

October 2015

Conversation with Ahava Tomer

Jewish Agency representatives met Ahava Tomer outside the ICU at the Hadassah Hospital on Mount Scopus in Jerusalem. She has hardly left the place ever since her son, Yonatan, was rushed there two days ago after being stabbed numerous times by a terrorist. She is not allowed to enter and see him often, but she said Yonatan is already doing better and calls her on his cell phone from inside the ICU room. He is laying in a bed near Nadav— a 13-year-old boy who was critically wounded in the same attack.

Ahava said her son was at her bedside every day at the hospital three months ago when she underwent surgery to address a disability she has suffered from since contracting polio as a baby. Now he is hospitalized just down the hall from the ICU where she received treatment and she can't believe she is back.

She proudly described how Yonatan, who is the youngest of her 11 children, saved many lives during the attack when he shouted “terrorist, terrorist,” and yelled at a little girl to hide in a building. The girl's father has since called Ahava weeping, and thanking her son for saving his daughter's life.

Ahava recounted the day of the attack, saying that Yonatan was supposed to come back home from synagogue. When she heard ambulances outside, she tried calling him on the phone but he didn't answer. She grew more and more frantic, calling him to no avail until a stranger answered the phone, telling her that her son had gotten a scratch and was in the hospital. It took Ahava several hours to get to the hospital since the roads were all blocked. When she finally got there and saw her son in the ICU bed she couldn't believe it was him and broke down crying.

As she was sitting outside of the ICU room, she noticed that there was an Arab woman sitting across from her. Only later did Ahava realize that this was the mother of the terrorist who had attacked her son and was being treated in a bed right near Yonatan and Nadav — the other victim. After making a request to the staff, the terrorist was moved to another room.

Ahava, who received an emergency grant from **The Fund for the Victims of Terror**, is in desperate need of the financial assistance. Her husband is also handicapped and since the day of the attack hasn't been physically able to visit the hospital. The family doesn't own a car, so in order to come to the hospital she needs to get rides from neighbors and friends. Ahava plans on using the money from The Fund to help Yonatan while he is in the hospital by getting him a decent pair of pajamas and slippers to wear.

“It is very special that there are people around the world that care about someone like me, may I never need such a gift in the future,” Ahava said. “I want to say not just ‘thank you,’ but ‘a thousand thanks’ — I wish health to all those who gave and that may we never need such gifts in the future!”

** Important Note: Everyone mentioned is a real person. We have used aliases to give the family some measure of privacy during these trying times.



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