



"Faith in the majesty of man, of the individual, whose freedom and well-being and happiness are the goals and raison d'être of the state."

Menachem Begin



Menachem Begin

Heritage Foundation

קרן מורשת מנחם בגין

Warm greetings for the

HIGH HOLIDAYS

2024/5785





Dear Friends,

On Simchat Torah, we will mark one year of war, one year since one of the most difficult events known to the State of Israel and the Jewish people since the establishment of the state, one year since the day when, for quite a few hours, the state did not exist.

For the past year, the best of our sons and daughters have been fighting a cruel enemy, one who adopted the Nazi worldview and sees the destruction of Israel and the murder of Jews as the purpose of its existence. A difficult and lengthy war is ahead of us, its price is painful and difficult, but there is no doubt in our hearts that with the help of God, nothing can defeat us.

What adds to the pain and difficulty is the rift in the Jewish public. Before the battle is even over, with our dead newly buried, the wounded in hospitals and rehabilitation wards, and many hostages still in captivity, our community suffers from strife, discord, and unfortunately hatred.

Many people have always asked, and they ask with more seriousness this year, "What would Menachem Begin say or do in the current situation?" I don't have an answer to this hypothetical question, but I know what Menachem Begin did and what he thought during his life and throughout his many years of service to the People of Israel.

Menachem Begin's legacy is a bright beacon that can illuminate the path we must follow to improve the state of the nation. This has been the mission of the Menachem Begin Heritage Center throughout the 25 years since it was established, and it is vitally important today.

The beautiful building that we built on Ketef Hinnom overlooking the walls of the Old City of Jerusalem is not a monument to the past, rather it is an institute of learning for the future generation of the Jewish people.

We ask and hope that you will join us in achieving our lofty goals.

Shana Tova and G'mar Hatima Tova,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Herzl Makov". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light blue geometric graphic element.

Herzl Makov
President
Menachem Begin Heritage Center





Dear Friends,

Like everyone in Israel, the Begin Center has made many sacrifices since 7 October. In order to survive budget cuts and a sharp decline in visitors, we laid off workers and drastically cancelled events and programs. Now, almost a year since that nightmarish day, Israel and the Begin Center have managed to find a way to move forward and function in a more or less normal way.

We have had to make decisions to prioritize our programming so that we are able to return to the right things. One of those is our unique values-driven leadership workshop specially designed for IDF officers and police personnel to help them make better leadership decisions in the field.

The war of information requires freely available, trustworthy content at the right place and at the right time. There is a lot of English content available about the war, but our unique style of programming examines deeper questions and sparks conversations. The French and Russian programming has addressed the dearth of information about Israel in those languages.

Here on the home front in support of the IDF and in the battle against misinformation and disinformation, we hope that you will partner with us in 2024/25 (5785) to strengthen our ability to do the work that needs to be done.

Shana Tova and G'mar Hatima Tova,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Basil Gamsu". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above the printed name.

Basil Gamsu

Chair, Management Committee
Menachem Begin Heritage Foundation

Executive Summary

Israel is at war on many fronts. The situation changes daily, if not hourly. In the heat of battle or the cold strategy of geopolitical chess, we often forget about the war of information. Today, too many people think that they can understand 100+ years of conflict in the Middle East by watching a one-minute TikTok video that then gets shared to Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, and in private messages. Content creators are less interested in truth. They just want their monetized clicks.

Long gone are the days when everyone got the same news at 6pm from people who cared about facts, truth, and integrity. In today's 24-hour or less news cycle, the only things that are important are how many eyes see it and that the biased narrative is cloaked under the thin veil of respectability that covers mainstream media.

In this Rosh HaShana bulletin, you'll see that the Begin Center is fighting on the information front.

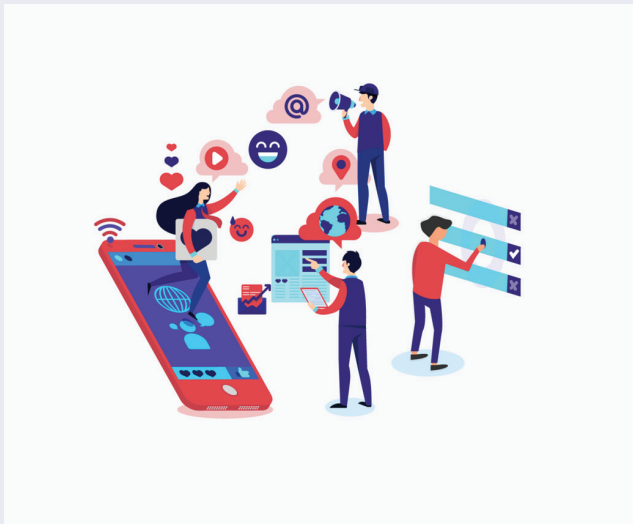


Image by Joseph
Mucira
from Pixabay



As we watched in shock and dismay at the protests against Israel in the wake of October 7, we saw that the protest leaders easily convince uninformed students who don't have their own values structure or correct information. While US ethics courses – used as punishment – utilize generally relatable figures, such as The Simpsons, the values-driven leadership workshop at the Begin Center utilizes the inspiration of Jewish and Zionist leaders who founded and fought for the establishment and development of the State of Israel.

Because of the Menachem Begin Scholarship recipients on three campuses this year, we had eyewitness accounts of the situation on campus. The recipients are the kind of values-driven leaders we need advocate for Israel without wavering in the face of the hostility of the protests.

With the increase in multilingual content, we can put the truth out and help Israel fight the battle against misinformation and disinformation.

And finally, we can show up. The Begin Center was in Florida in April 2024 for several programs, and this summer, one of our fellows was in London to speak to two communities. We are ready to go where you are to present the truth and advocate for Israel.

Partner with the Begin Center to ensure continued inspirational, educational, relevant programming for all of the Jewish people around the world. See in this issue:

- ◆ Values-driven leadership workshops
- ◆ Increased English, French, and Russian content
- ◆ Promoting Israel and the Begin Center in Florida and London
- ◆ Israelis on US campuses

Be in touch to find out how you can make a difference for Israel: ilanab@begincenter.org.il

Yachad nenatzeach!

Effects of the October 7 War

The joy of Simhat Torah evaporated with the sirens in the morning shattering the peace of Jerusalem. As reporters scrambled to get to the scene, the news was bad and getting worse, worse than we could have possibly imagined.

In the first few months of the war, the Begin Center experienced some indirect effects of the war.

- ◆ Staff serving in reserves; remaining staff reduced
- ◆ Budget cut by 20%
- ◆ No tourists, no students, no groups
- ◆ Postponed events
- ◆ Mobile museum stranded in Sderot

A year on, all of us have varying levels of anxiety with family and friends fighting in or otherwise affected by the war. Yet the people of Israel stand united against all attackers. The repeated slogan in Israel is יחד ננצח, yachad nenatzeach – Together We Will Win.

Since January 2024, the Begin Center has shown its resilience and rebounded as much as possible.

- ◆ Our staff returned from active duty and are ready if called again
- ◆ Educational programs are operating at full capacity
- ◆ Students and some groups have begun to return; tourists and army groups have not yet returned
- ◆ Modest Begin Prize ceremony was held in June
- ◆ Mobile museum is undamaged and is in use in Jerusalem
We hope it will go to the Yigal Allon Center in the fall
- ◆ Digital contact in multiple languages increased exponentially

What Kind of Leader Will You Be?

One of the headlines after the campus protests was that New York University charged some students with misconduct, and as a punishment, they required students to complete a 49-page self-study ethics course. A few headlines laughingly pointed out that one of the ethical dilemmas was based on an episode of *The Simpsons*.

All in all, the ethics course is not bad, but it is unfortunately presented negatively as a punishment instead of a positive part of the core curriculum. As a punishment, it is in some ways the equivalent of Bart Simpson writing sentences on the chalkboard at the beginning of every *Simpson's* episode.



Ethics Matter: Values-Based Leadership at the Begin Center

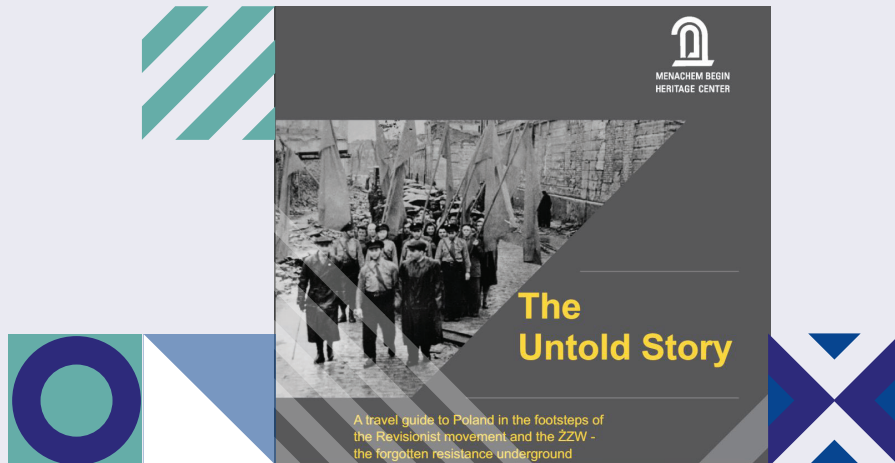
The Menachem Begin Heritage Center has workshops that teach participants about values-based leadership. While we've often mentioned it, **what does it actually mean?**

In the two-hour workshop, participants by defining leadership styles, participants are encouraged to think about what kind of leaders they want to be. The guided discussion highlights role models throughout Jewish and Zionist history, including Menachem Begin and others.

Using a dynamic Socratic method, participants organically determine their own values. Then the values are put to the test in various scenarios. The participants learn that values-based leadership varies based on the leader and their hierarchy of values. For example, a pragmatic leader will focus on results (transactional), while an idealistic leader will focus on intention and often inspire their followers to also become leaders (transformational).

When faced with a dilemma in the field, participants will have the tools to make better decisions based on their own values.

Why is the Begin Center uniquely suited to this kind of workshop? We recall that Menachem Begin was famously asked, "What style of prime minister will you be?" His clear, immediate answer was "In a good Jewish style."



Expanding English Content

We are especially pleased to offer you a free 120-page guidebook telling the Revisionists' story in Poland during World War II. This was developed as a guide for educators taking groups to sites in Poland so that they can include the stories that were almost lost to history. Thus, the guidebook is called *The Untold Story: A Travel Guide to Poland in the Footsteps of the Revisionist Movement and the ZZW*.

Please go to our website and scroll down to **Special Activities**. There you will find the link to "The Untold Story – Teacher's guide." It is important to us to know who downloads the guide, so you will be asked to register before you receive the link (*your email address will not be shared or added to any other lists*).

The pilot trips with the Polish Insitute and Yad Vashem using the Hebrew guide have been very successful and so popular that we have a waiting list for other training trips.

On the same topic, Yossi Suede, content developer at the Begin Center, had an article published in the academic journal *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* called "The Warsaw Ghetto Poet: Władysław Szlengel." **Be in touch for the link to get free access to the article.**

A Special Gift

Included with this Rosh Hashana bulletin is a translated chapter from the Hebrew-only book *Begin's Path*, edited by Begin Fellow Dror Bar-Yosef. In the chapter, published in English as the enclosed stand-alone booklet, Benny Begin presents the essence of Menachem Begin's philosophy on the freedom of the individual and the nation.

We also have a short article by Benny Begin called "A Matter of Prestige: Marking 80 Years after the Irgun Declaration of the Revolt." This is available digitally. **Get in touch to receive your free copy.**

For English content, please email ilanab@begincenter.org.il

Israel Advocacy Tour in Florida

In April, Begin Prize recipient Yoseph Haddad and Middle East Human Rights expert, Emily Schrader joined President of the Begin Center Herzl Makov in Florida for the Israel Advocacy Tour. Events were held at Boca Raton Synagogue and the Beth Torah Benny Rok Campus in partnership with other South Florida organizations.

The event left a profound impact with Haddad emphasizing the crucial need to focus on the principles of partnership rather than co-existence. He said that with partnership, we are immersed in one another's lives, where co-existence is merely living side-by-side. Haddad strongly communicated

April 15, 2024
Boca Raton Synagogue

April 16, 2024
Beth Torah
BENNY ROK CAMPUS

THANK YOU
SOUTH FLORIDA

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the imperative need to control and counter the false anti-Israel narrative and that we must address Arabs in their native language – ARABIC – stressing the importance of understanding and speaking the language spoken by Israel's enemies and the local population. Emily Schrader highlighted the alarming trend of today's youth relying heavily on TikTok for information, urging for strategic communication approaches tailored to their preferred platforms. She advocated for vigorous pushback against the subversion of dialogue and emphasized the power of engagement on social media. Even seemingly insignificant comments will play a crucial role in challenging falsehoods and enlightening others.

A key takeaway that struck a chord strongly with audience members: to effect change, information must be delivered in formats that resonate and entertain. The speakers didn't shy away from confronting uncomfortable truths, notably pointing out the influence of the Islamic Republic in controlling narratives and supporting extremist groups like Hamas, Hezbollah, Houthis, and Islamic Jihad.



Paul Gross, Senior Begin Fellow, in London

Speaking on the theme of "what you see from here, you don't see from there," Paul Gross spoke to two London congregations, including one of the biggest modern Orthodox synagogues in Britain, about the current situation in Israel. In explaining the importance of the topic, Paul said, "Few outside Israel appreciate the scale of the national trauma caused by the events of 7 October. Israel is not the same country or society as it was on 6 October and understanding how and why it has changed is critical to understanding why Israelis view the atrocity – and their country's response – differently to the rest of the world."

***If you would like to sponsor a speaker in your community, please be in touch:
ilanab@begincenter.org.il**

In Memoriam

May their memory be a blessing.

◆ **David Levy, Israel**

Always an advocate for the underrepresented and underprivileged, David Levy spent his career in government service, including several ministerial positions in Menachem Begin's government, including significant work on Project Renewal. For his lifetime of service, he was awarded the Israel Prize and the Begin Prize.



◆ **Anna Ruth Hasten, United States & Israel**

After a lifetime of generous philanthropy, including support of the Begin Center from the beginning, and unwavering advocacy for Israel. Anna Ruth, wife of Mark Hasten z"l and sister-in-law of Hart and Simona Hasten, made aliyah and spent her last years in Israel.

◆ **Joe Brender, Australia**

As a successful businessman in Australia, Joe Brender was a community leader, a generous philanthropist, a supporter of the Begin Center and a proud Jew and Zionist.

*If you'd like to **honor the memory of a loved one** at the Begin Center or if you'd like to discuss a **Legacy Gift**, please be in touch:
ilanab@begincenter.org.il



Eyewitnesses on US Campuses

There is no better advocate for Israel than a well-informed, highly educated Israeli who can navigate the minefield of a US campus. Last September the Begin Center initiated a scholarship program to assist Israelis attending Ivy League universities in the United States. On October 8, 2023, two of our scholars were called to the reserves and immediately flew back to Israel. Another returned to her work at the UN. The fourth reported to us about the hateful antisemitism bubbling up on UPenn's campus. In the end, three scholars completed the year and sent us their thoughts. The fourth deferred his scholarship, and he will attend Columbia University for the 2024/25 academic year with plans to actively stand up for Israel.

Here are excerpts from their reports.

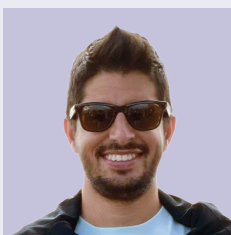


Shai Dromy,
University of Pennsylvania

As an Israeli who has lived in Israel all my life, I never considered antisemitism to be a significant phenomenon. After October 7, I realized how wrong I was. . . .

From all the discussions I participated in, I concluded that clear and confident discourse can effectively change positions. The problem was that many people, students, and faculty feared expressing those opinions, mostly afraid of being socially ostracized.

The presence of Israeli students on campus is crucial. For instance, my experiences as a combat soldier in Gaza and as someone who lost a family member in a terrorist attack in the Gaza Envelope years ago made a significant impact on people and helped change perspectives.



Roy Hadar,
Northwestern University

Life on Campus as an Israeli: Walking around campus, the air is thick with tension. Anti-Israel and antisemitic signs and flags are everywhere. Chants and protests have made many Jewish students afraid to openly display their identity. Being Israeli in this context is challenging, but it's also a unique opportunity to provide strength and solidarity to Jewish students who feel isolated and threatened.

Engaging with Non-Jews: Talking to non-Jewish students about the conflict has been eye-opening. Many are curious and want to understand the real situation. These conversations are vital. They help break down stereotypes and build empathy, creating a more supportive environment. One conversation at a time, we are changing perceptions and building allies.

Reflections on the Year: This year has been transformative. I've seen firsthand how important it is for Israelis to be present on US campuses. Our presence provides a personal connection to Israel, strengthening our community and fostering understanding among non-Jews.



Ella Chisick,
Columbia University

The reality we're living in right now is precisely why I chose to study [Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies].

Knowledge enables us to engage in deep, professional conversations with depth, ones not based on "facts" circulated on TikTok and Instagram by people spreading hatred and encouraging the deepening of divides and social rifts among us.

In the past semester I have been asked about the well-being of my family and friends, and I have witnessed tremendous interest in hearing the Israeli narrative. [The tough questions] were asked out of consideration for the future of the Middle East, about the ability of the Israelis and the Palestinians to live alongside each other, understanding that none of us is going anywhere.



**Amos Atzmon,
Columbia University (on his plans for the 2024/25
academic year)**

In these past months in New York, I have closely observed the complexities on the Columbia University campus, including antisemitism and an increased anti-Israel atmosphere on campus . . . [which] has strengthened my resolve to pursue my LLM degree and be actively involved in campus affairs. I was exposed to the scandalous decision of the student senate not to approve the establishment of a club against antisemitism. I was a member of the student Senate myself before joining my military unit and probably could have affected this decision. It strengthened my desire to be involved and prevent such incidents next year.

***If you would like to sponsor a
scholarship, please be in touch:
ilanab@begincenter.org**





Menachem Begin

Heritage Foundation

קרן מורשת מנחם בגין

Protect the legacy and heritage of Menachem Begin for future generations!

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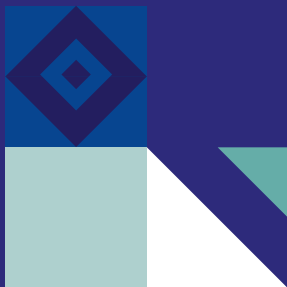
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