in the "safe room" from Saturday, 7 October 2023, at 6:30 a.m. until we were rescued on Sunday, 8 October 2023, at about 12:30 p.m. The terrorists came into my house and the "safe room", and when I explained that I was at home with two small children, they decided not to harm us. They stayed with us in the "safe room" and in our home for about two and a half hours until they left. We were rescued a day after they left.

Except for three families in my neighborhood, all my friends from the nearby area were murdered and/or kidnapped.



Assaf Ertel

Kibbutz Kissufim

Assaf Ertel, a 52-year-old kibbutz member, managed settlements in southern Israel for two decades. At the head of Kibbutz Kissufim near Gaza for almost two years, he woke up on October 7, just before the first siren. Quickly grasping the hardware, he became a messenger between the emergency room and the IDF sweepstakes unit when the cellular network failed.

Since that Shabbat, separated from his family, Assaf has been with the Kissufim community who evacuated to the Dead Sea and established education and welfare systems in the hotel. Now, after two months, the focus is on rebuilding the kibbutz and the community and examining future options while supporting the affected families, as the beginning of the long and painful journey home.



Eran Smilansky

kibbutz Nir – Oz

Eran Smilansky, a 28-year-old potato farmer and member of the emergency squad in Kibbutz Nir Oz, displayed remarkable bravery during the terrorist attack on October 7th. Realizing that terrorists aimed to burn his house, Smilansky leaped from his hiding place, through the kitchen window as eliminating six terrorists.

Because of the chaos, Smilansky initially mistook the terrorists for IDF soldiers. Taking cover in a closet, he shot the intruders, preventing a potential bombing of his home. After his heroic stand, he assisted the emergency squad in rescuing a family affected by the blaze.

The IDF arrived hours later, securing the area. Smilansky's courageous actions, including neutralizing the attackers and aiding others, stand as a testament to resilience amid the harrowing events in Nir Oz, where approximately 25 residents lost their lives and 75 were kidnapped or missing.



The story of

Modi Amir

Kibbutz Kfar- Azza

Anat Amir's father, Modi Amir, was murdered in his house in Kibbutz Kfar Azza at 7:00 am on Saturday, October 7.

There were other family members with him in the house when the terrorists broke in. He told them to hide in a small inner room within their safe room and bade them to lock the door and keep silent. When the terrorists entered the safe room, he pretended to be alone. He sat on the floor, his back to the door behind which the others hid, knowing that they will murder him, but that his body will further impede the terrorists from entering the inner room. Indeed, once he was killed the terrorists did not search further, and the lives the others were saved



Benny Avital

Kibbutz Nir Oz

Member of a local security squad in Nir Oz.

That Shabbat, I was alone with my children and one of their friends. I went out to help and save other families, even before army forces arrived without knowing if there were terrorists in the kibbutz.

In addition, on that bloody Shabbat, my older brother, Gil Avital זכרו לברכה, who was part of the security squad, was killed in battle with terrorists at Moshav (a community settlement) Yesha .



Bar Vilker

Nova survives

I attended the novah party, not as a guest, but as a worker responsible for sustainability. When the rockets began around 6:30 in the morning, my colleagues and I quickly left the party. Approaching the car, we found ourselves on a trail of cars waiting to exit. Luckily, our driver friend maneuvered around them and reached the main road. Sensing something amiss, we turned toward the open direction, encountering roadblocks and gunfire. Following a police officer's instructions, we ran east, escaping to the field and hiding among trees. After hours of walking, we reached Petish, where buses took us to Be'er Sheva and eventually back home. In the chaos, we attempted to escape in a car, but gunfire halted us, creating a bottleneck. Abandoning the cars, we walked eastward, understanding there was no turning back. After hours of walking in the field, we finally reached Petish with others, where we waited for evacuation. The internet revealed the event grounds were occupied, leaving us without a chance of survival without our car. It was a harrowing experience, marked by gunfire, narrow escapes, and the constant need to adapt to an ever-changing situation

