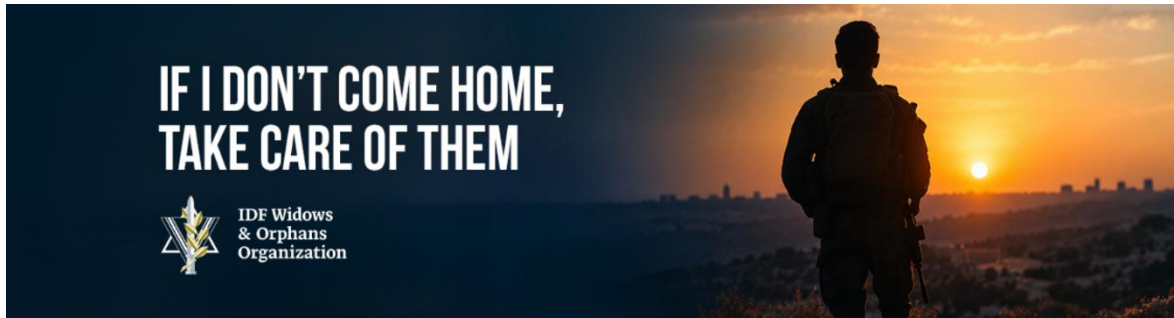




Between Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur

Greetings from Shlomi Nahumson, IDFWO



Dear friends,

Twice in Israel's history, we entered the holidays believing we knew what the days ahead would bring, only to have our world suddenly and violently changed.

In 1973, it happened on Yom Kippur.

Fifty years later, it happened again on October 7.

Both times, war arrived with devastating surprise. Both times, the number of widows and orphans we serve grew dramatically. And both times, the wounds extended far beyond individual families, leaving a lasting scar on Israeli society and the Jewish people.

I will never forget the horror we felt as the events of October 7 unfolded. And today, nearly three years later, there is not a single day at the IDF Widows and Orphans Organization when we do not encounter the



consequences of that day, just as we continue to walk alongside families still carrying the consequences of the Yom Kippur War and every war Israel has fought.

During the Ten Days between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, we are called upon not only to reflect on our actions, but to consider our responsibility to one another, and to act.

More than 1,000 children have lost a parent in Israel's defense since October 7, 2023.

We cannot give them back what they have lost. But together, we can help lift them up.

With the support of people like you, we can provide the care and opportunities these children and their families need throughout their lives.

- ♥ Sometimes that means providing financial help when a family needs it most.
- ♥ Sometimes it is a scholarship for college and the promise of a brighter future.
- ♥ It can mean celebrating a Bar or Bat Mitzvah, helping with a wedding, or simply making sure there is a new backpack for the first day of school.
- ♥ It can mean sending a child to Otzma camp, where no one has to explain what it means to have lost a parent.



♥ And sometimes, perhaps most importantly, it means providing a mentor, a community, and the knowledge that someone will always be there.



I want to thank you for choosing to stand beside our families. Through that choice, you enable us to be there for them not only in the moments of loss, but throughout the entire journey. You enable us to give children the opportunity to grow and thrive alongside others who truly understand them, and to give widows and widowers a community that offers friendship, a sense of belonging, and the strength to keep going. You help us provide our community with a place where the longing and the pain are always present, but where there is also life, growth, joy, and hope.

We know we can never take a parent's place. But together, we can keep an unspoken promise to those who fell in Israel's defense: If you do not return, your child will never be alone.



For me, that promise feels especially profound during these days.

We look unto the new year and the holidays with hope and gratitude. We pray for quieter days and for the safe return of all those defending Israel. But whatever the year ahead brings, our widows and orphans must know that **we will be here. And that you will be here with us.**

May the coming year bring healing, hope, good news, and peace. G'mar Chatima Tova from Israel,

Shlomi Nahumson, CEO IDFWO

Video IDFWO →

ARC to ISRAEL is a partner of the IDFWO in its vital work for widows and orphans.

More information at: www.arc-to-israel.org/widows-orphans as well as in the book: [*“Israel’s Trial by Fire – The Fateful Years Around October 7, 2023”*](#)

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