

Dvar Israel- 12/15

Lian: When we said yes to this Shnat Sherut, we chose to pause our lives in Israel for a year, and start the army service one year later than all our peers. Some of you might not know, but a lot of our friends in Israel are already soldiers.

Nir: As you can imagine, the life of an average soldier is not easy. You need to always do what you are told, you don't get a lot of sleep, the food is not exactly "gourmet", you always have to be on time, you are away from home and many times you don't return for Shabbat. We often hear about experiences like this from our soldier friends.

Lian: Since it's not easy to be a soldier, as a society, Israelis take initiative to support and give back to those on active duty in many ways. It starts with Falafel stands that give free meals to soldiers when they are on their way home on Fridays, and continues to people that support soldiers that come from less fortunate backgrounds.

Nir: This week, one of these initiatives really warmed our hearts. A group of high school students from Kiryat Shmona decided to use their Chanukah break to bring the holiday spirit to IDF soldiers. These soldiers participated in the "Northern Shield" operation at the border with Lebanon, that began in order to neutralize terror tunnels that were recently discovered. The high school students collected food and snacks, made posters and brought them to those soldiers that spent a few days and nights in the rain and cold.

Lian: Even though we are not in the army like many of our friends, we see the experience of being away from home for long stretches of time reflected in our own experience. When soldiers have a long period of time when they don't come home from the army, they count the number of days that they were away and say things like "I'm closing 21" if they were away for 3 weeks. Today we are closing 114 days in Toronto,

Nir: but who's counting?

Nir: In less than a week from now we are going to be in Israel. We are so excited to see our family and friends that we miss so much. I can't wait to visit my scouts chapter and talk to my Chanichim, that now are leaders and have Chanichim of their own.

Lian: And I can't wait...
We wanted to thank you all for the best 114 days of our lives. Thank you for letting us become a part of your incredible community. We are so proud to be a part of you and can't wait to see what the rest of the year ahead will bring.

Together: Shabbat shalom v'lehitra'ot!