

# HATE IS EASY. LOVE IS HARD.

Taking Rachel Goldberg's speech at the U.N. really seriously



On October 19th, 2023, Rachel Goldberg, mother of [Hersh Goldberg-Polin](#) who was abducted by Hamas terrorists, delivered a powerful speech at the United Nations. In it, she demanded that the world not rest until the babies, children, women, men, and elderly hostages are freed.



Source: Hey Alma; Photo Courtesy of Jon Polin



Scan the QR code or [click here](#) to watch the speech.

## 1. WHY IS IT SO EASY TO HATE?

Rachel quotes *New York Times* journalist Nicholas Kristof who wrote: *“if your moral compass is attuned to the suffering of only one side, your compass is broken, and so is your humanity.”*



- ◆ In what ways might this statement ring true to you?
- ◆ What makes it so hard to be attuned to suffering on both sides?
- ◆ To what degree are you able, or willing, to see beyond your own suffering?

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Rachel suggests that we are attuned to the suffering of only one side because hatred is so easy. Read the following quotes from Rachel's speech, and then consider the questions that follow:

*“We must ask ourselves: do I aspire to be human, or am I swept up in the enticing and delicious world of hatred?”*

*“Hatred of the other – whoever that other is – is seductive, sensuous, and easy.”*

*“We opt for hate, because it is so comfortable, so familiar, and so very, very easy.”*



- ◆ In what ways does hatred contribute to our seeing the suffering of only one side?
- ◆ Rachel uses a deliberate set of adjectives to describe hatred: it is enticing, delicious, seductive, sensuous, comfortable, familiar, and above all – easy. Why these adjectives? Select 2-3 of them, and share why they might be apt.
- ◆ If it is easy to hate – what is the opposite of hate, which is so hard?

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Rachel finds comfort in knowing that *“there was someone trying to do the right thing when everything in the universe had been turned upside down.”*

- ◆ What is the right thing?
- ◆ In sharing the story about the person who did the right thing, how is Rachel trying to appeal to the humanity of the U.N., to humanity at large?

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## 2. WHY IS IT SO HARD TO LOVE?

Shir HaShirim – the Song of Songs, is one of the five Megillot (scrolls) in the Hebrew Bible. Its subject is love. One verse, in particular, describes how hard it is to love:

“שִׁימֵנִי כַחֲתָם עַל־לִבֶּךָ כַחֲתָם עַל־זְרוֹעֶךָ כִּי־עֵזָה כַּמּוֹת אֲהַבָּה”

“Let me be a seal upon your heart,  
Like the seal upon your hand.  
For love is fierce as death”

- Song of Songs, 8:6



- ◆ If it is so easy to hate, why is it so hard to love?

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The verse offers an antidote to help us manage the hardship in love: “Let me be a seal upon your heart; a seal upon your hand.”

- ◆ Why is it easier to love, if that which we love is sealed upon our heart and hand?

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### 3. A SEAL UPON YOUR HAND

In Israel, after the October 7th massacre, many people started tattooing onto their bodies the memory of that day. In doing so, they sealed what mattered to them upon their heart and hands.



- ◆ Below are two images of hands. On one hand, write or draw a 'seal' that will remind you why it is so easy to hate. On the other, write or draw a 'seal' that will inscribe inside of you what it takes to love.



