

SPECIAL DELIVERY FROM THE FRONT LINES

Sending Love in the Midst of War



Welcome guest
Welcome Shabbat
We've been eagerly waiting and you finally arrived!
The house is clean, we picked you a bundle of flowers
And spread a white tablecloth on the table.
The candles burn bright and the house is ready.

- Rivka Elitzur

שלום לך אורחת
שלום לך שבת,
חיכינו חיכינו סוף סוף הנה באת.
הבית שטפנו, פרחים לך קטפנו,
פרשנו מפה לבנה על שולחן.
הנרות מאירים כל הבית מוכן.

- רבקה אליצור



THE CALL TO SERVE

Pedaya Mark served in the IDF during Operation Iron Swords, but his circumstances were different than most other soldiers. Pedaya and his sister survived a terrorist attack seven years ago which took their father's life and left their mother seriously injured. His brother Shlomi died in a car accident a few years ago. And his relative, Elhanan Calmanzon, was killed on October 8th as he was rescuing civilians from the barbaric Hamas attacks.

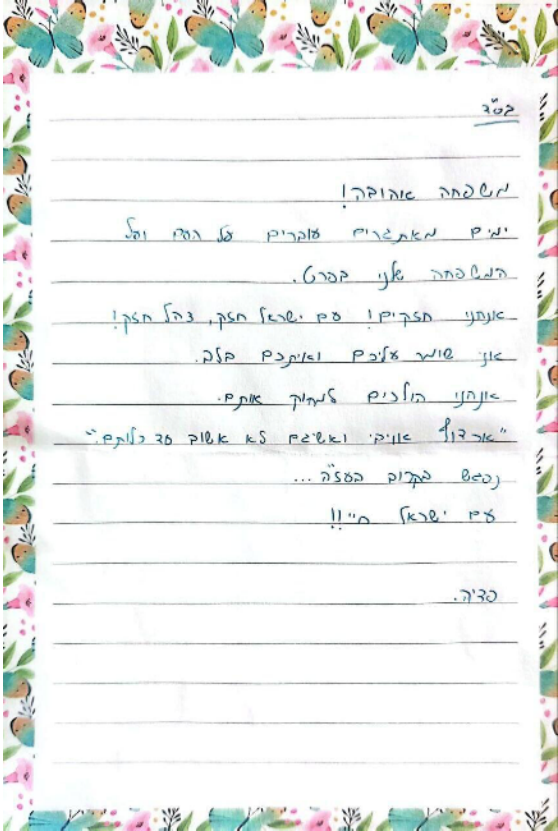
Since his family is a bereaved family, Pedaya had every opportunity to forego serving in a combat unit. But he felt a calling and a responsibility to serve as an officer, and found himself leading troops through Gaza in the current war.



SPECIAL DELIVERY

On the Shabbat of October 13, Pedaya was in the army and sent a bouquet of flowers to his family in the aftermath of his cousin's death. He wrote the following note:

BS"D
My loving family!
Times are tough, for our nation and for our family in particular.
But we're strong! Our nation is strong! The IDF is strong!
I'm watching over you and am with you with all my heart.
We're going to destroy them.
"I pursued my enemies and overtook them; I did not turn back till I destroyed them."
(Psalms 18:38)
We'll be together soon, with God's help...
Am Yisrael Chai!
Pedaya.



- ◆ What do you think compelled Pedaya to send flowers?
- ◆ What stands out to you from this note?
- ◆ How do you imagine his family reacted when they received the flowers and read the note?



A JEWISH PRACTICE

At almost every major intersection in Israel on Fridays, drivers pull to the side of the road, roll down their window and purchase bouquets of flowers for Shabbat. Outside of Israel, it's just as common to adorn the Shabbat table with flowers.

The source of flowers on Shabbat dates back to a Talmudic tale of Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai, who together with his son emerged from a cave where they were hiding from Roman persecution. It was just before Shabbat and they saw an elderly man take two bundles of myrtle branches (the same Hadas that is part of the Lulav).

“Why are you carrying those branches?” they asked.

“In honor of Shabbat,” the old man replied.

“Why won't one branch suffice?” they wondered.

The elderly man replied, “One branch to remember Shabbat (Zachor - זכור), and one branch to preserve Shabbat (Shamor - שמור).” Rabbi Shimon turned to his son and said, “See how beloved the mitzvot are to Israel!”

ZACHOR AND SHAMOR: IN PEDAYA'S MEMORY

זכור את יום השבת לקדשו | **Remember** the Holy Shabbat
שמור את יום השבת לקדשו | **Preserve** the Holy Shabbat

-From the Ten Commandments

One of Pedaya's final acts of love to his family was the special delivery he sent from the front lines. Pedaya's story ends in a tragedy. On October 31, at the age of 22, he was killed in combat along with many of his comrades from the Givati Brigade.

Just like the message in the Talmudic tale, the bouquet of flowers and accompanying note Pedaya wrote are an expression of remembrance and preservation.

Remember and preserve the legacy of Shabbat.

Remember and preserve the determination to defeat evil.

Remember and preserve the importance of family.

In Pedaya's memory and in honor of Shabbat, gift a bouquet of flowers to yourself, a friend, your family or a stranger. Include a note that captures reflections of what is most important to you that you want to remember and preserve.





A large rectangular area with a yellow border, containing 25 horizontal grey lines for writing.

