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Oral Q&A on the Decision to Trade Terrorists in return for Gilad Shalit's Release

1. It is a mistake to release some 1,000 terrorists in exchange for a captured soldier. The price is too high. The State of Israel does not need to capitulate to kidnapers. According to the organization of Terror Victims, approximately 180 Israelis have been murdered by terrorists who were released in earlier exchange agreements. One of every two released terrorists is involved in new murders. It is therefore impossible to save one person by endangering others.

We have an army, and they should go to war to save even one single person. The Americans are prepared to attack for the sake of saving captives, even if many soldiers are killed in the process. This is the proper way to act. The security establishment also opposes such exchanges. Simply put: if one does not capitulate to pressure, our enemies will stop kidnapping soldiers because they will understand that we will not exchange terrorists for them.

2. Some claim that if terrorists are released there will be trageies. It is forbidden to predict bad things. One should not open his mouth to Satan. We are not prophets. Rather, we must act with intellect and knowledge.

3. Some claim that this whole deal is politics. There is chaos in Egypt. The State of Israel does not want to ruin its good relations with Egypt, and is therefore agreeing to the deal in order to maintan good relations. They feel, so the claim goes, that it is therefore worthwhile to release 1000 terrorists, but connects the deal to Gilad Shalit rather than to politics.

4. If Gilad Shalit is released, we will certainly recite Shehechyanu. We will be joyous that he is returning home, and at the same time we will be sad over the release of the terrorists. The Halachah is that if one's wife gives birth to a boy and dies during child-birth, a person recites two blessings: "Blessed be the True Judge" over his wife's death and Shehechyanu over his son's birth. And if a person's father dies and he receives an inheritance, he recites: "Blessed be the True Judge" over his father's death and Shehechyanu over his inheritance (Berachot 59, Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 223:1-2).



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