



ISRAEL UPDATE

with Pastor Trey Graham



December 3, 2023

As Christmas approaches...

We all struggle.

We all struggle in different ways.

We all struggle in different ways at different times.

We all struggle in different ways at different times in different places.

IDF says 800 tunnels discovered in Gaza op, 500 destroyed or sealed

By EMANUEL FABIAN and AGENCIES

📺 / Military says hundreds of kilometers of tunnels, many of which link Hamas's 'strategic assets,' eliminated; IDF Arabic spokesperson urges Shejaiya battalion to surrender

IDF carries out 'extensive' airstrikes in Khan Younis area amid heavy Gaza fighting

Rocket fire from Gaza continues; IDF says it hit more than 400 terror targets over past day, including mosque used as command center; IDF asks Gazan civilians to move to safe zones

Israel kills Hamas commander behind deadly attacks; rocket barrage targets Tel Aviv

IDF chief okays battle plans for continued ground offensive in Gaza; defense minister: We've returned to fighting in full force

Netanyahu vows 'total victory' against Hamas; says PA rejects Israel, can't rule Gaza

By JEREMY SHARON and TOI STAFF

At press conference, PM insists ground op is only way to destroy terror group, acknowledges differences with US, claims he let money into Strip for years for humanitarian reasons



The IDF is calling on the residents of eastern Khan Yunis to evacuate, in the leaflets it is distributing now. "Khan Yunis is a dangerous combat zone." The residents are called to go further south, to Rafah. – Amir Tsarfati



Source: Ocha, Israel Defense Forces



Ruth Munder, 78



Keren Munder, 54



Ohad Munder, 9

**1st Group
Released
last Friday**



Daniel Aloni, 45



Emilia Aloni, 5



Raz Katz, 4



Doron Katz, 34



Aviv Katz, 2



Adina Moshe, 72



Margalit Mozes, 78



Yaffa Adar, 85



Channa Perri, 79



Hanna Katzir, 77

HOSTAGES TRANSFERRED TO ISRAELI CUSTODY





Israeli hostages released on November 25, 2023: Top from L-R: Sharon Avigdori and her daughter Noam, siblings Alma and Noam Or; middle: Hila Rotem, Emily Hand, Shiri Weiss and her daughter Noga; bottom: Adi Shoham and children Yahel and Naveh, Maya Regev, and Shoshan Haran. (Photos: Courtesy; combination image: Times of Israel)

**2nd group
released**

**Released last
Saturday**



THIRD GROUP OF HOSTAGES RELEASED



**AVIGAIL
EDAN, 4**



**HAGAR
BRODUTCH, 40**



**OFRY
BRODUTCH, 10**



**YUVAL
BRODUTCH, 8**



**ORIA
BRODUTCH, 4**



**CHEN GOLDSTEIN
ALMOG, 49**



**AGAM GOLDSTEIN
ALMOG, 17**



**GAL GOLDSTEIN
ALMOG, 11**



**TAL GOLDSTEIN
ALMOG, 9**



**ALMA
AVRAHAM, 84**



**ADRIENNE
SIEGEL, 62**



**ELA
ELYAKIM, 8**



**DAFNA
ELYAKIM, 14**

Released last Sunday



Israeli hostages released by Hamas on Nov. 27, 2023 (Photo: KAN 11)

**4th group
released**

**Released on
Monday**

ISRAELI HOSTAGES RELEASED



RIMON KIRSHT
36



GABRIELA LEIMBERG
59



MIA LEIMBERG
17



CLARA MERMAN
63



OFELIA ROITMAN
77



DITZA HEIMAN
84



TAMAR METZGER
78



NORALIN BABADILLA
60

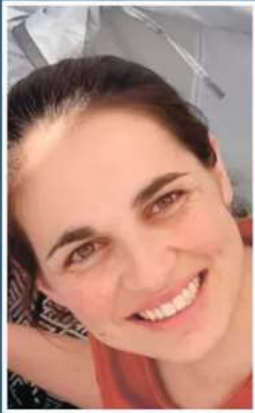


ADA SAGI
75



MEIRAV TAL
53

**5th group
released
Released
on
Tuesday**



6th group released

**Released on
Wednesday**



8 Israeli hostages released by Hamas on Nov. 30, 2023 (Photo: KAN 11)

**7th group
released**

**Released on
Thursday**

**110 hostages have been released so far (86 Israeli and 24 foreigners)
Estimated 136 still being held, including 15 women and 2 children**

Info on Deaths of Israelis Held by Hamas Start to Emerge

By **Hana Levi Julian** - 20 Kislev 5784 – December 2, 2023

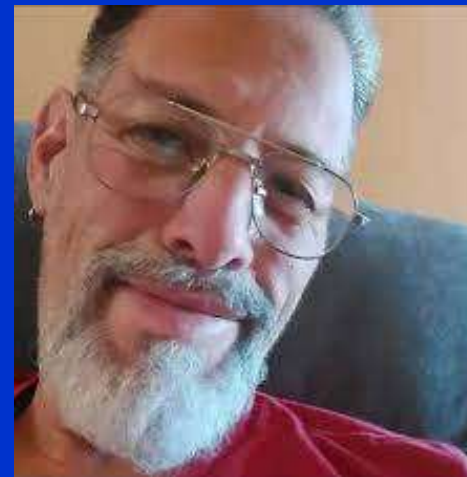
JEWISHPRESS.COM



Colonel Asaf Hamami, 41



Eliyahu Margalit, 75



Ronen Engel, 54



Ofra Keidar, 70



Guy Illouz, 26



Ofir Tzarfati, 27



Maya Goren, 56



Aryeh Zalmanovitch, 85

A ground campaign is the only way to win Gaza war, Netanyahu says

During a separate press conference earlier in the night, Defense Minister Yoav Gallant said that there were still 15 women and two children hostage in Gaza.

By TOVAH LAZAROFF

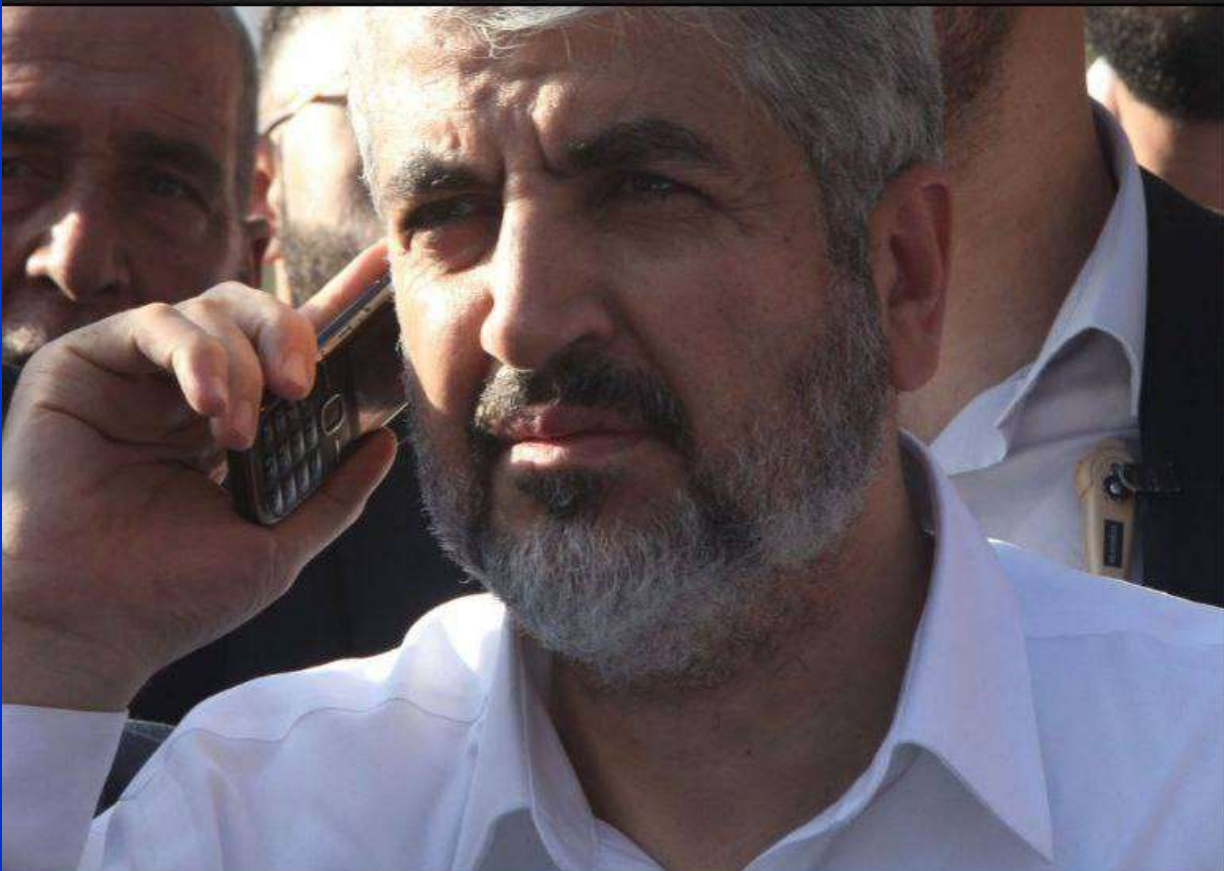
DECEMBER 2, 2023 21:41 Updated: DECEMBER 2, 2023 22:48



A ground campaign is the only way to win the Gaza War, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said as he pledged destroy Hamas just after Qatari mediated talks for an additional truce and further hostage releases collapsed in Doha late Saturday afternoon. “We will continue the war until we achieve all its goals,” Netanyahu told reporters in late night press briefing. He turned to the international community, stating, “you are partners in our goal of eliminating Hamas and freeing the rest of our hostages. “Therefore I emphasize to you as well: **there is no other way to achieve these goals - but to win, and there is no way to win except by continuing the ground campaign,**” he stated. Netanyahu underscored that this would be done while “observing international law.” The IDF, he stressed, is acting to protect Israeli citizens both against Hamas in the south and Hezbollah in the north. “We are continuing the policy we established: a strong deterrence in the north, clear decisive [victory] in the south.” He issued a warning to Hezbollah not open a second front on the north. “If Hezbollah makes a mistake and enters into a large-scale war” that it will be responsible for Lebanon’s destruction. Netanyahu spoke one day after the Gaza war resumed following a seven day lull from November 24 to December 1.



WSJ



Khaled Meshaal, a Hamas founder pictured in 2016, survived an Israeli assassination attempt in Jordan in 1997.

GETTY IMAGES

Israel Plans to Kill Hamas Leaders Around the World After War

Nation's spy agencies have long history of targeted assassinations

Hamas has no regrets over October 7, 'war of liberation' is coming - official

THE JERUSALEM POST

By DANIELLE GREYMAN-KENNARD



Osama Hamden
(photo credit: screencast)

Osama Hamden, a senior official in the Hamas terrorist organization's Political Bureau, insisted in an interview with Lebanon's Bel Moubashar Online that Hamas did not regret the October 7 attack and that a larger "war of liberation is coming."

The interview, which took place on November 29, was translated by the Middle East Media Research Institute.

The interviewer asked Hamden: "If you could go back in time to October 6, would you still do what you did on October 7?"

On October 7, Hamas committed a large-scale terrorist attack that killed 1200 people, including babies and foreign nationals. The attack was the deadliest day in Jewish history since the Holocaust.



Defending the October 7 massacre and promise of future violence

In response to the question, Hamden answered, "Why do some people assume that we would want to go back on our acts of resistance?"

"So you have no regrets?" the interviewer prompted.

"Regret for shattering an entire division of the occupation army?" Hamden countered.

Following this, the interviewer asked Hamden, "You said that if Israelis would make new arrests, after all the prisoners are released from [Israeli] prisons, you would carry out another operation. So, can you promise another October 7?"

During Hamas' attack, the terrorists kidnapped over 200 Israelis and foreign nationals to be used as hostages. As part of a Qatari-brokered ceasefire agreement, Israel has released terrorists and criminals in exchange for the release of women and children held by Hamas.

"I can promise a war of liberation is coming," warned Hamden, "not just another October 7."

Hamden also warned that he did not think the war would be "far off" when the interviewer asked if the war was planned for the "foreseeable future."

We all struggle.

We all struggle in different ways.

**We all struggle in different ways at
different times.**

**We all struggle in different ways at
different times in different places.**

We all need Hope

Matthew 1-2

Luke 1-2

Jacob was the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, by whom Jesus was born, who is called the Messiah. Matthew 1:16

Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: when His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit. Matthew 1:18

Meet Joseph of Nazareth

- He grew up in the village of Nazareth, in the Galilee region
- His father's name is Jacob and he is a distant descendant of King David (Matthew 1:20)
- He is betrothed to and later husband of Mary (Matthew 1:18)
- He is called a “righteous man” (Matthew 1:19)
- He was by trade a carpenter or craftsman (Matthew 13:55)
 - Carpenter = τέκτων *tektōn* in Greek
 - A worker in wood, a carpenter, joiner, builder; a ship's carpenter or builder; any craftsman, or workman.

Meet Mary of Nazareth

- Greek name Maria [Μαρία, Μαριάμ]
- Hebrew name Miryam מִרְיָם; named after the elder sister of Moses and Aaron
- She grew up in the village of Nazareth, in the Galilee region
- As a young teenager, she was betrothed (Hebrew erusin אֵירוּסִין) to Joseph
- She was taught a woman's role in Jewish prayers and blessings, and like all Jewish people she was waiting for the promised Messiah
- She is described as a “virgin” in Luke 1:27
- She is called “favored one” of the Lord in Luke 1:28
- The angel Gabriel said “the Lord is with you” in Luke 1:28

The confusing struggle begins

And Joseph her husband, being a righteous man and not wanting to disgrace her, planned to send her away secretly. Matthew 1:19

Joseph's 1st of 4 Dreams

But when he had considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for the Child who has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus [Yeshua], for He will save His people from their sins.” Matthew 1:20-21

God keeps His promises

Now all this took place to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet [Isaiah 7:14]:
“Behold, the virgin shall be with child and shall bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel [עִמָּנוּ אֵל],” which translated means, “God with us.”
Matthew 1:22-23

Will we obey God in our struggles?

And Joseph awoke from his sleep and did as the angel of the Lord commanded him, and took Mary as his wife, but kept her a virgin until she gave birth to a Son; and he called His name Jesus (Yeshua יֵשׁוּעַ).

Matthew 1:24-25

**In a difficult and confusing life situation,
Joseph prayed and trusted God.**

**In our struggles, do we pray and fully
trust God?**

At the Kotel (Western Wall) tonight.
A young man was off from the army to visit his
family.
The cease fire ended.
He is heading back to fight in Gaza.
He stopped at the Kotel to pray before he goes
down south into the battle field.
May God protect him and all our brave soldiers.



How does Mary's story begin?

Now in the sixth month [of Elizabeth's pregnancy] the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the descendants of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. Luke 1:26-27

Where
does the
Christmas
story take
place?



Mary is not alone in her struggle

And coming in, he [angel Gabriel] said to her [Mary], “Greetings, avored one! The Lord is with you.” But she was very perplexed at this statement, and kept pondering what kind of salutation this was. Luke 1:28-29

*Greek verb χαριτόω *charitoo*

*Definition: to favor, to make accepted

Mary receives a promise in her struggle

The angel [Gabriel] said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary; for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus (Yeshua יֵשׁוּעַ). He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob (Israel) forever, and His kingdom will have no end.” Luke 1:30-33

Our struggles lead to our questions

Mary said to the angel [Gabriel], “How can this be, since I am a virgin?” Luke 1:34

How would you react when God’s promise seems impossible?

The angel [Gabriel] answered and said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy Child shall be called the Son of God. And behold, even your relative Elizabeth has also conceived a son [John the Baptizer] in her old age; and she who was called barren is now in her sixth month. For nothing will be impossible with God.” Luke 1:35-37

Mary believes while she struggles

And Mary said, “Behold, the bonds slave of the Lord; may it be done to me according to your word.” And the angel [Gabriel] departed from her. Luke 1:38

Now at this time
Mary arose and
went in a hurry to
the hill country,
to a city of Judah,
and entered the
house of
Zacharias and
greeted
Elizabeth.
Luke 1:39-40



Friends can encourage us when we struggle

When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby [to be known later as John the Baptizer] leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. And she cried out with a loud voice and said, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! And how has it happened to me, that the mother of my Lord would come to me? For behold, when the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby leaped in my womb for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what had been spoken to her by the Lord." Luke 1:41-45

Mary praises while she struggles

And Mary said: “My soul exalts the Lord, and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior. For He has had regard for the humble state of His bonds slave; for behold, from this time on all generations will count me blessed. For the Mighty One has done great things for me; and holy is His name. And His mercy is upon generation after generation toward those who fear Him.” Luke 1:46-50

“He has done mighty deeds with His arm; He has scattered those who were proud in the thoughts of their heart. He has brought down rulers from their thrones, and has exalted those who were humble. He has filled the hungry with good things; and sent away the rich empty-handed. He has given help to Israel His servant, in remembrance of His mercy, as He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and his descendants forever.” And Mary stayed with her [Elizabeth] about three months, and then returned to her home [in Nazareth]. Luke 1:51-56

Now in those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus [Octavian, first Roman emperor; reigned 27 BC - AD 14], that a census be taken of all the inhabited earth. This was the first census taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. And everyone was on his way to register for the census, each to his own city.
Luke 2:1-3

*Rome took a census every fourteen years for both military and tax purposes, and each Jewish male had to return to the city of his fathers to record his name, occupation, property, and family.

Our struggles often require us to act

Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David, in order to register along with Mary, who was engaged to him, and was with child. Luke 2:4-5

Caravans would travel about 20 miles per day, and the distance between Nazareth and Bethlehem (80-90 miles) would translate into a 4-day journey. However, Mary (nearing her pregnancy term and possibly riding a donkey) would require more than 4 days for fear of miscarriage. So perhaps a week (or more) would have been needed.

<http://wiki.answers.com/>



Life keeps moving even when we struggle

While they [Mary and Joseph] were there [in Bethlehem], the days were completed for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son; and she wrapped Him in cloths, and laid Him in a manger [feeding trough], because there was no room for them in the inn. Luke 2:6-7

In the same region there were some
shepherds staying out in the fields and
keeping watch over their flock by night.

Luke 2:8



And an angel of the Lord suddenly stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them; and they were terribly frightened.

Luke 2:9



But the angel said to them [shepherds], “Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people; for today in the city of David [Bethlehem] there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.” Luke 2:10-11

Dealing With All Types Of Struggles

Joseph, Mary and the shepherds were separately told “Do not be afraid”

- But when he had considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for the Child who has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.” Matthew 1:20
- The angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary; for you have found favor with God.” Luke 1:30
- But the angel said to them [shepherds], “Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people;” Luke 2:10

In the midst of all the painful struggles this Christmas season, we need to hear...

1. Do NOT be afraid
2. Hear the GOOD news
3. You can experience GREAT joy
4. This is given for ALL the people
5. A Savior has come for YOU

**In our struggles,
what is the Good News?**

“there has been born for you a Savior”

Have you surrendered to Jesus?

Let's pray Psalm 20 together

May the Lord answer you in the day of trouble! May the name of the God of Jacob set you securely on high! May He send you help from the sanctuary and support you from Zion! May He remember all your meal offerings and find your burnt offering acceptable! May He grant you your heart's desire and fulfill all your counsel! We will sing for joy over your victory, and in the name of our God we will set up our banners. May the Lord fulfill all your petitions. Now I know that the Lord saves His anointed; He will answer him from His holy heaven with the saving strength of His right hand. Some boast in chariots and some in horses, but we will boast in the name of the Lord, our God. They have bowed down and fallen, but we have risen and stood upright. Save, O Lord; may the King answer us in the day we call.