

Session 207

Vayishlach – Becoming Israel

15 December 2024

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BPgP5T20DNs>

Jeremy

It's wonderful to see you all. I'm sorry that the technology is still not totally fixed on my side. But I guess that means that we still have a way to go. And that's alright, because it's not our job to finish the task, but we're not allowed to stop the task in the middle. And in fact, that's what I've been feeling all day today. I look around the Arugot Farm, and there is so much for us to do. Not just on the Arugot Farm, in the entire Land of Israel. When I just look out and I see the rolling hills of the Judean Desert, all the way to the Dead Sea, and then beyond the Dead Sea. I'm like, "Wow, there is so much more to do."

And amazing things are happening. Gaza is being liberated. I was told by one of the soldiers that are deep in Gaza that they are already now paving massive highways, planning on Israel's sovereignty in Gaza. They're planning on rebuilding Gaza. I mean no one is talking about it, so I'm just telling you here in the Fellowship. It's not like this will be spread to the world, I'm just telling you what I personally heard from my friends that are in Gaza. That they are building highways in Gaza and there's no reason Israel should be building highways in Gaza unless Israel is planning on rebuilding Gush Katif and rebuilding Gaza, which is such good news.

And even better news, Israel right now is starting to take over pieces and parts of the Promised Land north of the State of Israel's borders, in Syria. And I can't help but think about it...one year ago today, Israel was in the middle of a nightmare. It was the greatest existential threat that faced Israel since I remember. Imagine if on October 7th that Chezbollah would have shot 100,000 rockets and invaded Israel. And Assad would have used chemical weapons. I mean the scenario is a nightmare. And then, somehow, by the grace of God, in one year, Sinwar, the head of Hamas and Gaza has been eliminated. Hanniyah, the head of Hamas outside of Gaza has been eliminated. Nasrallah in the Chezbollah in Lebanon has been eliminated, Chezbollah has been totally dismantled, and Assad, the evil regime of Syria has fallen. And you like blink twice and you're like, "What? Almost all of Israel's enemies have fallen within a year?" Had you told me this one year ago, no country can do that on their own, there must be a force that is guiding Israel toward victory, and we are alive to see it.

And you know, sometimes, the toughest things in life bring forth the biggest light. And so, October 7th was the darkest time I remember in my lifetime in Israel. And then all of a sudden you spin your head twice – Donald Trump is soon to be the President, Elon Musk is on the team, Israel is now rising up again, and all of our enemies are falling before us. It's truly remarkable, and all I can do is give thanks to God because we are alive to see it.

And so, with that, I would love to start off this Fellowship, which at least from my angle is going to be very different than all the other Fellowships I've done up until now. And before I start, I just want to unite as we always do because the heart of this Fellowship in my mind is prayer. Meaning, I'm sure that if we had theological discussions amongst all our Fellowship members we could argue until Mashiach comes. Just the amount of Jews that are here, we could argue until Mashiach comes. Throw in all of you guys, there's a nun here and there's Ephraimites and Noachides and Christians and I don't even know who. So many people are here. The theology can go on and on and on and on and on. But then, all of a sudden, we reveal a deep truth. That when we pray, we're all united. When we pray to God, all of us are praying together. We're all aiming our hearts and our minds and our thoughts to the Creator of Heaven and Earth, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to the God of the Bible. And all of our theology doesn't matter because all of us have been taught what we've been taught and we can't erase what's in our brains. But what we can do, is unite with our hearts.

And that's why prayer is so fundamental, and that's why the final Messianic vision is a House of Prayer for all nations. It doesn't say that it's going to be a Jewish synagogue, and it doesn't say it's going to be a Catholic church or a Christian church. It's going to be God's home and it's a House of Prayer, not of the Torah, not of the Bible and not of Scripture. We can argue about the Torah. The entire Talmud is one giant argument about the Torah. No. What unites humanity is prayer. And this prayer is the first that I know of where we bring everyone together in prayer and I want to use this opportunity to unite our hearts, to unite our minds, unite our words through this Land and kick off the Fellowship with prayer.

So HaShem, the God of Avraham, Yitzchak and Ya'acov, here we are. There are children crying to fulfill Your promise for this world. We come here every week and all of us are on a journey to the Land of Israel. All of us are on a journey to Jerusalem, to Your dream, that we should build a House of Prayer for all nations. We're trying so hard, so with our abilities, we're just doing it virtually now. All around the world we've come together to manifest a virtual House of Prayer for all nations. One step closer to a physical house in Jerusalem. And bless everyone who has gathered here today. Bless them, bless their families, bless their loved ones, shine Your light into their life, bless all of our members who will be tuning in later, bless them with Your light. Shine it in their life and may Your light be their courage. May Your light be their strength, and may Your light be their direction. Amen.

Alright, my friends. So, there really are a lot of things to talk about today. And I particularly want to keep my surprise for the end. But right now, I want to pass it off to Ari who I know has Torah that he wants to share. So with that, I'm going to pass it over to my partner in crime. Ari, are you here?

Ari

Shalom, Jeremy, I am here. Can you see me, can you hear me?

Jeremy

Yeah, I see you now. Excellent.

Ari

Are you in Judea? Are you in Jerusalem, where are you?

Jeremy

I am in Judea on the Arugot Farm at the Guest House, waiting for our members to come to Israel so they can stay at my Guest House. So I'm broadcasting from the Guest House right now.

Ari

Ok, so those are the blinds behind you. I didn't recognize them. Ok, it's good reception. It's really unbelievable. Do you guys remember the days where it was an absolute like Vegas gamble about whether we could broadcast from the Farm and now it's crystal clear. We got this internet installed which has been a blessing...and as you can imagine, it has its downsides, too. But either way, it is very good to see all of you. Really good. The response to the Judean Diet has been really strong. I really didn't know if anyone would sign up at all, I have to tell you, cause what do I know? But I definitely wasn't expecting it to be as strong as it is. I don't have the exact count, but I think it's between 55 and 65 so far and it's only been a week. Tabitha, if you have the exact number, you can write it down. But either way, it doesn't matter. I don't want to know the exact number, I don't want to know, because it doesn't matter.

Because what really motivated me to do this whole thing was that I weighed in right before Shabbat at 213 pounds. And by the way, if you're going to weigh yourself, which I'm not saying you should, always weigh yourself BEFORE Shabbat, never after. Either way, I started off my journey at 246 pounds and I've never been back there. And I feel really good. And you remember what I was going through. And after digging really deep, I felt in my heart that my journey may really resonate with people and bring light to their lives and strengthen their relationship with HaShem and lengthen their lives.

Anyways, so that's what I wanted to do, and I really was very impulsive about it. If I had thought too much about it, I don't think I would have. Just for the taunting of my immediate family. Especially my sisters...unrelenting, unrelenting. Anyways, it doesn't matter. They love me, they're just trying to strengthen me, I guess. But like I said, I didn't know what the response would be, what the interest would be, but then again, I know that that is not my department. My job is to move forward in faith, and the outcome is in HaShem's hands. And I really believe that it's crucial to remember that truth regarding the diet, itself. The fact that the outcome is out of our hands, is part of the fundamental paradigm shift of this program.

You know a lot of people are saying like...I'm imagining some people as I'm writing these modules, they're saying, "Ok, get to it. What's the diet? Tell me...what is it?" Ok, and there is a

definitive “what.” But if it’s all about the “what,” then it’s just another diet. It’s going to be another failure because here is the same. There’s a fundamental difference that needs to happen in here and in here. Because many people have been reaching out with questions, good questions. Understandable questions. “I want to lose 30 pounds. How long will it take for me to lose 30 pounds? I’ve tried everything, is this going to work for me?” I mean, look at Jeremy. The guy fell off a horse, he’s not exercising, he’s put on weight. We all know he needs the Judean Diet more than anyone. Right?

But the fact is, that in Western thought, we have come to idolize outcomes and destinations at the expense of the journey. And I’ve come to believe that that philosophy has not only undermined our appreciation of our individual journeys in this world, but that whole world view has also sabotaged the outcomes themselves. Ironically, it was only when I liberated myself from the number on the scale, or any other specific desired metric or outcome or destination. Only then, was I able to shift my motivations and my experience to an infinitely higher and more meaningful dimension. And like I said, ironically it was that shift away from outcomes that is what brought me to the outcome I really wanted to begin with. And so, if this seems sort of cryptic, I get into it much more in the program itself.

But I think our Torah portion illustrates this truth more beautifully than any mortal could. Definitely better than I could. See we all know that we are called the nation of Israel, Yisrael, Israel, because of the verse from our portion that says:

“And he said, Your name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel; because you struggled with God and with man and prevailed.”
-Genesis 32:29

The word Yisrael comes from the word “kisarita,” because you struggled. We struggled with God and with man and we prevailed. We prevailed, right? B’tuchal. Wouldn’t that be a better name, right? Why aren’t we called the nation that prevails? Why are we the nation that struggled. I feel like it’s much more valiant and victorious, the nation that

prevails. We’re the nation that struggles?

So Rav Biederman points out in the name of Rav Leibel Eiger that Ya’acov, that Jacob, and therefore the entire nation was named Yisrael because prevailing in anything, in any struggle, in any fight, in any challenge, is not in our hands. That part, the outcome, that’s in HaShem’s hands. But the struggle, that is in our hands. We can on some level, take credit for that. Our successes, our victories though, those are in the hands of the Creator of Heaven and Earth. All we can take responsibility for is the struggle itself. And even that, ultimately, is in His hands. For He also gives us the desire and the strength. That’s another discussion.

Let’s look inside at verse 25:

And Jacob was left alone; and there he battled with a man until the breaking of the day.

-Genesis 32:25

Now Rashi tells us famously that this man that Jacob was wrestling was the guardian angel of Esau, which we have a custom of not to even verbalize, to say, because it gives it strength in the world. But it was the guardian angel, Esau, it wasn't a normal being of flesh and blood that he was wrestling with, but he was battling with the arch angel of Esau.



Now open your hearts for a second. Open your hearts here. The word which the Torah used for battle is v'avavek (וַיִּאָבֵק), which the Hebrew speakers here, you can here, it comes from the word avak, which means dust. And the sages teach that the dust that they stirred up into the air through their wrestling ascended to the holy throne. That dust rose up to HaShem's holy throne.

Ya'acov struggled with this dark force in the world. The struggle itself, the dust from that settled before HaShem's holy throne. Because when we struggle for HaShem's sake, when we struggle for God, Himself, to come closer to Him, that struggle gives Him immense pleasure. And that's really what the Judean Diet is all about. It's really not about the "what." There's really a lot of wiggle room for personalization on that whole front because we're all different. But I won't say that the "what" doesn't matter at all because I think there's great wisdom in how we'll be approaching it in the "what" and the "how" together, all of it. But the beating heart of this program is the "why."

And my whole life, I wanted to lose weight, to look better, to be healthier, to be more confident. But when facing the last piece of cheesecake at 1 A.M., that was just too abstract. It was never enough of a reason for me to overcome that imminent temptation. At least not for too long, not on a long-lasting way. It was only when my "why" became to serve HaShem, to come close to HaShem, to connect to the sources and the teachings and the Torah and the sages of Israel. When my "why" became to strengthen my relationship with HaShem, it was only then that I made this fundamentally shift which ironically de-anchored me from any measurable outcome. It was only then that I actually began to see measurable, lasting results. So I am not here to promise you anything at all that is not in my hats. All I can say, is that for those of you who feel compelled to join, I will do my very best to share my journey and my heart with you and embark on this journey together. We're doing this thing TOGETHER. And for those of you who don't feel compelled to join...for example, Ardelle, she wasn't feeling it, but she's such an incredible, wonderful tzedeket, that she reached out and said that she wants to sponsor two of the programs for people who really want to do them that may not be able to afford it. I mean, just unbelievable people in this Fellowship. So again, if you don't feel compelled to join, don't.

Don't feel any pressure. It really may not be the right time, it may not be. Many of you, you've been there already. You've already been down this route and you could be teaching me, guiding me, I know that that's true. So many of you are just so much greater than me. I feel like a spiritual mouse compared to you. It's the truth! It's not the first time I've admitted that on this Fellowship that I'm so humbled by the greatness of so many of you. And it won't be the last. Anyways, thank you so much for reaching out to me with your love and encouragement. I can't even start to tell you what a blessing you are in my life. And speaking of blessings in my life, there's Jeremy! Back to you, brother!

Jeremy

Alright, thank you very much. I think that one of the reasons why I appreciate this idea that Ari came up with, to me was almost out of nowhere. I came back from the United States, I was getting a family protection dog, I was teaching at Fellowships in Florida and then in Colorado and I came back and all of a sudden, there's a new way that the Fellowship can express themselves. And the reason why I like it is because emunah is a lifestyle. Faith isn't a declaration and faith isn't a belief. It is a life OF faith, in practice, with loyalty. And the way to express that is absolutely through the way that you eat, the way that you pray. But to take one element that everyone lives by, everyone has to eat, and then elevating that into a spiritual practice, seems like a marvelous thing to do. And it has nothing to do with religion, it has nothing to do with Judaism, or Christianity or Buddhism. It's really about just living with emunah and making everything that we do physical, elevating it to make it spiritual, to find the holy sparks within it.

And to me there's nothing greater than the Torah brought to the world more than God wanting a dwelling place in the physical. That's what Israel is all about. It wasn't like, "Abraham, go to the Land of Israel and meditate alone on a mountain." It was, "No, I'm going to make you a great nation. You're going to need an army, and politics, and taxes, and down and dirty, and build a kingdom, and with that, through that physical building, we're going to reveal holiness."

And so, I really love this idea and I'm really excited to see what's going to happen because I don't know what's going to be in the first module. I'm definitely going to be watching it. And I'll be laughing at Ari...

Ari

No, no, Jeremy. You are not invited to watch it. There are no spectators. You're either on it, with us, or you're out. You don't watch it...

Jeremy

I want to laugh at you. I want to make sure I'm...

Ari

You and my sisters.

Jeremy

Well I'll tell you, the sparks of holiness that I have found in my life come primarily from Tehila. And I know that I say this almost every Fellowship, but the teaching that she's going to give today is truly mind-blowing. I don't know how a text can be 3,000 years old, taught by the geniuses of the sages of Israel throughout the generations, in comes Tehila Gimpel, reads it over Shabbat, talks about it a little bit with me, and then she has an entirely new take on Scripture that is so obviously a truth that's hidden within the text that was just waiting to be revealed. And so, with that, I would love to introduce to you to the love of my life. And she's worked pretty hard today to make this video. But here she is, Tehila Gimpel.

Tehila

Hi everybody. I want to discuss the interesting pattern that appears throughout the portions that we've been studying, starting through the Ya'acov stories and going all the way through the stories of Yosef and his brothers. I want to try to identify a message that's sort of a meta-idea that's developed through these stories when they're put together. Let's start from the end.

One of the most intriguing and perplexing stories in these portions, is the elaborate scheme that Joseph has around revealing himself to his brothers. He could have just revealed himself, he could have had a beautiful resolution. "Oh, my gosh, you guys have come here. Hugs, kisses, let's talk about how our father is doing." It could have been a beautiful thing. But instead, he has this scheme around the goblet. And it's a very strange and perplexing story. Why does he need to do this? He has his fancy, bedabbled goblet and he hides it in Binyamin's bag and then he says, "They stole it," sends all his people to run after them, chases them, brings them back and they say, "Oh my God, if anybody stole your goblet, that person should die." And then he says, "Well, no, they can be my slave," and then he searches all of their stuff, for it to ultimately be in Binyamin's bag. It's a weird story, right?

Now when we look at it, is it ringing a bell, does it remind us of any other story that we've read in the recent Torah portions. Do we see anything? Well, I imagine that perhaps it's reminding you of another story that we just read a couple of weeks ago. Because in the portion of Vayetzai, Ya'acov wants to leave Lavan and Rachel goes and steals her father's t'refim. This is interpreted in the translation as idols, but let's call them t'refim. Rachel takes them, Lavan goes to chase after them, looks through all their stuff, Ya'acov says, "Death penalty to whoever stole it," only for that to sadly seal Rachel's fate in the future. And the aims that Rachel stole, interestingly, while translated as idols, the word "t'refim in the Bible is a pagan idolatry of sorts, but actually, primarily used for like fortune-telling, divination, knowing the future.

You could see that in a bunch of places, like in Yechezkel, Ezekiel 24:26 where the prophet asks questions to the t'refim, and many other places in the Tanakh. And so, if you aren't really sure if

the story of Rachel stealing the idols from her father is similar to the Joseph story, twice Joseph mentions that he uses his goblet, not for drinking his morning coffee or for like having his cocktails with his friends, but for doing nikush (נִכּוּשׁ), which means fortune-telling, telling the future.

So we have these two items that are planted or stolen and hidden and everyone is searching for them and they're both used for the same thing. It's like, "Hello, these are similar stories." And look at who those stories are taking place with. One is done by Rachel, and one is between her two sons. This can't be a coincidence that the similarities are overwhelming, but seeming like a mirror-image. Rachel really took the t'refim and is cursed with the death penalty. Binyamin didn't take the goblet, and is ultimately spared the death penalty. What are these stories trying to tell us? They must be related.

So I want to dig in and suggest that the Torah is linking the stories to serve as a reference point saying, "Oh, you want to understand this story? Well, first understand its predecessor." So if the goblet story is weird, then the t'refim story, the story of Rachel stealing her father's idols is even weirder in a lot of ways. Let's look back at that story. Ya'acov sees that his cousin Lavan's children are gossiping about him and thinking bad things about him and that he became rich at their father's expense. HaShem says, "You know what? It's time for you to go home." And Ya'acov is also feeling that. And he shares that with his wives. Rachel and Leah say, "You know what? We feel the same way."

And then there's sort of a twist. Instead of just going, saying goodbye, sayonara, he decides to just make a break, make a run for it. And at that point, Rachel snatches the t'refim from her father and causes Lavan to chase after them like mad. Now, why? So many of the interpreters say that it was actually to keep her father away from idol worship, that's like what Rashi says. But really? He's a very rich guy in an idolatrous society. Can we imagine that she took the t'refim thinking, "Well, you know, I guess it's an unsolvable problem for my father. He's never going to be able to go to the idol store and buy new ones. He'll just become a mono-theist and worship the one Creator of the universe," because what? Because he can't make it out to the mall to buy new idols? Come on.

Others, like the Rashban, and it's a difficult thing to say, but maybe she even used them for herself, it sounds terrible, I don't want to even think about that. Like, do we really even want to accept the possibility that she was stealing idolatrous paraphernalia, we like to call them idols, but something that was used for pagan practices? Like neither of those explanations really sit well. So sometimes when you don't know why someone is doing something, you can look at the outcome that they achieve and work your way back and try to figure out what she was doing.

So assuming that Rachel is pretty smart and she can see the likely see the outcome of her actions, it's probably reasonable to assume that if she's causing something with her perplexing actions, maybe that's actually what she wanted to achieve. So if we want to know why she did it, let's see what happens as a result of her stealing her father's t'refim. So they're running away, Lavan chases after them. But if you look carefully at his words...he makes a lot of noise, "Oh, you took my children, my grandchildren, I wanted to kiss them goodbye." But it seems like the primary reason that he chases them is not because of that. He says, "Listen, I get it. You miss home, you want to go to your father's house. But why did you take my gods? Why did you take my idols?" Meaning, it seems that the main motivation for the chasing, is really the t'refim, more than the actual sadness of missing his grandchildren.

And this is an idea posited by Ariel Stollman, he says, "If the outcome of taking the t'refim is that Lavan chases them, and we don't really have a satisfying other explanation for why Rachel would have had any meaningful use for the t'refim, maybe that outcome WAS what she was trying to accomplish. Maybe she was trying to force a confrontation between Lavan and Ya'acov. Because if you look back at the verses, it's really interesting. When Rachel is stealing the t'refim, it is juxtaposed and paralleled in terms of the wording to Jacob running away. In chapter 31, verse 19, it says:

And then the very next verse, it says:

Now Lavan had gone to shear his sheep and Rachel stole (גָּנְבָהּ) her father's t'refim.

And in the very next verse it says:

And Jacob concealed (גָּנַב) from Lavan by not telling him that he was fleeing.

That's not what it says in the Hebrew. The Hebrew uses the exact same word as it uses to describe Rachel stealing (גָּנְבָהּ) her father's t'refim. It says that Ya'acov stole Lavan's heart (לָבִי גָּנַב יַעֲקֹב אֶת) meaning he didn't tell him he was running away. It's like using the exact same words to tell us, "Pay attention. These verses are related." She stole the t'refim perhaps because Ya'acov was stealing her father's heart. He was stealing away, he was making a run for it.

Again, if you read it like that, then Rachel is doing something beautiful. Ya'acov's entire life is running away from conflicts. His mother, Rivkah said, "Run away from your brother." He runs, he doesn't say, "Wait, maybe I'll talk to him, maybe I'll hash it out, maybe I'll give him back his bracha, maybe I'll work this out with our father, let me make things right, give me a chance to just explain to him that I didn't mean to hurt him." He just took the blessings and made a run for it.

When Lavan is totally abusing Ya'acov – switching his wives, switching his salary, Ya'acov is just like, “Ok, why did you switch my wives, Lavan?” And Lavan says, “Oh yeah, we don't let the older one get married after the younger one. That's just not how we roll around here.” And he's like, “Ok, I guess I'll work another seven years.” Lavan is constantly not giving Ya'acov what he deserves and he never actually opens it up. He's running away from conflict and running away physically, literally.

So now look what happens. She steals the t'refim, as a direct result, they finally have it out. Ya'acov says, “You have stolen from me day and night. You have abused me and wronged me day and night.” And then when Ya'acov starts talking, it's amazing, he's a man of so few words. And it's like a dam bursting, it's the longest conflict he ever has with anybody. Usually Ya'acov is quiet, he lets it all out and he says everything that he needs to get off of his chest.

And not only that, he puts to rest this rumor that's been flying amongst Lavan's family that Ya'acov has been stealing from Lavan because what happens by stealing the t'refim? Lavan actually gets the opportunity in front of all of his friends and all of his family, all of his cronies that come along with him to dig through all of Ya'acov's possessions. He's going from tent to tent and Ya'acov says, “You've checked everything. Did you find anything that you have a claim is yours?”

So if he would have just left and run away, the rumor would have hung on. Ya'acov stole from Lavan, that's why he's so wealthy, that's why he made a run for it. Now all of Lavan's crew are there seeing him go through all of Ya'acov's tents and not one thing that he can claim as it. Ya'acov says, “You looked at everything. Did you find anything?” So the truth comes out. His innocence comes out and then Lavan speaks his truth, too. How does he answer? He doesn't say, “You know what? Sorry. I wrongly accused you.” What does he say? He says, “Ya'acov, everything you have is mine.” His real character comes out, too. He always said, “Of course, Ya'acov, I want you to be successful, I'm looking out for your well-being. I want you to build yourself up, I want things to be fair for you...”

Oh, yeah? Because when push comes to shove, he literally sees Ya'acov and sees everything that Ya'acov has and says, “Yeah, it's not that you're stealing one item or another. Everything that you are, everything that you have, is mine.” Just like Avraham separated from Lot and said, “You go there, I go here.” Just like he made a covenant with Avi Melach, just like Yitzchak made a covenant with Avi Melach in the next generation. It's Ya'acov's time to come say, “This is mine, this is yours. I know that you think that everything that's mine is yours, but no. You have what's yours, I have what's mine. Let's lay down the ground rules, let's lay down the border.”

And if he had run away, all those rumors, all that unclarity, all that uncertainty would just be hovering like a dark cloud for who knows for how long? Lavan could have at any time just showed up in the Land of Canaan and said, “Hey, I want to claim this and I want to claim that.”

What's marvelous is, that right after that story, that's when Ya'acov reaches out to Esav. When he runs away, we don't actually know, when he starts back towards the Land, if he's planning on reaching out to Esav, or if he's just sort of planning on avoiding the subject, laying low somewhere, maybe building a barb-wired fence around his little town. Maybe he's going to do that, or maybe he's going to initiate a resolution, we don't know.

The very next story, after this meeting with Lavan, is that Ya'acov sends messengers to his brother, Esav. He's going to try to make things right. And on the way to doing that what happens to him? He's attacked by an angel of God, seemingly an angel of Esav. And he wrestles with him. Now even though he didn't initiate that wrestling, Ya'acov doesn't back down. That's a very different Ya'acov than the one that's getting pushed around all the time by everyone. The angel actually says, "Can you let me go? It's getting to be the morning," meaning Ya'acov was not letting go. He was not letting go, he was not trying to run away from the angel, he was holding him down. He's like, "No, we're going to work this out. I want a blessing."

And then, his name gets changed to Israel. And it says, "Because you've wrestled with man and God and you've prevailed." So I get that you've struggled with God, it's a celestial being, you've wrestled with an angel. What does that mean, "You've wrestled with man?" He's not struggled with any man in this fight. Well, what was the story that just happened right before this? He had two struggles. He struggled with the angel and he struggled just a moment ago with Lavan.

And so we always think about Ya'acov's name changing because he struggled with an angel. That's not what the angel says. He says, "Your name is changing for two reasons. You struggled with me and you struggled with a man." Now all of that was precipitated directly by Rachel stealing the t'refim. Her action equally contributed to Ya'acov becoming Israel. So why did she steal them? It's not impossible that she wasn't trying to take her somewhat conflict-averse husband and make him into Yisrael. And even if she wasn't meaning to do it, even if it wasn't intentional, who knows? It doesn't even matter because in the bottom line, the direct outcome of the t'refim story was that.

So now, when we read the story of the goblet with Joseph, that story is going out of its way to hint to us that there is something to learn...in order to understand that story, we need to understand the t'refim story. So you want to understand the goblet scheme? Read it in the context of the t'refim story. Joseph could have just revealed himself, but then so much would have gone forever unsaid. They would have immediately have said, "Oh sorry, let bygones be bygones, water under the bridge, right?" Joseph needed to be able to chase after them and retrieve this hidden goblet in order to have the conversation that needed to be had, in order to precipitate the conflict that would lead to the resolution. Because without conflict you don't have resolution. You just have lingering stuff. You just have skeletons in your closets and bad feelings that are swept under the rug.

So he is forcing them to come and hash it out. And they say, "We'll all be slaves to you." He's like, "No, no, no, no. Only one of you. The one who stole," which is going to be Binyamin. "Only one of you should be the one who has to stay behind."

Now on the one hand, this would have course been difficult for the brothers to break to their father, obviously. But in a real way, he's offering them their dream come true, their way out. Rachel is gone, Yosef is gone, he can make Binyamin disappear and go away and they would have the full inheritance to share with no one. No competition, complete dominance. That's what they wanted, wasn't it? So yeah, they would have to disappoint their father. But they even had a perfect way out. Listen, Binyamin stole the goblet, what could we do? We tried our best, we even offered ourselves up. But no, he wouldn't listen. He wanted to punish the thief. There could really be no reason not to take this deal. Sorry, dad, we tried our best, they could have said.

But Judah, Yehuda steps up and says what needed to be said. Yosef instigated this conflict in order to lead to the ultimate resolution just like in the time of his mother, he's reliving it in a way that forces the people around him to face things with courage and the willingness to accept the outcome whatever it is. Just like Ya'acov couldn't become Yisrael without that story, Yehuda could not become what he was destined to be, the leader of Israel, the House of David without this resolution.

And just as a side point, it might have not even be the first time this was happening to Yehuda. I'm not sure that this story isn't also in some ways echoing the story of Yehuda and Tamar. Because Yehuda was avoiding conflict, telling his daughter in law the truth about why he didn't want to give her another one of his sons. It's not quite the same story, but she's also holding onto something of his. She runs off with an item of his. He sends his friend to go and retrieve his items, but he can't find her so she's kind of like stealing his items, and then he pronounces the death penalty for her in the circumstances of her showing up pregnant and then she ends up using those items that she had hidden away from him in order to say what needed to be said, to have the conversation that needed to be had. Then Judah becomes who he aims to be as well. So it's not quite the same, but I think that we're definitely seeing a theme in these portions of people avoiding saying what needs to be said and then using this method of this theme of the hidden items being revealed in order to lead to a resolution of the hidden feelings being revealed.

And it's a profound lesson. Problems never really disappear. They just morph into other problems. We see our fathers and mothers going through the same things again and again until they finally understand the lessons that they need to learn and become who they need to become. Until they have the courage to face...until we have the courage to face our demons, they don't go away. We don't become who we could be. And each time, it may be very painful. Ya'acov is seriously damaged. He's limping. The brothers are seriously terrified and probably

traumatized by facing the possibility of becoming enslaved or having Binyamin, God-forbid, punish, but that's what it takes to become Israel.

And I think before our very eyes, right now, we are meriting to see Israel become Israel. When we look at our recent year, we're injured, we're like Ya'acov, but if you can see past our pain and past our limp, we can see ourselves becoming Israel. For how long have we been acting like Ya'acov? We see our enemies arming themselves, lying about us, terrorizing us, claiming that we stole the Land, the Land that was given to us by our forefathers, promised by HaShem. And we're just like, "Ok, we'll defend ourselves, we'll have an Iron Dome, let's not get into a conflict, we don't want to initiate things. Let's turn a blind eye, another stabbing, another shooting, another rocket attack. Who wants to open up and actually solve this? We're going to get hurt, we're going to get injured, we're going to maybe limp."

But now we've been forced to actually become Israel from the north to the south, to end Chamas, to end Chezbollah, to end the Syrian military threat, hopefully to do the same to Iran, and to anybody who threatens us until they say, "please let us go," like the angel said to Ya'acov, "Let us go, let me go." This year has forced us to stop running away and to actually say the truth. We haven't stolen anything. You have stolen from us. We haven't stolen the Land of our forefathers. You are the ones mistreating us, you are the ones lying about us and claiming untruthful things about us. It's time to set up a border, to set things right, to take what is ours, not like thieves, but proudly with our right. The price that we pay may be a horrible pain, constant pain for what we've lost in order to become Israel for the righteous people that we've lost. But the other side is that we've faced our conflict courageously. And for Israel to say, "We are not letting go. We are not letting go until you bless me. We are not letting go until this curse, this suffering, all of the lies that have been told about us until they are turned into a blessing. For Ya'acov to become Israel and for Israel to say, "We struggled, but we prevailed." May that happen and continue to happen in our times. With that I wish everybody a beautiful week. Bye guys.

Jeremy

Speechless is the word. I'm just speechless. I don't know what to say. What I do want to say, is I want to thank everyone in this Fellowship. Because as you can see, the production quality is so much higher than it has ever been. And Tehila spent so much time preparing it, racking her brain, and I feel like now the videos that are coming out are so well produced, with beautiful lighting and beautiful cameras and angles and that is entirely because of this Fellowship. And I want to thank you for that.

And what Tehila reminded me so much is that whether we like it or not, the Jews today...our father is Jacob. Abraham, we are connected to Abraham, but so is the Arab world, Yishmael. And you know the Christian world, they're very connected to Isaac. And they look at Isaac, the one son that Abraham had, that he had to carry the wood up to the altar and sacrifice to

Abraham. They're very connected through Esav, to Isaac. But the Jews are from the children of Israel. And so Jacob, what did he do? He was a simple, pure, whole-hearted, almost naïve. In modern Hebrew, tamim means naïve. He's just a simple person in a tent, he doesn't want conflict. He wants to run away from Esav. And then when he's with Lavan, he doesn't want conflict. He just wants to ...ok, another 7 years. Ok, no problem. You switched my wives, I'll just walk away now.

And all of a sudden, when you think now what Israel's gone through, Laban said, "It's all mine." And for years, Israel has been playing Jacob. Looking at the Arabs in the Land of Israel that are so called Palestinians. And they're saying, "This whole Land, it's mine. The Jews don't belong here. You stole it." We've given them money. Instead of building hospitals, they built terror tunnels. And they attacked us and they fought us and Israel, like Jacob, just didn't want conflict. We just wanted to keep it quiet.

And then, all of a sudden, since October 7th, just like Tehila said, we have emerged as Israel, and that is truly something marvelous. If you look what's happening in Syria now, I saw this on my X feed.



And it says that there are Druze communities inside Syria that are declaring that they want to secede from Syria and be annexed to Israel. But when you look at the topography of what that would look like, it's like adding another half of the Golan Heights and the IDF has already taken over the demilitarized zone in the yellow area. And all you would need then is to move into the red area and more of the Land of Israel would return to its rightful owner and the rightful heirs to the Land of Israel.

But things are changing in the Middle East all the time. And what I want to do, is I want to go from the beginning all the way through. I spent hours going through literally the entire Tanakh in order to sort of squeeze out what is the essence here? What is at the heart of the Torah? Because it's not a religion. It's a promise. And what is that promise? And how is it relevant to what's happening today in Azza and in Syria. So check out this video that I made for you and I hope you enjoy it.

(video)

All of the pundits are weighing in about the war in the Middle East. Israel's new front, Syria. Once Israel successfully toppled the Chamas, a domino effect has affected Lebanon with the elimination of Chezbollah, and now Syria with the fall of Assad. Many are saying, "This is a

religious war between Sunni and Shiite Muslims. There are Kurds and Dews and Yezidi's that have a stake in the war. Well, I want you to know the truth from the Land of Israel. This has nothing to do with religion. All religions are man-made. No religion holds the ultimate truth. There is only one truth and that is the Torah. This isn't about religion, but about the one foundation the entire Torah is based upon.

October 7th showed the world as the Holocaust did in the 1940's that evil is real. In fact, what happened to the young women in the Nova/peace/love/music festival, and what happened to the most peaceful and peace-loving families in the south of Israel was so horrific that it was virtually impossible for any human being not to acknowledge that evil of the Gazans on that day was pure evil. What the world needs to know about Syria is that God created the reciprocal forces of good and evil as a way to define each other, as a way to drive the historical process forward. God endowed mankind with free will, the freedom to overcome the seductive and the addictive force of evil.

The battle ground between good and evil IS the Land of Israel, the place of God's dwelling with B'nei Yisrael. The place of humanities foundation and the intersection of the infinite and the finite. If evil was to prove the biblical account to be untrue by destroying the State of Israel, evil's dominion over the entirety of Israel would be said to disprove the reality of the God of Israel. And the source of good in the world. The truth of God's absolute sovereignty over all of creation will be universally understood with Israel's sovereignty over all of the Land of Israel. And everyone will recognize good that overcomes evil. That will unite humanity under God's kingship and usher in what we're all waiting for...the final geulah, the final redemption that unites all of existence, that unites Creator and created.

The reason why this has nothing to do with religion is because the first command given to the first believer is "Go to the Land of Israel." And when Abraham finally passes through Sh'chem and arrives in Elon Moreh, God makes His first foundational promise to him. In Genesis 12, verse 7:



And then when Avram becomes Avraham in the covenant of the pieces, God sets the exact boundaries of the Land of Israel. In Genesis 15, verse 18 it says:

ביום ההוא פרת יהוה את אברם
 ברית לאמר לזרעה נתתי את הארץ הזאת
 מנהר מצרים עד הנהר הגדל נהר פרת:
 ON THAT DAY HASHEM MADE A COVENANT WITH ABRAM:
 "TO YOUR OFFSPRING I ASSIGN THIS LAND,
 FROM THE RIVER OF EGYPT TO THE GREAT RIVER,
 THE RIVER EUPHRATES
 GENESIS 15:18

את הקניזי ואת הקניזי ואת הקדמוני:
 THE KENITES, THE KENIZZITES, THE KADMONITES,
 ואת החתי ואת הפרזי ואת הרפאים:
 THE HITTITES, THE PERIZZITES, THE REPHAIM,
 ואת האמורי ואת הקנעני ואת הגרגשי ואת היבוקסי:
 THE AMORITES, THE CANAANITES, THE GIRGASHITES,
 AND THE JEBUSITES."



That Land from north to south, east to west, is the Promised Land of Israel. It has nothing to do with religion. It doesn't matter if you're Orthodox, Modern Orthodox, Ultra-Orthodox, if you're Southern Baptist, Anabaptist, First Baptist, all of that is man-made. All that matters is that promise to Abraham.

Do you know why? The first covenant made with Avraham is actually a covenant about, of course, the Land of Israel. Genesis 17, verses 7 and 8:

והקמתי את בריתי ביני ובינך וביני וביניך
 לדורתם לברית עולם להיות לך
 לאלהים ולזרעך אחריה:
 I WILL MAINTAIN MY COVENANT BETWEEN ME AND YOU,
 AND YOUR OFFSPRING TO COME,
 AS AN EVERLASTING COVENANT THROUGHOUT THE AGES,
 TO BE GOD TO YOU AND TO YOUR OFFSPRING TO COME.

ונתתי לך ולזרעך אחריה את ארץ מגוריך
 את כל ארץ פנעו לאחזת עולם
 והייתי להם לאלהים:
 I ASSIGN THE LAND YOU SOJOURN IN TO YOU
 AND YOUR OFFSPRING TO COME,
 ALL THE LAND OF CANAAN, AS AN EVERLASTING HOLDING.
 I WILL BE THEIR GOD."

That's the only covenant that matters. That's all that the Torah is built upon.

And that's why in Isaac's revelation with God, it says in Genesis chapter 26, verses 3 and 5. Isaac is about to leave the Land of Israel and God says:

גור בְּאֶרֶץ הַזֹּאת וְאֵהְיָה עִמָּךְ וְאֶבְרַכְךָ כִּי לֹךְ וּלְזַרְעֲךָ אֶתֹּ
אֶת־כָּל־הָאֲרָצוֹת הָאֵל וְהִקְמֵתִי אֶת־הַשְּׂבִעָה אֲשֶׁר
נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי לְאַבְרָהָם אָבִיךָ
RESIDE IN THIS LAND, AND I WILL BE WITH YOU
AND BLESS YOU; I WILL ASSIGN ALL THESE LANDS TO YOU
AND TO YOUR HEIRS, FULFILLING THE OATH THAT
I SWORE TO YOUR FATHER ABRAHAM
GENESIS 26: 3-5

וְהִרְבִּיתִי אֶת־זַרְעֲךָ כְּכּוֹכְבֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם וְנָתַתִּי לְזַרְעֲךָ
אֶת־כָּל־הָאֲרָצוֹת הָאֵל וְהִתְבָּרְכוּ בְּזַרְעֲךָ כָּל־גּוֹיֵי הָאֲרָץ
I WILL MAKE YOUR HEIRS AS NUMEROUS AS THE STARS
OF HEAVEN, AND ASSIGN TO YOUR HEIRS ALL THESE LANDS,
SO THAT ALL THE NATIONS OF THE EARTH SHALL BLESS
THEMSELVES BY YOUR HEIRS

That's the promise to Isaac. And then, of course, the promise to Jacob. When Jacob becomes Israel, he receives his name from God in this monumental moment when Jacob is given the name, Israel, by the mouth of God. He's given the command to be fruitful and multiply and make a nation in

the Land of Israel. Genesis chapter 35, verses 10 and 12:

וַיֹּאמְרוּ לוֹ אֱלֹהִים שִׁמְךָ יַעֲקֹב לֹא יִקְרָא שִׁמְךָ עוֹד יַעֲקֹב
כִּי אִם־יִשְׂרָאֵל יִהְיֶה שִׁמְךָ וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל
SAYING TO HIM,
"YOU WHOSE NAME IS JACOB,
YOU SHALL BE CALLED JACOB NO MORE,
BUT ISRAEL SHALL BE YOUR NAME.
" THUS HE WAS NAMED ISRAEL.
GENESIS 35: 10-12

וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ אֱלֹהִים אֲנִי אֵל שַׁדַּי פְּרֹה וּרְבֵה
גּוֹי וְקָהַל גּוֹיִם יִהְיֶה מִמֶּךָ וּמַלְכִים מִחַלְצֶיךָ יֵצְאוּ
AND GOD SAID TO HIM,
"I AM EL SHADDAI.
BE FERTILE AND INCREASE;
A NATION, YEA AN ASSEMBLY OF NATIONS,
SHALL DESCEND FROM YOU.
KINGS SHALL ISSUE FROM YOUR LOINS.

וְאֶת־הָאֲרָץ אֲשֶׁר נָתַתִּי לְאַבְרָהָם וּלְיִצְחָק לָךְ
אֶתְנַנֶּה וּלְזַרְעֲךָ אֶתְּרִיב אֶתֹּ וְאֶת־הָאֲרָץ
THE LAND THAT I ASSIGNED TO ABRAHAM AND ISAAC
I ASSIGN TO YOU;
AND TO YOUR OFFSPRING TO COME
WILL I ASSIGN THE LAND."

Joseph, before he dies, in Genesis 50, verse 24:

וַיֹּאמֶר יוֹסֵף אֶל־אֶחָיו אֲנֹכִי מֵת וְאֱלֹהִים
דָּקָד יִפְקֹד אֶתְכֶם וְהֶעֱלָה
אֶתְכֶם מִרְהַרְרַי הַיָּאֵת אֶל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע
לְאַבְרָהָם לְיִצְחָק וְלַיַּעֲקֹב:
JOSEPH SAID TO HIS BROTHERS,
"I AM ABOUT TO DIE. GOD WILL SURELY TAKE NOTICE OF YOU
AND BRING YOU UP FROM THIS LAND TO THE LAND PROMISED
ON OATH TO ABRAHAM, TO ISAAC, AND TO JACOB."
GENESIS 50:24

And then, again, Moses, in his first encounter with God at the burning bush. When he's commanded to take the Jews out of Egypt. He's told one thing.

In Exodus chapter 3, verses 7 and 8:

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה רָא הִנֵּה רָאִיתִי אֶת־עֲנֵי עַמִּי אֲשֶׁר בְּמִצְרַיִם
וְאֶת־צַעֲקֹתָם שָׁמַעְתִּי מִפְּנֵי נַגְשָׁיו כִּי יִדְעֹתִי אֶת־מַכְאֹבֵי:
AND THE LORD CONTINUED,
"I HAVE MARKED WELL THE PLIGHT OF MY PEOPLE
IN EGYPT AND HAVE HEEDED THEIR OUTCRY
BECAUSE OF THEIR TASKMASTERS;
YES, I AM MINDFUL OF THEIR SUFFERINGS.
EXODUS 3: 7-8

וַאֲדָרְךָ לְהַצִּילֵנִי מִיַּד מִצְרַיִם וְלְהַעֲלֵתֵנִי מִרְהַרְרַי הַיָּאֵת הַיָּאֵת אֶל־אָרֶץ
טוֹבָה וְרוּחָהּ אֶל־אָרֶץ זָבַת חֶלֶב וְדָבָשׁ אֶל־מְקוֹם הַכְּנַעֲנִי
וְהַחִתִּי וְהָאֱמֹרִי וְהַפְּרִזִּי וְהַחִי וְהַיְבוּסִי:
I HAVE COME DOWN TO RESCUE THEM FROM THE EGYPTIANS
AND TO BRING THEM OUT OF THAT LAND TO A GOOD AND
SPACIOUS LAND, A LAND FLOWING WITH MILK AND HONEY,
THE REGION OF THE CANAANITES, THE HITTITES,
THE AMORITES, THE PERIZZITES, THE HIVITES,
AND THE JEBUSITES.

Moses was given a mission. Not to make a religion, not to establish new holidays, but to fulfill the foundational covenant of the entire Torah, which is the Jewish people must inherit and become sovereign in the Land of Israel. That's what the war with Syria is about, that's what

the war in Gaza is about, that's what all of our existence in the Land of Israel is about. The Jewish people must become sovereign in all of the Land of Israel. You want to bring peace and prosperity to the Middle East? You want to bring law and order to this region? Do you want to be in an era of prosperity like you can't even imagine to all of humanity? The peace plan is to allow the people of Israel to dwell, settle, and become sovereign in all of the Land of Israel. (end of video)

Alright, I hope you guys enjoyed that. That took me quite a while. You should know I cut stuff out because also in the book of Chronicles at the very end. Like the last book of the Tanakh that was written by Ezra and Nehemiah, they write there again, all that matters is the covenant with

the forefathers. And what was the covenant with the forefathers? It was that the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the descendants of Israel, the children of Israel will inherit the Land of Israel.



And so, what I want to do, is I want to put up Google maps here for just a second. And I want you to see because you can really clearly see what is the exact points of Israel? Well, if you see that black line from the left and the bottom, there's the bottom left spot there. That is right on the Nile. And it says, "From the Nile to the Euphrates."

And then what's so beautiful about the Euphrates, is you see those three red markers that are right there. Well one starts at the Mediterranean Sea, and then you just follow the Euphrates River all the way down to the Persian Gulf. And then you have this thing that almost looks like a menorah for Chanukkah. That is the Land of Israel. That is the Promised Land.

And so, Israel is tasked, not with going to war against all of those nations, but rather establishing peace and prosperity, law and order and sovereignty over that Land. Because that is the foundational promise of the Bible. It's really not about a religion. It's about a Land. It's about a people, a Land, and a God. And that's what this whole war is about. And so people are so lost in the details of the religion and the theology, and the orthodoxy and the halacha, and they don't realize that this entire historic process is all about the Land of Israel. That's why we're called The Land of Israel Fellowship. That's why we're called The Land of Israel Network. Because it's all about the Land of Israel.

When you think about it, good is the opposite of evil. And good's dominion in the world instead of evil emanates from the children of Israel's sovereignty over the entirety of eretz Yisrael, the Land of Israel. And we become a beacon of holiness in eretz Yisrael according to the Torah. That's the game. The holiness of eretz Yisrael will illuminate humanity with a new light that displaces the darkness and the world will know that God reigns supreme. Our sovereignty reflects God's sovereignty. It's not about religion. It's actually about sovereignty.



And so, with that, I want to show you the first draft of the new logo that all of us have worked at behind the scenes. Tabitha and Ari, and right there you see it. Now it's just a first draft. We'll have a few more weeks. But that is eretz Yisrael. That is the Land of Israel. You see the gold shape in the middle, that's the State of Israel, but really that's just a sliver inside the biblical Promised Land.

And what struck me is that people don't even know what the shape of the Promised Land looks like. Everyone knows what the State of Israel looks like with the Golan Heights that juts out a little bit at the top and how it kind of curves along the Mediterranean Sea and it ends in a point with the Negev. But no one knows the shape of the Land of Israel. And in our Fellowship, that needs to be our message to the world. That that Land that we see before us here, that is going to be a beacon of light for the entire world. And already now, we're slowly seeing pieces of the Land being restored to their rightful heir.

And so, with that, I want to bless everyone that we have the eyes to see what days we're living in and we have the message of what the world needs now and may our prayers lead the way and may the Torah be our guide. And so with that, I want to wish you all a beautiful week, shalom, have a wonderful week and of course, you can always reach me at jeremy@thelandofisrael.com. Of course, you can send me a WhatsApp. And with that, I want to bless you from the Promised Land of Israel, in fact in the heart of that Promised Land, which is the mountains of Judea.

Aaronic blessing (Hebrew)

Shalom, my friends. Thank you so much, it's always good to gather together and be together. Have a wonderful week.