



“When God was about to create heaven and earth, the earth was in chaos, unformed and void and darkness was over the face of the waters. Then God’s spirit glided over the face of those waters and God said, “Let there be light!” and there was light. And when God saw how good the light was, God divided the light from the darkness. God then called the light Day and called the darkness Night, and there was evening and there was morning the first day.” Genesis 1:1-5 - This week’s Torah portion

The forces of darkness are not new to the Jewish people. The terrible events in Israel over the last days strikes at the heart of every Jew living on this earth. Our hearts break as we hear story after story of devastating, inhumane and unspeakable acts of hate and terror against our brothers and sisters in Israel -against babies, children, women, men, and young teenagers attending a music festival celebrating peace. In our Torah, we find the instruction to “blot out the name of Amalek”. Why is Amalek singled out for this decree? It is because Amalek was known to attack the most vulnerable of the Jewish people - those who were placed at the back of the line in times of war - the women, children, and elderly. So here in the year 2023, in the world in which we live, we see once again the manifestation of Amalek - in this case a terror organization whose sole mission is to annihilate the Jewish people. They came after the most innocent and vulnerable along with others, in a manner we have not seen since the Holocaust, and which we never imagined we would ever see again.

Still, still, we are the Jewish people. While our hearts may break, our spirit will not. We must not let it. We must not be overcome with despair to the point of inaction. While Israel, like every country including ours, has its political tensions and divisions, we must be unified in doing all we can to combat hatred, violence, evil. Our strength is in our values, in our ideals, the actions we take every day to heal and repair this world - to bring more goodness, beauty, love and light into it. Our strength is in our community, in **this TINR community**, where we come together to share, learn, pray, celebrate, comfort and care for one another in good times and in bad.

On that very note, Rabbi Gallop and I want you to know that we are here for you. We are available to sit with you, listen, provide comfort, as well as spiritual and/or emotional support. The days and weeks, even months ahead, may be challenging vis-à-vis the events in Israel, so please, if you or someone you know are in need of support, do not hesitate to call or send an e-mail. Together in solidarity with Israel, the Jewish people and all good people of this earth, we will remain strong and make our way through the darkness into the light.

Finally, for those of you who have been asking how you can help and support Israel at this time, here is a [link to American Friends of Magen David Adom \(the Israeli equivalent of the Red Cross\)](#) which provides medical assistance to those in need.

We pray for the peace of Jerusalem, all Israel, and all inhabitants of this earth.

***“Oseh shalom bimromav, hu yaaseh shalom
aleinu v'al kol Yisrael, v'al kol yoshvei teyvel, v'imru Amen.”***

Warmly,
Cantor Rita Glassman