

I wanted to share one more letter I just received

First let me tell you about the author. Robert is an inmate in his mid 60s who has served for over 43 years.

He never knew he had any religion.

During Covid he became extremely ill. Covid in the prison is simply awful because they barely treated it and the infirmary had very limited facilities.

One night he has a dream. He is a little boy. His grandmother comes to him and shows him her arm and says "I survived." She lights Shabbat candles in a very dark narrow place and turns to him and says "we are Jewish but you must never tell anyone."

So after the dream Robert wrote to me because he heard that I visited Jewish prisoners.

I worked with Aleph (A part of Chabad that helps Jews in the military and prisons) and they determined his Grandmother was Jewish and a survivor.

So for the past two years we have been corresponding and studying together. I sent him a prayer book and he read it intensely. He finds the most fascinating questions in the prayer book, questions that make me much more conscious of our prayers and the kavanah we are trying to achieve. And when I lead services he always notes when I am doing something different.

He prays very diligently

This is what he wrote in part

I am so grateful for Rabbi David's presence, involvement and teaching. He guides us in the path of service. Our challenge is to remain alert, attentive and open to opportunities for service. We can't just stand by and watch passively as life goes by; we must run to meet each moment with eagerness and joy. To take this stance means we must do whatever it takes to be a clear channel for Divine love.

I am guided by his teachings to open my heart and share everything I have. I have been hurt and abused by many people in life. If it weren't for Rabbi David and the encouragement he provided I wouldn't have

come as far as I have. Things would have still been bottled up inside me. Because of Rabbi David I now take much less PTSD medication.

For over 35 years I never wrote to anyone. Now I am blessed to have Ms P (a 97 year old resident at the Hebrew Home who is a Ukranian survivor) and G (a 12 year old student at Ohev Shalom) to write to. I didn't care about anyone but Rabbi David helped me find that source of caring. Everything has changed

I pray. I pray in the morning when I awake, when I go to the bathroom, when I eat, when I get medication, when I study the bible, I pray when I go to sleep. Rabbi David has guided me that Gd always is there and wants to hear my voice.

Until I met Rabbi David I never really knew my Jewish heritage or cared for it. I never cared for people but all of that has changed

Rabbi David takes the time not only to lead our services but to try to connect with each one of us personally.

He urges us to know that we are dearly loved by Gd