

THE TRIBE WEEKLY

PARASHAT BESHALACH

26-27 JANUARY | 17 SHEVAT

My Israel Story



**ANNA
COLEMAN**

Head of Operations,
Tribe

At the age of 16, as many British teenagers do, I went on Israel summer tour. Tour was when I fell in love with the madness, courage, bravery, *'shtuyot'* (nonsense), rudeness and brilliance of this tiny Jewish homeland that I now call home. Having made aliyah over ten years ago, life here is not always easy but I cannot imagine living in any other place in the world.

On October 7th, I woke up to the sound of sirens in Tel Aviv. I ran to the stairwell and sat with my neighbours, all of us trying to understand what had awoken us so early on this Shabbat and Chag morning. Throughout the next days we moved back and forth from our protected

stairwell to take shelter, closely monitoring the news with shock at the unimageable horrors taking place in our country.

With the situation as it was, I debated if leaving Israel to lead our scheduled Tribe Poland trip was the right decision. Each year, Tribe takes sixth formers who primarily attend non-Jewish schools on a heritage tour of Poland to experience not only the death camps and what Jewish life was like before the Holocaust but also for participants to connect with, and be proud of, their Jewish heritage. Having visited Poland many times before, this particular trip had a completely different feel to it. The comparisons to the events of October 7th were striking and heartbreaking, but the difference today is that we have the Jewish state, a home to all Jews.

On the recent United Synagogue Israel solidarity trip, we met with displaced families, soldiers, injured

Israeli citizens, first responders and families whose loved ones are being held hostage in Gaza. Despite the unimaginable suffering they have experienced, and are still experiencing, what remains with me most is not their pain but rather their continued courage, heroism and strength.

On Shemini Atzeret we read *Kohelet*, where, in Chapter 2, it says, "*Yitron Haor Min Hachoshech*" - light surpasses darkness. There has been an extra dimension of darkness in Israel and around the world over the past months, yet I continue to witness how this is overcome, time and again, by the tremendous light and hope generated by so many different people, from our participants in Poland, to people all over the world standing with Israel and by the tremendous *achdut* (unity) and resilience of the citizens of Israel.

Parasha Scramble!

Unscramble the words in capitals to reveal some facts about the parasha.

- 1 One man was brave enough to step into the sea first, his name was **CHAN NOSH** [1 word]
- 2 A major event in this week's parasha is the **FITTINGS TELOPHASE** [4 words]
- 3 When the Jewish people complain about the bitter water, God performs a miracle: He **NEWEST SWEETHEART** [3 words]
- 4 Did you know that the Manna tasted of **AVENA TRYOUT WHEW?** [3 words]
- 5 In order to honour Shabbat, the Jews had to collect a **TROOP UNBOILED** [2 words] of Manna on Friday.

