

A Deal With Terrorists What Is at Stake?

By Phyllis Chesler

A deal for a ceasefire and for the slow release of Israeli hostages and a quick release of hundreds, if not a thousand Palestinian terrorists, is upon us. The stakes could not be higher or more tortuorous.

The redemption of even one Jewish soul from Hell is a mitzva, a commandment, a Jewish obligation. But, if the slow-paced release of nearly 98 such souls, and of all religions—are purchased at a very high cost, it may only lead to more Jihad terrorist kidnappings of Israeli civilians, more rockets launched against Israel, the revival of Hamas, and a resumption of the ten-front war against the Jews—what, then, has been accomplished? Here I am including the punitively outrageous Obama-Biden restraints, the propaganda war, the UN resolutions, the ICC arrest warrants, all the boycotts, the vicious Western campuses response to 10/7—in addition to the military attacks from Gaza, Lebanon, Yemen, and Iran.



Do we dare sacrifice the 98 captives, (those who are living and the bodies of our dead), in order to protect the future of the nation? In order to ensure that the death in combat of 840 IDF soldiers, 917 civilians, and 77 police officers was utterly meaningless? Have nearly 2,000 people, 1834 to be precise, died in vain in this round of the never-ending war against the Jews?

How can we calculate the value of captive lives over and against the survival of the collectivity?

As we all know, in 13th century Germany, the Maharal, Reb Meir of Rothenberg, known as the "Gadol Hador," the leading rabbinic authority in Europe of his generation, was captured by King Rudolph, because he'd advised the Jews to flee the region rather than pay an overly greivous tax to Rudolph. Reb Meir's community raised the equivalent of five and a half million dollars to rescue him. He objected to their paying this ransom. Reb Meir believed that it would only encourage more kidnappings. He died in jail in 1293.

I am not suggesting that the Maharal's decision applies to Israeli captives now. In that instance, the captive was the one who made the decision; those being held in Hamas's tunnels have no say. But it is something to think about. As is what it is bound to mean if Israel is forced to give up the critical Philadelphi corridor.

Am I even obliged to speak out at this time? Or, must I humbly, cautiously, remain silent? However, the deal between Israel, the United States, and Iran/Hamas, is far too important; I am obliged to say something, however minor it may be.

Who am I to speak?

None of the Israeli hostages are close family members, I do not live in Israel, I do not serve in the IDF, my children and grandchildren are not in battle and have not been wounded or killed, I myself am not on site volunteering.

Ah, but all the hostages kidnapped from Israel, all the wounded, every traumatized soul, all those who've been tortured and murdered, and all those still fighting ARE my family; each and every one is very dear to me. They are my people. Jews, Arabs, Druse, Muslims, Christians—we are now all part of Israeli history, figure largely in our covenantal future and in terms of the survival of the West.

What am I obligated to do? Speak out for them and for their close relatives? Personally rescue them? Fund those who are risking their lives in order to rescue them?

Yes, I do send money. Yes, I do write fact-based articles of opinion which require all my time. Does this give me standing? Can I "vote" on the impending hostage deal?

No. That would be impossible. Can I think about it all the time? Yes, that I can do. May I speak out about 10/7 and its aftermath? Yes, that I've been doing every single day since

then.

Is the deal acceptable if President Trump will actually join Israel in militarily bringing down Iran, the largest state purveyor of terrorism in the world, especially against Israel and the United States? Is that the carrot even as the deal's forced return of Hamas terrorists is the stick?

Please allow me to suggest that you read Ambassador David Friedman and Gary Willig at Israel National News; Nadav Shragai and Canaan Lidor at Jewish News Service; Gadi Taub, Michael Dorin, Jake Siegel, and others at Tablet; Daniel Pipes at Middle East Forum and at the Wall Street Journal; anything written by Caroline Glick and by Melanie Phillips on this subject.

Even as I write this, a deal of some sort is being announced. I tremble. The wilder part of me thinks that Israel should only return terrorist corpses and finally institute a death penalty for terrorists with blood on their hands. Remember: Yahya Sinwar had blood on his hands, was treated royally in Israeli jails, was returned to Gaza in a deal for Israeli soldier, Gilad Shalit—and Sinwar then went on to plan 10/7.

Just sayin.'

The more measured and compassionate part of me will rejoice with the return of the Israeli hostages, even if they are only released three at a time.

What do you all think?

First published in [Phyllis' Newsletter](#)