

Program name:

# “Safra Veseyfa”\*

Submitted by The Institute for Jewish Studies (Derech AMI)

In Honor of Lt. Col. Emmanuel Moreno, z”l

\*“Safra Veseyfa” is a combination of words in Aramaic. Safra is “teacher, writer, man of the book” and Seyfa is “one who steals the way ahead”. The combination implies the author of a way ahead that was not previously seen as possible.

## A. Program description

The "Safra Veseyfa" project is a special project in honor of Lt. Col. Emmanuel Moreno which assists IDF (Israel Defense Forces) combat units by re-instating Torah Scrolls that have been deemed unfit or invalidated by halacha (Jewish law) to units and army bases in which they are needed.

The project offers a combined contribution to the Israel Defense Forces together with support for the Institute for Jewish Studies in honor of Lt. Col. Emmanuel Moreno, a fighter and commander of the elite Sayeret Matkal who fell in combat towards the end of the Second Lebanon War in enemy territory and whose image has not been de-classified for publication.

The sponsors of the project will enjoy a dedication of a Torah Scroll in their name to the army unit, at an honorary ceremony in the presence of the IDF Chief Rabbi, unit commanders, soldiers, rabbis of the Institute and family members of the donor.

## B. The need

The Israel Defense Forces is a strong and professional army equipped with some of the most advanced artillery and weapons systems for sea, air and ground combat in the world. What distinguishes the IDF from other armies in the world is a Torah Scroll on each base, a Torah Scroll that strengthens their fighting spirit and reminds them about what they are fighting for.

As it turns out, there are many cases of Torah Scrolls which lose their kashrut status (i.e. fit for public use according to Jewish law) due to physical conditions in the field, including dampness or storage in semi-open areas. The Institute turned to the army to inquire about current needs to update Torah Scrolls being used by combat units. From its inquiry it was revealed that there are currently more than 200 Torah Scrolls waiting to undergo a process of "kosherizing"; that is, a re-fitting of the Torah Scroll according to the particular case of invalidation, re-instating the Scroll to the army unit to which it was dedicated and a return to service for the soldiers of the base.

## C. The renovation of a Torah Scroll

The process of renovating a Torah Scroll begins with establishing the halachic status of the Scroll and the halachic issue(s) that need to be addressed, followed by a process of meticulous proofreading and many hours of editing including computerized processes to ensure accuracy. The process takes between three months to half a year.

Once the Scroll is re-authorized for public use, it converts to “active service”. The next step is to determine which army base will receive the Scroll, and to hold a re-dedication ceremony which is organized by the IDF.

The IDF permits the donor to decide in whose name he or she wants to re-dedicate the Scroll.

## **D. Cost**

The cost of the project is around \$10,000 per Torah Scroll.

### **The Institute for Jewish Studies in Honor of Lt. Col Moreno, z”l (Derech AMI)**

The Institute is based in Jerusalem, situated in the neighborhood of Nof Zion which overlooks the Temple Mount from its Southern façade. There are currently ten post-army students at the Institute involved in character building and the study of Jewish law as a way of life.

Derech Ami has taken the initiative to lead a process of returning to the roots of ancient Israel, the basis upon which Israeli culture is built. The deepening of these roots creates a fertile ground for the generation of creative and leadership-oriented individuals in Israeli society, driven by a modesty and integrity in all aspects of social, cultural and economic activity.

The cornerstone in the search for self-identity leading to leadership and independence is a meeting between Israeli creativity and the generations that came before it. The study of Jewish precepts, ethics and classic Israeli thought therefore naturally serves as the foundation to continuing academic and professional studies.

The design of purity of character as the basis to building overall character, together with a steadfast spiritual foundation, is the basis to control over the material world.

### **Learning to give**

**Derech Ami** is engaged in the subject of Israeli Jewish philosophy that deals with giving in all areas of society and community, with an emphasis on the relation and correct balance between personal development and a contribution towards society and the Jewish people.

Derech Ami leads workshops for personal and social awareness and is building a spiritual center that will attract individuals from all walks of life, with neither qualification nor segmentation between different groups, nor definition of any individual's religious or ethnic status.

The image of Lt. Col. Emmanuel Moreno, may HaShem avenge his death, serves as a pillar of fire at the head of the camp. Emmanuel achieved in his lifetime a rare balance between a person of faith and a person of deeds, grounded in his Land on the one hand and touching the Heavens on the other.

His image serves as a source of inspiration and personal example in his military activities as one who dedicates his soul to the mission with extreme modesty.

The message of faith and giving without limits is the message we aspire to transmit to our students at Derech Ami.