

Modern Day Maccabees

MEET THE WOMEN OF EZRAS NASHIM



...ORY of
...ELA A"H
...ng dedication to chesed

לעילוי נשמת האשה החשובה
טובה בלומא בת ר' שמעון הלוי ע"ה
Donated by her children





One of the greatest stories of courage from Chanukah is that of Chana and her seven sons. As the Yevanim tried to keep the Jews from Yiddishkeit, King Antiochus, demanded that each of Chana's sons worship his idols. One by one, Chana saw each of her sons executed by the king, but she remained steadfast in her belief in Hashem.

Chana's piety and resolve is an example to those who struggle today. She and the Maccabees remain an example of bravery and emunah.

Today, there are women making history, who have earned the title 'modern-day Maccabees.' This group of women run an organization with passion and idealism, believing in their cause and in their power

to change the world. They are revolutionary, pioneering a new concept that has not been done before. With utmost mesiras nefesh, they give hours of their time and patience to help others.

Ezras Nashim is a group of all-female Jewish EMTs who come to the aid of hundreds of women and children each year in medical crises. These volunteers receive New York State EMT training and certification. Beyond their medical training, these volunteers give their patients kindness, compassion, and dignity – and regularly receive praise from grateful patients. They prove that women helping women can accomplish anything!

Like the heroes of our past, these women inspire us every day! Meet our modern-day Maccabees



Miriam*

is a married woman with five children. In addition to taking care of her family, she has a demanding job as a craniosacral therapist. She's also in school, studying natural healing. When she gets a call from Ezras Nashim, she drops what she is doing and rushes to the scene.

No matter what else is demanding her attention - cooking supper, folding laundry, doing homework with her son, dealing with a client, doing her grocery shopping, bathing her kids, studying, kneading some dough, frying some doughnuts, doing carpool, sorting through her pantry... Whatever it is, she'll leave it behind to help a woman in need. And this can happen up to four times a week. In her own words: "I find responding to emergency calls very fulfilling, meaningful, rewarding, and thankful. I am so proud to belong to this organization!"

Miriam says she isn't quitting anytime soon. She plans to stay for the long-term. The gratitude from patients propels her forward, renewing her sense of purpose for this mission.

Sometimes, Miriam struggles. Some men from her community have expressed opposition to her volunteer work in front of her children. It can be hard to navigate through the noise and focus on the good she is bringing to the world.

Despite any challenges, Miriam isn't giving up. She believes that Ezras Nashim fills an essential need in the community, and they will continue to serve the community they love so much.



Sarah*

Allow us to introduce you to Sarah. Sarah works full-time at a community hospital, and is in college at the same time. She has a busy life, working and studying, trying to find time in her life to spend with family and friends. But being paid to help people isn't enough for Sarah. She wants to help more people, to give her free time to others. Since she she doesn't have much free time during the day, she gives up her nights. She's on call through the night, getting up at all hours to help another person.*

She could be brushing her teeth, getting ready to shower, just having fallen asleep, deeply snoring, exhausted from a long week of work, tossing and turning the whole night, deeply ensconced between her covers, in the middle of a vivid dream... It doesn't matter. Her sleep isn't important when she gets a call.

Sarah says she finds her volunteering "very rewarding." She has the support from her immediate family and friends but still, so much pushback. Do you know what it means to give up hours of you time to the scorn of your own community? Do you know what it takes to keep believing in what you do, to keep giving up your precious few hours of sleep, in the face of so much adversity?



Liba*

The volunteers are incredible. Liba* is 22 years old and single. She works part-time as a lab assistant in a laboratory. She sets aside time just for Ezras Nashim shifts so that she

can take as many calls as possible. This is what she says about Ezras Nashim:

'It's very meaningful work and there is nothing like the feeling of knowing you made a positive impact on someone's life. The feeling of leaving a scene, knowing you made a patient's worst

day even just a little bit better is indescribable, and I'm really grateful I get to be a part of it.'

She wants to continue volunteering for as long as the organization will have her!



Talia*

At 72 years old with a total of twelve children, Talia is happy and content. She's heavily involved in the medical field and has impressive experience, including volunteering as a doula for over 20 years, working as a camp nurse, and teaching CPR and first aid. When asked if the volunteering disrupts her daily life, she says: 'Usually,*

We all have busy lives.' And yet, this busy mother and grandmother turns up at as many emergency situations as she can, to help out other women. Her mission is to ensure that every patient feels comfortable with her service provider in their most vulnerable moments.



Chana*

And now let's discuss Chana. Chana is 75 years old, and she works in real estate. She's your typical working mother and grandmother with a busy, fulfilled life. When her daughter introduced her to Ezras Nashim, she thought to herself 'that sounds like a great organization where women help women.' She trained as an EMT and joined the organization. In her own words 'people are so grateful when we help them, they stop me all the time to thank me.'*



Basya*

She's a middle-aged mom of five. She works full-time as a pediatric physical therapist. Since she cannot volunteer during the day, she takes the night shift. She says that it makes her happy that she can give to people in need. Sometimes it's hard.

She can get a call in the middle of a wedding, anniversary party, community event, etc. but that doesn't stop her. In fact, she only wants more people to join and be part of this special organization.



Rivky*

is a full-time nursing school student and phlebotomist, and she teaches CPR and first-aid part-time. At 20 years old, her days are full and busy. Helping people from the medical field is in her blood: her grandmother is a nurse, her grandfather a dentist, and her father an EMT.

She joined Ezras Nashim because she wanted to give back to the community in a meaningful way. Rivky is intent on taking almost every call that comes her

way. She says she loves being part of such a special organization, even when her family and friends criticize her. Her message to the world is that 'we are capable and knowledgeable. We follow protocol and are constantly reviewing each call to help us improve.'

Do you see how these amazing volunteers are the Maccabees of today?

These volunteers are not giving up. Not now and not ever. They believe in what Ezras Nashim does with all their hearts. They hear the appreciation and wonder in the voices of the patients, comments such as “I couldn’t have managed without you” and “every woman should call Ezras Nashim when in a medical crisis” and “I feel like I am being taken care of by a bunch of sisters.” They see the gratitude in the eyes of the patient and the family when they show up, and handle the patients with sensitivity, patience and care. They’re not giving up. The community needs them too much.

At 7:57 one fine Monday morning, a woman called Ezras Nashim and said that she was in labor at home unexpectedly and needed assistance.

A volunteer who was doing carpool nearby rushed to the scene. Another volunteer arrived with the ambulance, and they transported the woman to the hospital, coaching her through her pain all the way. They arrived at the hospital at 8:23am and she gave birth to a baby boy at 8:40am, just seventeen minutes after arriving to the hospital. We marvel that our volunteers’ efficiency matches their caring!

Do you know what a modern-day Maccabee looks like? Someone who is prepared to go out of their way to help strangers.

One Tuesday morning, the family members of a sick and elderly woman called

Ezras Nashim and asked them to transport the woman to Columbia hospital for her outpatient treatment. Since Columbia hospital is far from the local community, Ezras Nashim informed the family that they’d be happy to transport her to the hospital, but they couldn’t promise that they’d be available to pick her up later in the day.

Sure enough, after the volunteers carefully carried the women on a stretcher into the

hospital, they got a call from another woman who was suddenly in labor at home. They rushed to the scene and transported her to Staten Island hospital, upon her request. The devoted volunteers then received a request from the dispatchers, informing them that the elderly woman was ready for pick-up at the Columbia hospital. Were they willing to do the long trip out again to bring her home? The answer was swift. From Staten Island hospital, the kind, patient, dedicated volunteers turned around and drove out to bring the elderly woman home.

How many people do you know who would spend hours of their precious time to help out people they've never met before?

A woman diagnosed with leukemia called from Crown Heights one day, asking for assistance.

Her husband had recently passed away from complications related to COVID-19 and she lived alone. She suspected that she had come down with COVID herself, and wanted to be transported to Sloan-Kettering hospital. The Ezras Nashim volunteers turned up as soon possible and, with sensitivity and compassion, transported the lonely, sick woman to the hospital.

In another touching story, a young woman struggling with anxiety and depression deliberately took too much of her medications one Shabbos, to relieve her sadness. When she started to feel like she was going to black out, she begged her husband to call Ezras Nashim. They arrived quickly, helping her into the ambulance gently, while making sure that she was comfortable and tznius. Once at the hospital, they stayed with her to help her change into a hospital gown privately and

ensure that she was being taken care of properly. They then referred her to therapists and organizations who helped her process her pain. She was so grateful for their kind help and support at her most vulnerable time, that she trained as an EMT and offered her services to Ezras Nashim!

Raizy* was moving a large pot of boiling hot soup from the stove to the counter, when she dropped the pot. The boiling liquid spilled all over her, and the pill on the floor caused her to slip. She called Ezras Nashim for help. Volunteers came immediately and treated the burns, which were in very private areas. They returned every hour that day, to check on her and change the bandages. Not only that, but for the next four weeks the volunteers came to her house every morning and evening to apply the creams and change the bandages, until she was able to do this herself!

Bruchi* received an urgent call from her mother one day, who complaining of severe chest pains. Her mother refused to go to the hospital with an ambulance, and insisted on waiting for Bruchi to come to her house. Bruchi was an hour away and didn't know what to do. Suddenly, she thought of calling Ezras Nashim to help. A volunteer arrived and made Bruchi's mother feel comfortable enough to go to the ER. While Bruchi made the hour-long trip to her mother in the ER, she begged the Ezras Nashim volunteer, a total stranger, to stay with her mother until she arrived. The volunteer stayed with the older woman, who had suffered a heart attack, and was taken for emergency surgery. Ezras Nahim saved this woman's life, while showing her such dedication and love. The volunteer later visited the woman in the hospital on two different occasions to see how she was faring!

Tziporah* found herself unexpectedly giving birth in the middle of the night. An Ezras Nashim volunteer came quickly, reassuring her that she would be okay.

Tziporah felt so lost and uncomfortable with her hormones working in overdrive, yet the volunteer was calm and present, advocating for her in the hospital and making sure that she was comfortable throughout the process.

What would these women do without Ezras Nashim?

Who else would rush to the assistance of these people during their most vulnerable time, to help them with all their patience, sensitivity, and compassion?

Ezras Nashim is filling a need that most people don't even know exists - until they find themselves in a critical situation.

We need your help. We need your support. Please help us help you!

CLICK HERE TO DONATE

Every cent goes towards helping another woman just like you.

Show that you support what we do. If you can't volunteer, you can still do your part!



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