

# BOOKMARKS OF TIME

## HOLDING THE MOMENTS THAT BEGIN AND END OUR STORY



### 1 A CYCLE THAT HOLDS US

Judaism teaches that time does not move in a straight line. Time circles and spirals, bringing us back to the same moments with new eyes. On Simchat Torah, we finish reading the Torah and immediately begin it again. Between one ending and the next beginning, we place bookmarks in time – moments that hold memory and meaning and help us see where we have been and where we might go.

This resource helps mark this historical moment – framed by two Simchat Torahs – through storytelling. It invites us to look back on the past two years, to name the moments that shaped us, and to begin imagining what comes next.



### 2 IMAGINING THE MORNING AFTER

On the weekend before the ceasefire, journalist Chen Artzi Srur gathered voices from across Israeli society, asking what people imagine the “morning after” will look like. Among them were Jon and Rachel Goldberg-Polin. Their words give language to a shared hope for ordinary days and renewed trust:

“Imagine a morning when we wake up and don’t have to convince ourselves to face one more day of struggle, just to wake and give thanks for another day in which we can make the world a little better than yesterday... To look into our children’s eyes and know that goodness is already budding, its scent close in the air. To feel seen and heard, to feel blessed and lucky. To use masking tape as masking tape – not as a tally of days in captivity... To recite psalms of praise and thanks – not prayers for freedom. To say the Shema without wiping away a tear.... To love – not to hurt more; only to love.”

Their words capture what this resource seeks to create – a moment of pause within the bookmarks of time. It invites us to look back on what has been and to look forward to what may come.





### ACTIVITY: SIX MOMENTS OF YOUR STORY



On Simchat Torah, we end the reading of the Torah and immediately begin again. We celebrate not because the story is finished, but because it continues.

Just as the Torah has five books, we can take stock of this long and difficult period in five key moments. Recall five scenes that shaped your experience, and feel free to reflect on any of the following for inspiration:

- The moment it began
- A moment of despair
- A moment when you felt the power of faith
- A moment that revealed light within darkness
- A moment that changed your perspective
- A moment of courage
- A moment of hope

In each box below, sketch or write about each moment. Give each one a short title, as if naming a chapter. In the sixth box, imagine the morning after, just as Jon and Rachel Goldberg-Polin did above.

1 _____	2 _____	3 _____
4 _____	5 _____	6 _____

When you finish, look at them together. What story do they tell? Where do you find hope or consolation in their unfolding? What meaning or direction emerges when you see them side by side?





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## RETURNING TO THE STORY

### הפוך בה והפוך בה, דכולא בה

*Turn it and turn it again, for everything is in it.*

– Pirkei Avot 5:22

Ben Bag Bag teaches that each time we return to the Torah, we uncover new understanding. The same is true for our own stories. When we revisit them, we see what continues to guide and strengthen us.

Share your story with someone, and then share it again. Each time you tell it, what new insight are you revealing about the pain, strength, despair and hope?

As one cycle closes and another begins, we echo the words said each time we finish a book of Torah – a reminder that strength is found not in finishing, but in continuing:

### חֲזַק חֲזַק וְנִתְחַזַּק

Be strong, be strong, and let us strengthen one another.



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