

Session 219

Tetzaveh – Revealing the Masks of our World

9 March 2025

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

Ari

Shalom everybody! It's so good to see all of you. All the equipment is set up. I'm very excited, can you hear me well, does the audio sound good? Ok, great, if there's like any sort of balance or bass or treble or whatever that needs to happen please let me know because I really wanna tweak this and we're constantly getting a little bit more professional as time goes by. Of course, right when I say that, everything just fell apart for me. Ok, here we are, great. So, I need to apologize in advance, I'm on a high level of readiness here right now so I need to keep both my phone on and the communications device ready just in case anything comes in. And I need to be...I'm on a relatively high alert for reasons that I won't go into right now. But it is very good to see all of you, indeed it really is.

It's been quite a week and before we dive in, I really want to take a moment here to start with a prayer. I'll tell you, Jeremy and I started this sort of new company and we're making all these new things and we have this whole new team and it seems like everything that we do now that is of any real consequence starts off with a blessing and a prayer which was not the way I lived the majority of my life. I mean, yes, I said prayers and blessings before I ate food...the sort of liturgical things that we said prayers and blessings, but not just freestyle before going and starting a thing. But before every episode of the Israel Guys, before every business, we start off with a prayer to center ourselves in gratitude, in faith, and in the Presence of HaShem. So with that,

Creator of Heaven and Earth, Master of the Universe, we thank You. We thank You for the gift of this Fellowship and for bringing us together as a family, as friends to seek Your truth and to strengthen our faith in these days of great upheaval and transformation we turn to You as our Rock and as our Refuge. HaShem, bless each and everyone of us with wisdom, with clarity, and with the courage to stand as vessels for Your light in the world. May we align our hearts with Your will, our actions with Your truth, and our lives with the mission You've set before us. May Your Divine protection rest upon am Yisrael, upon the soldiers, upon the nation, upon our families, and upon all of those who seek Your Name in righteousness, that stand with us as friends and as family. May we merit to see the redemption unfolding before our eyes, to witness the light of Your Presence, illuminating the darkness and to be partners in the great story of Your Divine orchestration and Your imminent redemption. Amen.

Ok, well it feels like so much is happening with the new administration elected in the United States of America. I mean, no matter how you look at it, things are moving faster in the world. It feels like every day there is a new tectonic shift in the world order. Things are just happening so fast. And it feels like things are changing for us here in Israel. Not only has the Overton Window, you know that sort of window of the things that you're allowed to say in civilized society. Well, with the President of the United States just throwing out a suggestion regarding transferring Arabs out of Gaza, things like that have gotten Knesset members here in Israel thrown out of the government and banned from being in the Parliament for daring to suggest the same thing that Trump just said in passing.

I mean so many things are changing. President Trump also just approved weapon's deals to Israel in excess of ten billion dollars, causing us to go from being on the verge of running out of weapons to having an influx of weapons beyond anything that we could have imagined. Sanctions, remember I was in the Wall Street Journal...was it the Wall Street Journal? Something like that. Wall Street Journal, for suing the Biden Administration for the unbelievable ridiculous and insane and infuriating and unjust sanctions on Jews in Judea and Samaria. Well those sanctions have been removed. And they weren't just removed and done away with. They were removed and placed on terrorist organization like the Palestinian Authority and others, UNRAW, and USAID, and many of these other US funded organizations that have been strengthened the global Jihad are being defunded and discontinued.

And there's a lot of talk about the US supporting Israel and declaring sovereignty over Judea and Samaria...which by the way, in my mind, if we need anyone's approval or blessing for sovereignty, then it's not real sovereignty, right? But they're giving us the blessing for sovereignty, it seems like the Prime Minister isn't really even asking for it. And he's like stuck, "Now, if I can't blame America, they're not letting me, who am I going to blame?" It's like so many people in Israel saying, "I wish we could have a Trump as our Prime Minister." I don't know, it just feels like in the Land that we're breathing a certain sigh of relief regarding all of this.

But if you know me well, you can imagine that this is causing me and others serious concern. Because while I do believe that Trump's alliance with Israel and his apparent genuine concern, I really feel like it's genuine, heartfelt concern for the welfare of the Jewish people, his fury and his rage at the way the hostages were treated, all of these sentiments and actions from Trump will be a blessing. I really think it will be a blessing for him and a blessing for the country that elected him.

But I just fear that here in Israel, it's causing us to put our faith in America and our hopes in their support and their security which is of course hazardous to us and just as bad as any other type of idolatry. Because that's not our mission in the world. Our mission is to be a light of truth and trust and faith in God. And that is what I want to dive into about this Fellowship. Because as always, the Torah portion and the calendar times that we find ourselves in, contain within them deep truths which feel like they are personally tailored for where we're at right now in history. And these lessons, they interconnect perfectly in ways that to me seem divinely orchestrated. So while I'm eager to dive into that, before I do, allow me to introduce my best friend and my rebbe, Jeremy Gimpel, who's going to share a beautiful and timely teaching with us. Jeremy, you there?

Jeremy

Yes, hey Ari, how are you? Baruch HaShem, I made it. Is my audio ok? Can everyone hear me? Yeah? Great! Ok, that's really good to hear. And so, I was thinking, there's a prophecy in the book of Isaiah that says, "In the time of the redemption, in its time, I will hasten it."

And so many ask the question, "Well is it a set time? In its time will come? Or is God going to hasten it and choose to bring it earlier than a fixed time?" And the word hasten it, in Hebrew, also means, "I will push it along." And I feel like the American administration is right now literally pushing Israel to do the right thing, giving us the backing, giving us the support and literally pushing us to where we need to be. And so, I just couldn't imagine a more positive scenario than what we're experiencing right now.

And just before the Fellowship, Israel announced that they're cutting off the electricity to northern Gaza. And that is a step in the right direction, fighting the war the way it was always meant to be fought. October 8th we should have cut off the electricity, cut off the water supply, and sieged Gaza, just like any other war, instead of giving them humanitarian aid. Finally now Israel is fighting the evil the way it needs to be fought and that's in fact what I wanted to talk about.

This week, everywhere around the world, the people of Israel gather together in their synagogues and we read what's called Parashat Zachor, the portion of Zachor, of remembering. And there's a mitzvah in the Torah that says:

"Remember what Amalek did. Never forget Amalek. Always remember Amalek."

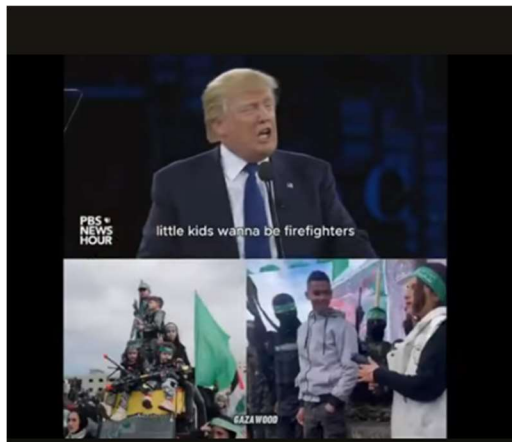
And because it's a command in the Torah to remember, the Jews once a year gather together in their synagogues and they remember Amalek because the Torah says, "Remember." And it's the

happiest time of the year, we're about to celebrate Purim, although this Purim, I've never felt so infused in my emotions – happy, anxious, sad, upset, frustrated, nervous, what's going to be?" It's definitely not just the happy-go-lucky Purim that I remember as a High School kid. Things in Israel right now are so complicated, but it is interesting that the happiest time of the year, what we're told, is that you need to remember evil. That we have to remember evil right before the Shabbat before Purim, and right in our happiest time of the year.

And in some ways, it's really bringing us back to basics, that even in our happiest times, we need to remember evil exists. Never forget the evil. And I think that this American administration that is pushing Israel to do what needs to be done, they live in a much clearer mindset than the previous administration where they really see evil for what it is. And they realize that it needs to be eviscerated.

And so, check out this video right here from a short clip from President Donald Trump, really talking about the evil of this society that Israel is at war with now. Check this out.

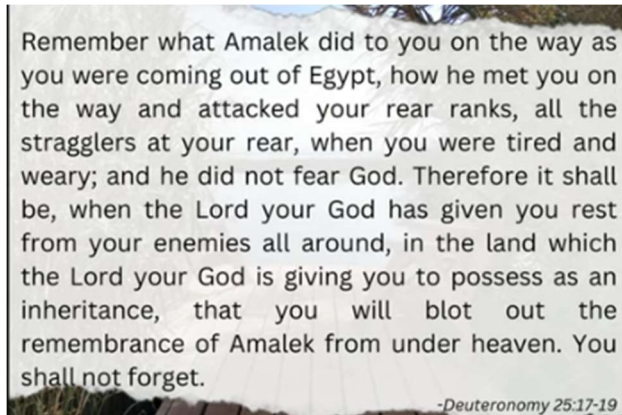
Trump



When you live in a society where the fire fighters are the heroes, little kids want to be firefighters. When you live in a society where athletes and movie stars are the heroes, little kids want to be athletes and movie stars. In Palestinian society, the heroes are those who murder Jews, we can't let this continue. We can't let this happen any longer.

Jeremy

Ain't that the truth? That is just what the society is, it's raised upon evil, the children grow up with evil and there's really no separating them. And when you think about what the Torah portion that we select and we read every year, it's from the book of Deuteronomy and the final command to remember Amalek. Can we get that quote up on the screen? Here's what it says:



And what I want to point out here, is that “therefore when the Lord your God has given you rest from your enemies all around, you have to blot out and erase Amalek from under heaven.” And so think about that. Why is the command given to us when we have relative peace in the Land of Israel? That’s when you need to blot out Amalek. It’s like we should go blot out Amalek and then maybe we’ll get relative peace. But the Torah says, “No, no,

when God will give you peace and quiet in your Land, that’s when you need to remember to erase Amalek from the world.”

And I think that really puts things in proportion. What is our mandate? Our mandate isn’t to make high tech and new technologies, and cameras that when you swallow can take pictures of your intestines and change the bioengineering of the world. Our mission is not peace. But our mission is to eliminate evil from the world. Our mandate is to create a dwelling place for God in the world, His dwelling place is the Land of Israel. And within the Land of Israel, we must blot out, erase, and eliminate evil. Not just live in peace and quiet. Because the Jews, we have a tendency, as soon as there’s peace and quiet, ok...we’ll build a fence. Let the Chamas stay over there, maybe they’re building tunnels, maybe not. It’s quiet now, let’s just live and let live.

And the Torah is saying, “No, no, no. When you have peace and quiet, never forget to blot out the evil.” And what happens on Purim? On Purim, we actually learn how Esther fixed it. Because it’s not just telling us a mandate to blot out the evil. But it literally is to finish the job. Israel is so good at destroying all of Gaza and turning it into a parking lot and then leaving the remnants of Chamas there. We’re so good at winning the 6 Day War and then giving the keys back to the Temple Mount to Jordan. We’re so good at winning so much and then right as we need to cross the finish line, we stop.

And here the Torah is saying, “Even when you have peace and quiet in your Land, finish the job.” And that’s what happens on Purim. We crushed the Amalekites, we crushed all of the people that wanted to kill the Jews. And then Esther says, “Achashverosh, Can I have just one more day? I just want one more day to finish the job.” We didn’t need one more day. I mean, we had given a strike, a blow to evil. We would have walked away victorious and triumphant. And Esther’s teaching us how to deal with evil. And she goes to the King and says, “Can I have one more day?” And until today, there are two days that are celebrated in Purim. It’s the only place in the world where...it’s the only holiday in the world where there are two days that are

celebrated in different locations around the world. We remember that extra day as a holiday in Jerusalem because Esther finally finished the job when she asked for that one more day.

And now that Israel has cut off the electricity to Gaza, and we are going in one more time with the backing of the United States, with bombs like we've never had, with, I hope, a spirit like we've never had, may we please finish the job and blot out the memory of Amalek from within the Land of Israel this Purim, amen. With that...Ari, would it be ok if I introduced Tehila? Because she also has a little message she wants to share with the Fellowship. Would that be ok? All right, I think that Ari says it's ok. So you come on here. Here you go.

Tehila

Hi guys! So great to see everyone, wow! Ok, well first of all, I just want to thank all of the beautiful, amazing ladies who joined me last week for the first Women of Valor. I think I speak for everyone when I say that we just had an amazing, immediate connection. And I just felt like I was in a miraculous moment. So I just want to thank you guys and for those of you who haven't had a chance to join yet, then don't miss out because we're having a great time.

Just a short thing, I know Ari has so much to say to get you guys ready for Purim, so just a very, very short little idea. You know I love to connect things to whatever happens in the Torah portion. I love to connect to what's going on, in whatever season that we're in. And you know, for the first time this year, I really think I noticed, it's interesting that every year, Purim comes out on the Torah portion of Ki Tietze, which is the Torah portion of the sin of the golden calf.

So only this year, for the first time, it really struck me that there are some very interesting similarities between the story of Purim and the story of the golden calf. Because really both of those stories include a sort of inappropriate party going on. You know, a wild celebration that's not holy. And then, both Purim and the golden calf involve a story of hiddenness and masks. What happens when Moshe comes down and sees what's going on? He goes back up and he gets the second tablets? It says that he comes down and his face is shining. He doesn't even realize that his face was shining. And from then on, he had to wear a veil, he had to wear a mask. As we all know, Purim is also all about these masks.

And the story of the golden calf ends with another covenant of the Jewish people, of Israel getting the 2nd tablets after they had sort of missed out on keeping the covenant for the first time around. And the book of Esther also finishes with a covenant. Because it says in the end of the book of Esther that the Jewish people accepted upon themselves to keep these commandments. And the sages teach that this was the time that the Jewish people actually, for

the first time, voluntarily accepted upon themselves to keep the Torah. That's an interesting observation because what does it mean when we've accepted it upon ourselves so many times?

What the sages point out is that in the first two times, it was almost impossible to say no. It was almost impossible to not accept the covenant with HaShem. When God reveals Himself on Sinai, do you really have like the opportunity to say, "Well, no, not for me." The sages compare it to hanging Mt. Sinai, like over the heads of Israel and being like, "You want the Torah?" It's like the imagery that the sages use. Because really when God is appearing right there and speaking to you, you don't really have the option of saying no.

And then, the second time around, when Moses brings us the second tablets. And you know, it's interesting, do you guys know what day that happened? We've talked about this a few times. That happens on Yom Kippur. So, he brings down the tablets, now this time around, it's a little bit less coercive. It's like, "Are those real? Are those the real deal?" They were carved by Moses, I don't know." Then suddenly he shows his face and his face is shining and they're like, "Oh my gosh, HaShem is clearly speaking through Moshe." It would be very hard to not accept this.

Now what's interesting, is that in the Jewish mystical tradition, we're taught that Purim is a day like Yom Kippurim. Like Yom Kippur. You hear the similarities phonetically between Purim and Yom Kippurim? There's an idea that there's a connection between Purim and Yom Kippurim. And there are many explanations that have been given to that, but I think that one maybe you can kind of think about in a new way is that Purim is a day that the Jewish people accepted upon themselves the Torah kind of like they did with the second tablets with Moses, but this time, completely voluntarily. Because even HaShem's Name is hidden in the book of Esther. All of HaShem's Presence was done with a mask. It was done hidden, and yet still, for that time we actually accepted upon ourselves the Torah.

And so, Purim is really in a lot of ways like the last story that led us into the stories of our life in the exile. And so, there's something about Purim that invites us, we talk about this on Shavuot, we talk about this on Yom Kippur, but I think Purim more than all the other days, invites us in the places where we don't see HaShem, in those places more than ever to accept upon ourselves that covenant that was really the truest covenant. Because it wasn't based on any miracle, or any shining face, but a place that was filled with masks and a place where HaShem was hidden.

If ever there was a time when sometimes we feel like HaShem is hidden, it was in the beginning of this war when HaShem hid His Face. And I feel like for all of us, there's just been a process of

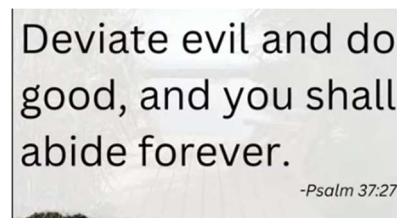
taking off the masks and trying to see HaShem through all of the different challenges that we're going through and to constantly be renewing our covenant through our covenant and our loyalty to HaShem, even in those places that are so covered up. So, with that I bless you guys to be feeling HaShem's Presence in every place in Your life where HaShem is hiding His Face, in those places to accept upon ourselves the Torah and to accept upon ourselves the responsibility of the yoke of heaven. And that, I think, is not the only idea of Purim, but definitely AN idea of Purim. So with that, I wish you guys to have a very meaningful holiday.

Ari

Thank you, Tehila. That is truly beautiful. And I think I may have learned from Tehila, or was it Yishai Fleisher this idea about really accepting the yoke of heaven, doing it voluntarily. Which is such a beautiful thing. But the teaching I heard was that the yoke...what is the yoke? It sounds like a burden, it sounds like something like, who wants a yoke on them? But really, if you take an oxen and you put him in a field and you don't put a yoke on him, he's going to slam his head into this tree and that and just cause a lot of damage and do nothing. But if you put a yoke on him, all of a sudden, he's able to actually create and bring goodness.

And I'm glad that Tehila shared that because you know Jeremy started by sharing the importance of fighting and destroying evil, of eradicating Amalek from the world and it is so frustrating to us here in Israel, in the army, in the country to see how the Prime Minister and the leadership is just not finishing Amalek, just not doing it. But the truth is, like Tehila said, it's not just about destroying Amalek, but it's about the yoke of heaven, the yoke of Torah upon us, then bringing that light to the world.

You know King David said in Psalm 37:



If we do good, we not only destroy evil and deviate from evil, but we do good, then we will be an eternal people. That's the secret to our eternity, is actually fulfilling our mission, which isn't just destroying evil. But by now, we know the truth that King David teaches there. That it's not only about that

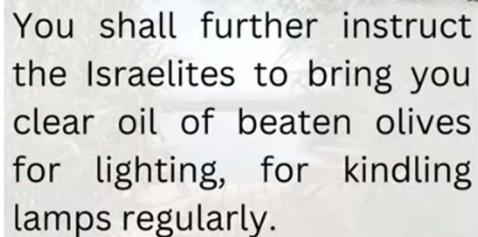
destruction, it's proactively doing good. To proactively shine our light. And both our Torah portion, as well as Purim, I think really demonstrate this in a very beautiful way.

Now I want to make sure that I don't just go on and on this whole time because I don't know if you guys heard it, but Tabitha sent out a message, I want to open it up to a Fellowship connection to connect with you. Last time I felt like I ambushed you a little bit. But if anyone has anything, questions about the Fellowship, thoughts you want to share, anything at all, not

even connected to the Fellowship, it's a great time for us to connect, maximum invitation, minimum pressure. But I did just want to throw that out right now and I hope that I don't go so long that it goes into that.

But anyways, the last portions we studied together were focused on the building of the Tabernacle in which we're creating a physical space within our physical realm in which God's Presence can reside in the most potent manifestation of that relationship, of that revelation, than we could ever imagine. And then this week's Torah portion, Tetzaveh, it shifts to the human and the ritual elements that animate the Temple, that give it light, that give it life. Because without the nation of Israel, without the priests of Israel, without humanity, the Temple would be no more than just a building. Ultimately it's about our hearts.

In the portion that we just read this week of Tetzaveh, we study that which lights it up. That which lights up the Temple. First and foremost, the ner tamid, the eternal light, which burns in the Temple, nonstop in perpetuity. We learn about the sacred garments of the holy priests, the Cohanim and the ways in which they are consecrated. But let's start with the eternal light. I have to just so briefly touch on each one. The eternal light that the Cohanim were supposed to kindle eternally. That's the ner tamid, the fire that is always burning.



You shall further instruct the Israelites to bring you clear oil of beaten olives for lighting, for kindling lamps regularly.

-Exodus 27:20

That was what was in the ner tamid, this pure olive oil. Now this is such a beautiful commandment because it brings us to that visualization of the final redemption. Because let's not forget that just as the prophet Samuel anointed David as the chosen Messiah, right now I just saw this morning, I got some sort of notification that there's a new Amazon Prime movie about King David and

the entire journey. And I love watching them, even though most of the time they're off and this is wrong and that's wrong. But just seeing it played out in real life. I just love that.

And so, King David was chosen as the Messiah. What does Messiah mean? It means the anointed one, Mashuach, Mashiach HaShem, the anointed one. Just as the King Messiah of Israel is always anointed with olive oil, an olive oil of the Land, itself. There's always to be a flame of that very oil within the Tabernacle in the Temple, itself. What does this show? Both the Temple and the entire nation is anointed in the same way, with the same mission, as the Messiah is. To shine God's light to the world. Not sometimes, not every now and then, not when it's easy and convenient, but all the time.

And for those of you here that are in the Judean Diet, you know exactly what I'm talking about. That was the last module, we just spoke about that exact consistency of the ner tamid. And this olive oil in the eternal flame comes from the Land, itself. It can only come from the Land of Israel. For this is one of those intrinsic, indigenous, qualities of the Land, itself. As we see in Deuteronomy, chapter 8, verse 8, which the Land of Israel is described as:

A land of wheat and barley,
and vines and fig trees and
pomegranates; a land of
olive oil and honey.
-Deuteronomy 8:8

Now you may have noticed that in this list of the fruits and the grains that the verse mentions, there is one that is different than everything else. This popped out at me. I haven't heard this from anywhere, it just popped out at me as something that is different. And what is different than all the others? I don't see any comments popping up.

The olive oil! Why? Why is the olive oil different than everything else? Well everything else mentioned, the wheat and the barley and the figs and the pomegranates, they're all mentioned in their original, natural, forms. Other than the olive oil. Olive oil is mentioned in its refined state. It doesn't say a Land of wheat and barley and vines and fig trees and pomegranates and olives and honey. No, it says olive oil. It describes the final product after which we exert our efforts upon it.

Because we've discussed before, like the olive, we discussed this on Chanukah also. God brings forth the greatest and most refined light from His people only through the greatest challenges and pain. Only through crushing us, crushing our inflated egos and humbling us to become the nation that He will anoint with the very product of the act of the crushing, itself. Just like the olives of the Land from which we refine this finest, clearest, purest olive oil. That's the exact same way. And just as the olive oil is a product of the Land, itself, the nation of Israel will be refined and purified through the Land, itself. For it's only within the Land, that we'll be able to shine this light to the world.

Rav Kook teaches that the lights from the ner tamid, from the eternal flame in the Temple and the light of the menorah, itself, that light, that illumination is the physical manifestation of the spiritual light that we will shine forth from the Land of Israel. As the prophet Isaiah said:

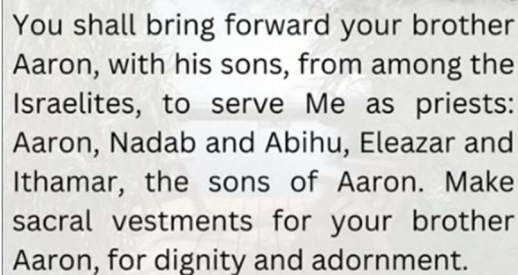
For from Zion shall go forth
Torah and the word of God
from Jerusalem.
-Isaiah 2:3

And when you read this portion through that prism, that absolutely everything that we are seeing instructed in the Tabernacle, in the Temple, is an expression of the role of the nation of Israel and the world, well then everything changes. Everything changes. No longer are these verses

about priests and olive oil and garments, merely ancient, abstract descriptions of some sort of

theological rituals, but they are very real and very relevant and true. They're true expressions of our national mission and how that mission will manifest itself in the days to come. How that mission can start manifesting itself, even now. Even now.

So the priestly garments, the breastplate known as the choshen, the ephod or the vest, the robe, the me'il, the tzitz, which is the head plate, they're all described in great detail. I'm not going to go into all the detail. But they're all ultimately worn by Aharon, the High Priest and his descendants as the verse says.



You shall bring forward your brother Aaron, with his sons, from among the Israelites, to serve Me as priests: Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, the sons of Aaron. Make sacral vestments for your brother Aaron, for dignity and adornment.

-Exodus 28:1-2

Those last words, those are the famous words – with dignity and with adornment. The Ramban, Nachmanides, notes that these garments elevate the sanctity, the Cohanim to serve as conduits between God and the nation of Israel. To reflect His Divine majesty on earth. For glory and for splendor.

This glory and splendor does not merely refer to the glory and splendor of the priests themselves, but rather the only true glory and splendor, that of God, Himself. The glory and splendor reflected in the faces of the Cohanim, of the priests and that was real, it was legendary, it was epic. That glory reflected in their faces was only that. It was just a reflection of the glory and the splendor of God that was being channeled into the world through them.

And just as the Tabernacle was meant to be a temporary, diaspora manifestation of the Beit HaMikdash, of the Temple, itself, the true glory and splendor is only fully realized in Eretz Yisrael where the final Temple will be built and never destroyed. And the Shkinah, God's potent Presence, the Shkinah, the Shekinah will dwell permanently.

So, I'm telling you, every time I read these portions, they take on a deeper and a deeper meaning. Each year it feels like they're becoming more real and more relevant. And this year? Well this year, it feels like we are watching the preview of a movie which is being screened immediately before the movie, itself. That's what it feels like for me. If you close your eyes and you try really hard, you can visualize the great darkness of our world being replaced with equally great light. The eyes and the hearts of all of humanity will be focused on the Temple. Right? X, TikTok, Facebook, all the internet, YouTube, everybody, all around the world, all of their eyes will be focused, their hearts will be focused on the Holy Temple, on the High Priest adorned with garments, whose light will shine in a way that will not leave any room for questions or doubts ever again.

And front and center over the heart of the priest is the choshen, the breastplate of the High Priest with the urim v'tumim, adorned with sacred stones, each representing one of the twelve tribes of Israel. And when these tribes are all together, when they're together by the heart of the priest and they're unified as one, only then can the prophetic light of the nation of Israel and the priests channel HaShem's light and illuminate all of creation. Only when the tribes of Israel can elevate our consciousness to the place where we can recognize that our strength and our blessing will only come when we love each other because of our unique gifts and differences. And not despite our differences, but because of them. Only when we realize that it's in the inclusion of all of us that makes us the nation of God, only when we realize that can we ever expect the rest of mankind to realize exactly the same thing.

And just as the choshen, the breastplate, aligns with the tribes of Israel over the heart of the High Priest, it's only in the Land of Israel that we can align the collective soul of the entire nation that binds our tribes together, our personalities, our ideologies, our differences together, that we can really be bound together with a true harmony.

You know, growing up in Texas, and learning about the stories and the legends of not only my family's involvement in what we each did from America to contribute to the wars of Israel and the establishment of the State, but just the miracles and the sacrifices. In my mind, the IDF was holy, it was holy. When I was joining the IDF, I felt like I was becoming like a High Priest of Israel. And my father, I remember he came to my techas, my celebration where I got my beret, and never did I see my father weep, just freely weep as seeing me in that uniform. The idea of uniform had a sanctity that paralleled the garments of the High Priest of the Temple. And while I know that many, particularly in the Ultra-Orthodox world would bristle at such an analogy, in my mind it was true, and it still is true.

I mean, so many of the words are even the same. For example, the ephod, the vest of the High Priest. I was actually looking for graphics depicting these different garments of the High Priest that I could legally share, but I couldn't find anything that I could legally share, it was all like copywritten. But it looked very much like a priestly version of this ephod.



This is my army ephod, it's called an ephod! It has in it my magazines, it has the first aid kit, it has all of the different things that I need to fight and to go into battle. It's called the ephod! And so, when I'm wearing this ephod and I see the other soldiers, I feel the exact same thing. It was worn over the shoulders. The ephod in the Temple was worn over the shoulders of the High Priest in the Temple, just like this is. And that symbolized the way

he carried the burden of Israel on his shoulders. And when I see our soldiers wearing that same thing, they're carrying the burden of Israel. They're protecting the entire nation. And by extension, the way that the nation of Israel should ideally carry the burden of the nations of the world on our shoulders, just as the priest does.

I actually want to share with you a clip from our last episode this past week from the Israel Guys, which I couldn't stop thinking about all throughout Shabbat. Because we had on a very special guest called Chuck Colson. Have you heard of this guy? Anyways, towards the end of the show, he conveyed a sentiment that seemed somewhat disconnected from everything else we were discussing, but was clearly weighing heavy on his heart for some reason. And I was thinking about it a lot over Shabbat. Because we were talking about whatever we were talking about. Iran, and China, and terrorism, whatever it was, and then he brings up Azerbaijan and Armenia and how Israel has sold weapons to Azerbaijan and allied themselves with Azerbaijan, despite Azerbaijan being Jihadist aligned with Turkey who have persecuted and terrorized the Armenians.

And it was weird, I got a little bit, instinctively defensive of Israel about like, "Why" and whatever. But I just wanted to hear him out because as opposed to many who criticize Israel who are always looking to condemn and to lie and with all the double standards, I could tell that this was not what Chuck was doing. His criticism was coming from a place of love and friendship. Immediately I felt it. It was clear as day. It was coming from a place of simply expecting more from a holy nation that he clearly loves. It was like he wanted to see us do this thing that he knew was right in his heart. I was really moved by it.

It was sincerely bothering him that Israel would ally ourselves with forces of darkness for pragmatic reasons of which there are numerous ones. We get over 40% of our oil through our pipelines with Azerbaijan, to the fact that they're purchasing our weapons with revenues that we need. There're other things, but it bothered him that Israel would shake hands with the devil no matter what. No matter what we may have stood to gain. It seemed like he was yearning to see something greater from us. This is actually how the conversation went. It's a five-minute piece, but it's worth watching, I think.

(video)

Chuck Colson



There's one thing that frustrates me, too, because as I said, I think that we should start with the moral component and say, "What's right, let's do what's right and then worry about whether or not it's politically expedient or economically feasible or anything like that. Let's just start with what's right."

And one of the criticisms I've had of Israel is that their relationship with Azerbaijan, for example, has been based on political expediency and the fact that they're also enemies of Iran, and so we've been friends with them. But in terms of basic morality, in my opinion, Israel should be standing on the side of Armenia in this because Armenia, they have so much in common in terms of being surrounded by people who want to kill you, radical Muslims, and they're a Christian nation, the world's first Christian nation, they were aligned with Russia. They learned that was a really bad mistake, right? And they were tremendously hurt by Israeli weapons that were sold to Azerbaijan and then used cluster bombs on civilians in Armenia.

And the Armenians are like, "What the heck?" Like, there was the Armenian genocide that led to and because the Armenian genocide was ignored by the world, Hitler literally referenced it in justifying the genocide against the Jews. And so, you look at those things and you go, "Why isn't Israel saying, "We recognize the Armenian genocide," and why isn't Ukraine saying the exact same thing about what's happening here? And the answer is, they're making their decisions based on political expediency.

Ari

You feel like you're calling for Israel to be a military, a political, a moral leader in the world, to actually take leadership. And I think the whole world is terrified of the global Jihad.

Chuck

To stand up and say, "This is right, this is wrong." That doesn't really align with our political goals, but it's still wrong. Armenians, they have nothing to offer us politically, but it's still wrong what's being done to them. That's not hard to do. A leader who is concerned with morality first, could be able to do those things and say, like I say, whether it's Zelinsky, or whether it's Donald Trump or whether it's Netanyahu, to say, "This is right, this is wrong, even if it doesn't line up with us politically, we can still recognize right and wrong and we can stand up for what's right."

Josh Waller

Jeremy, I think you have some Torah to finish us out with that concept.

Jeremy

Well morality of right and wrong and truth, you know the book of Exodus in Hebrew is actually called the book of Names. And it ends with the construction of the Tabernacle. And why is it called the Book of Names? Well it's because this when Israel gets its name. Not a name of an individual like Noah or Adam or Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but Israel as a nation becomes a nation in the book of Exodus, and we receive our name, our essence.

And how does it end? It ends at making a dwelling place for God in the world. Ends with making a Tabernacle, that's how the book ends. Where the Tabernacle could have been in the book of Leviticus, it's specifically ends in the book of Names because that is our name. And what is our mission here? It's exactly like what you said. To be a voice of morality, to be a voice of clarity, of truth, to make a dwelling place for God in the Land of Israel. That's our mission. And in order to do that, we have to remove the evil from the Land. Either with the new MK84 bombs or with emigration, but it is to remove the evil from the Land because that's the only way that we can make a dwelling place for the truth. That's the only place we can make a dwelling place for God in the world.

Ari

Can I just piggy back? Because Jeremy is not only my commander in the army, he's my rebbe. I'm just going to take it one step further. Because the Ramban, Nachmanides, he calls the book of Exodus, he calls it sefer ha'geulah, the book of redemption. It's 42 chapters, but only the first 12 actually talk about the redemption from Egypt. So why is it called the book of redemption if it's over 40 chapters. And the answer is, because redemption isn't just freedom from slavery, it is fulfillment of your mission in the world. And our mission is exactly what Jeremy just said, to bring God's Presence into it. And if we're going to be able to build the Temple, we have to be able to build it in our hearts. And one word, one letter difference between the word, geulah, which is redemption and golah, which is exile. And that's the letter aleph, which stands for God. When we bring God into our hearts, and then we don't put our faith in Trump, and we don't put our fears in Russia, but our fear is of God and our faith is of God, that is what will bring the redemption. Make our hearts into the Temple, and then the Temple will be built on Mount Moriah in Jerusalem. (end of video)

Josh

Amen! We got it.

Jeremy

Alright guys, this has been an awesome show.

Ari

I was thinking about that because the way his eyes lit up, did you see that? You could see the excitement in his eyes when I said that, when Jeremy said that because in the end, he was right. We're approaching an era in our history where we are not destined to be a nation like every other nation. With our own pragmatic real politic, our own interests. But we're destined to be so much greater than that. We're destined to be a beacon of light and truth and faith which never compromises on what is right and what is true. Because when we do compromise on what's right and what's true, when we have this sort of pragmatism, it broadcasts a message to the world that...we gotta do what we gotta do in order to survive. Just like they do. Even if it does mean shaking the hands of evil. After all, we would emerge stronger from aligning ourselves with Azerbaijan than Armenia. And well, you know survival of the fittest in everything.

But that is not our truth. Our truth is that if we operate based on righteousness and kindness and faith, even if it does not seem to be in our short term or our long term interests, strategic interests or whatever interests. It doesn't matter. Because God is with us in our righteousness. And just as the High Priest bears the burden of the Israelites on his shoulders, as a nation we the Israelites bear the burden of the nations of the world on our soldiers. That is real leadership and that is real responsibility.

When you see Israel finally rising to the calling and taking responsibility, and it's going to happen. It's going to happen soon, I know it's going to happen. Taking responsibility not only for ourselves, but for the nations of the world, just look for who's at the helm of that ship. And if you ask me, chances are that that leader, whoever it is, that will be the Messiah we've all been waiting for, but that's just me. I know it's a loaded issue, I'm just sharing my heart.

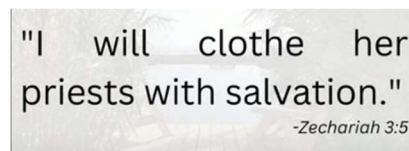
Anyways, the point is, that this mission, too, is reflected in the garments of the High Priest. From the breastplate, to the vest, to the ephod, to the tzitz. What was the tzitz? Do you remember? There's a beautiful teaching we learned last year about the tzitz, I think from Tehila. The tzitz was the headplate of the High Priest which said on it the words, Kodesh l'HaShem, Holy to God. The tzitz represented the alignment of the mind of the Cohen to the mind of the nation, to the mind of God, Himself. The ultimate alignment with the Divine will. I know I was thinking, I want to get some sort of visual of that, some sort of picture of that and put it in my house, because ultimately whatever we allow in our mind, that is going to either align us and make our mind holy to God, or make our mind defiled. We have to be very careful what we allow in. And in this world, where we are bombarded by so much, that is a tremendous part of this war.

And then there is the me'il, right? The robe that is adorned with the golden bells and the pomegranates which clink together making this beautiful sound every time the High Priest moved. And that symbolized the voices and the prayers and the songs of the Israelites in our Land. A song which will awaken the spiritual vitality of the nations of the world.

And then, of course there is the beautiful blue techelet, the blue thread flowing through so much of it which we haven't had for millennia and all of a sudden, over the past few decades we have rediscovered. And I have it on my very tzit tzit right now. But that techelet, that color, both subconsciously and consciously summons the image of the waters of the sea to the blue of the sky to the dominion of God, Himself. We've spoken about it before in the past.

Every single element of what's described in the Torah portion serves as the same ultimate purpose. To bridge the earth and the sky, to bridge the physical and the spiritual, to bridge the mundane and the holy. The phrase, suggests that the garments beautify and dignify the Cohan Gadol, just as the Land of Israel adorns the nation of Israel, right? Transforming us from a scattered people into a majestic nation. The Land, it provides the context for Israel to shine through the unity of these garments of the High Priest, to the service, the responsibility of the ephod and the tzitz and the choshen. That is how it will all happen.

In the exile, Israel's garments were tattered. Our unity was fractured and our service was so greatly diminished that it's almost unrecognizable. What a Jew's life in Romania or Hungary in the shtetel compared to the nation of Israel. And the Temple on Mount Moriah in Jerusalem. You couldn't even see the similarity, but in the exile, we were just naked and bare. But returning to eretz Yisrael, when we return to the Land, the Land itself almost reclothed our nation and began restoring us to our priestly splendor, as the prophet Zechariah says:



"I will clothe her
priests with salvation."
-Zechariah 3:5

When we return to the Land, we are clothed with Yeshua, with salvation. Just as the words for glory and splendor describe how the garments of the High Priest transform him from a mere individual to a beacon of light shining the glory of all of

Israel to the whole world, I believe that eretz Yisrael, that the Land of Israel serves as the garment of the nation, transforming us from a scattered nation of just individuals, into a majestic nation in the Land, a nation which shines like the olive oil. With purity and with clarity.

Because just as the process of aligning ourselves with the frequency, like the radio frequency of the Land, itself, it humbles us. It crushes our ego like the olive oil. Only in the Land will the nation be able to serve as the translucent vessel through which God's light can shine through to all of humanity.

And that's exactly why the forces of the greatest evil in the world, the great darkness and viciousness and hate are all focused on us in the Land. And the more "in the Land" we are, the more on the tip of the Judean frontier we are, the darker the evil is against us. Because it's exactly because of the great light that's generated by our dwelling in the Land that the forces of darkness hate it with such unwavering passion. And this is so important for us to remember because it gives us hope. I can't tell you how often I run into friends in the grocery store, and depending on what's happening, within the first minute, someone asks the question, "What does God want from us? What is this all about?" You know, think of it, we're brutalized and terrorized by Hamas, the world villainizes us and blames us and lionizes them. We fight the darkness with our very lives, the darkness that faces the world that they don't even know is facing them, we put our very lives endangering ourselves and our families and losing our precious beloved sons and daughters who are fighting this war against evil on behalf of all of humanity. And we're sanctioned, and we are castigated and we are cursed and blamed and hated.

We strike this painful, horrible deal, releasing terrorists with blood on their hands for the return of, in some cases bodies. The bodies of our hostages. And in their unimaginable evil, Hamas switches out the bodies with other bodies causing even greater trauma and torment. I just remember Shaena turned to me when that happened, with the Bibas family, she said, "What does God want from us?" That's just what is always asked.

But when we remember the answer, which is hard to do when you're in the midst of it, when you remember why God is crushing us, that He's crushing us for the sacred, lofty purpose, which perhaps we can't really fully understand right now. We definitely can't fully understand how this is crushing us in the way that we need to be, but He is crushing us for the purpose of making us the purest and clearest olive oil for which He can shine His light. When we are able to remember that, at least for me, it makes the pain at least bearable. It's just so hard to always keep it in mind while you're in the midst of the pain that we're enduring.

But the truth is that we are keeping it in mind. I'm really not sure how any other nation would hold up in such circumstances. Have you ever thought about that? Let's say this was happening to Spain. Or France, or Turkey. I'm not really sure how any other nation would hold up in such a circumstance. Really. Maybe there are some that would, I don't know. What do you guys think? Do you think it would? I tend to doubt it because it's only because of God's covenant, His covenant with us and His blessings to us that we can survive at all. Let alone bounce back with such strength and faith and resilience. There's just so much pain.

But despite how excruciating it really is, we're not losing our resolve, we're not losing our faith because we have been here before and we know that absolutely every single detail of what is happening is part of the miracle that will soon be revealed. We know that each and every single detail of what's playing out in the world right now is happening for our sake. To set the stage for the greatest and the most miraculous redemption that the world has ever seen.

Which brings us to Purim! I know we're running out of time a little bit. Hang on if you can, I just want to share this with you because it's really interesting. There's a Jewish law, Halacha, that if you miss even one word of the Megillah, you have not fulfilled your obligation to hear it. If you miss even one word in the recitation of the book of Esther, you need to hear the whole thing again. Which is really tricky being the entire congregation erupts in crazy sound effects to blot out the name of Haman, each time it's recited. If you've ever been...you need to go to a synagogue. These people are nuts. Blasting horns every time the name Haman is read, but right after Haman is read and his name is blotted out, then he says it one more time. Because even that word we need to hear with clarity and fullness. You need to hear every single word. So one small example of this seemingly irrelevant detail is the 2nd verse in the Megillah. It says:

In those days, when King Ahasuerus occupied the royal throne in the fortress Shushan.

-Esther 1:2

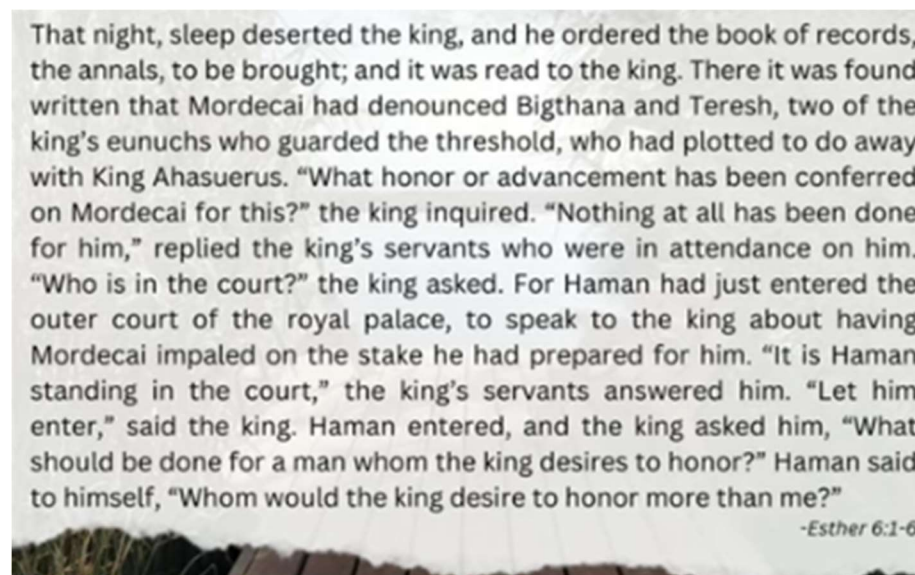
Why do we need to hear every word? Because every word conveys another miracle. And so, literally we could go through every single verse and say how each verse conveys another miracle. That verse, the Vilna Gaon fills in the backstory, you know the backstories, the Midrashim that we have from our fathers and our

parents and our grandparents and our ancestors, we have all the backstories, right. He teaches us that Achashverosh sought to have his throne be created as the exact replica of the throne of Solomon in Jerusalem. That was so important to him, which isn't a shock, considering his very intentional use of the vessels of the Temple for this historic feast, party, celebration. He was very consumed and obsessed with the Temple because using these vessels from the Temple means that he, himself was more powerful than the God of Israel. This legendary nation of Israel that he has ground into dust.

Anyways, the backstory is that he wanted the throne to be a perfect replica of the throne of Solomon. But the only people who knew how to actually construct this throne were those who lived in Shushan. And when it was constructed, it was so heavy that it couldn't be moved to the capital. So he moved the capital. He moved the capital to Shushan because that is where his throne awaited him. Little did he know that the real reason that he was moving to Shushan as the capital was because that is where Mordecai and Esther lived. And that is where the story needed to play out.

You know it reminds me of the story of Ephron the Hittite who became a dignitary in Canaan in the days leading up to Abraham's arrival, just so Abraham would have someone of esteem in the Land with whom to negotiate. Because it was Ephron the Hittite who had the cave of Machpelah. In the eyes of HaShem, moving capitals of superpowers is no less difficult than causing the sun to rise in the east and set in the west. And so from the very moment, we read the Megillah, every single verse conveys a different piece of this great miracle.

So Rav Biederman brings the teaching of the Alshich, who shares another detail of another miracle, one of my favorite parts of the Megillah. I know we're running late, but I just love this part because it's considered the turning point in the Megillah, the actual tune in which it's read shifts at this moment when Achashverosh couldn't sleep. He had the book of records to read before him because he couldn't fall asleep. It says in the Megillah:



And we know what happens. Hamon goes into this whole elaborate honor that should be shown and then the king says, "You do that for Mordecai," and that's where everything shifts, flips on its head. It's such a great piece. And the Alshich points out something that I never thought about. That Hamon came precisely at the perfect, exact moment for this miracle to occur. Because if Hamon had come any earlier, he would have heard that the king was discussing a reward for Mordecai. And if he came any later, someone else would have been asked how Mordecai should have been rewarded. It happened exactly, precisely as it was supposed to happen, down to the very second. Every single detail in the Megillah reveals a different aspect, a different miracle, each of which contributed to the one great miracle which is the holiday of Purim.

But the truth is that this is not unique to Purim. The very essence of Purim conveys the truth of the miracle of our whole world. Rav Biederman brings the words of the great Bnei (?) who teaches:

In Nisan [alluding to the miracles of the exodus from Egypt], we experienced revealed miracles. Everyone saw that Hashem can change nature. However, many didn't know that even when the world is run according to the rules of nature, Hashem is also leading the world with HaShgacha Pratit (divine orchestration) over every detail. The Israelites knew it, but it wasn't known to most people... This was corrected with the miracle in the month of Adar. The miracle was within nature; all the rules of nature remained in place. Nevertheless, it was obvious to all that Hashem performed the miracle and didn't occur by chance. It became known that Hashem's providential intervention is also within nature... This became known to us through the miracles in Adar because the miracle was within the rules of nature, yet everyone saw that it happened with Hashem's wondrous providence.

-Bnei Yisascha Adar 1:7

And this is why the sages teach that the holiday of Purim will be everlasting, meaning we will celebrate it even in Messianic times when other holidays will be less relevant. And we learn this toward the very end in chapter nine of the Megillah where it says:

Consequently, these days are recalled and observed in every generation: by every family, every province, and every city. And these days of Purim shall never cease among the Jews, and the memory of them shall never perish among their descendants.

-Esther 9:28

The words to focus on here are “these days of Purim shall never cease among the Jews.” Because the deepest truth of God’s perfect providence and orchestration of every moment IS our message to the world. That is our message and that always will be our message to the world.

The word, megillah in Hebrew, just a quick review here, it means to reveal – megilah, l’galot, to reveal. When reading through the story of Esther, it is clear beyond the shadow of a doubt, that all of these occurrences were of perfect Divine orchestration, although no where is God’s Name mentioned. There’s no other book like that. It’s only the last letter of certain words, it’s like encoded, you have to look so deep within the words. I could go into it, we don’t have time right now. But you see God’s Name, but you just don’t see it mentioned outright.

The word olam in Hebrew does not only mean world, but it means hidden. The laws of nature and the series of coincidences that comprise our lives are an illusion to the highest order. And it is the task of the Jewish people to remove that mask for the world, revealing the truth which is that the God of Israel has been behind the scenes since the beginning of time, directing every single moment of world history. We don’t even need to say it. In the days to come, it will be revealed in the eyes of the entire world. Nothing will need to be said.

Firmly grasping this understanding despite the doubts and the challenges that we inevitably encounter in the world, is, I think it is the key to spiritual vitality and to personal growth, national growth. To serve God in truth. God is no longer relegated, when we really understand Purim, God is no longer relegated to biblical stories and cataclysmic events, but to the details of our daily lives. And the current events that are playing out in the world around us. And it just invigorates us with the knowledge that every moment has the potential for meaning and sanctification if we choose. If we choose, right? Choice, that's the message of Purim.

Because if God's providence were revealed in all its glory, like in Passover, there were moments there in the story of Passover where I don't think we had any free will at all. We would have no choice at all if it wasn't for the mask of this world. It's exactly because of the mask. Because of the hiddenness that we can have any free choice. Esther was confronted with a choice. She was confronted with a choice between saving her people and saving herself. Because she had a way out, she was the queen. But she also had the opportunity to save the nation of Israel at the risk of her very own life. The words of courage and faith that Mordecai spoke to her. A part of those words live within me. They should live within each and every one of us.

"Salvation will come to the nation of Israel. But will it be through you?"

That was what he said to Esther. Today, right, today in Israel the nation is facing challenges to our very existence that are paralleled really only in the time of Purim. Right? We know that God is with us and we know that salvation will come. That's His promise. The only question that we need to ask ourselves is what role we're going to take. Will we be the vehicles for redemption and the vessels for HaShem's light in the world or will we be bystanders? Uninvolved and disconnected, but watching the whole thing play out.

As the redemption in the world is approaching so rapidly, we need to ask ourselves, we are asking ourselves! That's what we're doing here by being in this Fellowship. Will it be through us? Because that is ultimately the question that we need to answer. Jew and non-Jew alike. Because the redemption that we're praying for, as we all know, is not just the redemption of Israel, it's the redemption of all of mankind. And each and everyone of us can play a role. A critical role, a unique role that only we can play.

We know that everything that is happening on the global stage between the US and the Ukraine, between the Ukraine and Russia, between China and Iran, all of these seemingly massive, global, tectonic shifts are no more than chess pieces in God's Hands which He is arranging with great perfection to set the stage for the redemption that we know is at hand.

So in this moment, we stand together. We're in the Land of Israel, but you're all really in the Land with us, although physically, geographically, you may be in all of your countries around the world. In Israel, we're here and you're here by extension. And amid these shifts and the great darkness we're facing, we're being called to embody the light of the ner tamid. To clothe ourselves in the sacred garments of our national mission and to shine as a unified people. We're crushed like olives but we are radiant with HaShem's pure oil. The eyes of all of humanity is on us in the Land of Israel and really on all of you because you are a part of us. And the stakes could not be higher. We are not merely surviving, but we are being refined to illuminate the truth of HaShem's providence, just as Esther and Mordecai did in Shushan.

The Land adorns us, the Torah guides us, and the challenges that we're facing sanctify us. And now, it's up to each and every one of us, Jew and righteous of the nations alike to decide. Will we be the vessels through whom the great miracle unfolds? Or not? That's our choice. Will we be the vehicles through which the truth of God's orchestration is revealed to the world? Or not? The redemption isn't a distant dream. It's happening now. And we have the privilege of being a part of it.

And so, I want to bless us that we will arise to the challenge and illuminate the darkness with the pure light of truth and merit to see the full redemption of HaShem's glory in our days. Amen.

And now, I want to bless all of you with the blessing of the High Priest of Israel. Ok, so allow me to bless all of you. And for those of you who would like to share, to ask anything, I would love to hear from all of you and connect with you. I've been doing that this whole time, just looking at your faces, which I love to look at and strengthen me and give me such joy. And I love to look at your faces when I'm blessing all of you.

Aaronic blessing (Hebrew)

May HaShem bless you and protect you. May HaShem cause His countenance to shine upon you and favor you. May HaShem lift His Face to you and grant you peace. Amen.

