



TORAH VEHA'ARETZ

INSTITUTE

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Halachic Responsa from the Battlefield

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On *Simchat Torah*, I was called up for reserve duty as the rabbi of a battalion, where I've served for the past five years. We protected the northern border for nearly five months and are slated to return later this year. Serving as a battalion rabbi in the reserves is fascinating and multifaceted: overseeing kashrut, issuing rulings on Shabbat observance, erecting an *eruv* for soldiers in the field, and providing religious items such as *tzitzit*, *tefillin*, *siddurim*, *chumashim*, and *sifrei kodesh*, including bringing a *sefer Torah* to soldiers in the field. Duties also include addressed halachic and hashkafic inquiries from both religious and non-religious soldiers, boosting morale by providing a perspective of faith, and building relationships with all of the soldiers, especially with the non-religious. We also trained to care for fallen soldiers, but *Baruch Hashem*, no casualties occurred in our brigade.

It was intense work, and I encountered soldiers eager to explore Judaism's perspective

on various matters and to hear the rabbi's guidance. Given my affiliation with Torah VeHa'aretz Institute, I also fielded inquiries from soldiers, officers, and army rabbis across the country, including those in Gaza, regarding land-dependent *mitzvot*.

Some questions I received include:

- Our tank division was stationed near a pomelo orchard on the northern border. Are we permitted to pick and eat pomelos? Must we separate *terumot* and *ma'aserot*?
- Civilians (with a non-religious appearance) brought fresh fruit to the settlement where we were stationed when I wasn't there, so I couldn't ask if they are tithed. Do I need to separate *terumot* and *ma'aserot*? If the fruit was already distributed and not in one place, can I still separate *terumot* and *ma'aserot*?
- Civilians were evacuated from a kibbutz adjacent to the border. May we pick lemons from their yard, or is that considered stealing? If not, how can I determine if the tree is *orlah*? Are the trees considered *hefker*, exempting them from *terumot* and *ma'aserot*?
- I'm in the battlefield without a phone or siddur and wish to separate *ma'aserot* from produce I received. Can I use an

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abbreviated text?

- I have a *siddur* but no wallet or coin for *chillul ma'aser sheni* (5784 is a *ma'aser sheni* year). Who can assist me with this?
- At the beginning of *Adar II*, a soldier contacted Torah VeHa'aretz Institute, inquiring if coins for *chillul ma'aser sheni* are still appropriated for soldiers.
- G-d willing, we will delve into some of these questions in the upcoming weeks. ■



Be'er Tziporah a"h - Bottled Water Gemach



Walking down King George St. in Jerusalem and want a cold bottle of water?

Come help yourself to a bottle at
52 King George.

In loving memory of Yoni's wife

Tziporah a"h, a true Eishes Chayil, always full of chessed, kindness and laughter, and brought life and strength to so many people, that she touched! She was like Aron, who loved peace and pursued peace.



Yoni thanks Hashem for having the opportunity of having Tziporah in his life, to learn of her caring, patience and happiness, to overcome her challenges. May Tziporah's Neshama be a light onto the world, in a time of darkness, and may her Neshama shine to Gan Eden. Yoni misses Tziporah with tears in his eyes, as Hashem gave him a gift, a crown jewel, now he returns her to Hashem.

With thanks and Toda. Love, Yoni

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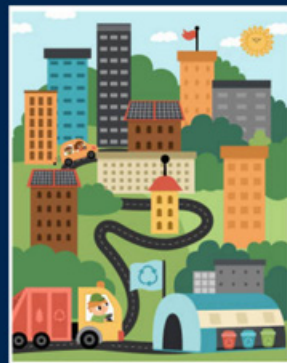
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