

Foreword to English Edition

The Jewish nation has always strived to emulate the great heroes and the nearly superhuman spiritual giants with which it has been abundantly blessed. For many generations, our role models were to be found, by and large, in our written and oral Torah. This admiration of our heroic predecessors and of our national and spiritual forefathers was expressed in the famous words of our sages:

Each and every one of the people of Israel must ask himself: when will my good deeds reach those of my forefathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.¹

The miraculous reawakening of our nation which led to the establishment of the State of Israel has given the modern day Jew still another, relevant, more immediate, though far less spiritually exalted source of inspiration: that of the leaders and fighters of the Zionist movement, the State of Israel, and the IDF.

For too long, it seemed as if these two sources of example and inspiration contradicted each other: if you were moved by the life-story and teachings of Rabbi Akiva, of the Rambam or of the Vilna Gaon, you were unlikely to feel for the likes of Herzl, Jabotinsky or Moshe Dayan, not even for their dedication and courage in helping establish a Jewish state; and if you did feel for the latter, you probably wouldn't be at ease with Torah-oriented role models. If you were lucky enough to identify with the vitality and majesty of the inner light of our life – the Torah – and at the same time also with the national valor and strength embodied in the heroes of Zionism and the State of Israel (if not with some of the other, less admirable aspects of their behavior), you were likely to feel some degree of dissonance or conflict, an inner contradiction.

But what appears to be an unbridgeable gap is actually nothing more than an illusion. The standard, facile distinction made

1 Eliyahu Rabba, parasha 23.

between what is labeled by many as “Judaism” as opposed to what is referred to as “being Israeli”; vanishes once we recognize the shared source of both what is “Jewish”, and the good, pure part of what is “Israeli”. Knesset Yisrael – the Jewish nation as an ideal, a timeless reality with a special link to Hashem that expresses itself throughout history in the Jews of every generation – is indeed the hidden, inner wellspring that nourishes our Judaism as well as our national life.

This belief – which was in short supply as we took our first steps in the long process of our national revival, and which was the core of the philosophic-spiritual system of the Torah giant: Rabbi Abraham Isaac Hakohen Kook – is spreading. More and more Jews understand the natural relation between these two integral components: religion and modern nationhood. In the past few years, we have witnessed the emergence of refined, sensitive souls, men of great stature, who identify with the whole, truly indivisible stature of the Jewish nation.

This book is a living memory of one of these special people, Major Roi Klein hy”d. Roi perfectly combined in his personality the “Jewish” traits with the “Israeli” ones, both in his noble life and in his heroic death.

In his life, a combat officer who studied the *daf yomi* – a substantial daily portion of Talmud study; an excellent student of industrial engineering and management who began his secular studies only in the afternoon, enabling him to delve into the deep sea of Torah study from the early hours of the morning until late in the day.

In his death, the officer who redefined bravery and courage in Israel’s Second Lebanon War, as he leaped on a live hand grenade to save the lives of others while sacrificing his own, who clearly and loudly said *Shma Yisrael* with his last breaths.

Our nation has paid too heavy a price because of the imaginary

contradiction between what is deemed “Jewish” and what is deemed “Israeli”. It is time for reconciliation. This was Roi’s deep belief; he lived for it, and also, to our utmost sorrow, died for it.

Since Roi’s death sanctifying Hashem’s name, his story touched the hearts of Jews throughout the world. We therefore thought that translating the book, thus enabling the large English-speaking Jewish community to read it and be uplifted by it, is well worth the effort. Our hope is that Roi’s noble personality, which is elucidated in these pages, will reach out and touch Jews worldwide, helping them unveil the noble Jewish traits and deep connection to Israel within their own souls.

Finally, I wish to thank the people who have helped make this edition possible: Sharon Blass, for taking on the lofty job not only of translating Rav Kashtiel’s discourses, but also of dealing with the challenging task of translating the esoteric, profound writings of the great Jewish luminaries – the Maharal and Rav Kook. Rabbi Jonathan Blass, for his wise counsel and enlightening comments. The talented Ben Gasner, for designing ‘With All Your Heart’ with all of **his** heart. Above all, my dear wife Noa, for being there during the whole process, with everlasting patience and sound advice.

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