

Yizkor: We will remember the fallen from the Black Shabbat of 5784-2023 and embrace the living | Shitim Institute

May the People of Israel remember its sons and daughters, faithful and brave, people of labor and peace, victims of the massacre on the Black Shabbat of 5784.

Let us remember the women and men murdered in their homes, in the fields, and on the roads throughout the Western Negev, which were breached and occupied by a cruel and merciless enemy.

The mother, gathering the last of her strength to hold the iron door handle tight to protect her family from the evil on the other side.

The father, throwing his children out of the window of their burning home, leaping out after them and taking the lead bullets with his own body.

The friends, once dancing in the light of the sunrise and now fleeing murderers through the fields but finding no refuge.

Let us remember the courageous ones who ran to defend and protect.

The warriors, women and men from local security teams, who confronted the enemy with their meager weapons, fighting with their lives.

The soldiers, women and men, positioned along the fence, who fought courageously, the few against the many, and fell in battle.

Those serving in the Security and Rescue Forces and the civilians who hastened from all over the country to help their brethren under attack and were cut down in the killing fields.

Let us remember all the inhabitants of the frontier, citizens and soldiers, foreigners, residents, and visitors whose bodies served as our border.

Let those who fell on that Black Shabbat be bound up in the hearts of Israel for all the generations to come.

Let us embrace the living, the survivors of the hell and the atrocities on that dark day.

Let us embrace the hostages, women and men, who are still being held prisoner in the underbelly of Gaza, old and young, female and male soldiers, the baby and the toddler, the mother and the father. Behold, their eyes are looking upon us, so let us not remain silent until they are returned home.

Let us embrace the little girls and boys who grew up under the shadow of a volcano and were caught in the crosshairs of the erupting inferno.

The wounded, of both body and spirit.

Those trembling with worry for their dear ones who were abducted.

The orphans, the widows and widowers, and all the bereaved.

The refugees of this destruction, the communities of Israel, by the thousands, who were forced into exile from their homes without knowing when they may return.

Let our mourning not go silent, and not be comforted, and not fade away until Israel returns and redeems its plundered land, and dwells upon it in safety and peace for all the generations to come.

*This writing was inspired by the previous versions of the Yizkor prayer, as written by Berl Katznelson for the fallen from Tel Hai, Abba Kovner for the victims of the Holocaust, and Ahuvia Malchin and Aharon Ze'ev for Israeli casualties of war.