



The Hidden Blessing

A Secret Weapon of Israel



In search of the driving force that enabled Israel to survive to this day and led to its resolve to never giving up hope. What gave the incentive to continue fighting in the darkest hours? What gives Israelis confidence to this day that - despite all appearances - there will be a bright end?

Burning Questions



When I started to learn about Israel years ago, I kept coming up against the same questions:

Why did these nation not give up for 2,000 years? Any other people without a national reference point (such as minorities in their country of origin) would have long since assimilated and lost their identity. Where did this utopian hope come from? How could anyone even think of living in Jerusalem again in a completely contrary reality?

Why did the Jews found their own state at that time of all times, after millions had perished in the Holocaust and only a fading minority remained? It was the time in modern history, when Judaism was at its weakest, both in terms of numbers and strengths. What did most of the new immigrants bring with them to build this country, beside the terrible memories of concentration camps and the lifelong scars and disabilities caused by the suffering?

Why do so many Holocaust survivors grow very old and have large families? Had they not experienced first-hand what a nightmare life could be? Hadn't they learned that there was no security? Were they really so naïve, as to believe that they could survive in the midst of the many Arab-Muslim states that were not prepared to recognize Israel's right to exist? It was only a matter of time before the next wave of destruction came.



How is it that 23% of all Nobel Prize winners are of Jewish origin, even though they make up only 0.2% of the world's population? That is a hundred times the normal proportion! Why these people, of all people, who have been prevented from developing freely over the centuries by professional bans and who often grew up marginalized in ghettos? How was it possible that this misery led to an explosion of creativity and such triumphs of the spirit?

When I got to know Israelis personally, I often recognized the same pattern in their lives. Rising again and again as a phoenix from the ashes. Using defeats as a springboard. Not letting them get you down. Planting trees for the fallen. Again and again new beginnings, new life emerged from the ruins.

What enabled these people, what was the secret of their inexplicable successes and achievements? What was their secret weapon?

Of course, and rightly so, one can see God's hand and his blessing in all these events. But I was of the opinion that there was more to it than that. Because the things, I wanted to get to the bottom of, were not just miracles. They were events, in which the people concerned played a very active part. What was the secret of their psychological, mental, physical and intellectual resources? And why did this come about despite difficult conditions, disadvantages and suffering?

Does Suffering Have a Purpose?



I found a clue in the writings of Viktor Frankl, a Jewish Austrian psychologist, who spent several years in the Auschwitz concentration camp. In his book "[Man's Search for Meaning](#)", in which he describes his survival, he writes: "If life has any meaning at all, then suffering must also have a meaning" and "it is precisely extraordinarily difficult external situations that give people the opportunity to grow beyond themselves internally... and thus opportunities to begin to shape a different reality". He continues: "Life means ... to bear

responsibility for the proper fulfillment of the tasks that life presents to each individual. Suffering is a very unique task and the way, in which the person affected by fate, bears this suffering is the unique opportunity for a unique achievement".

Suffering as a breeding ground, suffering as a path - to achieve something special? Suffering as an opportunity?

That was a completely different view from the one I knew.

In the world around me, happiness meant the absence of suffering - and success was associated with unhindered access to resources and options.

The Western view was - and is! - the hypothesis of the exact opposite of Frankl's approach: with sufficient encouragement, affirmation, support and corresponding opportunities for self-fulfillment (i.e. an environment without suffering and lack), anything can be achieved. Western development programs for individuals and countries are based on this logic. But the results are often not convincing ...

Viktor Frankl's book gave me a lot to think about.



From Being a Slave to Becoming the Leader of a Great Empire



If you want to understand Israel, it is obvious to go back to the Bible. And who is a better example of a successful career than Joseph? He became the second man after Pharaoh over Egypt. He was successful and influential: thanks to him, Egypt was able to avoid famine despite seven years without a harvest and was even able to help people from other nations. From a shepherd and a slave he became the operational leader of the empire at the time. What a rise! But at what cost?

He was sold as a slave by his own siblings out of sheer resentment, because he was his father's favorite and had dreams, where he was superior to them. He was preferred and denounced his brothers to their father, when they blasphemed. Was the result of his special fostering arrogance and over-confidence that led to hatred and almost to his death?

This trauma was apparently a turning point in his life. From here on, we hear that he succeeds in everything because God blesses him and that he rises to become Potiphar's steward. But fate strikes again. This time through a woman, who wants revenge for the fact that she cannot seduce him. He is sent to prison - without a hint of guilt and without the possibility of defending himself. The surprising outcome: The young man, who reported everything negative to his father, had become a man, who did not complain, although now he had every reason to do so. Instead, he got to work in and became the unofficial prison manager. Eventually, his ability to understand God's voice from dreams leads him to Pharaoh's court. The maturity and far-sightedness of his recommendations pave his way to the top of the state - and make him the savior of countless people, including his own family.

Joseph was ready to “bear responsibility for the proper fulfillment of the tasks that life sent him”, to use Frankl's words. The way he bore his suffering ultimately gave him “the unique opportunity for this unique achievement”.

Were the bitter experiences, the disappointments, the years of suffering ultimately the forge in which Joseph's character was formed, so that he could later act without presumption, without condescension and without revenge - even towards his own siblings? Was this climax possible not in spite of but solely because of this pain-filled career?

And what had kept Joseph from sinking into self-pity and giving up hope all these years? What had given him the strength to keep going and make the best of each situation? What inner knowledge had driven him during the long period without any humanly visible rays of hope?

Was Joseph an isolated case? A man with special abilities? An exception? On the one hand certainly, but on the other hand not.



An Orphan with Migration Background Becomes Queen



Let us look at a young girl, who was raised far from home, in a foreign land. Her people, the Hebrews, had been taken into exile from Jerusalem by King Nebuchadnezzar. So she grew up as part of a disadvantaged national minority in Persia. In addition to this uprooting, she also lost both her parents. An orphan with an immigrant background, she was eventually raised by her older, single cousin.

She was chosen for the king's harem because of her beauty. Another stroke of fate. A woman without rights, whose normal destiny would have been to spend the rest of her life banished to the house of concubines. But her charm and authenticity won her the king's heart and she became queen.

And after only a short time, the fate of her entire people would lie in her hands.

Because Mordechai, her cousin, was not willing to bow down to the prime minister Haman as if to a god, the latter decided to murder all the Jews on a single day, the 13th of the month of Adar. He persuaded the king to decree that the Jews were to be exterminated and their property was to be made available for plundering. Despair spread among the Hebrews. Within Esther as well.

Would she have the courage to go to the king and plead for her people, at the risk of losing her life, because she too was only allowed to approach him, when she was called? In the end, she did so in an incredibly wise way, with the result that the Jews, instead of being annihilated themselves, were allowed to destroy their enemies with royal approval.

This last-second salvation has been recorded into Jewish history as the Purim miracle and is celebrated every year again: 2025 - on March 13 and 14.

Esther's story, in which God's name is not mentioned once, also makes clear the personal responsibility of each individual in an impressive way. Without ifs and buts, without excuses. Esther would have had many reasons not to intervene. But she understood that she had perhaps become queen for precisely this situation and that she too (as Frankl puts it) "was responsible for the proper fulfillment of the tasks that life presents to each individual". She used the suffering that was to be inflicted on the Jews for a unique achievement and saved her entire people.

How, in the face of this absolute catastrophe, confronted with the extinction of her people, did she rise above herself instead of giving up? Why did she think, she had a chance to turn around the already sealed fate of her people? Where did she find the audacity? What had prepared her for this task? Was it the long difficult years of her childhood in which she had developed an inner strength?



Thousands of Years Later: a Nation Rebuilds its Land



Around 2,500 years later, there was no one in Europe who stood in the way of the genocide of the Jews. It was carried out with frightening systematicity and efficiency for years. Induced disease, malnutrition and excessive labor were replaced by mass shootings. Then came the extermination camps, in which millions of people were murdered, mainly in gas chambers (in what is often described as an industrial form). Nazi Germany thus wrote the darkest page in world history. But the whole world supported this atrocious action through either active participation or indifferent passivity.

By 1945, the majority of European Jewry had been annihilated and almost property had been looted. The survivors had been transferred from extermination camps to refugee camps and continued to live behind barbed wire because they were still unwanted in their countries of origin. It was the loneliest, bitterest hour since the expulsion into exile - and the most hopeless.

Theodor Herzl's dream of 1897 to reawaken the Jewish state seemed buried under the mountains of corpses, every initiative suffocated in the gas of the extermination chambers. Hope seemed to have crumbled to ashes in the crematoria.



How did it come about that on November 29, 1947, in this very situation, the United Nations decided to offer the remaining Jews the opportunity to proclaim their own state? Did they just want to get rid of the refugees and thus of the responsibility? Did they expect the action to fail? Why did they then advise the Jews not to seize this opportunity? Or did they assume that the Arab states would bring Hitler's Holocaust to an end so that the Jewish question would be buried for all time? Why did they deny Israel military support and even enforce an arms embargo?



And yet one man, David Ben Gurion, decided on his own, against the recommendations of all the Western states, to take the step towards independence: despite the warnings of the Soviet bloc and against the threats of the Arab countries. Even against the advice of his own generals!

What did this man see that the others did not? What was his confidence based on?

Only a few hours after the proclamation five professional Arab armies invaded Israel. The few thousand Jews tried to defend themselves with rifles and grenade launchers against the tens of



thousands of the Arab League, their artillery, tanks, airplanes and warships. The final extinction of the remnants of this people seemed sealed.

But they did not give up! What moved Holocaust survivors, who had arrived in the country as human wrecks, to take up arms and fight against all human reason? Why were the Jews born in Israel, the Sabras, not content to continue living as a tolerated minority in the country at the risk of losing everything? What chance did the 650,000 see against 150 million?



But around a year after the proclamation of the state, Israel proved its ability to survive to an astonished world - against all odds. (More details on the history of Israel you can find in the articles: [“Israel – A Hope fulfilled”](#) - Part 1&2)

We know from physics how diamonds are created: Carbon is transformed in the liquid rock of the earth's crust around 150 km below the surface, under incredible pressure and at over 1,000 degrees Celsius. This process, in which the hardest natural elements on this planet are formed, which have an incredible radiant power, takes millions of years.

Were 2,000 years of exile, pogroms, persecution and over 6 million deaths the process that created a nation that could rebuild the land of their fathers? Did the way, in which those affected bore this suffering, create the unique opportunity for the unique achievement of founding the State of Israel?

The Special Secret Weapon

The examples described so far have various elements in common.

It is impressively clear that their suffering and the way they dealt with it, shaped and strengthened these persons internally and prepared them for challenges far beyond their imagination. Suffering was ultimately the breeding ground for their later human greatness, their abilities and finally their successes. This is where the meaning of suffering begins to emerge.

The second is the utter hopelessness of the situation. Each time, the sentence had already been passed, the execution had already been partially carried out. And yet, in the face of a seemingly irreversible and unstoppable downfall, these particular personalities did not give up. It was, as if they perceived another reality in addition to what everyone else could observe.

When veterans from the War of Independence were asked how they could explain this victory, the answer of some was: “There is an eternal covenant”. But that is not it alone.



The Jewish understanding of faith is: “Ein Od Milvado” (there is nothing other than him) and “Hakol Letova” (everything is for the good). In other words, if we believe that God rules the world, that he is good and that everything happens under his guidance, then there must ultimately be a good reason for everything that happens.

It is the prospect of a finally positive outcome, of a blessing that has not yet become visible, but which will certainly occur at a certain point in time. Even if you do not experience this moment yourself, your loved ones will be the heirs of this blessing. To despair and give up before it happens would

therefore be proof of a lack of trust in God and would lead to depriving oneself of the finale planned by God.

Take the example of the spies sent out by Moses to explore the Promised Land. They returned, but only two of them saw the possibility of taking this land. As a result, all the people had to walk through the desert for 40 years, and those, who doubted, died before the Hebrews actually entered the land. God kept his promise, but only the heirs and those who trusted in him from the beginning experienced this.

The principle of hidden blessing is to trust in the midst of suffering and hopelessness that everything has a purpose and that this is not the end. That despite the rubble and ashes, no - out of the rubble and ashes, God can and will build something new and wonderful, albeit - at the time of his choosing. And to actively look out for this result, to seek it with all our senses and to work towards it with all our strength.

Israel's men and women have used this secret weapon over and over again with success.



Own Experiences

At first hearing, this principle may sound simple. But when you try to apply it yourself, you realize how much inner strength and perseverance it requires. The most persistent opponents are your own thoughts, fears and experiences. It is therefore primarily a battle against oneself, a targeted control of the evaluation and interpretation of what one perceives.

The concept began to fascinate me. As someone, who had not had an easy childhood and was suffering from an incurable illness, I wondered, whether I might be able to find traces of a hidden



blessing in my own life that I had not previously been aware of. This search became a revelation, as I suddenly began to assess and understand my own past differently.

All my life I had missed the security and confidence that accompanies people, who experience security and support in their parental home. My father's focus on his work on the one hand, the lack of harmony between my parents and my mother's mental illness on the other, meant that our home was just a place to sleep for me. When my mother's illness became so acute that she could no longer live at home, I was left to my own devices at the age of 16. The fact that all my other relatives lived far away, made the situation even worse. There was no one available to help me, so I had to cope on my own: with everyday life, but even more so with decisions and actions that were crucial for my future. These were very dark, lonely years for me.



It was only when I began to deal with the Jewish understanding of suffering that the question began to germinate in me, as to whether there was a causal connection between the shortcomings of my childhood and my later successes. Had I unconsciously grown inwardly and become stronger as a result of this situation? It helped me to find a late peace with my past.

The fact that I have suffered from increasingly frequent and intense migraines since I was 14 years old, has also taught me something: To enjoy the moment and to try with all my might to make the best of it, because I never know whether the hours ahead will be mine. Whole days corroded away by pain and erased from life, heavy as unburied corpses. But what joy, what gratitude, what inner rejoicing in the unburdened moments. Each one a celebration of life. I realized with amazement that I had learned this intensity through migraine.

How Tears Became Diamonds



When my husband, Harald, was diagnosed with cancer in 2022, it was initially a blow for us. His father and grandfather had already died from the same disease. In the months that followed, he had to undergo regular surgical procedures. We lived from one appointment to the next. In January, a year later, two new tumors were discovered. It was devastating. And we had to decide, how much space we wanted to give to the fear. Whether we would allow ourselves to be paralyzed by the gloomy thoughts and worries that

suddenly overshadowed all our hours and especially our nights.

On the Shabbat evening after the double tumor diagnosis, we watched the burning candles grow smaller and smaller without losing their luminosity, radiating their warm light until the very end. And decided that we would celebrate life together in the time we had left, trying to make the most of



every moment. We were determined to concentrate on the important and valuable things and gratefully enjoy every precious hour.



The concrete consequence of this decision was to book a flight to Israel. This time we didn't want to discover new places and sights and learn more about this special country on a round trip. This time we actually just wanted to seek refuge with our Heavenly Father in the place, where he had said his eyes and heart would always be: In Jerusalem, at the [Kotel](#) (Western Wall). And that is what we did. I wrote about this special week in

the article: "[Altars of Gratitude](#)".

In the months that followed, we discovered that God had "filled our inner pockets" during this time - with ideas, initiatives, the revival of almost forgotten ones and the discovery of new talents. I reactivated my literary skills and began to write about Israel. The vision of a [website for Israel](#) was born. With minimal external help, Harald managed to acquire the necessary technical knowledge to build the website himself. We tried to include everything we knew about Israel and what we thought, was particularly important and valuable to make it accessible to others in [pictures](#), [stories](#) and [recommendations](#).

Constructive and creative thoughts replaced the gloomy images of the future. New ideas developed so quickly that we could hardly keep up with the implementation. We were happy and fulfilled during these months full of creative energy and zest for action and we felt that we managed to make the most of our days.



Then came the Hamas massacre on October 7th, 2023, and the reaction of the global public: the ignorance, the relativization, the indifference, the anti-Semitism. And for us, the moment to stand up for Israel publicly and in person. Given the emergency nature of the situation, our first [Israel event](#) was realized in less than 10 days and catapulted us into a new dimension: supporting Israel in a very practical way. Soon after, we were in the wounded country, meeting those affected, trying to alleviate their suffering and reporting as [contemporary witnesses](#). The "[Wounded Israel](#)" series was born. And a succession of [follow-up projects](#).

It began in Jerusalem in March 2023 and was born out of tears, pain and incredible pressure from all sides. But never before had we been so sure that we were doing the right thing. This way we were allowed to experience ourselves, how tears became diamonds.



Would all of this have happened without Harald's diagnosis or was this blessing made possible by the fact that we suddenly saw our lives from a different perspective, because of this prognosis? In any case, in contrast to my childhood, when I could only identify traces of blessing retrospectively, we were now much better able to deal constructively with a difficult situation. This time, we discovered the resulting blessing quite quickly.

And realized: you can learn it, you can claim it for yourself, you can get better at it. The circle that had opened up, when we read Viktor Frankl's theses on suffering, began to close. We began to understand that everything that happened to us actually happened for us. A completely different perspective! The supreme art is, to trust in the blessing that is not yet visible, as if it could already be experienced. Not an easy view. It requires inner strength and perseverance. But it opens up new worlds. An invisible but incredibly effective weapon against giving up.

How inspiring that each individual can also use this secret weapon in and for their own life!

The Spark of Survival

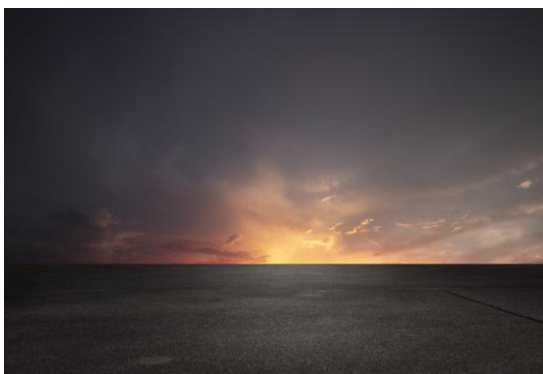


In this way, the stories of the Bible, current historical events and personal experiences round off the picture of the secret weapon that Israel's men and women used time and time again and that made them strong and invincible in the long term.

For all the conquering empires have failed: They have not succeeded in wiping Israel out permanently. Even though they expelled the Jews all over the world, they could not extinguish the thought and hope of a return.

Because every year at Purim, the Jews remember how God turned their fate around. At Passover, they celebrate how God freed them from the hands of Pharaoh and thus from the world power of Egypt, and at [Hanukkah](#), how he gave them the miracle of a small minority defeating the great empire of the Greeks. And these memories keep the fire of hope alive. Even the mass murder of millions of Jews could not snuff out the sparks. For there were always a few, in whom this hope continued to smolder, only to flare up even more. This is how they survived 2,000 years of persecution, expulsion and extermination. It is not for nothing that Israel's national anthem "Hatikva" is called Hope.

Hope in the Darkness



It is a confusing time. Injustice seems to be getting out of hand. The months of fighting have not brought a final victory, but seem to have multiplied the number of enemies. International support is dwindling by the day. The actual impact of Trump's presidency remains to be seen. It seems to be a battle on 100 fronts: In the media, for opinions, for the truth. In politics, in the hostage negotiations, in international institutions, as well as on the streets of many countries, even among friends.



The ceasefire with Hezbollah is fragile, because it has not withdrawn completely behind the Litani River as agreed. As a result, five Israeli military posts remain in southern Lebanon.

Egypt, from which the weapons for Hamas were smuggled, is violating the peace agreement with Israel and has deployed tanks and tens of thousands of soldiers on the Sinai Peninsula on the border with Israel. Iran is threatening a third attack and the Houthis are waiting.

Hamas humiliates Israel at every hostage handover and shows its brutal face once again. 1904 Palestinian criminals, including 496 sentenced to life imprisonment for murder and terror, are released in the first phase of the hostage deal - for 33 Israeli hostages, at least 8 of whom are no longer alive. Will the lives of these 25 - as in the past - be paid for with the lives of future victims, because many of the 496 released criminals will murder again? The fate of the remaining live or dead hostages in Gaza is not yet clear.

And terrorist attacks in Israel are on the rise. On February 20, 2025, three bombs exploded on buses. Further bombs - more than a dozen in total - were discovered and defused in other buses and on trains. All with timed detonators for the same time of day. It was a miracle that all these bombs were accidentally set for 9:00 in the evening instead of 9:00 in the morning. So there were no casualties. During rush hour the next day, hundreds would have been injured and killed. There have been no such attacks in Israel for over 20 years. But in recent weeks, Palestinian prisoners who had planted bus bombs during the Intifada have been released. A coincidence?

It is a war of attrition that starves minds and withers souls. Resources are dwindling, exhaustion is spreading.

In these times, Israel is once again called upon to activate its secret weapon: The knowledge that everything has a purpose. And, in the midst of suffering and hopelessness, to trust that God can and will build something new and wonderful despite the rubble and ashes, no - out of the rubble and ashes - at the time of his choosing. And to actively look for this result, to seek it with all her senses and to work towards it with all her strength. It means trusting God's goodness, his omnipotence and his promises more than all the logic of this world and acting as if you can already see the future blessing despite the abysses, obstacles and impossibilities.

This also applies to all those, who stand by Israel's side. It also applies to us!

Do we believe the media reports? How do we assess the situation? Are we ready to give up? Or do we remember the darkest hours of history and learn from them that even that was not the end? That God is never at the end of his possibilities?

How credible do we consider the Bible's statements that God has made an eternal covenant with his people and that all Israel will be finally saved?

How long and with what consistency are we prepared to stand by Israel's side?





Do we belong to the nations that turn against Israel, or do we choose to become the righteous among the nations by continuing to stand with Israel even during the hardest of times?

If we do not succeed in using this secret weapon for ourselves, we will grow weary, we will eventually despair at the apparent futility and hopelessness of the situation. But if we manage to see in all this a school, a learning process, which in the end will make Israel more mature and stronger and make it a light for all nations, we too will experience together with Israel how exactly this will ultimately come true.

Zechariah says in chapter 8:23, *“At that time, ten people from different countries will want to join a Jew. They will hold him by his robe and ask: ‘Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is on your side.’”*

They are not all, they are not many, but they have always existed: The righteous of the nations. Through the centuries, during the Holocaust and also today. Do we choose to stand with Israel? You cannot be faithful to God and ignore his people. Nor can we claim to follow God and at the same time violate the apple of his eye, “Israel”. For those, for whom the statements of the Old Testament are not enough, let's conclude by looking together at the Gospel of Matthew, chapter 25. It is about the Last Judgement - the king chooses the righteous. On the basis of what criterion? On the basis of what they have done for his brothers, even the least of them. Is it really difficult to understand that his brothers were and are first and foremost his people, the Jews?

Many of us have already experienced the truth “whoever blesses Israel will be blessed” in many ways. But one consequence of this is particularly impressive: those who stand with Israel also stand with God and will be his people together with Israel (Zechariah 2:14-15). Are we part of this?



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