

Session 90  
Parashat Shemini  
27 March 2022

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nzoWf0qx56c>



Shalom my friends! Shalom, can you hear me? Give me a wave. Good to see all of you. Thank you, Hashem. Everything leading up to this fellowship just now...my computer wasn't working, nothing was connecting and then right, a minute ago, we're in. So that's great, and it is really good to see all of you. Brandon, Ardelle, good to see you, Akiva, Channah, Yehuda, wow...the whole family's around the table. I guess it would be breakfast in the exile right now. Either way, good to see everybody. And yep, I know what you're looking at. My face, but maybe not, maybe I'm just projecting. But a little facial hair update. I don't like it. Not one bit. I miss my beard, and while I do understand why I took it off, I now believe that my beard was more than just a mask that I was wearing. Because I actually feel different without it. There are all sorts of kabbalistic understandings of the spiritual functions of a beard and we know from Jewish history, of course, that sporting a beard is like a traditional Jewish practice. At least since the times of King David. And I hardly think that Avraham, Noach, Moshe were like pulling out their Norelco's before their morning prayer. Either way, I think this is the last time in my life that I will ever be without a beard. Period. I think it was worth it to take it off just for that understanding. And it's already starting to come back in. I'm talking about the beard a lot. I know, I feel it, I'm going to move on. But listen, however much I do regret it, a number of you sent me messages about feeling inspired by my impulsive shaving and that I followed my heart in taking it off. And I want to thank all of you for that because I was just sitting here like sulking in my beard, thinking that even if it just strengthened or raised up one of you for a moment, well it made the whole thing worth it.

Ok, so beard. Check! Covered. Now what are we up to? Nuclear war! That's right. And the Torah portion, of course. Beards, nuclear war, Torah portion...that's our fellowship for today. There is a lot to cover in the fellowship today. A lot is going on in Israel and the world. And as we know, there are no coincidences. It's all tied in together, which reminds me that now is a great time to ask you to please pull out your Bibles, your Tanach's because I really think we're going to use them for this portion together. If you have a Tanach, not just the five books, but all of it, that would actually be great because we're going to go into the book of Yechezkel...anyways, so please if you have that, that's great.

But before we get into any of that, let me introduce you, to a guy that you guys may have heard of, he's a dear friend of mine for many years, and my dog ate his chickens. So what else is there to say...Jeremy, Gimpel! Hi Jeremy! Turn off your mute thing.



There we go, hi! It's really good to see everyone. Thank you, Ari, I'm glad we're done talking about your facial hair. We're moving on. It's growing back. So, I wanted to share just something personal that happened to me this last week, after our fellowship. And, how it kind of stayed with me and then probably one of the most amazing discoveries that has happened in Israel and they're really interconnected, at least in my perspective.

Last week, I attended two separate weddings. And I had never been at a wedding before where there are children underneath the chuppah. Because usually children come after the marriage, not before. But there were two weddings that I was at, and at both weddings, there were children underneath the chuppah with the husband and the wife. The first chuppah was in Jerusalem and it was of a family with eight children, went through a whole long arduous journey process and eventually moved to Israel and converted to Judaism with their eight children. And so they converted to Judaism on Wednesday morning and then Wednesday evening they couldn't be together anymore because they're not married. And they had to have a chuppah as a newly wed couple. I'd never seen that before, I'd never encountered that before, but they already had eight children. So their eight children were under the chuppah with them and they were all just like on Wednesday, they were reborn as Jews and on Wednesday night they were married. And it was really, really beautiful. And I'd never seen anything like that before. And it just seemed like such like a very high level of integrity to like leave the comforts of the United States and venture out into the unknown, not knowing Hebrew. Eventually like after 15 years of a journey, just eventually brought them and their whole family all the way to Jerusalem. And that was like one amazing wedding with eight children under the chuppah.

The very next day, I went to another wedding. This time it was in the mountains of Judea in Tekoa. And it came from a good friend of mine who got divorced and he had four children. And then he eventually remarried after a couple years with another woman that got divorced and she also had four children. And then they were standing under the chuppah together, getting remarried, and they had eight children under their chuppah. And there was one part in particular that was just so beautiful because a part of the Jewish tradition is the wife walks down the aisle, goes to the chuppah and then walks around the husband seven times. The husband puts a physical ring on the wife's finger and the wife walks around the husband, creating a spiritual ring around him.

And this time, when the wife walked around the husband, she walked around all eight of their children because she's now taking spiritual responsibility for her children and his children now. And they're becoming one new family. And there were also eight children there. And I didn't know what to do with that. And I opened up the Torah portion and I see that the Torah portion is called Parashat Shemini, the Eighth day. I'm like, "Wow, that is just a spice cart in my life." I'm like, ok, we know that the number 6 represents nature. North, south, east and west, up and

down, that's it. Six is very natural. It's all dimensions of space. It is nature in its reality. The seventh, number 7 is holiness within nature. That's the Sabbath. The 8<sup>th</sup> day, that's already something that's beyond nature. Something that's just beyond the natural order. That's why the 8<sup>th</sup> day is the circumcision and the 8<sup>th</sup> day is the 8<sup>th</sup> day that the Tabernacle was finally erected and God's Presence filled the glory of the Tabernacle. And that's beyond the natural order of things.

And then, all of a sudden, this week, the greatest archeological discovery happened.



A 3,200-year-old amulet with the Hebrew name of God, found in Samaria. According to the archeologist, Dr. Scott Stripling, it's the oldest Hebrew text ever discovered. And there's pictures of it, on the front side, the back side and that's kind of like a side view right there. It was discovered on Mt. Ebal by Joshua's altar. And this is without a doubt, something that is beyond nature. It's

an absolute miracle that we actually found this tiny little amulet after 3,200 years, the 11<sup>th</sup> century BCE. That's exactly when the Israelites came in to settle in the Land of Israel.

And just to put this into perspective, you know, they're commanded in the book of Deuteronomy to go to Mt. Ebal and to go to Mt. Gerizim and order the blessings and the curses. And at the Mt. Ebal, on Joshua's altar, where they established that, is where they found this thing.



Now, just to make things there perfect, that is Joshua's altar on Mt. Ebal. That's an ariel view. There's one more ariel view there. Oh that's really beautiful. It's one of the most important archeological sites in all of Israel. And 99% of Israeli's and 99% of tourists never, ever get to go there because it's currently under military control. And in that military control, you actually have to make some sort of

agreement with the army to go there, and finally go there. So it's just most tour guides and most tour companies, they don't do that and they'll point to it from afar, but you don't actually ever get to see Joshua's altar, which is the oldest archeological site that's after the Jews come into the Land of Israel. That's the first thing that they do.

And the people that found this amulet, which is the oldest Hebrew text ever written, they're called the Associates for Biblical Research. And they come to Israel and they are a Christian ministry and they're doing archeology all around the Land. But just to put things into context, if we open up to Deuteronomy chapter 11, verse 26, the Israelites are commanded to do exactly that. And here's what it says:

"Behold, I set before you today a blessing and a curse: the blessing, if you obey the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you today; and the curse, if you do not obey the commandments of the Lord your God, but turn aside from the way which I command you today, to go after other gods which you have not known. Now it shall be, when the Lord your God has brought you into the land which you go to possess, that you shall put the blessing on Mount Gerizim and the curse on Mount Ebal."  
- Deuteronomy 11:26-29

come into the Land of Israel.

And so, Moses says, the first thing you're to do when you go into the Land of Israel is to establish this new covenant. Know - there's light, there's dark, there's blessing, there's curse. That's the fundamentals here. Follow in the ways of the Torah, you'll be blessed. If you don't follow in the ways of the Torah, there's going to be a curse. And that's the first thing the Israelites do when they

And so, we go and we continue. The researches said, it's two centimeters by two centimeters. Like it's a tiny little amulet. And it is like a curse tablet. They didn't know what to call it. Like perhaps at that time, if someone wanted to curse their enemy, they went to Mt. Eval and they would write down a curse to then curse their enemies or to curse one of the people that they wanted to get back at. You can actually read what it says on this tiny little amulet. Can we put the picture up? So this is what it says:

### Chiastic Parallelism on the Mt. Ebal Amulet

Cursed, cursed, cursed - cursed by the God **YHW**.

You will die cursed.

Cursed you will surely die.

Cursed by **YHW** - cursed, cursed, cursed.

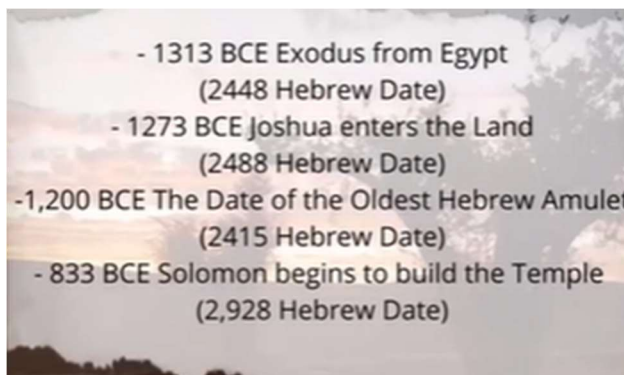
Note: The amulet contains 40 proto-alphabetic letters, 11 of which are aleph. In the 23-word English translation of the inscription, the word curse appears 10 times, and YHW appears twice.

And the researchers say, it goes back to 1,200 BCE. And so, that would make it centuries older than anything they've found up until now in Hebrew. Until now, you see the way it works is, if they don't have any proof, then it must not have happened because there's no proof of it. So the academic world has said, "Well, Hebrew is an evolution, the Name of God was an evolution, none of this ever happened." It's

500 years older than any other thing found that used the Name Hashem according to the professor in Haifa University, Professor Galil. And you know, that's the way the academic world works. If there's no physical proof, then the people just say, "Ahh...the Bible is just, I don't know, the Bible is like mythology. You can't really take it literally. And until we have proof, then those names evolved later, and they found 500 years that the Name of HaShem was written somewhere in the Land of Israel. And I guess that's when it must have been articulated."

And then they take the entire Torah and say, "Well, I guess the Torah then wasn't really written when it was supposed to be written. It was also written much later. And ahh...the story from Exodus, that just also must have been some kind of mythology." And that way, they just sort of like, destroy the entire Torah from its core.

But the Haifa University professor Gershom Galil said, “This is a text you find once every 1,000 years.” And so, if you can imagine that. Five hundred years later, I want to put it into context in just a little bit, but what you see is that the Israelites, they were literate, they wrote in a sophisticated chiastic structure here where it says, “Cursed, cursed, cursed. You will be cursed. You are cursed, cursed, cursed. That’s a structure that’s written all over the Tanach, so this is just a simple person that wrote a curse amulet. But what you see is that they were literate, they were writing in sophisticated chiastic structures. They lived, wrote and cursed in the Name of HaShem as Moshe revealed it according to the Torah in those times when they entered into the holy Land. And it’s like the facts that the Torah have been revealed, what it means is that all of the events of the Torah as they happened, could have very much been documented as they happened. I made this structure here so you could really put the timeline together. Can we put that screen up? So here we go.



One thousand, three hundred and thirteen BCE in the Jewish year, or the Hebrew year, it’s 2,448, that was the exodus from Egypt according to the Jewish tradition. And so then there’s 40 years in the desert. Then we go, Joshua enters into the Land at 1,273 BCE. This amulet was found right around the time of Joshua, a little bit after the time of Joshua. Once that mountain was established as the

Mountain of Curse, a couple of decades later, someone went up there to curse their enemy, maybe it was the Philistines, maybe it was the Amalekites, maybe it was their neighbor that ate their chicken, I don’t know, but they went up there to curse someone that they did not like, and about 1,200...just 50 years after Joshua enters into the Land, that is the date of the oldest Hebrew amulet.

Now just to put things into context, 833 is when Solomon begins to build the Temple in Jerusalem. And he says in chapter 6 that it was 480 years after the exodus from Egypt. So you can just... that’s in chapter 6 in 1<sup>st</sup> Kings, so you can just easily line it up. The exodus from Egypt, Joshua enters into the Land, there’s the amulet that’s found right after Joshua enters into the Land, and then you have Solomon building the Temple exactly 480 years after the exodus from Egypt.

Now imagine what the modern world has thought up until now. Five hundred years later, that’s well past Solomon. I mean you’re talking about sometime maybe around the King Josiah, maybe even later than Yeshyahu, I mean, it’s like until now, the academic world thought the Bible was written later, God’s Name was invented later, they had no idea. But now they found the first time God’s Name, Hashem, written just decades before the Torah was revealed at Sinai. As Joshua enters into the Land, you know, just 40 years later, and it’s unbelievable. Five

hundred years later, they found Hebrew, but how lucky are we. How fortunate we are that they found this little amulet. Just because they haven't found it yet doesn't mean it doesn't exist. And now, we see it does exist.

And all the events that happened in that time, it wasn't that it happened in the time of Ezra and then later they were writing, "Oh one time, there was this amazing story of the slaves in Egypt." No, no, no. The Torah was written in Hebrew in a chiastic structure a lot of times, and they had the ability...the simple people...they were literate, they were writing, and it all comes to its place in peace. And so, it's a miracle on so many levels that it lasted this long, that it didn't decompose, that somehow those archeologists did such a thorough job in finding something that's just this big, that we had the technology to use the lasers and the x-rays to even unveil what was written there.

And there's a war on truth in the world today. They would just like to disprove everything. And all of a sudden, reality reveals itself and Jerusalem is called the City of Truth. And all of this is happening as we start preparing for the exodus from Egypt. I mean this story is just breaking now. I'm sure it's going to eventually it's going to continue to spread. It's so marvelous and interesting. But we're talking about the exodus from Egypt, we're talking about the revelation at Sinai, the beginning of the Ten Commandments. Because if we actually date the writing of HaShem's Name in Hebrew all the way back to the times of Joshua, well then just 40 years earlier, we're talking about the Sinai revelation.

And it's one thing to say, "Oh, yeah, well...there was this thing that happened." But according to the Hebrew Bible, the Sinai revelation is the most important event in all of human history. It's when God revealed Himself, not to one person, not to a small group of people, but He shifted the entire trajectory of human consciousness, of human morality by revealing Himself to an entire nation. And that nation experienced what they experienced and that experience was passed down father to son, father to son from generation to generation. There is no other religion on earth that has such a claim. And now we have the writing to back it, which is so beautiful. And that is something that is beyond nature. That didn't have to happen. Natural state – yeah maybe we found something 500 years later somewhere under the earth in the rocks of this ancient, ancient Land. But we have the technology, and we had the dedicated archeologist that found it for us.

And for me, this has been a theme that has been recurring. There's a beautiful sentence in Hebrew that says – Hachol yavo elmechamo b'shalom. Hachol – everything. Yavo – will come. Elmechamo – to its place. B'shalom – in shalom, in peace, in completeness, in wholeness. A lot of times, when my friend got divorced, I was like, "Oy, he's divorced now. Oy, it's like the destruction of a Temple. He's going to be alone now. His kids are not going to have a mother." And then as I'm watching...wow! A new family has been reborn. And a beautiful family is now in the mountains of Judea. Hachol yavo elmechamo b'shalom. You see one family that they



kind of went off on their journey, all alone, no friends, no family. Just what are they going to do? And then hachol yavo elmechamo b'shalom. Sometimes I have some kids and they drive me nuts. And I just have to have faith and I'm started to see that as they get older – hachol yavo elmechamo b'shalom. Everything will come to its place in completeness, in wholeness, in shalom, in peace.

And so sometimes when there's that struggle or that doubt that's ahead of us...why did they only find HaShem's Name 500 years later, like into the times of like the end of the first Temple. Like, why is that? Hachol yavo elmechamo b'shalom. Everything is going to be revealed, the truth is reality and reality is a part of the oneness of HaShem. Hachol yavo elmechamo b'shalom. And so, as we're preparing for Pesach, and sometimes we feel maybe like there's an Egypt in our own lives, just know, everything will come to its place in shalom and there's always that number 8 that's kind of hovering around believers. Because there's the natural state, but then there's the number 8 that's beyond the natural state. And that's where believers live.

Ari

Jeremy, that was really, really beautiful. That really touched my heart. That was first of all, the weddings, the story about the archeologist, there was a lot of wisdom there. And for a guy that's sharing so much wisdom, you really should have a longer beard. Just being honest. It hit me as you're speaking, but you pull off the beard business pretty decent. But anyways, what a finding that was. You know there are times that I'm out here talking to HaShem and I have this feeling that...it's hard to explain, but like the God I'm speaking to is the same God that Avraham and Yitzchak and Ya'acov and our forefathers spoke to? I know that we know that obviously, but to like internalize it. Well a finding like that really like digs it in.

Anyways, the first wedding Jeremy spoke about, about the couple that converted – I wasn't there in person, but I did hear it broadcast on Yishai Fleisher's podcast, which I highly recommend. And as I listened to that podcast, I was driving and I was just so deeply touched that I started to cry. And just the joy that I heard in their voices. And as you know, Jews don't proselytize or seek to convince anyone to convert. We don't know who's supposed to be what. That's not our department, so on the contrary, we dissuade people. And it can be a very long and difficult process to convert. And so I just heard such joy and a sense of birth and arrival in their voices. I'm just so happy for them.

And the other wedding of the couple that you know, the ones that have four kids from each prior marriage, well that one really touched me as well. I was there in person, I was right up there. And there's something even more beautiful about the fixing of what's broken then there is about the creation of something brand new. And hence the mystical story of creation, right? God shines the light into the vessels and they shattered because they couldn't contain it and now we're elevating that light. But don't worry, I'm not going into the whole mystical thing.

There's going to be far less mysticism in this fellowship than any past. I had a little discussion with Jeremy about it because I really didn't know.

But you know, actually on that subject, I do want to say this. That after the last fellowship that I did, I asked you to share with me, you know, if you prefer that I really stick to the text of the Torah, in the verses, or if it's ok, if you appreciate it that I periodically venture into the world of kabbalah and abstract dimensions of the Torah. And I got a lot of feedback in there. And it was about 50/50. And so I didn't exactly know what to do with that. So, just I wanted to say that if you have any opinion on that, or anything else you want to share, please don't hold back. We want to hear from you. Because the truth is, there's no template for this fellowship, I don't think there's ever been anything like it. And we're creating it together, and we're community here. We're not just talking frontally here. So, we're in this together. So please, continue being open and honest and forthcoming about your feelings.

Anyways, so it's not hard to see HaShem's Hand in the fact that on the week of Parashat Shemini, literally translated as the Torah portion of 8, that there are two weddings, right here in Judea, in which there were 8 children under the chuppah. And that's just a little message from HaShem that He's with us and He's orchestrating everything, even what weddings the parshah takes place on. But as I was reading through the portion again, there were a few parallels that really just like shlepped into my heart, that I didn't even know why. And I had to do a lot of thinking about it. About what's happening more on the macro dimension, on the global level. Not only "what" is happening in the world, but also maybe "why" it's happening.

So, regarding the first thing that I want to talk about and I'm glad this is a safe place because I can't source this for you. It's not from the sages of Israel. It's just from my own intuition, my own very flawed mind, but it's from my heart. So I wanted to share with you and sort of work it through. And it's about the war in the Ukraine, right? Surprise, surprise. I don't know about you, but I'm still very much looking over there. I'm praying about what's happening over there. And I know that when things start going on for a few weeks, no matter how crazy a thing it may be, it somehow starts becoming normalized in many people's minds. And to some degree, it just becomes the way things are. Just another thing that's happening. I actually think it's part of mankind's ability to psychologically adapt. You know, we've seen it over the past few years of realities that we considered to be unimaginable science fiction become real and a part of day-to-day life. But I don't think that's what's happening with Russia and the Ukraine. It's not going away, Russia and the Ukraine.

And what I'm going to share isn't a prophecy and it's not even a prediction. It's just something that we'd be negligent not to look at or consider because it's a very real possibility. And that is that things could very, very quickly devolve into a nuclear war. Literally in the blink of an eye. As a matter of fact, the famous sage known as the Vilna Gaon who died, I think around 230 years ago, said that in the last war, the war of Gog U-Magog, it's going to last only 12 minutes.



Because of the weapons that they would have. So I'm not sure how to make any sense of that before the invention of the nuclear weapon, it's just worth thinking about. Anyways, this isn't just Ari talking, you know I try to keep up-to-date as much as I can from various news sources in Israel and the US, around the world, from the right, to the left also. And none of which I trust by the way. But one thing I have been seeing unfold more this past week than ever before is that with Russia becoming increasingly frustrated and humiliated in their war against Ukraine, people are really concerned that Putin may actually really use a nuclear weapon. And he's saying it and again he's really considering it. He's maintaining the right to use it.

And so anyway, here's a clip from a show. I don't know if you've heard about it. It's from the Bill Maher show, which is not rightwing, conservative by any means. He's a traditional liberal. He used to be like to the left, now he's like sort of conservative because the liberals have gone so far to the left. But he was just dashing Trump right before this discussion and then, this is a little excerpt of the discussion they had:

Bill Maher



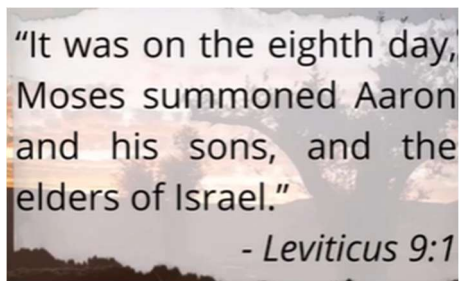
And knowing that every war game model that's ever been done, one, you get one escalation, you get one tactical nuke that you respond with one. It very quickly turns out to be in five hours, there's 90 million people dead. So it's like, the escalation ladder ramps out very fast in that situation, so figuring out what to do about that...how to posture on it, is a really, really hard question.

They do these war game scenarios which is all we ever do because we haven't actually had a nuclear war since 1945, we haven't dropped any nuclear weapons. When they do them, there's a moment in the scenario, the first thing happens, right? Russia launches, let's say, one tactical nuke. At that moment, there's a choice to make. Do you respond with a nuclear commensurate single tactical nuclear warhead back? Or do you stay conventional. In most of the simulations, if you choose nuclear, you end up with 100 million people dead very fast. Because of the way that the systems are built to escalate. And so for a lot of people, you might...it might be the wrong political answer, but that is the gate. It's that first response. And once you go through one gate or the other, you're on the path very quickly towards, not inevitable, but very likely global devastation or not. And again, it's one of the trickiest things. When the government runs these tests, they say, they almost also end up with total global nuclear war. There's no...it's the way that things are built. They're built to kill.

Ari

And it's crazy. It just takes one guy and 90 million people. I mean, it's just...and why do I show you this video? To show that the fear is very mainstream. It's very real. There hasn't been a heightened nuclear threat like this since the Cuban missile crisis in 1962. And so, with the nuclear threat facing all of mankind, sort of hovering in the background, there were parts of the

Torah portion that really spoke to me powerfully. So let's open up to the Torah portion and start at the beginning, right?



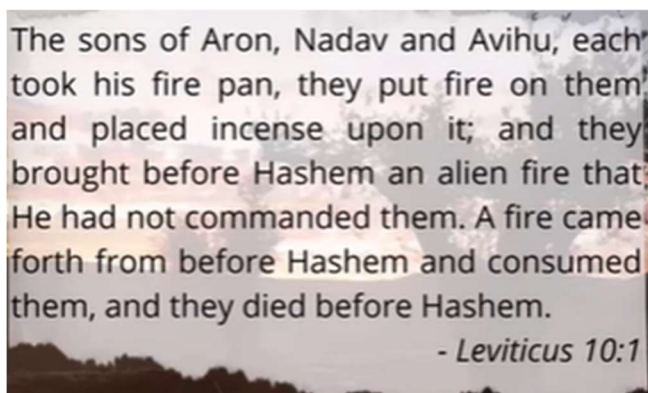
Now, this was a big moment. Perhaps one of the biggest moments in Jewish history. And we've discussed in past fellowships that since the golden calf, the Jewish people have really been licking their wounds, not only like physically but emotionally. Many weren't sure that HaShem was really with them anymore. Or that they even deserved to have HaShem with them anymore. And you know, it was just such a betrayal. And not only were they about to see that HaShem was indeed with them, but they were able to be a part of it. You know, it wasn't like the free gift that they received up until now from the ten plagues and the parting of the sea to the manna and the cloud and the fire that sort of guided them through the desert. That was all just free gifts which they recognized how undeserving they were.

But now, they were able to build the Tabernacle. They were able to build a home for HaShem in the lowest of the physical realms. And so there was this tremendous suspense and anticipation as Aaron and his sons, the Kohanim, they were doing rehearsals called milluim. It's actually called milluim, the same word that's used for military reserve exercises today. And on the 8<sup>th</sup> day, it was going to be the real thing. The nation would behold Hashem's glory as He would miraculously consume the sacrifices from heaven in the eyes of all of Israel. And indeed, that is exactly what happened. Aaron the High Priest, he offered a calf as an offering for himself, which is clearly an illusion for the role that he played in the golden calf, that he arguably never forgave himself for. Even though we spoke in past fellowships and sort of understood why he had to do that.

And then, in the next verse, in verse 3 in chapter 9, Hashem tells him to take a he goat for a sin offering, which the sages of Israel say was an atonement for the sale of Joseph, right? Why the sale of Joseph? Because after they sold Joseph, the brothers, rather than repenting or taking responsibility, they slaughtered a he-goat and dipped his tunic in the blood in order to lay the groundwork for the lie they would tell their father that Joseph was devoured by a wild animal. Why even share this? The first offering would be to clear the slate. To you know, put it all on the table and put past transgressions behind them, transgressions between the nation and HaShem as well as transgressions between the nation and each other. All of those things needed to be repented for and atoned for. And so, this was such an exhilarating opportunity to turn over a new leaf and start the relation with Hashem anew. And not only can they now see definitively that they've been forgiven, but they have the opportunity to be partners in creation with HaShem, building a dwelling place for HaShem in the world and offering sacrifices from their hearts in return for the overwhelming generosity and kindness that Hashem had bestowed upon them, pretty much until that point.

And so, that new dimension of relationship with HaShem, that is why the dedication of the Tabernacle had to be done on the 8<sup>th</sup> day. Jeremy sort of touched on this before, but you know we've discussed it in past fellowships in Shemini as well. The 8<sup>th</sup> night of Chanukah, we talked about that, the 8<sup>th</sup> night of Chanukah – Shemini Atzeret, the 8<sup>th</sup> day of Sukkot. That the number 8 represents something very unique. It represents the infusion of the transcendent within the finite. Right? We've gone into this before so I won't go into it too much, but the number 7 in the Torah follows the same model, really, like Shabbat. There are 6 days of the mundane and then the 7<sup>th</sup> day is holiness. And that's spiritual rest. The 7<sup>th</sup> day is spiritual, it's the opposite of the 6 days before it.

And so what's the 8<sup>th</sup> day? The 8<sup>th</sup> day encompasses and integrates the first 6 days of the mundane and the 7<sup>th</sup> day of holiness. It integrates them together. Instead of remaining in opposite dimensions and domains, it sort of, it holistically fuses them together. Right? The Mishkan had to be inaugurated on the 8<sup>th</sup> day because...you know Rabbi Simon Jacobson, he put it so beautifully. He said that the role of the Mishkan was to make the infinite reality of HaShem an indwelling Presence in the physical world. So that's why it had to be done on the 8<sup>th</sup> day. And so, the inauguration began. And as we've learned before, the Sefirot teaches that fire, right? The fire came down like a pillar from heaven to earth. That it went directly into the Holy of Holies and from there it emanated out onto the altars causing the incense and the sacrificial parts to go up in a pillar of smoke, back up to the heavens. But then it happens, the big moment. Nadav and Avihu, Aaron's sons, they grab their fire pans and offer an alien fire, a strange fire. They offered an offering to HaShem that He had not requested or instructed. Let's look inside, chapter 10, verse 1:



The sons of Aron, Nadav and Avihu, each took his fire pan, they put fire on them and placed incense upon it; and they brought before Hashem an alien fire that He had not commanded them. A fire came forth from before Hashem and consumed them, and they died before Hashem.

- Leviticus 10:1

So just imagine, like in this move of impulsive love and inspiration, they violated the very sensitive spiritual laws that HaShem had created and as a result, they were consumed by Divine fire causing their souls to immediately return to their source.

Which brings me back to Vladimir Putin and the very real threat of global nuclear war facing mankind. Because you see nukes are an entirely different type of weapon. Now if I'm wrong on any of the details here, let me know. I'm just using the knowledge that I have. But even the Moab, you remember the mother of all bombs? I first heard about this when Trump dropped it near a Syrian airport a number of years ago. Anyway, even that cannot compare, right? It's a totally different thing, it's a totally different technology. And I'm not a weapons specialist, but I know enough to know that normal bombs contain explosives and the more explosives, the

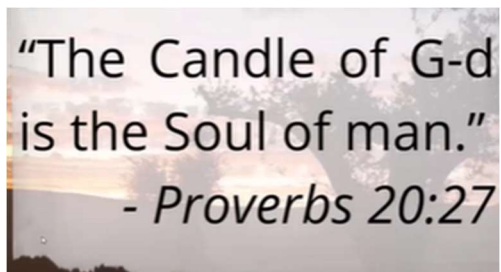
bigger the bomb. But nuclear weapons are the only weapon that exponentially expanded the unimaginable destructive power possible based merely on the discovery of three letters and a number, right? What are those?  $E=MC^2$ . Energy equals matter times the speed of light squared, which essentially means energy equals matter. Meaning that with the realization that matter is just another form of energy, essentially, it's concealed energy, that wasn't only an abstract, theoretical epiphany, right? By converting matter into its component energy equivalent, this unimaginable energy is released which can destroy the world. Many hundreds of times over based on just the nuclear weapons in existence between the US and Russia alone.

So the physical universe was created with scientific laws, the laws of physics. And the successful manipulation of those laws can have cosmically unimaginable results. Results so profound that they actually bridge the gap from the physical realm to the spiritual realm, I guess depending on how you define it. You know the spiritual realm has its own laws and realities as well. The spiritual world is not just cupids flying around with bows and arrows. The spiritual world has its own systems which can be controlled and manipulated as well. And just as the nuclear weapon is the weapon interface between the world of matter and the world of energy, between the material and spiritual world to some degree, when Nadav and Avihu entered the inner court yard of the Tabernacle, they were the spiritual equivalent of enriched uranium. Many of the sages explain that what happened to them wasn't even a punishment. It was merely the result of a misallocation of spiritual powers and energies in a very high stakes situation. Are you guys with me so far?

Ok. So Rabbi Jacobson shares this insight into exactly these spiritual laws that he learned from the Lubavitcher Rebbe. And I'll try to keep this tight because we have a lot to cover. And it's a little bit mystical. But I think when you hear it, you'll agree that it's self-evidently true. So he explains that there are two forces which allow for the animation of the physical body by the soul. And these forces allow for these two seemingly, antithetically, opposite elements. The Divine soul, which is a piece of God, Himself so to say...and the body which is made of dirt. So these forces allow for the harmonious coexistence and these opposite forces to inhabit the body at the very same time.

And these two forces within the soul are called ratzo v'shov. Ratzo, coming from the idea of striving, of seeking, of yearning. And shov is the opposite, right? The return, the grounding, the settling, it's sort of like...what's the word? Pulsating, up and down, it's going up, it's like the idea of breathing. Inhaling and exhaling. That force of ratzo is the part of the soul that is always striving higher. That is seeking to connect to the Creator and is constantly yearning to merge with HaShem. It's constantly pulled upwards like a magnetic force. And the shov, is the force that wants to stay alive in this world. To actualize the potential that's acquired right after the ratzo brings us higher and closer to HaShem, we bring that back down and we can actualize it. It wants to stay in the body and to elevate the body. So, if you follow what I described here

and I wouldn't blame you if you didn't, but if you did, it could forever change the way that you read the verse in Proverbs that begins with the words:

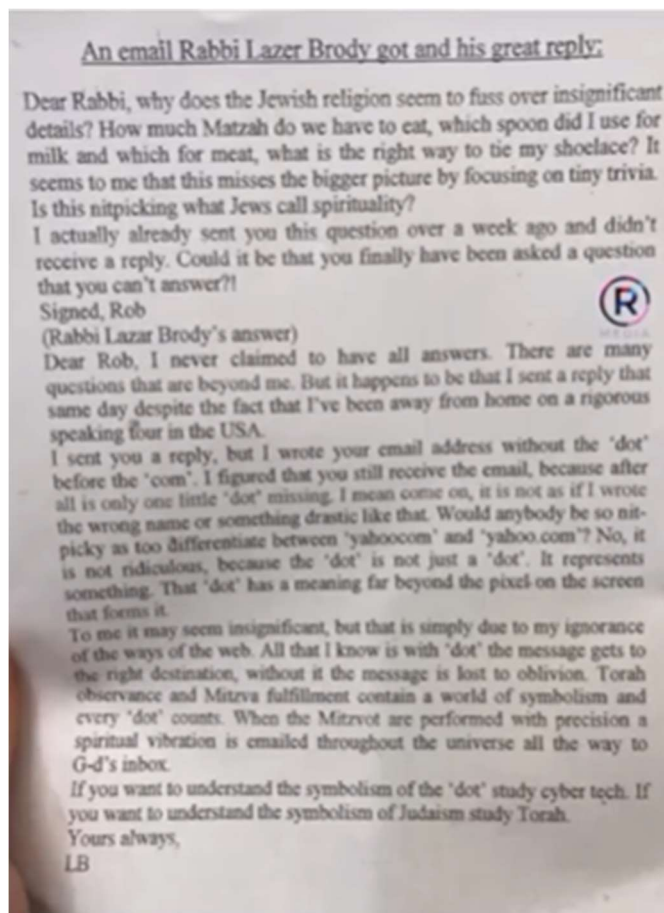


What does that mean? The candle of God is the soul of man. So visualize a candle. The wick, as long as it remains lit, it's like locked in this dance. On the one hand, it's striving upwards, it's like drawn to the source above. Well at the same time, it's flickering down as well. It's cleaving to the wick for dear life and drinking the oil that sustains its very existence. That allows it to

exist as a differentiated unique flame. And it's the tension between those two impulses to ascend, yet to exist. It's the tension between the ratzo and the shov that produces that light.

And so that's the same with the soul of man. The yearning to ascend and come close to God, but at the same time, to remain connected to the body to remain alive, that's the balance. And at that moment of nuclear, spiritual forces at play, the ratzo within the souls of Nadav and Avihu, the part of them that so yearned to transcend and cleave to HaShem and cleave to their Maker, that yearning of the ratzo was so great that they just gave in to it. And by surrendering to that impulse, it created an imbalance. And the ratzo simply overpowered their shov. And their souls were literally like pulled up and out. Out of their bodies like the flame of a candle that's being sucked up and extinguished by a vacuum.

So I actually sent a...you know Rabbi Lazer Brody? He's a dear friend and a rabbi and someone sent him a question. And I was forwarded the exchange. And I wanted to share it with you because I think it actually expresses this sensitivity of the spiritual powers from a different perspective. So he writes:



How good is that? Right? That was really nice. And that sort of brings it through because the bottom line is in the spiritual realm, just like in the physical realm. Even the smallest minutiae can have unimaginable consequences.

But I don't think that the parallels end there, and I was conflicted about...I don't know if we have time to go into this whole thing. Can I go a few minutes over? Give me thumbs up if that's ok. Ok, I'm getting enough thumbs up that I'm gonna do it anyways. Anyways, what motivated Nadav and Avihu? What motivated them, not only to put their lives in jeopardy, but to actually surrender their lives knowingly, right? Because the sages tell us that they actually did sense their own deaths approaching, but they didn't care. That is how great their hunger was to cleave to HaShem. So, what was their motivation essentially? They were hungry for a Divine connection in a way that is I think probably beyond what we can imagine. Maybe some of you actually can, but for me, that's just a level, it's hard for me to wrap my mind around. And I think it's impossible for us to even imagine the degree of desire and yearning that they were experiencing. I mean the spiritual forces of play are far beyond what we've ever experienced in the world.

And I think the reason for that, is because of the current spiritual state of mankind. We are all tamei. We are all ritually impure. There isn't even one of us who isn't. This is the condition of mankind. I'm talking about the ideas of tamei and tahor. Does anyone in the fellowship recognize these concepts? We've touched on them before. Do you recognize the ideas we're talking about? It takes up a lot of the Torah. We'll have a lot of opportunities to really unpack what tamei means. It means to really, to be ritually impure. But it's important to understand



that it's not evil, per se. You can become ritually impure even if you've done nothing wrong. It's just part of life many times. For example, after a woman menstruates or gives birth, or if you even touched a dead body. There are volumes and volumes elaborating on what the laws of purity and impurity really mean.

But in short, you know if you rearrange the letters of tamei, you get atum, which means "sealed off" or "blocked off" from spiritual light. The impurity prevents you from acquiring the spiritual sensitivity and closeness to HaShem. It's like a callousness around the soul. You know, when I was at that wedding that Jeremy spoke about, the wedding where they were getting remarried and it was just so beautiful? I turned to a friend of mine who's also very close to the groom, and I said, "How could you not be crying right now?" And he just shrugged his shoulders and said, "I don't know, I think I'm just dead inside." And you know I think compared to the unimaginable joy and spiritual invigoration for which our souls have the potential of experiencing, I think we're all dead inside to some degree.

Which is why this Shabbat we took out another Torah scroll and read a very special portion of the Torah from the book of Numbers, chapter 19 verses 1 through 22. I was actually in the House of Prayer in the synagogue at the farm here on the mountain. And we only have one kosher Torah scroll. So between the Torah reading and the added reading, we had to actually sort of roll through the Torah, through an entire book. Anyways, the portion is called Parashat Parah, and it's the portion about the red heifer, that one inexplicable law, right? That even the wisest King Solomon didn't understand. That when we burn this red cow and mix its ashes in water and then the Kohen sprinkles it upon the nation with a bundle of hyssop, it just sounds crazy. For some reason, the nation becomes pure and the Kohen becomes impure. That's just the paradigm example that we don't understand. But we don't understand really any of it. We don't understand these things, but the scientific laws of the spiritual world, there is a reason for it. And our sages say actually, that that is part of what really purifies us is the very fact that we need to humble ourselves in performing these actions that no one on earth can understand. To a certain degree that humility itself is purifying. But I think more, maybe on a more symbolic level. But the red heifer is anything but symbolic. It's very real. Here's actually a video, courtesy of the Temple Institute.

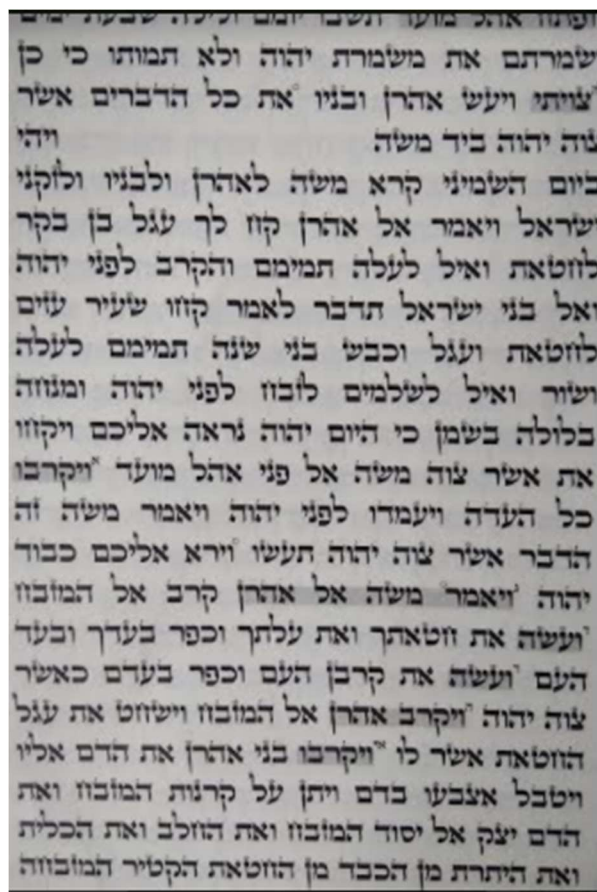


(video) We have some exciting new footage that we have just received of a brand-new red heifer that was born in the United States of America. (end)



Ok, to be fair, that video was from seven years ago, but the life expectancy of a cow is 20 years, so it's not even halfway through. And either way, either way, you should know that there are teams of Jews who travel the world seeking the red heifer – this pure and unblemished red heifer that's never been worked, or yoked. Because finding a kosher red heifer that can be sacrificed to the Temple and used to purify the Jewish people is a sign that the Temple itself is not far behind. And while these teams are very secretive, I'm telling you, I know from not the inside, but outside the inside...I've heard from very reliable sources that they have secured a red heifer that is alive now. In addition to that one, that's just in an undisclosed location that was not shared with me.

Anyways, so we read about this portion on this Shabbat, and our sages say that even just by hearing the words, we achieve some level of cleansing and purification. Which based on what we've learned in the fellowship up until now, is really not difficult to understand the power of words. So with your permission and your blessing, I thought I would read the beginning of the portion to all of you so you could hear it in the original Hebrew. Is that cool? Do I have your blessings? Ok.



(Ari sings in Hebrew) There's no intellectual reason I were to read words to you that you don't understand, but I feel like the words of the Torah pierce directly to the soul which brings us to, you know, to a further understanding and wisdom from the Haftarah, that we read for this special Shabbat. A Haftarah that I really feel like it really brings it all together. So please, open your Tanakh, this is the part that may take us a little overtime, but that's ok. Open to the book of Yechezkel, to Ezekiel, chapter 36, verses 16 to 38. Now, it's just such a powerful portion that I thought we just needed to read it together. It's just so rich. Maybe we won't read to the very end, but let's start:

Ezekiel chapter 36, verse 16: The word of HaShem came to me saying, “Ben Adam, the house of Israel dwell on their land and contaminate it by their way and by their actions like the contamination of a menstruous woman was their way before me. So I poured my anger upon them because of the blood that they poured upon the earth and they defiled it with their idols, so I scattered them among the nations and they were dispersed among the lands. According to their ways and their doings did I judge them. And they came to the nations to which they came and they desecrated my Holy Name when it was said of them, ‘These are Hashem’s people, but they departed His Land?’ But I pitied my Holy Name that the House of Israel desecrated among the nations to which they came. Therefore, say to the House of Israel, ‘Thus says my Lord HaShem Elohim, not for your sake do I act, O House of Israel, but for my Holy Name that you have desecrated among the nations to which you came, and I will sanctify My great Name that was desecrated among the nations that you desecrated among them. Then the nations shall know that I am HaShem,’” the words of my Lord HaShem Elohim, “When I become sanctified through you in their sight. And I shall take you from the nations and gather you in from all the countries, and I shall bring you to your Land. And I shall sprinkle pure water upon you. That you be cleansed from all your contamination, from all your filth, I will cleanse you, and I shall give you a new heart, and a new spirit I shall put within you. I shall remove the heart of stone from your flesh, and I shall give you a heart of flesh. And my spirit shall I put within you and I shall cause you to go by my decrees and guard My laws and perform them. And you shall dwell on the Land that I gave your fathers and you shall be to Me a people and I shall be to you a God. And I shall save you from all your contaminations, and I shall summon the grain and increase it. And I shall not place famine upon you and I shall increase the fruit of the tree and the produce of the field so that you no longer accept the shame and hunger among the nations. Then you will remember your evil ways and your doings that were not good. And you shall loathe yourselves in your sight because of your sins and your abominations. Not for your sake do I act, the Word of HaShem, let it be known to you, be ashamed and humiliated because of your ways, O House of Israel.” Thus says my Lord HaShem Elohim, “On the day when I cleanse you from all your sins and cause the cities to be inhabited and the ruins to be built. And the desolate lands to be tilled instead of being desolate in the eyes of every passerby. Then they shall say, ‘This very land was desolate has become a Garden of Eden. And the cities that were destroyed and were desolate and ruined shall be fortified and inhabited. And the nations that will remain around you will know that I am Hashem. I will have rebuilt the ruins, replanted the wasteland, I HaShem have spoken and acted.”

I know that was a lot, but what could I leave out from that? I should be reading that every day because in a lot of ways, it’s just the story of our return to this mountain, right? We can see from this portion what is happening now in the world. And we can understand the raw power built into the rituals that Nadav and Avihu were performing in the Tabernacle. We see the prophet telling us that the exile in itself is a desecration of God’s Name. That’s why it’s so difficult for me to understand these otherwise pious, religious Jews that just sit there in the

exile, and by their very existence there...remaining there, they are voluntarily perpetuating one of the worst desecrations of God's Name in the last thousands of years.

And we learned that the ingathering of the exiles is the opposite of that desecration, it is a sanctification of His Name. And we see that happening right now, even from the Ukraine, right? The Jews flooding home from the Ukraine. And then we see very clearly that once these waters are sprinkled upon us, then Hashem will give us a new heart and a new spirit. That He shall remove from within us a heart of stone and place within us a heart of flesh. And I used to think that this is going to happen in one mass revealed miracle. But I now know that it's a gradual process. We can see from reading through those verses that it's a gradual process because so many of it is happening already now. I see it, I experience it with my eyes every single day what's happening out here. I see it happening on the mountain, right? For those of you who have been here, you know what I'm talking about. People come out here that are just so powerfully moved and brought to tears. And I'm not just talking about religious people by any means. I'm talking about people who you would never think would have a spiritual encounter. People that by their own admission are so spiritually numb that they believe that they're unreachable. And I've seen these holy mountains out here just pierce the calluses around their hearts in ways that are just simply indescribable. And it has nothing to do with me, it has to do with being back in the Land, in the hills of Judea.

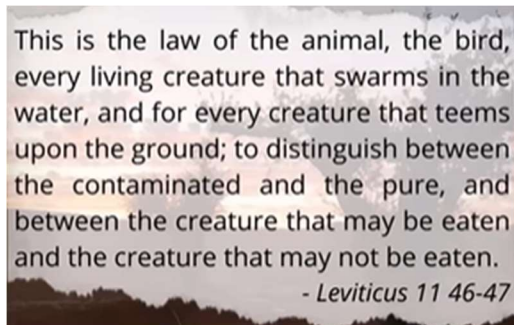
And I just see this overwhelming spiritual thirst in the world, not even among the Jews here in Israel. And not only among all of you, right? You are the holiest, right? But throughout the world. Sometimes I think it's actually difficult to see and identify because of the strange and often counter-intuitive way that this hunger manifests itself. But there's no question that the hunger is there. So, for example, maybe this crazy desire to blur the distinction between the genders, right? For example, you know I don't know Tabitha, could you put up that picture of the swimmers?



Anyways, I don't know if you know what I'm talking about, but it is insane as it looks, it comes from that same place, right? All the way to the left, that is a transgender swimmer that competed and won the gold medal against the three girls on the right. It just looks so crazy. Like how do you make sense of that? But you know as crazy as it looks, maybe it

comes from that same place of seeking to make some sort of contact with the source of unity behind everything and to blur all the distinctions of this world.

But you know, just like we learned in this week's Torah portion, not only from Nadav and Avihu who sought to erase distinctions and boundaries in a way that was not desired by Hashem, but also from the detailed and intricate lists of what is considered kosher and what is not kosher – the birds, the fish, the animals...Hashem tells us in the last verse of the whole portion why there are all of these laws. So Leviticus, chapter 11, verses 46 and 47:



The operative word there is “distinction.” God desires us to honor the distinctions that He has made, both in the spiritual world and in the physical world in the way which He desires. Not in the way which we may desire, or we would like to see or we think is right.

And that is where so many people in their spiritual hunger are just going astray. But, you know, the more I think about it, I just think that we can still flex that muscle of compassion and recognize that the hunger, deep in the hearts of mankind to come close to HaShem, to pierce the multiplicity of the world and connect with the source. Even if they don't know it and they don't think it and they're claiming the opposite, there is that hunger in their hearts which they all feel. And in my mind, that is ultimately what's the most important thing right now. Because when we look at entire swaths of the world as evil and we hate them in our hearts, we too, we get locked in this in the same prism of impurities and illusions of this world, we're locked in there right with them. But if we look at our fellow men, and we judge them with the benefit of the doubt, if we fill our hearts with love and compassion for all of mankind, that's what I believe will hasten the redemption that we're praying for so much. Because at this point, let's face it, the wheels of history are turning, right? There are powers in this world that we have no control over. Hashem is at the steering wheel right now. The only true power that we really have to influence the direction of things is the power of prayer.

And I'm so excited to share this with you. The famous Chasidic master, right? The Ba'al Shem Tov, so he shares a very simple teaching about Nadav and Avihu that I really think can transform your prayer experience. So you ready for this? He teaches that it is only...this is a quote...it is only out of a great kindness on the part of the Almighty that one remains alive after prayer. Meaning that if we really understood the power of our prayers, and when we turn our hearts to God, and we speak to Him, we are really standing before the Creator of the world. And if the laws of nature were not overruled, what happened to Nadav and Avihu when they brought their offerings, what happened to us, right, when we turned wholeheartedly to HaShem, we would just be inhaled by the source of our essence, of our being. And so, to me, keeping that in mind, just the absolute raw nuclear power of our prayer, it's just very empowering. And so that being said, let's turn to HaShem together in a prayer.

HaShem, we're standing before You today, the holy members of this fellowship in Israel, all around the world. Different backgrounds, different faiths, but we are all yearning for You. We're here together at this moment because we want to cleave to You with all of our hearts. But the world is shaking right now. The world is in a very precarious situation. We seem to be on the verge of self-destruction and unimaginable pain and death. Please, Hashem, we are just all so lost. Please bring back Your people Israel to our Land in a merciful way. Please sprinkle us with the holy pure waters of the red heifer and purify us and replace our hearts of stone with hearts of flesh so that we may finally be compelled to shine the light that You shine upon us to all of mankind. And may we do so from the holy Temple in Yerushalyim. There's just so much pain and death and we're on the verge of greater destruction than we have ever seen with our nuclear swords being unsheathed. Please Hashem, bring redemption to the world and fill our hearts with a love for You and a love for each other. That we can beat these nuclear swords into plowshares, and we will never know war again.

And with that my friends, I'm going to bring the fellowship to a conclusion. And I want to bless all of you. With a great honor, it's such a great honor for me to bless you with the Cohanic prayer. That I'm not a Cohen as you know, but we are an "am Cohanim," a nation of priests and that is our role. So please, one day soon, may the Cohanim be blessing all of mankind with this prayer from the top of Mount Moriah in Jerusalem. But until then:

Aaronic blessing (Hebrew)

May HaShem bless and protect you. May HaShem make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you. May Hashem lift up His countenance to you and give you peace.

Shalom, my friends. Reach out, stay in touch, we need to stay connected. Love you all very much.