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Life works in ways that will never be understood, but it seems to always come full circle. Whether it be through great luck, tragedy, or something like making a friend, life is connected throughout the years. In the waning years of the Holocaust, liberators gave many prisoners a new attitude towards the once-thought cruel hand of life they were dealt. A result of this momentous time was not only an end to the second World War, but also the creation of countless relationships between the soldiers and the prisoners. Once an opportunity came up for former prisoner, Joshua Kaufman, and Daniel Gillespie, his liberator, to reunite after decades living less than an hour away from each other; the two couldn't resist, resulting in one of the most heartwarming and special reunions of the 21st Century.

Dachau was the first Nazi camp, established in 1933 in southern Germany. It was a training camp before the War expanded, eventually becoming a concentration camp famous for its medical experiments. Working as an ammunition laborer, Kaufman spent years inside the camp, even removing deceased bodies from gas chambers. He had recently lost his mother and siblings in the Dachau concentration camp and was cooped up inside a cattle car with some 30,000 other survivors when Daniel Gillespie, a member of the 42nd Rainbow division in the US Army, came and took over the camp on April 29, 1945.

"To me, the American soldiers were proof that God exists and they were sent down from the sky," explained Kaufman in an interview with History.com, showing just how significant these soldiers were to the survivors. After serving in the Israeli army shortly after liberation, Kaufman married and moved to southern California working as a plumber. Gillespie worked as a

salesman with his own family in California, as well, but the first time the two would meet since liberation wasn't until 2015 at Hunting Beach, California.

When the two approached each other on the beach, Kaufman immediately fell to his knees and kissed Gillespie's feet, something he later said he was too weak to do when they first met. The encounter was full of admiration and thankfulness from Kaufman, but with humility and appreciation from Gillespie, now retired and feeble. The excitement lasted long after they first greeted and continued as the families and friends met with each other. "I came out of hell into the light," said Kaufman, "and for that, and to [Gillespie], I am eternally grateful."

This reunion was not only an example of the true and great impact the liberators had on concentration camp survivors, but it also demonstrates the absurd yet connected way Life happens with our everyday lives, no matter how distant or forgotten friends, or heroes, are.

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