

**FROM THE RABBI'S DESK**  
**Zionist Organization of America (ZOA) Gala Benediction ~ 9/12/17**

To my fellow staunch supporters of the ZOA, Thank you for this incredible honor. My grandmother, Rachel Levinson Nunberg of blessed memory, was an Auschwitz survivor and one of only two Jewish survivors from her hometown of Augustov, Poland (then Lithuania). When she was just a teenager, the Nazis raided her town and immediately seized and murdered all the Jewish men, including her father, Noah Levinson. As they dragged him from the family home, his last words to my grandmother, his eldest child, were: "Rochel, take revenge." Even after she began her Jewish life anew in the United States, her father's last words echoed in her mind

My step-grandmother, Frania Goldhar, another Auschwitz survivor, who co-founded the city of Yoqneam in northern Israel, died earlier this year at the age of 95. When speaking to Israeli children about her Holocaust experience, she proudly revealed that her personal revenge against the Nazis was the fact that her grandson, Dudi Zohar, was a Major in the Israeli Air Force. Sadly, my beloved cousin, Major David Zohar, was killed last month in a freak Apache helicopter accident while serving as a reservist in the IDF. And so I feel even more acutely that it's our collective responsibility to seek revenge on behalf of my grandmothers and their entire Holocaust generation.

Jewish revenge is unique. It is not about anger and violence. It is not about shouting Allahu Akhbar and murdering innocent civilians. Jewish revenge is about promoting the God given Jewish ideals of freedom and liberty, democracy and morality, philanthropy and community, education and understanding, and peace and brotherly love. Jewish revenge is about tenaciously defending those ideals and standing up to those who threaten them.

Jewish revenge is about unconditionally supporting the existence of the State of Israel, and about strengthening its bond with the United States of America, a country that shares our Jewish ideals, and the greatest democracy the world has ever known. Jewish revenge is about supporting those who work to ensure that malevolent forces will never again succeed in their evil mission to destroy us.

Jewish revenge is about our shared goal tonight, supporting the mission of ZOA, an organization that works tirelessly to strengthen the bonds between all of us in the world who passionately desire to protect these precious ideals and guarantee that we will never take them for granted. May God bless the State of Israel, world Jewry, and the United States of America, and may God grant us a sweet New Year ahead, in which we flourish and emerge triumphant in our mission, and thereby relish the sweet taste of Jewish revenge. And let us say Amen.