



*„...and the Lord will be
jealous for his
land! Joel 2:18*

Serious time: Yossi

DURING THE WAR:



Alke with Dvora

„So much has happened and there were so many different experiences during the war. I can only share a little of my observation about our small group of survivors. When our 3 boys were kidnapped, knowing they were in the hands of terrorists— that has triggered some deep depression. We at Ner Yaakov truly have the goal to comfort, but seeing this deep well of depression showed me again, that without God touching His people, we are humanly speaking helpless. However, the one thing we could do is: To stand with the survivors and stand with Israel—and for sure: Pray!

The Ner Yaakov house was very empty, which was hard for me. But in July we did expect our Brazilian Jewish friends again and we prepared with joy. Only four days before the meeting they had to cancel— the airport was closed. I was surprised that the survivors wanted to come anyway. „Inge, we are only sitting in front of the radio and listening to the news. It is good to come together for a little bit!“ This gathering was one of the most challenging and hard meetings we ever had at Ner Yaakov. Just a few days before many of “our kids”—soldiers—had died. They gave their lives for us and there was so much indescribable pain—also with us—and at the meeting there was much tension. Some wanted our friend Alke to make some music to cheer the crowd up, but others felt it was totally inappropriate to have music. I understood both sides and needed much grace and wisdom to walk through this situation. Also there was some tension between survivors who have lived here most of their lives and the new immigrants, which is usually not an issue at all at Ner Yaakov Thank God, most went home overall pleased that they had come. I am so thankful to tell you, that at the next meeting none of this tension between them was left! Praise God!

I did see that some survivors were afraid, but almost none of them were afraid for themselves: Their fear was for the young soldiers and for their land—not for themselves. Their grandchildren are in the army, some had even been inside Gaza. I think, that none of us can really imagine what goes on in the heart of a grandparent who has survived the Holocaust. One survivor’s blood test came out bad, because she had not heard from her grandson who was in Gaza, for about 12 days.

But not only the grandmothers feared, all felt like “they are our kids“. I am still thinking about a comment a dear lady— a survivor from Auschwitz made. She said to me, „Ever since we have our own State I fear for it! But how good that our boys can die while fighting for our land, not in the crematorium in Auschwitz! We are not seeking power, but we are not power-less anymore!“

Visiting a few survivors I also realized that, even if they had bomb-shelters or safe-places, they could not make it in time, because their walking is very slow and with a cane. However, none of them complained about that, They only said: “We have survived so much more...!“ As I visited in Ashdod, which was under constant heavy attack, I did not speak with Raissa a lot about the war, because I remembered, that even in better times she had kept her I.D. under her pillow, just in case she has to run away fast! We just visited! I was so impressed at one of my home visits. Simion and Ina in Ashdod, who have a small flat with a big balcony, had long decided to build a room on this balcony. While I was visiting them, we had to run to the bomb-shelter twice, but right after the danger ended, they went out and continued to build! They are amazing!

*In it all I saw so much pain, but also so much strength. May I call it:
Strength like „overcomers“!*



Home visits: Raissa

Rifka

Simion

Ina

**„How good that our boys can die while
fighting for our land, not in the crematorium
in Auschwitz! We are not seeking
power, but we are not power-less
anymore!“ Survivor from Auschwitz**