A knock on the door.

What does that mean to you? Perhaps a friend coming to visit? A child coming home? A delivery?

For many families in Israel, that simple phrase carries an entirely different meaning, bringing them back to a world of pain, loss and sadness.

For the Golovensitz family, the knock on the door came in July 2017, and their world changed forever.

David Golovensitz, an officer in an elite Golani unit, was killed on active duty in Hebron.

It was an IDF delegation that knocked on the door to break the news to the family.

Their son would never knock on their door again.

David epitomized the best of our youth, constantly searching for ways to contribute to society. Together with his friends, he founded an organization to dispense food to needy families, as well as arranging a cadre of volunteers to dance and add joy at weddings of couples who couldn’t afford a large celebration.

Shimon and Esther, David’s parents, felt that David’s light must continue to shine, so both the weekly food packages and the wedding dancers continue all over the country, the latter group now called “Mesamchei David” (David’s happiness-bringers).

Apart from his social activities, David loved the mitzvah of tefillin, he even requested an extra set of Rabbeinu Tam tefillin for his bar mitzvah. Esther felt she wanted to donate a pair of tefillin to a soldier who could not afford to purchase his own and who would use them daily.

She contacted Yossi Nachshon, who distributes tefillin to soldiers all over Israel, and within weeks, one pair of tefillin became two, 10, 20, hundreds. As word got round about the project in David’s memory, people began donating tefillin.

The Golovensitz family were very surprised to see just how many people had old pairs of tefillin lying around
the house – the uncle or grandfather who passed away, the boy who got them for his bar mitzvah and never wears them...

Imagine, instead of your grandfather’s tefillin sitting in a drawer, an IDF soldier has committed to putting them on every day in memory of that grandfather and in the merit of David Golovensitz.

The response was incredible.

One woman showed up with a pair of tefillin returned to her by the army in 1973 after her brother fell in battle on the Golan Heights; they’d been sitting on a shelf in their original IDF bag for over 40 years! The woman was so excited that a soldier on active duty would be honoring her brother’s memory every single morning. And the recipient soldier, currently serving in a combat unit, was equally inspired by the opportunity to perform such a meaningful mitzvah.

And that’s not all.

The recipient was a lone soldier with no family in Israel, so the family of the fallen soldier from the Yom Kippur War decided to ‘adopt’ him and offer him a warm and hospitable home for his vacations and weekends.

Think about it – this pair of tefillin, left behind by a soldier who gave his life in defense of the State of Israel, has now passed on to a soldier who left his home and family behind to dedicate his life to that same purpose, the defense of the Jewish people in the Land of Israel.

Every pair of Tefillin has a story that needs to be told.

And every Israeli soldier, doing his part to protect us all, deserves the opportunity to wear the eternal Jewish symbol of Divine connection and protection.

To date, the Golovensitz’s initiative has repaired hundreds of pairs of tefillin since distributed to IDF soldiers in need.

If you would like to participate in this incredible mitzvah, in memory of Lieutenant David Golovensitz, please contact his father, Shimon, on +972 (0)50 251 2665 or simongolo@gmail.com