

Session 167

Shemot – The Names of Israel – The Untold Stories of our Heroes

7 January 2024

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wBg8lfr83n4>

Jeremy

Alright friends, shalom, welcome to the Land of Israel Fellowship. So nice to see you all, thank you, thank you, so good to see you. The war, it's become a marathon. And news is that Israel is not stopping in Gaza. The war up north is heating up. And so, it seems like a domino has fallen and just hold on tight. Because we don't know where this is going to take us. But on a personal level I'll tell you that over Shabbat, I had a little bit of a life-changing event for me. My oldest brother had the first grandson in the family, which means that Tehila and I became a great uncle and a great aunt, which made us feel much older than I think that we should. A great uncle, I mean that's like a really old man, is it not? Then all of a sudden Tehila and I were like, "Well, I guess we were good uncles until now. And now we're great uncles!" And my parents became great grandparents.

And the brit circumcision was over Shabbat. And the whole family got together to celebrate Shabbat together. And in the middle of the ceremony, who knows why thoughts come or where they come from, but I'm in the Judean mountains, surrounded by all of my family, all of my children and my brother's children and we're all together, and I have this flashback to when I am about my youngest son's age, Noam. And he's about eight years old. And my older brother, who's now just becoming a grandfather, he's maybe 17 years old, 16 years old, something like that. And he's driving me to my soccer game because he was my coach. And we get to the soccer field and we're all sitting in the goal and my brother has this little clip-board and he's like taking notes on. My father's on the side of the field, he watches all of my games. And my mother hands the new baby over to my father. My father then passes it to my brother, and my brother then puts the baby on the kise shel Eliyahu, Elijah's chair in preparation for the brit.

And I just saw so much happen in one moment. And it was out of this world. That's what life is. It's so deep, my little niece who was born right around the time that Tehila and I got engaged has become a mother, and watching my brother turn into a grandparent and just the inter-generational love and adventure. And what's so unbelievable, that is what life is made of. And the enemy, the evil ones in the world...just trying to convince people not to have children. Just enjoy video games and the pleasures of this world and they like miss what the entire world, what this was all created for.

And they asked me to lead Friday night davening. So Friday night services, I kind of got everyone dancing and singing. And I gave over a little Torah for the audience that was there. They already gave me the microphone, I'm just going to do whatever I want to do at that point. And I said, "It's the parsha of Shemot. And in the parsha of Shemot, the Midrash says that once

the Pharaoh decided that he was going to throw all of the male children into the Nile, the men in Israel separated from their wives. They said, "That's it. How can we have more children? Pharaoh's going to just throw our boys into the Nile? Better to just not have children at all. We can't just have children that will be killed." And there's a whole back and forth. And this is really when Miriam begins to shine. She says, "Abba, how can you do that? Pharaoh has said death to the boys. But you're now decreeing death to also the girls. You're going to annihilate all of the people of Israel, all of the children of Jacob, there will be no continuation." And then Amram, Moses' father goes back to Yocheved and then Moses is born.

And there's this amazing Jewish tradition that you hear in the most trying times – from the slaveries of Egypt to the death camps in Auschwitz. Somehow the Jews have enough faith to bring life into the world. And it felt like we had taken our place in Jewish history, just me and my little family. And as the Chamas and the world against Israel wants to bring death and darkness and destruction to Israel, here my little family chose to bring more life and more light into the world. Even with all the dangers, we know what that means. You know you're going to raise your sons and soon my sons will be entering into the IDF and all of the risks that that entail.

I just want to thank Tabitha so much that every week before the Fellowship, she creates this beautiful slide. And every week she puts the faces and the names of all the soldiers that had fallen that week. And you know we wake up to that every morning. It's the worst part of my day, but it is to know that that is the sacrifice that we need to make to live free in our Land, to build the dream that God gave us so many years ago.

And you know, I just want to give you an insight. Because there's no way that this will ever make it onto the news. But this is a short video of soldiers that are finally leaving the war zone of Gaza after more than 90 days of battle. And I just want to share with you their holiness, their love of God, it's beautiful to see King David's army alive and well in our lifetime. And the words that they're singing are, "And for everything HaShem our God, we give thanks to You." Check this out. And for everything HaShem our God, we give thanks to You.

Video



You know there's just...how much clearer can it get that there is forces of evil that are here to attack the forces of good. And even Israel's soldiers that have to deal with death and war and like the darker sides of the world, as they leave the battlefield, 90 days of absolute hell on earth. What are they doing? It's like they're dancing at a wedding saying, "And for everything HaShem our God, we give thanks to You." It's like you couldn't see something more beautiful than that.

And so, what I want to do know, is what I love to do in every chance that we get as a Fellowship. And that is to bring our worlds together, to bring our hearts together from Africa, from Asia, from all over Europe, from the United States, from Mexico, just what an opportunity to be a reflection of HaShem's light in the world and to bring His light through this Land and to broadcast that to the world and to just be one for just a little bit in prayer. And so, that's how we'll kick off the Fellowship today after watching those chayalim just sing the praises of God. If only we could touch a little bit of what they must have felt. The gratitude and the joy of coming home to their families alive and well.

HaShem, Master of the Universe, God of the legions of Israel, this war is so painful for all of us. HaShem give us the eyes to see that You are healing us through this war. Give us the heart to hear that You are calling us to return. Give us the wisdom to defeat our enemies. Shine Your light onto this Land. Bless all of the families who are fatherless right now. Give the mothers strength to keep their homes running. Give the children courage and faith to get through these hard times. Please, bring their fathers back home from the front lines. HaShem, look at this Fellowship and what we are working to achieve in the world. Every Sunday we start off our week together. Different time zones, different places, different worlds come together. All of us come together to bring the Torah from Israel to the world, to bring a new unity into the world, to try and live out an example of the vision that You gave us through Your prophets. In hard times, in good times, we have stood together, we've grown together, we've learned together and we've prayed together. Brothers and sisters, that's who we are. Brothers and sisters with You as our Father and the Torah as our guide. Bless everyone in this Fellowship, everyone who is here today from around the world, bless everyone who will be tuning in later on this week, and bless all those who will be tuning in years from now. We are all one movement for You, one movement for Jerusalem. HaShem, bring us all back to Jerusalem, to a new Jerusalem, to a rebuilt Jerusalem where Your Presence will be restored soon in our days, Amen.

Alright my friends, so let's kick it off. This is a thought that I've had. Last week I went to a shiva house, you know a house of mourners. I visited that house five times. I've never done that before, but I just kept on being called back. Just compelled to go back, just to be there more, to hear more of the stories, to let my heart really be with that family. And it says that "a man must bless God for the bad in his life, just as he blesses God for the good in his life." And when someone dies, you say, "Blessed is the judge of the truth." And so, even in the hard times, the idea is...why would we bless God in the hard times? Maybe we can call out to God in the hard times, maybe we can cry out to God in the hard times, but to bless God in the hard times?"

And I think the idea there is that those hard times, they're just preparing us, they are a blessing. We just don't have the eyes to see it. Something is brewing, something is growing, something is being fixed. And in the parsha, when Moshe first encounters God at the burning bush, God says, "Take off your shoes," and you'd think, this is the first thing said to the savior of Israel as the real redemption process starts. I mean the first words that are being said...that's significant.

Why would God open up his message with take off your shoes, the place you are standing is holy?

And so the sages of Israel explain that in the redemption process, you need to always go back to Moses and realize that God is speaking to you. The place that you are standing right now in your journey is holy. The place in your life right now, this place in time is holy. Don't just wait for the climactic end of the war, don't wait for the vacation, don't wait for the victory, don't wait for crossing the finish line. Right now, take off your shoes, the place that you're standing right now, this ground is holy.

And so, I just want to tell you that we're in this long process. The war of October 7th, the war of simchat Torah, the war of the liberation, the war of our redemption. And there are three stages that Israel must pass through in order to achieve absolute victory. And these stages are chronological. Meaning you can't get to stage three until you finish stages one and two.

And so right now when we think about what's happening in Gaza, the first stage is Israel needs absolute victory in this war, absolute demolish the Chamas, white flag. The absolute victory, and that's not clear right now. There are a lot of forces in Israel that are calling to capitulate, maybe sign a deal for the hostages, maybe kick the can down the road and deal with it later. No! Right now Israel needs, number one, the first stage is absolute victory in war.

And the second stage, a people that have created such unholiness in the Land of Israel, that have done such evil in the Land of Israel, those people need to be removed from the Holy Land. And so now, there's all these talks about emigration, separation through emigration, that's stage two. That needs to happen. In fact, that's really the guidance of the Torah from the get-go. That if you don't remove the evil from the Land of Israel, they will be thorns in your side and thistles in your eyes. They'll be a stumbling block and maybe that's going to take a lot of courage because Israel may have to stand alone. But Israel must eventually just emigrate all of the Gazans that want to wage war on Israel, get them out of the Land.

And stage three is Israel needs to go back to Gaza and resettle the Land. That will be full victory, salvation, restoration in the Land of Israel. Now as you go down that list, there are the kind of forces behind Israel, the consensus, the support for those three stages go down. Number one, 95% of Israel wants absolute victory now. Emigration...I think it's about 80 – 90%. Resettling Gaza, that's like 70%, it's like it goes down in support.

And so, I just want to share with you what's on my heart. And I don't know what will be done with this. And you're the first to hear this in a real way. But I am working, praying, hoping, and this will never be able to happen without an extreme amount of help from heaven, but what's been placed on my heart is to see a million man march. From the kibbutzim that were destroyed on October 7th, all of Israel to march all the way to Gaza in support of our soldiers, in

support of total victory. That's stage one. And what I've learned is, the most compelling way to bring people onboard...this has been studied over and over again, is to show them that's what everyone is doing. That's what everyone wants. There's a certain herd mentality that's a part of our human nature, there's a certain desire for unity in Israel. That if Israel is doing it, I'm doing it. And that expression of a million people marching from the destroyed kibbutzim, all the way to Israel, waving banners, Israel should trust in HaShem, victory...I have so many ideas for so many banners. And just Israel marching.

There's actually an ancient blessing that is to be made called "Blessed are You Lord our God who is the wise One of secrets." And it's never been blessed in Israel before. And you need 600,000 men over the age of 13 in one geographical location to make this. It's like a geulah bracha, a blessing of the redemption. And I think that right now, Israel is at a place that we could bring a million people together, to stand with our soldiers, to demand absolute victory in Gaza.

And then the next stages, let Israel see that Israel is there. That we are unified in that movement. And I don't know exactly how it's going to happen. It will need a lot of help from heaven, but if in about a month from now, there's a livestream for the Fellowship, Sunday night, and we're marching to Gaza, that would just be truly unbelievable. So that's where my prayers are, that's where my energies are going right now, and slowly but surely, I think that Israel is ripe for such a move now. Just a giant display of unity, a display of faith, a display of support. And we'll see where that takes us, but that's where I am at right now. As far as the Farm, it's like, ok, the Farm right now is like pause. Gaza right now is on the burner. We've got to make sure that Israel wins. And there are three stages. So let's make sure we at least complete stage one. And I think we can really rally Israel together for that. And so, that sort of a vision into the future and we will see how that goes.

Now what I would love to do, is I would love to invite Tehila onto the Fellowship. Is she here with us live? That was the original plan. Yes? Excellent! Ok, good. And so Tehila has some Torah that she's going to be sharing with us. It was actually a Torah that was kind of developing over time. And each time Tehila said, "Oh, what about this? Oh what about that idea?" I'm like, "Wow!" She's just like brilliance and wonder and so, we are just so lucky to have her with us. So, Tehila, I'm passing it over to you to really kick off the Torah part of the Fellowship. Here you go!

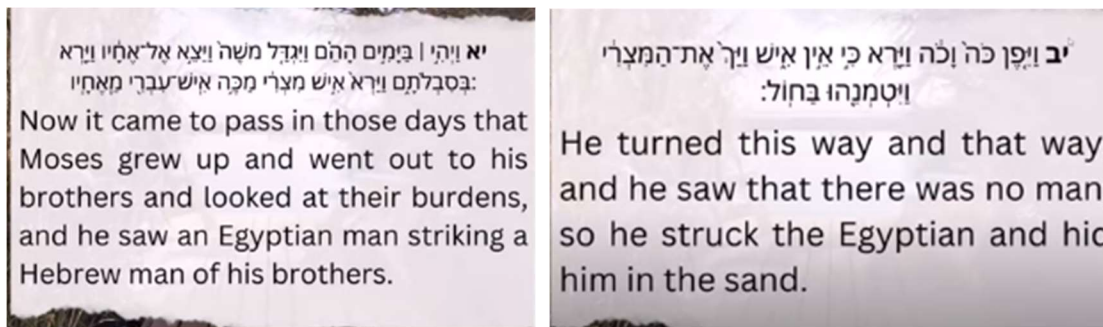
Tehila

Hey, thanks, Jeremy. It's so great to see everybody. So you know, in these portions that we just read this past week of Shemot and coming up on in Vayera, we're reading about this transition of Moses, Moshe Rabbenu from being a person, I don't want to say a guy, but being a person into being a leader, being who he's meant to be. And what's so interesting in Moshe being the leader, he has the ability to take us from slavery into salvation. He has the ability to take us

from exile into the Land of Israel. So there's much as we're in this time, to be trying to learn from Moshe, what are the characteristics we need?

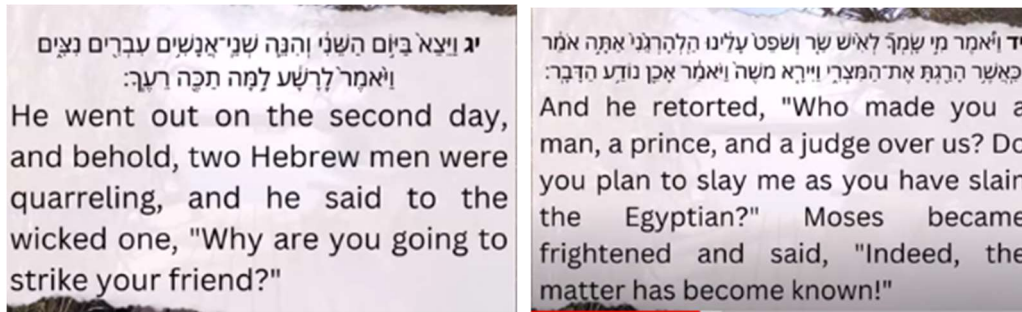
Now whenever we think of Moshe, the first thing that of course comes to mind is his humility. Right? He's the most humble of all men, he's the most humble person. And whenever you see somebody with really outstanding characteristics, you have to ask yourself, well how did they become that way? And what struck me in reading this week's parsha was that Moshe doesn't seem to be born terribly humble. Now I know that sounds crazy, but stick with me. We the readers know that he comes from this humble beginning of like a life in a basket, being hidden for a few months in a closet and then floating around in a basket. But from Moshe's perspective, as long as he can remember himself, he's grown up in the lap of luxury and he's thinking he's a prince.

Now the first story we actually hear of Moshe, we don't know anything about him as his bio, really. The first time he steps out into the world, he actually doesn't behave very humbly at all. He behaves in tremendous confidence and courage. He kind of acts like he runs the place. The first story where we see Moshe is in the second chapter in verse 11, it says...the first thing that we see is that he steps out into the world and he goes to see the sufferings of his brothers and sisters. He says:



So what actually happens the first time that Moshe steps out into the world? He looks around, he sees evil, but no one is doing anything about the evil, so he strikes the Egyptian, himself. That's not a humble kind of fearful man. As an act of courage, someone is stepping out to do justice and protect the weak. Now you would imagine that Pharaoh is not going to be happy about this, so he buries him in the sand. But what's interesting here is that Moshe doesn't like humbly slink away. It says that the very next day he goes out again. He goes out again, now what does he think is going to happen? Like it's going to be a better world out there? It's not like he's going out again to like keep on hammering away at making the world a better place. I mean he had this willingness to just keep on going out and fighting the good fight, even if the possibility is that he's going to keep having these conflicts, that's he's really going to have to be strong and courageous.

And what do we see the next day? Even more darkness. And this time it's not darkness coming from an external force of an Egyptian hitting a Jew, but he sees evil inside the nation. He sees Hebrews fighting with one another. And it says he goes out the second day and just the very next day, behold two Hebrew men are quarreling. This is verse 13:



Now what's so interesting here is we know Moshe as being so humble, but to the people around him, he's not appearing to be humble. They're like, "Are you a prince, are you a judge, are you bossing us around?" They're not perceiving him as being humble, they're perceiving him as being haughty. Now what they could have said, was "Hey, mind your own business you fancy prince, you're not our boss." But they dig even deeper into him. You know, they say, "Hey, we don't not only want you to be our boss, we know what you did." There's like a veiled threat there, not a thinly veiled threat.

And it says, "Then Moshe became afraid." But at that point he's just afraid. He still doesn't run away. Maybe those guys are mad and talking tough. They're not actually going to go behind my back to Pharaoh and tell on me. And then, it says in verse 15 that Pharaoh heard what he actually did and wanted to kill him.

What does that actually mean when we put all these together? These slaves, these brothers of his that he was trying to protect, the people being tyrannized by this horrible Egyptian government, go out and rat out the very man that was trying to help them. And it's only at that point that he runs away. Now imagine, being a prince, and then going from that to running away to the desert, you're wandering, you might even starve. It's like from the very, very top to the very, very bottom.

And it's like, Moshe wasn't born humble, he was humbled. The next time Moshe faces a task of doing something as the leader for Israel, that's when we're already going to meet him as a very humble man, not because he was born that way, but look what happened to him to turn him into that. And you know that we're promised by our sages that our last salvation will be like the first salvation. Meaning in our final redemption, there's going to be a lot of similarities for our redemption from Egypt.

So as we're reading these stories in these week's portion of the redemption from Egypt, we're reading very carefully and seeing what's happening because those are things that are going to happen to us.

Now look carefully at what actually happens to Moshe. What was he trying to do? He was trying to fight the good fight instead of the evil. And what happens to him. He's not appreciated by a lot of fellow Jews and he ends up being chased and criticized and tyrannized by what at that time was the world international super-power telling him that he was using disproportionate force against evil. And you know, and then the Jews that are not appreciative of him, his brothers that are not appreciative, and they don't just keep it as an internal fight, they go behind his back and say bad things about him to the State Department or to the UN, about what excessive force he's been doing and the genocide he's doing on Egyptian officers. Is it any wonder that he became so humble? He actually becomes the humblest man on earth. Cause it's really just the most humble experience you could have. To try so hard to be so good and have everything just seem to come up against you.

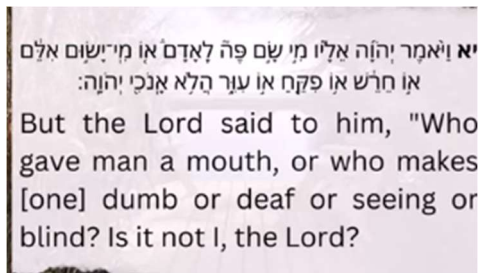
And you know the similarities to us today in Israel are obviously striking because when anybody...we often feel so humbled in the efforts that we try to make and then come up against so much condemnation and opposition to even forces within ourselves trying to create negativity and lack of faith. And so, it's really an interesting question, why does it have to be that way? Because if I was writing the biblical story and no one hired me for this, but if I was, then the way I would have told the story would have been a little bit different. Like if I was making up the story, this could have been a perfect movie. Imagine Moshe and he's this prince growing up in the palace. And you expect him to be all posh and spoiled and just disconnected. But his heart goes out to his brothers, he strikes down the Egyptian, let's start this grass roots movement of like yes! We're going to go back to the Land of Israel, we're going to fight the evil, we're going to fight the Egyptians. That would have been such an amazing, inspiring story, but it doesn't happen that way.

Moshe is not allowed by HaShem at that point, despite the amazing leadership that he's showing at the very beginning, he's not allowed at that point to be the leader. He had to first be humbled, humiliated, like ground into the dust before he could then be lifted up to be the leader. Because what is HaShem really telling us here? He's telling us that humility is the defining characteristic of what you need in order to inherit the Land. The greatest warning that we receive every time when HaShem tells us about coming into the Land of Israel is to be very, very careful not to have a haughty heart. We're always warned, don't think that it was my strength that gave us the Land, it was the strength of my own hand that I did all this. It's the greatest challenge we always face in Israel.

So the only way, the Torah is telling us, the only way that we could go to the Land is with a leader that will be a model for us, not just of strength and courage, but strength and courage from a place of humility.

So now what's really interesting, is right at the junction, between Moshe being a person and becoming a leader, there's this conversation at the burning bush. And Moshe is so humble that he refuses the task. This person that just on his very first time stepping out of the palace was already ready to take this massive action to fight against the tyranny of the Egyptians on the Jews, at this point doesn't believe in himself at all. When HaShem, Himself calls upon him to go and save the Jews, he's like, "Naaah, I can't do it. I can't do it. Look at me, I'm nobody, I'm nobody. Nobody's going to listen to me..." Why did he say, "Nobody's going to listen to me?" He's not just being unconfident. He's saying, "Nobody's going to listen to me" because it's happened to him already. It's happened to him already, he's been there.

And then what does HaShem say to him? HaShem answers him:



Meaning, so now go, I will be with your mouth, I will instruct you what to speak. The only way to find the balance is to have courage in action, but knowing that your strength comes from Him. It's this balance that we're taught to have in order to inherit the Land. He was like, "Well, I'm going to be so humble, I'm not going to do anything." HaShem says, "No, no, no, no. The essence of

being able to inherit the Land is to have courage of action, but humility of spirit.

And that's like the emotional roller coaster of this war, has just been one smack in the face of humility after the next. After the original shock of the war, sort of the adrenalin that came in the beginning, it just sort of settled into this realization of humility. There's no way to describe our situation before October 7th better than as one of haughtiness. We thought that we ran this place. That we had the technology and the cameras and the planes. Who could invade us? Who could cross our borders? Yes, we had some terrorism, but this rag-tag group of terrorists. And yet, we weren't even invaded by an impressive country. We were literally invaded by what was a few years ago, just a rag-tag band of terrorists and you saw people crossing the border, like old men on rickety crutches, managing to cross over our technological borders. And with all of our high-tech army, that's been so humbling.

And there were surely moments in the desert where Moshe asked himself, "What's the point? Maybe I should just give up." But HaShem's message to him was, "Who gives strength to anybody, it's Me." He wasn't saying that...he was saying, "You're not being humble Moshe to weaken your spirit. But to come to the understanding that you have no strength of your own."

Your strength only comes from Him. And when you live in that consciousness, in a consciousness of HaShem giving you the strength back, then that's really the only state of mind that allows us to be worthy to inherit the Land. And so, you know, I'll just finish with one point. Jeremy, do I have time to go a teeny bit deeper? Jeremy?

Jeremy

Yes, you do. You're rocking it.

Tehila,

Oh, thank you, dear. That for me, just showed me how much there is to learn from this, but I was driving Jeremy crazy all day because I kept saying, Jeremy, there's this one thing in the portion that I don't understand. I really see this message of the humility that we need. Ok, I get it. There's something that really, I'm going to use a pun...something "struck" me. And what struck me was the constant use of the word "struck." It says that there was an Egyptian "striking" maceh in Hebrew, striking a Jew. And then it says that Moshe "struck" the Egyptian. And then it said that he saw two Jews fighting, and he said, "Why are you striking one another?"

Now what's very interesting is that the Hebrew holds so much that you can't pick up in the English. Because the Hebrew word for striking is macah. Right after Moshe becomes the leader, and he has that moment with HaShem, where HaShem says, "No, no, no, I'm going to be with you." When he comes back to the Land of Egypt, what does he immediately do? He begins to bring the plagues onto Egypt. But the plagues are not really called plagues. That's an English word. In Hebrew they're called, "machot," meaning strikings. The Egyptians were stricken, it's the exact same word, the identical word to the thing that happened to him in the beginning of his life, that he was seeing all of the people striking one another, that's exactly what he goes and brings on to Egypt.

I kept saying to Jeremy, "Jeremy, that's so weird, why is this word appearing again and again?" And, I keep having this pun, "What struck me, was that if the idea of this humility, it's beautiful that Moshe had this spirit come over him to help and to want to fight back against evil. But there was an element of it that was like, "Yes, I'm coming, and I'm going to fight the evil." He didn't come and say, "At HaShem's advice," he just went out and did his thing and then he was humbled. And it was like HaShem was perhaps saying to him, "You can't humble Egypt, you can't humble Pharaoh until you, yourself become the model of humility."

And now what's so interesting, is that there are not two stations of this word in Moshe's life where you see the word "strike," where he "strikes" the Egyptian and then he brings these plagues that "strike" Pharaoh and all of the Egyptians. But there's one more time when we see the word "strike" in Moshe's life. And when is it? When Moshe hits the rock. And that's essentially, meaning his sort of challenge that becomes his downfall. And it's like these

bookends surrounding the heroism of his life are these times where he's sort of uninvited, unasked by HaShem goes out and does this sort of hitting. And it's always the same Hebrew word.

And I found the most interesting Midrash. There's one Midrash about this point in Moshe's life where he says to HaShem, "HaShem, why do I have to die? I didn't do anything wrong?" And HaShem says, "Oh, do you think you're better than Abraham? Do you think you're better than..." And he says, "Well from Avraham came Ishmael." "Well, do you think you're better than Yitzchak?" And then he says, "Well from Yitzchak came Esav." And He says, "Do you think you're better than Noach?" And he says, "Well, Noah didn't fight for everyone to survive, but I fought for the Jewish people." And then he says, "Well, what have I ever done wrong?" And now what do you expect HaShem to say? You expect HaShem to say, "Well, you hit the rock, right?" That's not what HaShem says in the Midrash. HaShem says, "You struck the Egyptian."

And I thought, "Well that's a strange Midrash." It's like it's trying to catch your attention of what you think the Midrash is going to say, and then it's bringing you back to the beginning to show you that those are actually perhaps the same thing. Perhaps they're the same thing, what bothered HaShem, what was wrong in striking the rock, HaShem says, "You didn't sanctify My Name." Meaning, people, even if unintentionally like you, Moshe, people perhaps got the impression that you were the one drawing out water. And it's the same thing. Had you, in the very beginning, struck down the Egyptian and started this grass-roots rebellion, everyone would have said say, "Moshe saved us." The only way to truly inherit the Land is by constantly having this consciousness showing the people what it means to know that HaShem is entirely in charge.

And so HaShem said, "Moshe you're amazing, I love you, but you're not the leader that's taking them into the Land because you went back to this model of striking on your own. They need somebody to take them into, somebody that is constantly showing them that all of their strength only comes from Me. And so Moshe was able to become that leader for a certain amount of time. And then at the end of his life, it was time for him to step down and allow a new leadership that would model that for Israel inside the Land.

So, that really, for me, gave me, this whole idea kind of gave me encouragement that although we're feeling so humbled here in the Land, that perhaps it's going to be an opening for us to really examine our hearts and realize that any strength that we can have only comes from HaShem and perhaps through that, we'll actually merit to deserve this beautiful gift that HaShem has given us here in Israel. So, with that I wish everybody a good week, guys.

Jeremy

Thank you so much, Tehila, that was absolutely beautiful. And that is exactly what is happening in Israel. You know, the upper echelons of Israel's military and security systems, you know like

in some ways there's a real internal war in Israel. And there's an internal war in America as well. And in some ways, it's the same war, meaning the deep-state of America is in a lot of ways the deep-state in Israel. And the people of Israel are trying so hard to break free from that deep-state right now. And that's what the judicial reform was really all about. But the upper echelons of the army, they are self-declared kind of atheist, secular people. And when you run an army and you are a self-declared atheist, you have definitionally said, "My power and my strength have done this wonderful thing for the security of Israel." And that according to the Torah is like the greatest invitation to be humbled. And to have a rag-tag group of terrorists come and break through all of your technology and all of your sophisticated fences and do exactly what they did to us on October 7th. Because our strength does not come from the military leaders. Our strength and our security comes from HaShem and the brave faithful soldiers that are now protecting us and fighting for us in Azzah. And so that leadership lesson from Moses is I think spot on and speaks directly to us right now.

But I think a lot of people don't really understand that. That the deep-state in America is the deep-state in Israel...that the Mossad and the CIA, they're somehow interconnected there, that there are some sort of forces that Israel is trying to break the shackles of. That America is not our ally. The believers in God in America, the lovers of the Bible in America, they're our allies. But the American state department, the Biden administration, they are not our allies.

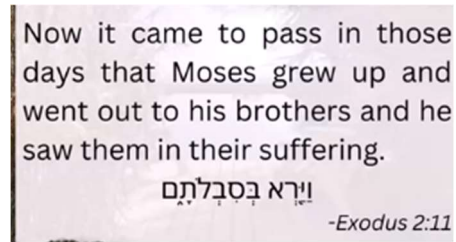
And the Torah needs to be the guide. And that's really what I wanted to share with you now. You know, I really have a constant desire to learn Torah. Am I learning Torah constantly? No. And I honestly think, if you ask me why, Tehila would say because I'm a dufus. Because I'm too busy or I'm too distracted. I have times in the day that I set aside to learn, I have times in the week where I set aside to learn together with Ari. And even though I'm not able to learn all the time for all my different excuses and all my reasons, my heart always wants to be learning. I know that.

And someone asked me a long time ago, when I was in Yeshiva, and that's really when I did study all the time, every day, all day. It's like, "What happened, Jeremy? You weren't like that when you were younger? How can you be so happy learning Torah, so many hours of the day?" And in this war, the answer came to me. This war an image came to me that answered the question that had been hovering over me for so many years. Imagine a soldier that's on the front lines and gets a loving letter from his father. And his father writes to him how much he loves his son, how proud he is of his son, gives him encouragement to be strong and brave and courageous. And he also gives him wise, true words of wisdom about how to get through the battles he's in, how to emerge victorious. That soldier would read that love letter from his father all the time.

And I think that's a good way to see the Torah. And then you can understand why we would want to read that love letter HaShem gave us to get us through this world. And to emerge

victorious. We need to read that to remind ourselves, the wise advice about humility and courage and kindness and love and truth. The Torah is just there, a love letter from our father to guide us in this world.

And there are stories that I want to share with you, with this Fellowship. I mentioned them at the beginning. They are stories of the real heroes of Israel. And they are stories that you'll never find on the mainstream media because they're not going to talk about one person that was a hero. And when we start reading the book of names, the book of Shemot, we lose the individual story. It's not really about Abraham and Isaac and Jacob. Moses' name, he's not even mentioned when he's born. It's like a boy was born, and it's like a daughter of Levi married another man of Levi and the names are almost removed because it's not about the individual anymore, it's about the nation in the book of Exodus. Israel was born as a nation. But it's important to remember that what makes up the nation of Israel are the most amazing individuals in the world. And to really connect to Israel, I want to bring one verse, that even Tehila now, she translated it a little bit off and almost every English translation miss-translates this verse. And it's really important to understand. And it's not something a lot of people understand, but this is Exodus, chapter 2, verse 11:



Now it came to pass in those days that Moses grew up and went out to his brothers and he saw them in their suffering.
וַיֵּרָא בְּסוּבְלֵתָם
-Exodus 2:11

That's the greatest translation that I've been able to come up with. Usually it says, "And he saw their burdens, or and he saw them suffering or he saw their suffering." But that's not what it says. The Hebrew that you saw right there is "He saw them IN their suffering." It doesn't say, "He saw their suffering." No, no. "He saw IN their suffering."

And what does that mean? The only way you can be a leader is to really feel the pain of your people. The only way to really attach yourself to Israel is to see them IN their suffering. To be in their suffering with them. It's not enough to know about their pain, but it's to see them in their pain, to feel that pain a little bit within you.

And I want to tell you know two stories that in order to understand who the people of Israel are, it's the only way that you can feel the pain that we're going through. And one of the stories is a little bit more distant from me. I don't know this man. And one of the stories is very close to me. So, I didn't want to start crying immediately, so I'm going to start off with a story and I'm going to try not to cry, of the story of the man that's more distant from me. It's just a story that I read about. And I spend a lot of time just trying translating the story into English, really to share it with you. Because the heroism of just a simple Jew living in the Land of Israel, you never would have known that there are super-heroes that walk around us. And they don't have capes, and they don't have super-powers. Because to be courageous when you have a super-power isn't really that courageous. But to be courageous when you're just a guy and those bullets can go right through you and take you out of this world, that's true heroism.

And so, this is a story of a man named Rami Davadian

(<https://youtu.be/wBg8lfr83n4?si=Ljl3myY2cwcWxkgX>)



And here's a picture of him. He's 58 years old. He's married to Iris, he has four children. The oldest of his children is 34 and the youngest of his children is 14. He grew up in a family of 11 children on a farm in the south. His parents were from a Kurdish country. It's like the region of Iraq, around the area of Turkistan, it's a little bit undefined. And their mother tongue was Arabic. And he grew up in Israel, speaking Hebrew and working the Land. And they had chickens and they lived on the farm and that's how they made their living. And they lived a hard-working, simple life, connected to erez Yisrael, traditional believers in God. And they lived there his whole life, he lived on that Moshav. Patish, in the northern Negev, just outside the kibbutzim that were attacked on October 7th.

And he said that from the time he was born, he's been living in Patish, that's his home. It's like one big family there. Everyone knows each other, and he said there's something really strong and powerful about living in such a tight-knit community. He says he has three brothers there and another three brothers that live in Ofakim, a small town near his moshav. And October 7th, he was drinking a cup of coffee before going to synagogue and he had no idea what was about to happen. At 6:45, he gets a frantic call from his friend who was begging him on the phone, "Rami, there's a balagon. You live close. Go and drive and get the son of one of my friends. He's right by the music festival near Re'im." I told him, "Sababa, no problem."

He sent me the location and I went driving, not really knowing that much of what was going on. And after driving a few hundred meters, I see a car on fire with people shot inside. I get back in the car and call the police, but there's no answer. I thought, maybe this was some sort of attack between Bedouin clans in the south, so I just continued driving. After a kilometer or so, I see exhausted young men and women running in panic in all directions. I shouted at them, "Come to me!" And I started picking them up. They crammed into the car as much as possible, I didn't understand exactly what was happening, but it was clear that we had to get them out of there.

In the process I called my son-in-law and other people from the moshav that I live in and I told them that I needed help and that they should open up the shelters in the moshav and take care of all of the guys and girls that I was bringing to them. And I wanted these children to get to a safe place.

So after dropping them off, he went back. Right back to the party to rescue more young people. And all the while, as he's going through hills and valleys, he realizes he's being fired upon by terrorists and they're running in every direction. They're shooting rocket-propelled grenades,

missing his car, firing up bullets all around. And his car has bullets penetrating. And he says after driving another kilometer, he sees another young couple hiding in the bushes in the pits. And he shouted to them, "Hey, this is Rami. Come with me." They come out, scared from hiding and again, 15 children cram into his car.

And on the way, a young med shared with him all of the horrors that they saw. They told me that there are dozens of terrorists who arrived on foot, on motorcycles, in vans, they're shooting, they're murdering everyone in cold blood. And that's when he finally understood that we were in the middle of a catastrophe. And as the hours passed, he received more and more names of friends who were in distress in the field and needed rescue from the inferno. And due to lack of the response of the police or the IDF, my phone went through everyone and I received endless panic messages from parents and siblings and worried friends from all over the country, sending him locations on WhatsApp how to find them.

And so, they wanted to find a police officer, he wanted to rescue whoever he could, but he was unarmed and he realized there was no choice but to just keep on driving and to try to save as many lives as possible. And all along the road he's seeing bullet riddled vehicles on fire, bodies laying on the ground. He said it was heart-breaking. He raised his eyes to the sky and prayed for help from the Creator of the World. And in one of the moments, he felt as though God touched him. He got a location from a friend and he went to go and find her. She hid in the field and I drove towards her. She wrote me, "I'm begging you, it's urgent, come quickly." There were internet outages, so I was on the line with her. I honked my horn and asked her to say if she could hear me. Is she close? Not? Hot? Cold? Where is she? She couldn't find him.

Finally, five minutes, somehow he got close to her. He got out of the car and ran towards her and this is his quote – To my astonishment, I saw her surrounded by six terrorists. I saw the armed terrorists and at first moment I froze in place. I didn't know what I was going to do. But God's Hand touched me. And I began to speak with them in Arabic. With confidence. I said to them, "How are you? I'm Aburami. I'm Muslim, like you. Listen, there are soldiers on the way here. They're going to kill all of us. Let's run away. Give me that girl, I'll take her with me and you run away there." And after a few minutes of back and forth, they actually listened to me. I quickly put her in my car and drove away. Amit, the girl, was in severe trauma. On the way, I called my wife to receive her and try to calm her down until her family arrived.

For the first 48 hours, from 6:45, October 7th, Rami continued. And he rescued more and more people, looking for survivors and rescuing everyone he could. All under heavy fire. He says each rescue was more difficult than the previous one. I didn't see my house, my children, I didn't think about anything other than that. Apart from the rescues, I also collected a lot of bodies. I was working non-stop. I saw these children as my children and I was working on automatic, like a machine. I don't know why God chose me, but I did everything that I could. Whoever thought about being a hero anyway?

I'm often asked, "How did I have the courage to enter an area infested with armed terrorists?" And the truth is, I don't know. I'm not a hero. I was unarmed and it was scary, but I hope that anyone else who comes in such a situation and saw children that needed to be saved would do exactly the same to save the children. I believe that God's hand touched me in those hours. And directed me where to go, what to do, where to take those children. And as I'm driving through the wadis and fields, when above me and around me there's non-stop shooting and bullets hit my car, and I get out without a scratch, there's no explanation other than that was God's Hand protecting me. For me, it was clear. I have a mission and I thank God for giving me the right to do it."

He had one more message for the Jewish people living in Israel today. And he said, "It's important to remember that for those terrorists, we were all Jews. Even when I rescued the children from the party, I didn't ask, who's left-wing and who's right-wing, who's religious and who's secular. I saved everyone because we are all Jews and we are all brothers and sisters. We should also remember and never forget that."

And so that is one of the most unbelievable stories that I've heard so far from the war. Can we put his picture back up there, Tabitha?



wouldn't look twice at him.

His name was Rami Davidian. And he sells gas to the farmers in southern Israel. He's not a fancy man, he's not a super-hero. But my Lord, the courage to do one act...you know, I can wrap my mind around that. You know, the house is on fire, there's an elderly man inside, go inside the house and pull him out. I can wrap my mind around that. But every time he dropped those children off, he had to go back and forth and back and forth. Rami ended up saving 700 children from that music festival together with his moshav. The level of heroism is just beyond. And you'd walk in the streets and you

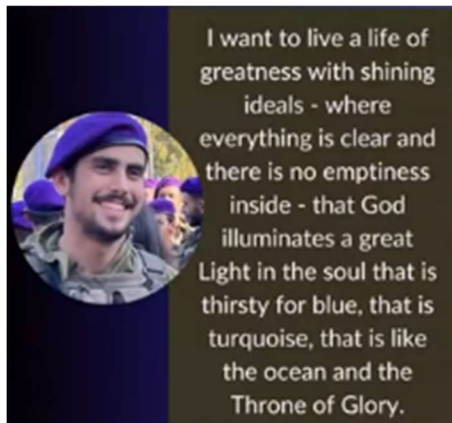
And so, I have one more story that I want to share with you. And, I know that we're running a little bit out of time.



we had Shabbat meals together. They're originally from England, they made aliyah. And the

But this is a story of a friend of mine whose son fell in Gaza. It was his first-born son. And his name was Efraim Yachman, or in English, Efraim Yachman. He was a marvelous boy. Marvelous isn't the word. The Yachman family have children that are really aligned with my children, but Efraim was two years older than my oldest. So I knew him the least, but he was always sort of there. I love the Yachman family. When I lived in Neve Daniel,

quote, at the end we made a beautiful slide, but just to kick this off, they found his journal after he passed and he wrote this...I don't know how long before he was taken from this world. And he wrote it after kitchen duty in the army. So, you could imagine, as he's scrubbing dishes, where his mind was.



And in Hebrew it's amazingly poetic, although that's quite beautiful poetry as well. The Hebrew it's beyond. And so, Efraim Jachman, when I went to his funeral, the rabbi, his rabbi got up and he quoted this verse from the book of Samuel in chapter 16 that sort of introduces David onto the scene.

And it says, "And one of the lads answered and said, 'Here I saw a son of Ishai from Bethlehem. He's a musician, a hero of a soldier and a man of war, a wise one and a beautiful person, and HaShem is with him.' And here I saw Efraim Yachman. He's a musician, a hero of a soldier and a man of war, a wise one. And a beautiful person and HaShem is with him."

And that's how they described him. Efraim played the piano like another level, but he also played the guitar, and the drums, and the flute, and he was just a musician. He had a harmonica in his armed vehicle in Gaza with him. And as a boy, when he was younger, before his bar mitzvah, he finished all of the oral Torah of the Shas Mishnyot, twice before his bar mitzvah. But he didn't ever want to show off, so usually a part of the bar mitzvah celebration is to celebrate what you've learned in honor of your bar mitzvah. So he just took this family to the Kotel in the old city of Jerusalem and they celebrated as a family because he didn't want to show up all of his friends so much more he learned than all of them. It's so much more it's beyond so much more. To finish all of the Oral Torah, all of Shas Mishnyot, twice by your bar mitzvah is another level.

And you know you hear stories from him because I was there five days, I just collected these stories to understand more and more what young man he was. When he was in High School, they did a seminar about healthy eating and how healthy eating is really a part about living a godly life. And from that point on, he stopped eating any processed sugar, and he started eating spelt bread and the healthiest types of food. But he was the kind of person that if all of the guys around him were like kind of snacking on junk food, so he wouldn't like be condescending about it. When Tehila was in High School, we were still friends. And she was a vegetarian and I remember one time we're all like eating steaks together, and she's like, "You know, the cows really suffered for those steaks," and I'm like, "Tehila, can't you just wait until after we're done? You're like ruining the meal. Why do you have to be like that?" And so he wouldn't do that. He would like take one piece of like the unhealthy food, just to be with his friends, like to be with them, to never feel like he was above them, to never show off.

And you know, when he left the house at 18, he called all of his brothers and sisters every Friday. Spent two hours on the phone, just calling them. Such a family man, such a young man, but so focused around his family. And when you heard the brothers and sisters at the eulogies, you just saw how much they admired him, what a role model he was for them. Just the whole family was just like...you hear it from his rabbis, from his commanders, from his officers, and you just can't believe it.

And one of the brothers said, "You know, I remember when we were younger, he used to get angry a lot. And somehow, you just fixed your midot, you fixed your attributes. I haven't seen you angry in years." And his father told me, that when he first started High School, he had to get up early in the morning or he'd miss his bus. And the first year of High School, he missed the bus so many times. But by the time he was in yeshiva, about to go into the army, they gave him the keys to the study hall in Yeshivat Yerucham cause he was the first one in the study every single day before the sunrise.

And somehow, Efraim continued to work on himself and fix himself until he became the most marvelous Jew that I've encountered in years. And you know, in his free time, what did he do, aside from playing beautiful music? He loved the Land of Israel. So he would organize hikes for him and his family. There was never just like bumming around, it was constantly like just going after light, loving the Torah and loving the Land. And when his rabbis were describing him, the first one every day in the study hall, in the beit midrash. And when he was learning, he just loved the Torah, shining light, just happiness. Everyone that learned with him was uplifted because he was such a wonderful person to be around, so optimistic, so happy, so joyful.

And you heard about stories that when he was in the IDF, no one likes to do kitchen duty. Kitchen duty is the worst. I'm still traumatized from kitchen duty. Your hands get all ripped up because you're just doing so many endless dishes. So he would always volunteer to do the grossest of all the jobs. Like to clean the pots that the most like horrible. He would always volunteer to do the things that no one else wanted to do. And when he was serving in Hawara, which is in the Shomron, which is one of the hotbeds of terror in Samaria, he didn't go through officer's training course, but at one point, they were just low on soldiers and he was promoted to become an officer without going through officer's training course. So he was operating as a soldier who had been through officers training course, with about three years of experience. But his time in the army, he was only there for about a year. That's unheard of in the army. So with just a little bit more than a year of service, in Hawara, that's not exactly an office job, he became a platoon commander, and it's unbelievable.

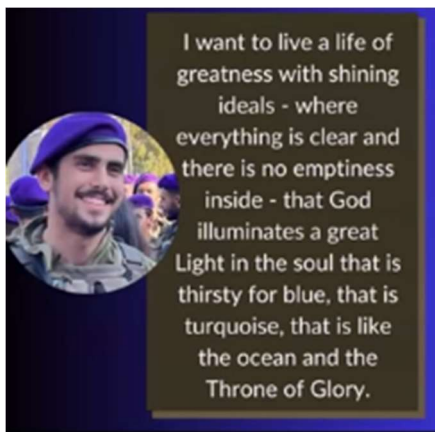
But what happened was, he had a real dilemma. What about kitchen duty? On one hand, an officer never does kitchen duty, they have so many other meetings to go to. They have to meet with all the higher ups and they're up, they never sleep and kitchen duty, that's only for the soldiers. But he said, "Ah, but I'm not really an officer. Maybe I should still do kitchen duty.

What about my sleep? And maybe if I do kitchen duty, that will lower the honor of the rank that I'm supposed to hold right now." And he was going back and forth, what is the right thing to do.

And this story happened as I'm watching the father, Shmu'el who had never heard this story. And he said, "Well, what did he do?" And he said, "He chose to do the dishes anyway." And the father was so happy to hear that story. That even though he was the officer, he chose to do kitchen duty anyways. He was just so good, but to understand how good, in Gaza, in the middle of this war, he woke up before the sunrise to learn one daf of Gemara, because that's what he committed to do every single day. And in seven years, he would have finished all of the Talmud. And every day at 6 in the morning, while everyone was sleeping, he was up praying with the sunrise so no one would disturb him. And he spent every day in the middle of battle, learning Daf Yom, learning Talmud every single day.

And he was awarded the most valuable soldier in the battalion. That's like out of 150 soldiers, to be selected as the MVP. It's like an award that very few ever get. And he received that award and no one knew. They only really found out after he died. Cause he didn't want to show off. If I was awarded this, that would be a bumper sticker on my car, I would have a t-shirt that everyone should know...I am the most valuable soldier of the battalion. Nice to meet you, my name is Jeremy Gimpel, I am the MVP. Everyone would know. That would be the best shtick in the world. He received one of the highest honors you can receive as a soldier in the IDF, and he didn't tell anyone because he didn't want to be haughty, he didn't want to be arrogant. He was just so truly humble.

And he left this world in the most heroic way. He saved his officer's life by jumping ahead and seizing the terrorists with his automatic weapon. And his officer demanded, left the hospital on the hospital stretcher bed to come to his funeral because Efraim Yachman saved his life. And so, he left this world in the most heroic act of selflessness and heroism that could be. And when I think about that wish or that prayer that he wrote in his journal, if we could put that up on the screen...



And to see that this young man had fixed his sleep, fixed his food, fixed his honoring his parents, fixed his love for his family, heroic, courageous, a scholar...what is that, other than can you say...I saw a son, Efraim Yachman, he's a musician, a hero of a soldier, and a man of war, a wise one and a beautiful person, and HaShem is with him.

It's like HaShem has taken the most beautiful souls from Israel, like His most precious. So to understand the pain that Israel is in now, we are losing our greatest souls. There have not been Jews like these in 2,000 years. Jews could not be

this way anywhere other than in this Land. They grow to become Maccabees. They grow to become soldiers of King David. And the Torah and the spirituality fused with men of war that are just defending their people in the Name of the God of Israel. There's nothing like it, there's never been a Jewish generation like the generation we're seeing now.

And so we know that there's this internal war in Israel now. When I look at the generations in the West and the next generation? They're being brain-washed in universities. They're being brain-washed on Tic-Toc. But the next generation that's rising up in Israel, that generation is going to save the world.

And so I just wanted you to have a little insight into the Yachman family and their loss and our loss. It's a loss for the whole world. But may his memory be a blessing and may we take a little bit from his light and bring it into our own lives. And may he have an elevation of his soul through our good deeds and our actions, that he should inspire us. Such a young age, it's like...he finished his job, he finished his mission, he just fixed himself to such a level that he was an angel on earth. That's what they said. That some people, they strive to be angels. And his brother said, "Efraim, he was a boy who turned into an angel on THIS earth." And so, may we all merit to take a little bit of that into our life.

Alright my friends, it's been wonderful to get together. And so from this place, and with that, I want to bless you all with the blessing that Aaron the High Priest blessed all of Israel with and that every priest in the Temple blessed all of Israel with, my father blesses me every Friday night and I bless my children with every Friday night. May all of you be blessed from this Land.

Aaronic blessing (Hebrew)

Shalom my friends.