



Sermon Sparks **Lekh Lekha** **By Rabbi Matthew Futterman**

Go to the Land Which I will Show you...

With this command our founding father, Avraham Avinu, settled with his family establishing the Land of Israel as the homeland of the Jewish people. Across the centuries their descendants prayed to follow their example with many realizing the dream and returned to the Land.

Thirty-seven years ago my wife, Chana and I returned with our two children to her native Israel - the land where we met and where our youngest child was born. The distance between Ashkelon, our home, and all our friends in North America in the pre-internet days made keeping in touch difficult.

But since October 7 we have been uplifted by the hundreds of emails, WhatsApps, Facebook messages, phone calls and Zoom calls from people we haven't seen in decades. Seeing Ashkelon get pounded on the evening news has reminded old friends that this is where we live, where we raised our children and, as in the past, is a favorite target for Hamas missiles.

Although we appreciate everyone's concern and good wishes I wasn't sure before now how to answer the question so many asked: "How can we help!"

Other than coming in person and placing their lives in danger or contributing to an effective organization caring for the displaced or soldiers - they want to know what else they can do.

After days and days of pondering I have an answer: Get in the faces of the Hamas enablers where you live with the truth. And stress that the Palestinians are not the enemy - Hamas is. We need you to flood the enablers with graphic proof of the inhuman savagery of Hamas.

Here in Israel we are prevented from seeing the absolutely horrific photos of what happened to our friends and relatives, our children and elderly - our neighbors.

But many of you have seen them. You know the truth. And despite the truth being out there we are challenged by thousands of Hamas supporters marching in every major city calling for support for the resistance. The Hamas enablers have undertaken a mission to hide the truth. While posing as progressives dedicated to preventing a humanitarian crisis they proudly tear down photos of the children held captive by Hamas - who orphaned many of these very children.



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And then we have to tread the minefield created by individuals in positions of power and influence: including university presidents, New York Times reporters and the head of the so called United Nations.

In the name of truth we need to document all the lies underlying the Hamas narrative until we persuade the enablers and their ignorant followers to reject the false narrative. It is a challenge as we learn from Winston Churchill who said, "A lie gets halfway around the world before the truth has a chance to get its pants on."

We need our friends overseas - especially the Jews of the Diaspora - in addition to everything already being done for us - to wage a war against the fake news. We need you to flood and inundate the university heads and newspaper publishers with the photos we are not allowed to see. Eventually some will begin to understand that they have bought into a narrative of lies. If they don't internalize the Torah's teaching to distance oneself from lies, perhaps another of Churchill's statements will ring true: "Truth is incontrovertible, ignorance can deride it, panic may resent it, malice may destroy it, but there it is."

In the folk tale of the Golem of Prague the creature is brought to life when the three letter word "emet" (truth) is inscribed on his forehead. But he ceases to live when the first letter ("aleph") is removed - when truth is compromised - leaving the word for death: "met".

The consequences of not getting the truth in the faces of the Hamas facilitators will inevitably be an overwhelming abundance of death.