

Hamas Leaders On the Run

Senior Hamas officials in Gaza are hiding out in a "bunker" built by Israel, intelligence officials suspect: Many are believed to be in the basements of the Shifa Hospital complex in Gaza City, which was refurbished when Israel controlled the Gaza Strip.

Shifa, the coastal strip's largest hospital, was built while Gaza was under Egyptian rule, before 1967. During the mid-1980s the building underwent massive refurbishment as part of a showcase project to improve the living conditions of residents.

During a Cabinet meeting last week, General Security Service chief Yuval Diskin said senior Hamas officials took refuge in the hospital basement because they knew Israel would not target it, due to the patients in the upper floors.

Meanwhile, senior figures in Hamas' military wing have fled to El Arish in Sinai, according to a Fatah report. They include Raed al-Atar, commander of Hamas forces in Rafiach, as well as Mohammed Sanwar, one of those behind the abduction of Gilad Shalit.

The report says the Hamas men fled through a tunnel in Rafiach and were taken in by a Bedouin tribe with whom they are linked, probably through their smuggling connections.

Two of Israel's top defense officials say Hamas has been badly hurt by Operation Cast Lead but that the terror group will fight on.

Military Intelligence chief Maj. Gen. Amos Yadlin told the Israeli Cabinet Sunday that the group's ability to fight has been damaged by the devastating assault. He said Hamas is suffering from ammunition shortages and has been hard hit by the deaths of senior terrorists. But Yadlin said the group is not expected to raise a white flag.

Diskin told the Cabinet that many Gazans are furious with Hamas for bringing a disaster on Gaza.



Min Hameitzar



(NATI SHOCHAT/FLASH90)

A soldier davenes *Shacharis* after returning from Gaza into southern Israel.

Miracles – To Behold And Respond

By Rabbi Daniel Yaakov Travis

The following is based on a shiur heard from Hagaon Harav Moshe Sternbuch, Ravad of the Eidah Hachareidis of Yerushalayim, leil Shabbos Parshas Vayechi in Beis Keneses HaGra, Har Nof.

As the war in Gaza unfolds, miracles are apparent to all who are willing to open their eyes. Missiles with the power to cause mass devastation continue to rain down upon us daily, yet few casualties are reported. Many miraculous stories are emerging from Israel's south, and all are worth retelling over and over. However, one particularly remarkable case highlights an important message.

Before the Israeli incursion began, the enemy laid minefields in the hope of killing and maiming as many soldiers as possible. Yet Hashem gave the Arabs the idea that they should make a map showing where each and every mine was placed. Although this document was top secret and closely guarded, it fell into the hands of Israeli intelligence. As a result, mass casualties were avoided.

We are indeed privileged to witness such miracles, the likes of which have rarely been seen in our history. Yet we must be aware of the responsibilities that come with living in such an era. It is easy to attribute these miracles to the incompetence of our enemy or just pure luck. Such an outlook betrays a dangerous lack of insight and puts the entire Jewish people at terrible risk, as demonstrated by the story of *yetzias Mitzrayim*.

Rashi explains that during the plague of darkness, Hashem wiped out 80 percent of Klal Yisrael. Approximately two million Jews left Mitzrayim, which means that about eight million Jews died during this plague. Why did Hashem impose such a harsh

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Product of the Month

OUR MESSAGE IS SIMPLE
**Go with the grain,
you won't go wrong.**

Go with the grain!



OPERATION CAST LEAD

GAZA CITY
The IDF uncovered a large school that Hamas had booby-trapped, intending to harm soldiers. Mines were also found in the school's zoo.

DIR EL BALACH
Paratroopers combing the area find weapons, uniforms and communications equipment.

SA'AJIYA
The house of Hamas' military "chief of staff" Ahmed Jibrin was destroyed on Sunday.

ISRAEL AIR FORCE
Scores of targets are hit every day, including sites of rocket launchings to Beersheva, armed gangs firing on IDF units and tunnels at Philadelphia Corridor.

PHILADELPHIA CORRIDOR
Tunnels used for weapons smuggling are destroyed from the air.

KEREM SHALOM CROSSING
Hundreds of trucks pass through

CLASHES WITH TERRORISTS | **IDF SUFFERED CASUALTIES** | **ROCKET LAUNCHERS** | **HAMAS TARGET THAT WAS STRUCK** | **KASSEM, GRAD MISSILES LAND** | **ISRAELI GROUND FORCES**

MAP BY S. RAPAPORT / HAMODIA

Miracles

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decree on the Jewish people?
The answer is that eight plagues had already taken place — *dam*, *tzefarde'a*, *kinim*, etc. Each one was devastating to the Egyptians, yet the Jews were miraculously spared. In this way, Hashem gave us a clear demonstration of His might and His love for us, and what happens when someone acts against His will. Yet eight million Jews were unaffected

by these miracles. They attributed them to magic and natural causes, and continued to transgress His will.
Then, through the plague of darkness, Hashem made clear that those who do not perceive the true nature of His miracles and do not interpret them as a wak-up call for *teshuvah* are not worthy of experiencing the *geulah*. It is not sufficient to merely exclaim "What a miracle!" and then go back to our business as if nothing has changed. The privilege of witnessing a miracle brings with it a responsibility to accept upon ourselves a higher level of *Malchus Shamayim*. If we don't do this,

we are in danger of failing the test. If the *geulah* were to take place today, I don't know how many members of Klal Yisrael would merit redemption.
After experiencing *yetzias Mitzrayim* and *kriyas Yam Suf*, Amalek confronted us. Amalek is characterized as *asher korcha baderech* — they attribute everything to chance. Anyone who does not think deeply about the miracles we are witnessing and passes them off as merely good luck is a member of Amalek and will not be worthy of the *geulah*.
"The ox knows its owner and the donkey its master's trough, Yisrael does not know Me, My

people do not think" (*Yeshayah* 1:3). We must take this opportunity to contemplate who our Master is and translate our heightened awareness into more passionate service of Him. Hashem is showing us miracles in order to motivate us to raise our level of *emunah*, to affirm deeply in our hearts that He is the only power in the world.
The Zohar tells us that the way to achieve this recognition is by thinking and speaking about the miracles which take place in our lives. The effect of relating Hashem's miracles is so powerful that when we do so, He summons the entire heavenly

assembly to come hear us speak about them.
We should be especially aware of this reality during the upcoming period of *Shovavim*. This six-week period is a powerful time for *teshuvah*. If we open up the smallest crack in our hearts and allow Hashem to enter our lives now, we are likely to see the *geulah* very soon.
(*Rabbi Travis is a Rosh Kollel in Yerushalayim and the author of Shaylos U'Teshuvos Toras Chaim and "Praying With Joy — A Daily Tefilla Companion" a practical daily guide to improving one's prayers, available from Feldheim Publishers.*)