

Session 108

Re'eh – Restart. Renew. Restore.

Preparing for the Best Year of Our Lives - Elul

28 Aug 2022

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3TrpqZHeNzg>

Jeremy

Shalom everybody! Welcome, welcome, welcome to the Land of Israel Fellowship! And it's so good to see you. I can't tell you how happy I am to be back in the Land of Israel, to be sitting here, to be broadcasting, to bringing us together. My life has just become crazy. Because when I was in the United States, traveling around, I like yearned for Israel. I just missed this Land, I missed this place. And now that I'm back in the Land, I'm like seeing all the faces, like I miss all these faces, I miss all these people, I'm just in a constant state of yearning and missing. It's just the way my life has unfolded now. And I'm just so happy to see you all. It's so good to be together. I mean, just, the speaking tour. I mean it was just life-changing. I'm never doing that again. We were gone for almost two months and it was just almost every night in a different city, it was just like started off in Newark. We got to see Charlene, I mean it was just the first member of the Fellowship we saw. We landed in Newark, saw our first member from New Jersey. And just traveled and traveled and we traveled. I remember like waking one morning...where am I? What day is it? Abilene, Texas?! Just like, so confusing, so disorienting, and we're on our way back and it was a long journey home. And Tehila actually caught this one picture of me and my family in the airport. And you have to see this picture. Can we get it up on the screen, Tabitha? You have to see it.



So the chairs next to me. Noam is under the chairs next to me. Akiva is under the chairs on the other side. Emunah is sleeping there on the back on the floor. Everyone is just so exhausted, just sleeping on top of and under anything that they could find. And now we're still not over the jet lag. We're still not over the jet lag, although Emunah has taken it upon herself. She's like, "You know what I'm going to do? I'm going to make a spa for the little kids." She's one of the

little kids. She's like number 3 of the little kids. But she's going to make a spa for the little kids.



And so, look at this picture here. The kids are sitting there with cucumbers on their eyes. I don't even know how she knew that that's what they do in spas, with their feet up. She's trying to make them relax so that they would finally get over their jet lag. Just like the cutest pictures in the world. So the adventure never ends.

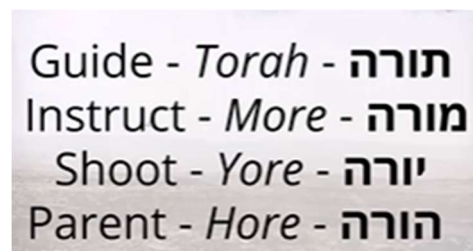


But now we finally have the chance to bring the whole world together. I'm just...I love reading the chats...from San Antonio, and from Scotland, and from London, and from Cape Town, South Africa, and from Germany, and Sweden, and just the whole world coming together. That we have an opportunity to align our hearts to bring them together in prayer from around the world through this Land. What an opportunity. And I missed it for two months because Ari was leading the Fellowship. So here I would love to just start off the month of Elul with an international prayer together. What greater thing could we do on Rosh Chodesh Elul, calling out to God as He calls out to us?

Ani l'dodi, v'dodi li – HaShem, Master of the Universe, thank You for bringing me back to the Land of Israel. Thank You for guiding me and my family, guarding us on the way. Thank You for this Fellowship, and thank You for giving me the chance to meet so many of Your people from so many places around the world. Thank You for allowing us to express Your unity through our unity in this world. Thank You for this Fellowship that represents what could be in the world if we aligned ourselves with the ultimate good, if we aligned ourselves with Your will, lived by Your word, loved Your Land, loved Your people, and came together no matter where we come from or what our differences are that we could make a Fellowship of brotherhood under Your Fatherhood. Thank you for guiding us on this path and bringing us together through our love of this Land, the Land of Israel. It's Elul, and we all want to meet You in this time. We want to return and align our life with the vision that You have for us. Help us take the Torah we learn and integrate it into our lives. Help us to shine Your light to all the people around us. Bless us, bless everyone in this Fellowship, every family to live the truth that You show us. Bless everyone with a year of abundance, with growth, with health and happiness. Amen.

Alright everyone, chodesh tov. So, we just entered into my favorite time of the year, and that is Elul, Rosh Hashanah, this time of the year is like the ultimate. It's the month of rachamim, the month of mercy. That's a really, really good translation. We all know this. Rachamim comes from the word, rechem, which means womb. It's the month that we enter into God's womb,

and it's a safe space for us to grow, to develop, where He protects us and nourishes us. And it's the month of dreaming of what's to come. Rav Daniel Cohen of Bat Ayin, one of my dearest rabbis taught me this years ago. He says, "Rosh Hashana, Yom Teruah, that's the moment of creation. That was the 'let there be light moment' where everything was created, the creation of man. And Elul is the time on the biblical calendar before creation when HaShem was still dreaming up what He wanted for creation before creation itself. This is the time now to dream what we want for this upcoming year because HaShem is literally dreaming with us in His way, in His time. And this month is auspicious for taking the reins of our life and steering it in the direction that we want to go. To grow and expand in the rechem that HaShem provides us. And this is the month where we're given this amazing space to really transform our lives – allow us to grow into who we were created to be. And when I say steering our lives in the direction that we want to go, I think that's the right way to understand the essence of the Torah. You see, Bible comes from the Latin word, biblia, which means book. But the word, Torah, in Hebrew is a verb, it's not a noun. It's a verb. Can we put the slide up on the screen? Look at the word, Torah and where it comes from.

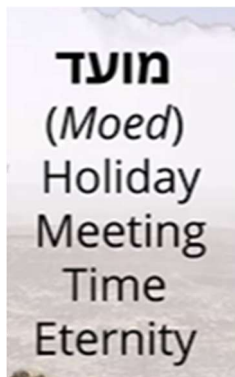


Torah literally means to guide. Moreh is to instruct, Yoreh means to shoot, like in archery, like you're shooting an arrow. It's like driving our lives, shooting us in the right direction. That's why the sin, chet, means to miss the mark, also like the language of archery. The Torah is shooting us, it's driving us forward in the direction that we

should go. And when you sin, you simply, you've chet, you've missed the mark that you were aiming toward. Because the Torah is shooting us and aiming us in the direction. And horeh, horeh is parent. It's like we have a book given to us by our Father in Heaven that is a living Word. It's not a book that's on a shelf, an old book, an ancient book, an Old Testament, all the different languages that are in a Bible. It's like an ancient book that's kind of collecting dust. It's a Torah, it is a living Word, the Word is alive, the Word is guiding us, the Word is shooting us in the right direction, the Word is parenting us to grow us into being God's children.

And more than anything, living in the rhythm, with the Torah, with the biblical calendar, provides us access to HaShem, access to ourselves, an ability to live in harmony with time, in the seasons of the year as the world around us is changing. We're able to tap into the potential changes that we were designed to go through alongside the world around us. And every time has a distinct blessing. A unique time that that holiday represents, that that month represents, an access point. And one of the great revelations of the Torah, of Scripture is that God is not only met in holy places, it's not just in Jerusalem, it's not just in the Holy Land, but He's met in holy times. And that times of the year allow us to unlock the potential of that time and experience our connection with HaShem in the most natural, the most pure way possible.

And that's why the word holiday, in Hebrew, if we can get that slide up there, is moed:



The moedim are the holidays. But the word moed literally means a meeting. It means holiday, but it means meeting. The ohel moed was the tent of meeting. That's what the Tabernacle was called. It's means time, moed, like when are you coming? And when is the moed of that? What is the date? It's a time. And it also comes from the word v'ed, which means eternity. So the same word is saying, "You want to celebrate God's times? You want to meet God in time? You want to experience eternity in time? That's what the moed is." It's a meeting place through time.

And so Elul, the King is in the field. And His Hand is outstretched to us...ready to meet us. We're not dressed up, we're not prepared, we're out in the field of life with dirt under our fingernails. And HaShem comes to bless us from the place that we're in. Where we're at. And on my trip, there were so many members of our Fellowship that I had a chance to really see them. To speak to them, to listen to them, and they're from all over the place, from totally different backgrounds, different life stories. But there is one thread that has brought us all together. And that is that we want Scripture to guide our life. We want to live a guided life. And that life is living in a relationship with HaShem. Just like food nourishes our body, the Torah is here to nourish our souls. And when religion just becomes ritual, philosophy, theology, and it's not feeding our soul, it's not nourishing us, it's not guiding us, it's all over. We turn it into some, you know, stale religion. No one wants that.

And that's why the fundamental connection that's expressed in the Bible, the Biblical heroes, they lived in a brit, in a covenant. In a covenant with God. It's like a relationship, that's what a covenant is, it's like a marriage. Like you can't experience emunah, you can't experience faith really until you're walking in it. Until you really just take that first step in that relationship, then emunah is revealed. It's like you can't really love someone until you're in a relationship with them. You can talk about love, you can think about love, but until you're in a committed relationship, that's when love is fully expressed. That's what a brit is.

And you know, we definitely felt that when we moved to the Farm. That was probably the greatest expression of our covenant with HaShem. Saying, "Ok, we're just going to walk out to the edge of the frontier and try to live a guided life. We'll find God in that journey to the Land of Israel, like Abraham." It's like in that walk of loyalty, will we experience emunah? That's why the word, na'aman is loyal. The same word. Because you can't experience faith without loyalty and walking in it in that relationship, in that covenant.

And you know I thought that when we kind of set off on the road for two months on a speaking tour, we really didn't know what would happen. I mean, things in America have become really

expensive. Gas is more expensive now, places to stay are more expensive now, food is more expensive now. We're like, "Whoah...what's going to happen?" Every step along the way, I mean we just put ourselves in situations where we had so little control over almost anything. We are just hoping and trusting that we are in HaShem's grip and that He's holding our hand along the way. And in that space, is when you live in a relationship, you live in a covenant, and God's Providence is revealed.

And I want to share just one story that I haven't had a chance to share with almost anyone yet on the Fellowship. And I don't think I even had a chance to share it yet with Ari. And it's just such an amazing story because HaShem's providence and guidance, sometimes it's just so glaring. And it glares so that it transcends time and space. And somehow things are planted much before, only to be reaped later. And an amazing tapestry unfolds when we stay loyal to the path. And so this happened at the very end of our trip. You know, we ordered our tickets ten months before we left. Ten months ahead of time. I had no idea where we were going. I didn't know who we were going to meet. I just knew what I knew, and I felt what I felt, and I knew we needed to get on the road and go meet our Fellowship members and I just said, "Ok, the tickets now are just...they're giving them away." It was before the crazy rise in inflation, it was so early. There was just such an opportunity. And we said, "Ok, we need to get on the road, meet as many Fellowship members as possible."

I spoke to our Travel Agent, who has the most amazing ability to find just the best deals. And I told her where we were going to go. And we're really excited. On the very end of our trip, we're going to be celebrating, Tehila and I, our 20th wedding anniversary. And that's just...20 years, that's a lot. It's like, I married Tehila when she was 19, so the first time where we've eclipsed, where we've spent more of our time together than she had spent alone. Like our 20th wedding anniversary. And so what better thing would we rather do than going out and meeting our Fellowship members on our 20th wedding anniversary. We're just going to go through the United States and HaShem will guide our path, He'll light our way, He'll straighten our path.

And so, a few days later, the agent, she got us tickets. And that for almost no extra money, she can even do a stop-over on the way back to Israel. And I'm like, wow, a stop-over. Well, that sounds exciting. I mean, what a special way to celebrate our anniversary, a stop-over. So I said, "Yeah, let's do that. What a great idea, a stop-over on our way to Israel. That will be such a great way to celebrate our 20th anniversary!" And so, since we've moved to the Judean desert, as you can see here behind us, there's no trees unless you plant them, and even if you plant them, you better put a watering system, even with the water, a natural state. And since we've been talking about that, we always wanted to see a rain forest. It's like the exact opposite of the desert. Like to experience God's creation in a totally different environment. And the travel agent said she could book us a stop in Costa Rica on our way home. Like, Costa Rica on our way home! That sounds unbelievable! Oh my gosh! We're going to go to Costa Rica for a few days on our way home. Like what an adventure! We're going to go to a rain forest. I was just so

excited. Ok, like that will be like the most wonderful way to end our tour. So I was like, "Ok, fine."

So we spent our first Shabbat in Iowa, our first Fellowship Shabbat, one of the most memorable Shabbats of my life, I will probably never forget that Shabbat. And we had the most wonderful time. And our next Shabbat was scheduled to be in Silt, Colorado. Silt is like the northwestern tip of Colorado. From Iowa to Silt, it's a drive. I'm driving through the Colorado mountains. I mean like, well, we can do it. We scheduled enough time in the middle. You know, we should be able to make it happen. And we have a whole team of Fellowship members in the northwestern Colorado area. And people from around Colorado came to celebrate Shabbat with us and it was absolutely amazing. And from Iowa to Colorado it's a pretty straight shot. And we should be able to make it with no problem.

On my way to Iowa I get a phone call from my dear friend, Tommy Waller. He says, "Oh, you're on your way to Iowa. Well that's great. You gotta come by Missouri and visit our base down here. And come by and speak to the people living here. They've been so isolated with corona, they would love to hear from you. You would give a real boost of strength and encouragement. Jeremy, it would just be great if you could drive to Missouri. And there's also one more group. On your way back you'll just see the other group on your way back." Like, well Missouri isn't exactly on the way to Colorado. I mean we're here on this mission and I have these two days that are free, but that's going to add...I don't know, 16 hours to our drive with all our kids in the car. I mean, we gotta do what we gotta do. I mean, we're being called to teach, I guess we're just gonna go teach, I mean that's what we're going to do. We're just going to bite the bullet, we're going to just stay true to the mission here.

And so we're driving now down to Missouri and I get a message from the mayor of the village next to us, from Ibei HaNachal. And it's pretty rare that I get a message from him. It seems pretty urgent. And he says that the community is expanding and they're about to build new homes and new families are joining. And it could be that this year they're going to reach a point where there's not going to be enough electricity for everyone. And the government allots a certain amount of electricity. They haven't yet moved it up to like more electricity. And with new people moving to the mountain next to us, there might be a power outage. And because we're a farm and we're only four families on the frontier, and we sort of knew what we signed up for, we'll be cut off first. And then a surge of nervousness went through my body. I'm like, "Oh my goodness, the winters at the Arugot Farm are not simple. I mean I have a fireplace now, but no electricity! With all my children! I mean that could get ugly. I mean how will we be able to expand our Farm and invite guests and I mean, if we can't even exist in our own staff houses, I mean, that's just ...nothing is ever simple on the Farm." I'm like, "ok, I guess. That's what life on the frontier looks like. We'll just have to figure this out."

So I was like, "There must be a solution. Can we ask the government to allot us more electricity? It's a natural growth. I mean, they had to expect this was going to happen." But the government right now is still a very left-wing government and they're not going to expand anything in the settlements right now. And so, I really don't know what to do. So I was just driving down to Missouri with this now extra burden on my shoulders. And kind of an extra edge of anxiety, and kind of a heavier burden than I expected. And I get down to Missouri and of course I have the best time. And I get to see Brayden, Tommy's oldest son who I love. And Tehila sees Tali, Brayden's wife. And they catch up after years of corona, not seeing each other. And I spoke that night and it was beautiful, and it was just amazing. And we had to drive forever to get to Silt, Colorado on-time before Shabbat. And we got there right before Shabbat. It was just crazy. But fine, we did our mission. We were truly happy that we did it. All is good. And we just stayed true to the mission.

A couple weeks later, Tommy gives me a call and thanks me for coming and I hadn't been in touch with Tommy in I don't even know how long. And I had no reason to talk to him. He just called me because he wanted to say thank you for coming down to Missouri and going out of my way to do that. And then he says to me, "I'd love to see you when you come back to Israel. I know your trip is coming to an end now." And I said, "Well actually, my trip's not coming to an end. We have a stop over in Costa Rica, and then we're coming home." And he says, "Really? It's just unbelievable! One of HaYovel's biggest supporters lives in Costa Rica. You have to go meet him. He loves Israel." I was like, "Really?! Instead of just traveling, riding through the rainforest, and see monkeys and sloths." I'm like, "Ok, no problem. If you want me to meet him, I'd be happy to meet him. Wonderful."

And so, to make a long story short, I eventually met this man who keeps a very low profile. Doesn't talk much. And we spent the whole day together. Most of our days were just hiking through the different beauty...there is nothing like a rainforest in eretz Yisrael. There is just nothing like it. And we just love God's creation, and we just were having the most amazing time. Our eyes are just like absorbing the beauty of this world. And we meet this person for the first time and he takes us on these tractor-like little racers, racing through the jungles and through the rivers. And my kids literally...Lavi, my oldest son said it was of the top five best days of his life. He had the best time just racing through the jungles and the rivers. Like, oh my gosh. He met Tehila and my children, we had the best time. I mean, what a 20th anniversary! And he loved hearing about our Fellowship. He was captivated by the Arugot Farm, and ok...wonderful, thank you for meeting, thank you for your hospitality. I left the next day.

I sent him a video that we aired on the Fellowship about prophecy in Israel. Because he was really interested in our teachings on the Bible and the Fellowship. And I aired that video a few months ago on the Fellowship and I said, "I look forward to meeting you on the Farm when you come to Israel." The next day, I missed a bunch of calls from him that I didn't notice because we were in some valley watching waterfalls. I didn't have reception. And I get back to our little

hostel and I see that this call that says, “Call me as soon as possible.” And I called him back and he said, “You know, I’ve watched your video about prophecy. I absolutely love everything you’re doing.” I didn’t ask him for anything. I was just being gracious and happy to meet. And he said, “I want to help you in what you’re doing.” And I told him about the urgent need of our electricity saying, “We don’t know what’s going to happen this winter-time. We really need to build a solar farm that will be able to provide electricity for our staff houses and for the guests that will be coming.”

And he said, “Don’t worry. We’re going to take care of the down-payment to get the project started to ensure that you have a safe winter.” I’m like, “How did I even get to Costa Rica? I don’t even know. Ten months ago, I had an idea. My travel agent said a stop-over would be a good idea and had I not been loyal to our mission, because financially, it didn’t make sense. On a time level, it was really dangerous as far as cutting it close to Shabbat. I never would have been in touch with Tommy, never would have told him that I had this stop-over in Costa Rica, I never would have met this man, and I never would have beenthe whole thing is such providence of the highest order. How the tapestry was being made, ten months earlier, of all places. We could have gone to El Salvador; we could have gone to Nicaragua to a rain forest. I don’t know how we ended up in Costa Rica. And just what a testimony. I didn’t know there was going to be an electricity crisis. And just stay true. Walk in the light, listen to the guidance of your heart. Be good. Know Him in all of your ways and He will straighten your path. I just want to sing HaShem’s praises for the miracles He does for us all of the time. The blessing was there, planted months before I knew anything. And all that was asked of me and Tehila, was to stay true to our mission. He placed blessing and curse before us. Choose the blessing, choose to stay true to your mission and see what will unfold.

And that’s what this parsha that lands right on Elul is all about. See with your own eyes, I place before you, light and dark, blessing and curse. You can choose to walk in the light and you will see with your own eyes the blessings that manifest before your eyes in ways that transcend time, in ways that you could have never prepared, even if you would have wanted to. And so, teshuva – it’s a time to return. Return to God, return to ourselves and return to the Land of Israel. To HaShem’s Presence here. To realign ourselves again. Coming home, so close to Rosh Chodesh Elul. Returning to the Land of Israel after almost two months of being away. I need realignment as much as I’ve ever needed it. Just so disconnected, so disoriented, so jet-lagged. It’s like, if my kids have jet lag, I have jet lag. Because they are not going to let me sleep.

And it’s just so good to have this time now to just realign with what life should be. Who I should be. And as we enter into Elul and we read this parsha guiding us in that way, I just want to bring Ari Abramowitz who did such an amazing job, holding down the fort at the Arugot Farm, hosting groups, 24/7 it seemed like. Hosting the Fellowship every day in the summer while Tehila and I were on the road. Just thank you for all of that, Ari. We literally have had just moments to say “hi” before Shabbat. We haven’t even had a time to catch up yet. But

here we are once again on the Fellowship. At least we get to connect here with everyone else. So, I'll let you have the microphone.

Ari

Shalom, Jeremy, it is good to see you. It is good to see everybody. For some reason again I'm logged in again as Moishe F, but I hope you can hear me. That was our friend, Moishe. Thank you for those words, Jeremy. I really appreciate that because you know, you're in a lot of ways, you're like the commander. You're my commander in the army, you take honestly like a higher level of extreme ownership and so while you were gone, I had to really step to the plate here at the Farm. And you know, it's good to see you back in the captain's seat, truly. And I feel like I hopefully was successful in keeping the ship a sail and on target. Just on the waters, that was my goal and now you're back and we can be back blazing trails.

And happy anniversary, Jeremy and Tehila. That also takes us far back. I was the one that set up the caravan that you were living in. I should take full credit for every good thing in your entire life. I'm just kidding. But really, it's funny when you talk about that...anniversary, 20 years. Shaena and I were just reflecting on all that we've been through in the few years that we've been together. And we often say like, "Imagine Jeremy and Tehila. Because as you can tell, all we can tell, Jeremy is about four times as unstable and erratic as any normal person. And so that makes four times the adventures, which is 80 years of craziness that Tehila has been through. So I don't know whether she should get a mazel tov or a trophy. I don't know. But either way, it's really been a joy and an honor to be a part of you guys. Sometimes for a while there, I was the third wheel. We remember those days.

But anyways, it's also so funny. You know, Charlene was your first Fellowship member that you met. She was also the first and I think possibly on my trip, the only Fellowship member that I met. And now, you know, she lives in my home in the form of Dvash's favorite teddy bear. That she won't go to sleep until she's snuggled up with Charlene right next to her. So I hope Charlene made her way into your home, too. Is Charlene there? I don't see Charlene. Hi Charlene if you're there. Anyways, it's just great to be back. It's really good and thank you all for all your messages. It was very hard for me to cancel the Fellowship last week. But I'm really glad that I did because listen to Sarah your wife, God told Abraham and Shaena was like, "You really shouldn't be doing this." And I slept most of the following 24 hours. And I have a feeling that what would have been a longer sickness was nipped in the bud. So thank you for your messages of concern and blessing and love and support. Really, like so many of you, I still haven't gotten back to you. But bizrat HaShem, I will get back to all of you. Just the flood of concern was so heart-warming and it meant so much to me.

But it wasn't hard for me to see that on some level, for us to take the last week off was important because we're entering a new spiritual dimension now. And I think that that buffer was important. Yeshivas, Torah-learning institutions, that's what they do. They take off a lot

more than that. They take off usually a month. And it's because it's a new energy. Jeremy will talk about it further, he touched on it a little bit. But we're entering an energy of renewal and healing and life and that's where we are right now. Right now! At this very moment, I'm right here on the Farm and you know you can see the sun going down behind me. And right now we're in the last moments of Rosh Chodesh, the new moon of the month of Elul. And it's winding down to a close. And we're in it! The training wheels are being taken off right now. And we're officially in this powerful time of repentance. And that's nothing to be nervous about. It's something to be excited about. Because you know, as we know by now very well, there is nothing that is a coincidence. Nothing. Everything is by design. And the more spiritually sensitive and aware you are, the more detailed your zoom is. The more refined your focus, your eyes become in seeing the Divine orchestration in everything and being constantly and perpetually aware of that.

And so it's not a coincidence that here on Rosh Chodesh Elul, we're reading Parashat Re'eh, the Torah portion this week. And the Chasidic masters, you know they read into things on multiple dimensions, all at the same time. So take it or leave it, ok? But they tell us that the letters of the first word of the Torah portion, Re'eh, resh, aleph, hey, stand for:



The head of Elul is today. That's where it is because this is when it falls out. You know it's an illusion to the powerful time that the portion is read on. Because as Jeremy will undoubtedly explain, Elul stands for ani l'dodi, v'dodi li. I am to my beloved and my beloved is to me from the Song of Songs. It's the time as we'll be talking about more when the King is metaphorically, but also maybe even literally in the field. The King is in the field.

But what does that even mean, that the King is in the field? Well to me, what are we in this Fellowship? Who are we? Right? We are warriors of light. We're warriors of light. Every single one of us. And from the deepest place, I believe that's what brings us together in this Fellowship. We're like a support group for spiritual warriors. And I just know this from speaking to so many of you and hearing what you're going through and how unusual it seems to me, the challenges that are facing really all of us. And when you step up to the plate, and you want to be that, well you get what you're praying for.

You know, Shaena and I just had over dear friends who stayed with us for Shabbat. And they've been really, really best beloved friends for over 25 years. And when you have friends that go that far back, it's a special thing. You really get to witness each other's lives. The ups and the downs, you get to take turns holding each other up during the hard times and celebrating the revealed good, the other times. And it's just, it's been very clear to me from the beginning that HaShem has a very unique thing going on with them. As a matter of fact, over throughout this Fellowship, I think I've talked about them to you numerous times. I don't like going into names

and respecting privacy, but just a few examples of what they've been going through without going too much into it. They tried to have children for over ten years. And they tried everything, everything. But they were reserving the IVF, you know IVF is very big here in Israel, invitro fertilization, it's a technology. Because for special reasons having to do with her blood platelets, doing that would have been a very unique and special risk to her. But after ten years of every other medical intervention, every spiritual intervention, you could imagine. I mean people around the world were praying for them, she was constantly organizing prayer sessions at her home. Amen parties where all the women would come together and make a blessing and all the women would say, "Amen." It's a whole thing. After ten years she broke down and went to the doctors to do IVF. And after all the blood tests came out, the doctors came out and they said, "We're not going to do the IVF." And she said, "Why?" They said, "Because you're pregnant. Right now. At this moment, you're pregnant." I mean what a drama. It's like you can't...it's like a Hollywood movie, right? And they had three beautiful boys in rapid succession.

And then a few years ago, their middle son – a little, beautiful, delicate angel, he was diagnosed with this rare and very dangerous cancer. And you know, he defied the odds after much prayer and tears and prayer and pain and crying and doctors and hospitals and chemo and alternative and everything. He defeated it. And Baruch HaShem, he's healthy now. He didn't even have in his hearing aids for Shabbat. I think his hearing was able to heal itself somehow, unbelievably. You know kids have an unbelievable power of healing. But here you're hearing the punch line right now. You're hearing the final words in those chapters. But having been on the journey with them has been exhausting.

And so they came over for Shabbat and they shared with us an entirely new, sort of 1 – 2 knockout punch that they're enduring right now. And I can't go into all the details, but it was crazy! These aren't things that you ask for. A lot of my big trials, tribulations, pain, you could really trace it back to very poor decision-making on my part. These are not natural consequences for their actions. It was wild. And literally right as the dust seemed to settle from their last painful challenge. And they were assaulted with this entirely new massive challenge. And as they were sharing their story, battling off tears, I looked at them and in my heart I just felt like what I believe is the truth. That this is what you get when you choose...or when you're chosen. Better to say when you're chosen to be warriors of light. Having witnessed what they've been through and how beloved they are. I mean they both could trace their genealogy back many generations to great mystics and rabbis and very holy Jews. They are truly from a very special line. Anyways, I just reflected on how much prayer and how much their challenges have generated light in the world in my life. How much faith they've faced, each and every one of those attacks with. And how their faith grew from one to the other. And I know I'm going into this a lot, but I think that we can all sort of see ourselves on a smaller level in these journeys. Because you know their pain just brought so much light into the world. And they didn't ask for it. And I'm sure if they were asked, if they were asked even right now...they'd be happy to bequeath to someone else their elite warrior of light status. You

know, can't someone else be the chosen people? Right? But things aren't up to us. And this is really why I believe that we seek to dissuade converts. Because you don't opt into a nation with this exact job description unless you're really sure you're up for it and this is you and this is what you want to do. And we talked into the night, you know, brainstorming how to fill all those cracks with light and all the brokenness with godliness.

And then it hit me. I was doing with them very similar work that we do with each other, one-on-one. I think in the Fellowship we talk about generalities. We talk about greater rules that happen. But then the personal connections come. And we work through things with each other. I know many of you, I've have been working through things with and you've been helping me also and we help each other. And that's really what so much of what this Fellowship is about. And I was like, "Really, HaShem?" I was thinking about so many of you. And I was like, "This is how You are rewarding the people in this Fellowship who have turned to me with their pain and their suffering." And I'm like, "These people are just so filled with love and loyalty and fidelity to Your Word, HaShem and this is what they have to go through." Just on a basic human level it hurts. But with these you know, extreme challenges and severe pain, while it's hard to understand, I have moments where it just seems simple. At least on one level. So I'll try to share with you what I mean, looking back. The first verse of this Torah portion:

Behold, I set before
you this day a
blessing and a curse.
- Deuteronomy 11:26

Now read correctly, this should really provide a tremendous amount of comfort. The first word – see – like behold, understand for yourself with your own eyes. Anochi – I, HaShem...like just the word, Anochi should comfort us. That when we say, "Anochi," He's giving the address. Me, HaShem, I am your address. I am the source of all of this.

And I'm placing before you blessing and curse. HaShem is saying, "It's all for me. Your King, your Abba, Who loves you, it's all for Me. The blessing AND the curse."

And of course, this takes us back to our on-going discussion of heaven and hell and the role of satan. And HaShem's making it very clear here. It's not the blessings that are from Me and the curses are from a rebellious, fallen angel that I'm locked in a battle with. There's really no such thing. The blessings are from HaShem and the curses are from HaShem, no differently. And I really hope it's ok, by the way, that I share that with you, and that I refer back to these things that some of us may see and feel differently about. But I think that those are the sometimes relevant things to focus on. And reach out to me if you disagree, if you want to talk about those things.

But anyways, what's the difference between a blessing and a curse? One is revealed goodness and one is hidden goodness that needs to be revealed. That has yet to be revealed. And God is telling us that when we enter the Land, if we obey His commandments and we're kind and we're compassionate to the helpless and to the widows and to the orphans to not only His

Word, His mitzvot, but also the Spirit of His Word. Then we will be blessed and then the good will be revealed. Why? Because our relationship with HaShem, our actions, they keep the spiritual channels into this world flowing smoothly and unobstructed. But when we don't follow HaShem's ways, the light comes into the world in ways that we can't understand or identify or make sense out of most of the time. The channels that flow are obstructed and confused and convoluted and I know maybe this is abstract and too mystical, but all that aside. Blessings come when we heed HaShem's Word and follow Him in His ways. And darkness and curses and confusion come when we don't. That's what all of the Torah portions that we've been reading have been about, repeating again and again that message.

And that's very much the world that we're living in right now. There's a lot of revealed good and a lot of revealed blessings. But there's no question about it, there's tremendous pain and darkness. And the people in this Fellowship, you know we're both chosen by HaShem, and we choose HaShem. And it's a little bit like a dance. Ani l'dodi, v'dodi li. Elul. I am to my Beloved and my Beloved is to me. It's a dance of choosing each other. We choose HaShem and He chooses us. And it's not always easy. But I wouldn't trade it for anything in the world. It's a true relationship. And that's what the first verse of the Torah portion is teaching us. The blessings and the curses. It's all from HaShem. Rav Biederman points out that during our Shabbat prayers, there's a prominent verse that we say that I never really thoroughly considered. I always just said it. It says, when you recognize and know that everything is from HaShem, that is your comfort. There you will find your manukah. Any semblance of rest that we have in this world, you'll find it right in there. In the knowledge that everything is from HaShem. And it's with that internalized knowledge that true happiness emerges. It's from that knowledge that everything is from HaShem, it's from that knowledge that unconditional happiness emerges. Unconditional happiness. Because when we are blessed with revealed blessings, well it's easy to be happy then. But when we face the hidden blessings, the yet to be revealed blessings, that is the true service – to be happy then. Our ability to be happy then, that is the true gauge of our faith. And that happiness is a foundational happiness.

We can be weeping at the funeral of a loved one, but those tears are shed upon a deep, transcendent, foundation of happiness that's hard to explain. If you've been blessed to experience it, you know what I'm talking about. I guess you could call them tears of faith. Not tears of sadness, but tears of faith. Raise your hands if you've felt something like that before. Wow, that doesn't shock me, that literally everybody I see on my screen is raising their hand. You know, I remember feeling it for my friend, Ari Fuld, may his memory be for a blessing. I've shared with you about him. He was murdered here in Gush Etzion. At the same time of being broken or shattered, I remember at the same time feeling this deep happiness. I was happy for him. You know, I was happy for him having lived a truly well-lived life. A well done. He lived his life well and he left his life well, sacrificed his life to save others. A life of kindness and compassion and charity and just legendary courage. I knew he was in a very good place. And that his passing was furthering redemption along and bringing unimaginable light to the world,

but at the same time, I was so sad for me. And I was weeping for me. I would miss him. I was sad for his children and for his family and for the Jewish people that lost such a warrior, an advocate, at least in this earthly dimension. But those human tears of grief and loss were shed upon a foundation of happiness and faith. And the Torah actually points to this very truth. And Jeremy, I'm sorry I'm going a little overtime, maybe I haven't acclimated to being like the wingman again. Forgive me. But let's just go to this verse. I think it's verse 15, chapter 16:



Now here's the relevant part of the pasuk I want to focus on. Because the Lord your God shall bless you and all your produce. And that's how it's read. But when you read the Hebrew...HaShem, your God will bless your produce and the work of your hands when you are truly happy, when you truly rejoice. And we rejoice in the knowledge that everything is from HaShem and therefore everything is good because true happiness is a reflection of

successfully internalized faith.

It's the greatest aspiration that we can possibly have in this world because remember a curse is a hidden blessing. A blessing that needs to be illuminated with light. And so during the remainder of the year, there are times when we are just trying so hard to connect with HaShem. We're struggling to pierce through the callouses around our own hearts and break through the barriers that are separating us from HaShem by force. There are times that...it sometimes feels like we have to storm the castle to find the King. We have to take out the guards and we have to fight our way in. But on Elul, we can just put down our swords and put down our spears. We don't need to fight, we don't need to storm the castle. On Elul, the King, HaShem, comes out to the field. He's unusually open and available to us for our petitions and our prayers and for us to share our hearts.

And I know I should wind it down here, but something happened to me this week that I really want to share with you. Because I'm taking on myself an increased level of prayer during Elul. I take different things on at different times, but I don't know how this is supposed to look, but I'm pretty sure it has something to do with going out to the fields. Literally. Going out to the fields to talk to HaShem and we have fields out here in Judea. And so I want to share with you what happened. Because as you all know, we're building this diamond in Judea to bring Jews and non-Jews, to bring everyone seeking a deeper relationship with HaShem to these holy mountains. But you got to be careful when you pray because sometimes HaShem says, "Yes." And this summer has been overwhelming and it's been constant. And you know, a very special demographic of Jews has been coming out in waves. And they didn't come out for years and now they're coming out in huge waves. And while I don't like labels, if I had to put one on this

group, it would be Chareidi, or Chasidic, or ultra-Orthodox. You know many of them only speak Yiddish. This is the family, by the way, that I spent the afternoon with just today.



The father was translating my English into Yiddish for his children from Williamsburg, Brooklyn. We could talk about that a whole nother time. But I'm getting calls from these people all of the time. They're falling in love with the mountain and constantly requesting to use our House of Prayer for their Torah classes and their feasts and everything. And

you know when they can't afford to pay, which is often, we ask for nothing. And I'll admit that sometimes my phone rings off the hook on all hours. Cause they don't have WhatsApp and they don't have Smart-phones, which I do respect, a lot. But at the same time, it can be constant and very bold and tenacious with their requests in a serious way.

And the other night my phone rang and it was late at night and it was one of their community leaders. And I was bracing myself for him to request AGAIN for us to host a Torah session feast here. It's called a fobrangen, it's sort of hard to describe. There's Torah and food and singing and fellowship. But it always ends up being a lot of real work for me. And we're not charging anything. It's an internal service. It's a service from HaShem. So I'm working on dealing with those inner voices, how I feel about it. But anyways, this guy called me and he wanted to arrange another one. But he said, this is how he started. "First, I just want to tell you how grateful we are. Your mountain is such a blessing, your synagogue, your hospitality, it's such a blessing. We're so in love with it. Our experience there is really changing our hearts. Thank you so much, thank you, thank you." And even though I knew, he was going to follow those words with his next request, which he absolutely did, it still really meant a lot to me. I mean, I really appreciated it. It put me in a much better mood to do what I was going to do and say, "Yes," but the gratitude and the recognition for how much we've done for them here on the Farm, it really made a tremendous difference. And when I hung up, I realized, how many times have I launched right into prayer to HaShem with requests. HaShem, please this, please that, with my fears, with my questions, without a moment of gratitude and recognition for the countless blessings HaShem showers upon me every day.

And so I want to bless all of us, my friends, that we take advantage of this special opportunity to come close to HaShem, and we start to seize this opportunity by showering our gratitude and our thanks for all the blessings HaShem pours upon us every day. And for me...one of the greatest blessings in my life, that I will be thanking HaShem for, is all of you. For this holy Fellowship and how much light and blessing is already shining from one end of the world to the other because of our holy work here. And so, I love you very much, my friends, HaShem should

bless you and protect you. And may this Elul be one of healing and love and repentance and renewed closeness and loving relationship with HaShem and with each other. Shalom, Shalom.

Jeremy

Thank you, Ari. Thank you. You've left me with just a little bit of time now. But everything you said was really beautiful. Thank you very much. So here's what I want to do. It's Rosh Chodesh Elul. And this is such an auspicious time that I want to share with you my guide of what I'm doing on my own internal work, and hopefully it will be an inspiration or a guide for what all of us can do as we prepare ourselves for this upcoming new year. It's the essence of Elul, it's the heart of this time, it's the essence of tshuva, so there is a practical, spiritual guide for building the life that we want for this coming year. That's what I'm doing. That's the purpose of this month. Like there's a reason why secular New Year's resolutions, they kind of like...the stigma is that they...I wanted to do this, but it didn't really come to pass. Because the resolution, it's not just like a one-day thing before New Year's. We have 30 days of Elul, we have 10 days until Yom Kippur. There's like a 40-day process that if we do it right, those resolutions will stick, we will transform who we are.

And if we translate teshuva as realigning oneself, to get realigned, there are three things we need to work on, getting clarity on during this month. And you can write these three things down because if we have clarity on them, everything is about clarity. And that's why taking it from our thoughts, to dibur, to writing it down, is key. And so the first question is:

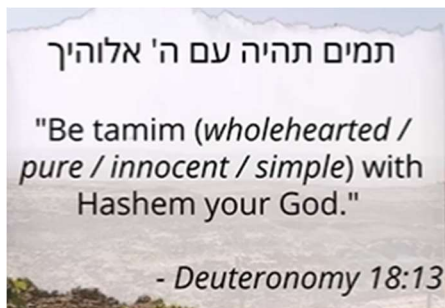
1. Who we want to be?
2. What we want in our life?
3. How do we want to live?

So there's three fundamental questions. And these three questions represent the first three pages of every journal that I have. So the first one – what we do on Elul, is we're going to find the mantras for this upcoming year. What are the mantras – who we are? Who do we want to be? Now for me, I've had these five in my top five for so many years now that I don't even remember them anymore. Can we just put them up on the screen? This was a secret that was revealed in the 1800's that was actually taught to me by Rav Shlomo Katz. And the letters of the beginning of each one of these Hebrew verses, if you see it, actually spells the word, teshuva.



These five verses to me are the heart of what it is to be a believer in this world. And a book, a beautiful book was just written based on these five verses, a book about teshuva, and if you want to order a book for the month of Elul, I would highly recommend this book. It came out last year. It was written by Rabbi Judah Mischel, "Baderech – Along the Path of Teshuva." And the book is actually...I just put it now on the chat so you can see how it's written - the title, the author, you can order it on Amazon.

And what I want to do now, really quickly, is just go through these five verses. Because I go through these verses every time I open up my journal. And this year I've added a few new ones. And each time, you know you want to add a few verses that are really going to be with you through this coming year. Who do we want to be? What life lessons do we not want to forget this year? So the first one that we mentioned, you can put it up on the screen:



Be tamim, wholehearted, innocent, simple with HaShem your God. Now the word, tamim, it's a difficult word to translate. That's why I put so many words in parentheses there. But to me, it really boils down to integrity. Just to be whole-hearted. To be honest. If you're not honest, you don't have integrity, then you're disintegrated. Here's just to be whole, to be simple, to be pure. No spin, don't lie, don't try to manipulate. Just keep things simple. It's just a

daily reminder to keep things pure, keep my speech precise, just to be tamim, to be pure with God. Just to have integrity.

The next one –



Just to try to keep a God-consciousness throughout my day. It's like a beautiful goal. To always orient myself toward the ultimate good. To act with moral clarity and courage when I need to. When I want to walk in the light always. Also the word shevita comes from the word, shaveh, which means equal. And that's when something bad happens, something good happens, something scary happens, it should all be shaveh, it's all from

one source, it's all from God. Everything that happens, I should see it in the same light. Everything should be recognized immediately as a communication, as a guidance, as a correction. I'm being corrected, I'm being guided, the hard times, the good times, it's all equal. It's all shaveh. Everything is in the eyes of shevita la'HaShem la'nagidi tamid.

And now the third verse, there's five. The one in the middle is:



So there's two at the top that are about our relationship with HaShem, two on the bottom that are about our relationship with HaShem, and then there's the heart of it all – to love your fellow as yourself. That's the litmus test, that's what this world is really all about. I mean, it's the heart of it all. It's easy to love God, it's hard to love man. And HaShem tells us, the easiest way, the best way, the greatest way to love God is to love your neighbor, love your fellow man, to express as much love between our fellow human beings as we can, that is the greatest of all commands. It should be the 11th Commandment. It's the heart of teshuva, it's not just about our relationships with ourselves or our relationship with God. It's about our relationship with God. And the next one:



This is the verse about living a guided life wherever you go, wherever you are. Search for Him, search for the way that you can be a kiddush HaShem, you can sanctify His name in the world. We're put in so many circumstances in life. Every day there's multiple circumstances. Know Him in everyone of those ways. In every way, what's the win in this situation? What's really the way to shine our light in the world? How do we express emunah right now? And Rebbe Nachman's first teaching that he writes, is every Israelite needs to search out the godliness, the godly mind within everything, so that everything will light his way and draw him closer to God. That's the heart. And then the last one:



It's all from Him, the good, the bad, the ugly, the beautiful. And as we walk, just to walk in service that's not really about us, walk humbly with God. It's about His Kingdom, it's about other people. Just to keep the humility as like one of the ultimate virtues. And so, those are the mantras of who we are.

So the work of this month – find the verses that you want to carry with you in this time as we start the new year, that will shape who we are. And the first page of my journal, those mantras are always there. Every time I look at my journal, it's just a constant reminder, a meditation of who I want to be. Those are the verses that I want to express in my life. And Abraham Joshua Heschel says in one of his last speeches to his students – Remember, above all else, build your life as though it were a work of art.

So who we want to be? The next one is what we want in our lives. And so that's the ingredients. What are the critical ingredients that we want to make sure that we have in our life? We look at our week. Did we put all of these ingredients into our life? These are mine –

Torah, prayer, my diet, my fitness, my health, my exercise, my marriage, my children, my original family – the ones that are closest to me, my brothers and my parents, my home, my writing, my journaling, am I taking time to have cheshbon nephesh (to reflect on my life and where I'm going and how I'm doing), eretz Yisrael, nature, animals, am I touching God's creation? I need those ingredients in my life. What am I doing to be creative? What am I creating in the world? Chesed – my community. What am I in service of, the kindness, what am I doing? And then my last and my most important ingredient. My mornings. Am I waking up early and having that time to really put those ingredients in? That's my key. So everyone needs to say, "What do we want in our life? What are the ingredients of your life that make your life beautiful? That make your life worth living? That make your life special to you?" You have to then articulate, what are the ingredients? And then as we build our life into Elul saying, "You know what? Here's my life. I love being out in nature. God created nature. Man created city. One step closer to nature is one step closer to God. On Friday's I want to take a walk along the river. I want to be out in nature. I want to spend time and build my life that I have the ingredients, that make my life beautiful, that make my life a work of art. If you want to bake a cake, you need the ingredients to put into the cake to make it delicious. Same thing about our life. So who we want to be and what we want in our life, that's the second question.

And then the third and last question – is how do we want to be in this world? How do we want to live? And for that we have the soul map. And those mantras that remind us who we want to be, the ingredients – what we want in our life. All we want to be in the world, we have the seven sfirot, the seven virtues, the seven godly attributes in this world, how we can express them in the world. And those seven virtues for me – love and compassion, that's chesed; discipline and self-sacrifice, that's g'vurah; emet, truth; courage and victory, that's netzach; chod is gratitude; yesod is self-mastery; equanimity, nothing should be able to shake us; and the last one, malchut is humility.

And so, a new year's resolution at 40 days, we think to ourselves, who do we want to be in the world? What ingredients do we want in our life? And how do we want to be in the world? If we can nail those three questions and really get clarity as we enter into the new year, it is literally like an arrow being shot. We're using the Torah to pull out our best life and to shoot it in a new direction, really regaining control and steering our life in the most beautiful direction possible...like a God-driven life, a godly life.

And so, we should all be blessed, we should all be blessed to really express our soul in the world this year and really pull out all of the hidden treasures that are within us and to be lights to everyone around us. And so, thank you all for joining us as we enter into Elul and thank you for welcoming me back to the Land of Israel. And we will see you again next week. Shalom from the Land of Israel.

Aaronic Blessing (Hebrew) Shalom my friends.