

Session 181

Metzora - Gaza has gone Global on the Eve of Passover – What's Next?

21 April 2024

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GhNLzj1Dm8>

Jeremy

Shalom everybody, welcome to the Land of Israel Fellowship. I'm sorry, we're having some technical difficulties here. I don't think times could be any crazier. We're like cleaning for Pesach, the war has gone global, our house is not yet fully ready. Tehila is working, we're all coming together here. It's just in perfect timing. I guess everything is just the way it's meant to be. It's lovely to see you all. I'm so happy we got a chance to gather together one more time before Pesach. Ari is a little bit under the weather. I know that he's working very hard. But we're going to get to him in just a little bit. So we have the full crew on, special Passover preparation. But before we get going, I just want to take this opportunity. Because in some ways, this is the end of the year, and we're about to start a new year.

And so, I want to take this moment, the last moments before we go into Pesach because it feels to me that this Pesach is going to be one of those corners that we turn on this journey. It just feels like Pesach is the time when the people of Israel were redeemed and the sages of Israel say that Passover is an auspicious time for the last generation to be redeemed. And it just seems like everything is falling into place. And so with all of that happening, there is nothing that I would rather do than call out to God and pray together. Because I've been looking for a Fellowship like the Land of Israel Fellowship. And there's nothing like it anywhere in the world. So we're the only ones. We are the only people that gather together every week from all around the world, from so many different backgrounds in order to learn together, to pray together, and so what an example we are setting for future generations. So, to have that opportunity to pray right before Pesach, I don't want to miss that.

So from this place, like one man with one heart, with one Land and one promise. HaShem, Master of the world, we've come here today to prepare for Pesach. Pesach is the beginning, Pesach is the end, everything that we do is to remember our redemption and salvation on Pesach. HaShem prepare us for our redemption and our salvation now. Every week our Fellowship gathers together from around the world. We dedicate this time to You. We want to connect what we know in our heads and allow it to go all the way into our hearts and expressed in our lives. From tens to hundreds, now our Fellowship has grown to thousands of people from the four corners of the world that are seeking You, that are seeking Your Torah, that are coming together through the Land of Israel. And every week we take another step on our journey toward Jerusalem, uniting together. We've all chosen to attach our destinies to Israel, to stand up for the truth, to stand together for Your people, to stand together for Your Land, and to stand together for Your promise. HaShem, the war in Israel now it's gone global. At any moment, the entire world can be changed and history as we know it can enter into a totally new era. Prepare

us for that moment. We know it can happen at the blink of an eye. Help us prepare for that great day because we all see that it's coming. Send us a leader, like Moshe. Take us out of slavery and bring us into the Promised Land. That's the prayer on all of our hearts. Send us the leader, let him rise up from among our people and lead us to a new and rebuilt Jerusalem. I'shanah haba'ah Yerushalyim. Amen

Alright my friends, so before we kick it off, I see that Ari is on the move, he's always on the move. He's never going to let us down. Wherever he is, he's going to find a way. Ari? I want to pass this over to you because I see that you're going somewhere. It looks important, but I want you to just say what's on your heart and wish us a blessing for Pesach.

Ari

Can you hear me? Yeah, great, ok. So I'm really grateful to hear that I have a voice because these are the first words that I've said in many hours. I'm trying to save my voice for the Seder night so I can run the Seder, the Passover Seder for my family. And I'm losing my voice, but I couldn't allow this opportunity to go by without sharing my heart with the Fellowship and seeing all of you and blessing all of you.

So, yeah, you know this is a very pivotal Pesach, like Jeremy said. I think everybody is feeling it, even people that are very not spiritual, feeling like something is coming into fruition, something is being born right now. And so, I want to talk for a second just about idolatry. People would look, I think nowadays, we tend to over-simplify idolatry and look at idol worshipers as like, silly, backwards, and primitive people. But it really isn't true.

You know the book of Kings actually referred to Solomon's wisdom, that it was even greater than that of the Egyptians, who we know were like top-notch idolaters. They were like the idolaters of idolaters, that's what Egypt was – was a nation of idolatry. And Solomon's wisdom was even greater than the Egyptians. So the sages teach that the Egyptian priests and sorcerers had a very powerful ability to control nature. And to affect certain outcomes, to produce certain outcomes. And through whether it was astrology or other methodologies, they really could control much of the world. A good example was, when Moses was born for example, they foresaw that the Savior for Israel would be born. And so they ordered all the Jewish male babies to be cast into the Nile because of their ability to see through astrology what was indeed the truth of what was happening. And they said, "We can control this, we can affect this, we can decree that the newborn babies are thrown into the Nile." That was part of their control. That control thing was their idolatry.

And if we look at our own lives, and our quest to control, there's a lot of that in there, too. At least I can speak for me. There's a lot of that idolatry in there also. That's why in the book of Jeremiah, the nation of Israel was spoken to, was spoken about with love and sentimentality, regarding the exodus from Egypt, when they surrendered control. They trusted in HaShem,

they went into the desert, they had no idea where their next meal was coming from. They had no idea going into this empty, barren desert how they could possibly survive how they would live. And they went with faith. What does HaShem say through the prophets? He says:

I remember the kindness of your youth, the love of your betrothal, you going after Me into a land, into a desert, in an unsown land.

And so I want to bless all of you, I want to bless all of us that this Passover, we're really able to receive the gift of freedom, of real true freedom. That we should merit the power of not thinking or worrying about the future, and being able to enjoy that lack of worry. Like truly free people, that's what true freedom is. To let go, free of the need to control, free of the illusion that we can control and when we surrender that control, we allow God to truly take the reign of our lives on a personal level, on a national level, on a global level.

We all know that Israel and the entire world, we're on the cusp of very tumultuous and unstable. If we're just like honest, scary times. And this Passover, may we be able to really infuse that pure faith and trust that the Israelites had during the exodus from Egypt. And may that enter our hearts because this is a time auspicious for that. The spiritual energy is lending itself, is allowing itself, there's an opening for quantum levels of growth on this front, on the level of trust and faith and surrender of control. So may we merit to enjoy Passover of that exact surrender and faith and trust. And may we follow HaShem into an unsown Land. The Land of Israel! We are in the times of redemption, the Land of redemption is what we are approaching right now. And so I bless all of you, I love all of you and may we all be celebrating new year in rebuilt Jerusalem, Amen.

Jeremy

Amen, thank you, Ari, thank you for coming on. I know that that was not easy with your throat, that was absolutely beautiful. I love your constant true integration of Torah principles into our lives. It's not just talking about theology or idolatry. It's like, what does that actually mean in our own lives? We just want to control it, and if we just let go and let God, that's when real redemption happens. I guess it's really what symbolized the march into the desert. That was the demand. Walking into the desert and having no idea where the water's going to come from, where the food's going to come from, how they're going to find shelter. And it is just to walk knowing that we don't have any control and that HaShem runs the world.

And my personal avodah, my service is constantly trying to learn the Torah, look at what's happening around the world and connect the dots. Because I think that's what makes the Torah divine. It's a living Word. Somehow, mysteriously, the holidays, the Torah itself speaks directly to our existence, even though we're 3,000 years after that story occurred. There's patterns in time, there is just certain realities that human nature hasn't changed, humans haven't changed, Divine wisdom transcends all time and all spaces. And if we can tap into that Divine wisdom

and then play it out in our lifetime, then we've cracked the code of how to live with God in our lives and how to be blessed.

And so, I'm looking at America now because America is the Egypt of our generation. Egypt was the super-power of that time, it was the center of civilization, it was the highest technology. Until today, people are stunned at the pyramids. The people say that with all of the tractors and all of the heavy equipment, it would not be possible to build the pyramids as they were built now in one lifetime. I mean, you think about just the amazing reality, the wisdom, and the ancient...I don't know, there's a certain like internal wisdom that the ancient Egyptians possessed. And they were the center of civilization.

The United States today is the same, it's the largest economy, it's the most innovative country, it's Wall Street, it's Hollywood, it's culture, it's music, it's everything. And so, right now, and it's not a coincidence, the largest Jewish population in the world, outside of Israel is in the United States of America. And I believe that America received the blessing to be the greatest and most prosperous country in the world as a direct response to the way they treated the Jewish people. It has been by far the kindest of all countries in our 2,000-year exile, no country was as welcoming, as generous, as equal, as free for the Jews as it was in America.

And what we're witnessing with our own eyes right now is a little bit like a tower of Babel. It's like the technology and the sophistication, and the...it's all sort of like getting a little bit scary now in the United States. Everyone heard, I'm sure, about the protests that are happening now all across the college campuses in America. Columbia was the latest most violent, most insane. People were arrested, a congressman in America, her daughter was arrested. I mean, just absolute...all over the Israeli social media, watching the most educated, the most sophisticated Americans that are just like filled with Jew-hatred.

And Columbia University was a very, very Jewish institution. A lot of Jews went to Columbia, and now the Jews that are there look at Columbia and say, "What is going on there?" And someone sent me this amazing picture. This was Columbia and their protest in 1940.



And I don't know if you can read the signs here, but one of them says, Hitler has not attacked us. Why attack Hitler? And then the next one says, "Why not peace with Hitler?" "Europe for Europeans, America for Americans." The same stupid leftists then are the same stupid leftists now. Nothing has changed.

Do they not recognize...eventually Pearl Harbor came and sort of woke everyone up. It was like, "Whoa...Hitler's after us, too?" Yeah, that's what's going to happen, America.

But something deeper is happening here. It's not just left wing, kind of live and let live liberal nonsense. Something much deeper is happening here. I just saw this video at Yale University which is also a very popular university that Jews attend, and watch what's happening here as they rip down this American flag. Right as it comes down, you can play it now, the whole crowd starts to cheer.

The glee and the excitement over ripping down the American flag, it's like the pieces are starting to connect a little bit here. It's the same forces that want to destroy Israel, are the same forces that are cheering as they rip the American flag down. And if that wasn't clear enough, I found another video of a new parade. And these are the communists against America that stand with the Palestinians. All the pieces are coming together. Check out this march.



There is only one solution. Communist Revolution.

The red flag and the Palestinian flag, that's a good mix, I like that, that's really sort of exposing itself. And what's amazing about that is now they're praising October 7th. That's the new chant by the way. It's not "From the River to the Sea," it's like glorifying October 7th.

And in some ways, it still kind of shocks me. But then I think just 80 years ago, the Nazis, they glorified, they celebrated, they enjoyed their hatred of Jews. And their evil towards Jews. But then, it was like cloaked with PHD's and sophistication and classical music from Germany. And communism, it's like evil now is exposing itself. It's out in the open for everyone to see.

And just in case you don't see it, the Christians in the Middle East, in the 1900's were 20% of the population in the Middle East. Today, in 2024, there are 1.5%. That's it. From 20%, they are now just a little bit more than 1%. And so what you see as an actual ethnic, religious cleansing that is going against the enemies of God, the enemies of God are just attacking the Jews and attacking the Christians.

And people are like, "No, no, no, but America gave 26-billion-dollar aide to Israel, that's just a bill that just passed. And I want you just to know the truth. That out of the 26 billion dollars, 17 were given to Israel, 9 were given to the so-called Palestinians. And of course, all of us, Israel and the Arabs, have to buy all of our weapons from American military companies. And so, thank you very much America for giving us the money, giving our enemies the money, profiting on both sides as you fund both sides of the war.

So, America right now, it's like just the Divine punishment, it's so poetic. It's like the enemy that they are supporting is the enemy that is going to ultimately take them down. And so the same forces that want to destroy America, they're the ones that want to destroy Israel. And you think about that, what's going on? America was a gift that the Bible gave to the world. Really that Israel gave to the world. The founding fathers of America were biblical people. They were considering making Hebrew the national language of the new country of the United States of America. And so, everything about America was rooted, built upon a foundation of the Bible. The fact that we're created in the image of God, the fact that there should be equality, the fact that there should be freedom of speech and not a tower of Babel.

And you see the forces of evil are trying to stop our free speech. It's like everything is slowly but surely chipping away at everything biblical that's in America. So the people that hate the Bible, the people who hate God, they hate America for that, and they want to rip America down, burn her to the ground and start all over. And they want to do the same thing to Israel. And we talk about the exodus from Egypt, but there's going to be a great exodus coming soon.



The Chabad Shul in
Pomona, NY, located
at 34 Northridge
Road

This is a video that was just taken maybe a couple of days ago before Shabbat. This is a synagogue in New York. This is a Chabad in upstate New York, and I've never seen a video like this, but that's the synagogue, and as you can see, it was totally lit, arsoned, burned to the ground. There's something about this picture that reminds me of Kristallnacht, something about it that looks just like old-school anti-Semitism in a way that I haven't seen. That shul is not going to survive, like that's the end of that Jewish community right there. And it's just a matter of time. There's really no where to run and there's no where to hide for the Jews in America. And it's just a matter of time until another great exodus happens and we're going to talk about that in just a little bit.

But before we get to that, what I want to do, is that I want to introduce to you our scholar in residence, our spiritual mentor, my dear wife, Tehila, who always has insight, always has Torah to share. Actually I got two emails this week demanding that Tehila teach us before Pesach. And I said, she's very busy, she's trying, she's trying. She's also very much moved by the Spirit of the Lord, or moved by Jeremy, pressuring her to quickly...come on, Tehila, you gotta come and teach the Fellowship. And so today was a good day as somehow, she found the time in-between Pesach cleaning, in-between taking care of the kids, to prepare a beautiful Torah for all of us and to give us some wisdom going into the holiday. So now, I'm going to allow Tehila to come, who's sitting right here next to me and she will take over from here.

Tehila

Hi everyone, it's so nice to see your beautiful faces, it is so fun for me. I hope you guys are all doing well, oh great, it's just so nice to see you. I'm missing all of you guys, wow, this is so much fun. Ok, so with all that smiley introduction, I'm going to take this on a sharp turn.

I had a perspective that came to me this week because I'll start with this. I was having a really stupid week. Not a bad week...a bad week would be like things weren't going my way. It wasn't that I was just failing at every single thing I was doing, I was actually making things dismally worse in like every area of life that I was trying to make things better. Have you guys ever had a week like that where you just feel like you're hitting a brick wall? Ok, I see I'm not alone, I'm not alone. You know, sometimes like there is no like match-up, no congruence between the amount of...every elbow-grease effort that I'm putting into all of these different things, and the actual things that are all just not working out for me.

And I just felt like everything I was trying to do, the opposite was happening. It was an awful feeling, and I'm looking up and I'm saying, "HaShem, I'm trying to do good, I'm trying to be a good mom, I'm trying to do good and help my clients in my work, and I'm trying to make my home ready for Pesach. And just feel like I'm crashing and burning again and again. And it was like Monday last week, and I literally wrote a WhatsApp to Jeremy, I was like, "I think I'm cracking up into a million pieces." And Jeremy is not used to getting messages like that, like in our relationship, I'm generally like the more solid one who manages to keep it together. Like I'm not keeping it together, Jeremy, I can't do this anymore!

And so you know, so of course those are like my stupid, personal trials and tribulations. And then, that's all mixed up and tangled in our national feeling of like on the one hand being so grateful to have survived being attacked by Iran, and on the other hand, there's this feeling like there's so much energy and effort and courage in our nation right now. So much willingness for self-sacrifice, and wanting to just defeat Chamas, to defeat our enemies, to settle the Land. You can feel this energy everywhere you go. People are just like, "Yes, ready to go." And yet it feels like even as a collective, we're constantly coming up against these external forces saying like, "No," and holding us back and even trying to punish us and sanction us and protest us. It's like we're trying so hard to like do the right thing and be good and we just feel like we're also, as a nation coming up against these walls.

And so there's a saying, like, "Why even bother, no matter what we do?" That's like where I was personally and it's where I was in like my connection to the rest of the nation of Israel. And so, as you can imagine, I was kind of like, maybe you guys can relate to this, I was kind of like wallowing in this. And then I said like, "Ok, Pesach is coming up, what can I look to here to find strength in this sort of rut that I'm stuck in?" And I didn't have to look far. Because I was immediately drawn to the story in Shemot, in Exodus, chapter 5. We have pretty much an entire chapter. Think about like how concise the Torah is. Like an entire chapter here dedicated to Moshe coming to talk to Paraoh and how that worked out for him.

Now imagine the scenario which we know he was really reluctant to go on this mission in the first place. And at the burning bush HaShem gives him all this ammo. Like here's what to do if they don't believe you, and here's this sign, and this is what you're going to do, and I'm going to be with your mouth." And HaShem is like convincing Moshe, "I'm going to help you."

And finally, Moshe's like, "You know what HaShem? Yeah! I'm all in, I'm going, I'm going to do it, right?" And now you can imagine that like what's going to be the next step? Like what is the Torah going to teach us? Like when you listen to HaShem, Hashem will make it happen for you, it's going to go great. And to call what happens to Moshe a failure, is really the understatement of the century. Because if Paraoh would have said, "No, I kind of like having slaves, I'm not going to let them go," it would have been unpleasant for Moshe. What happens? Paraoh makes their work even harder. And now not only is Paraoh mad at him, and now all of the other Jews are mad at him.

Think what déjà vu this must be for Moshe because his earlier years were him also trying to do good and he ended up getting into a fight with an Egyptian, his adopted dad is mad at him for killing this Egyptian, he goes out and meets the Jews who were far from grateful, they don't appreciate him, and they just sort of mocked him and say, "Who are you?" You can imagine Moshe just like saying, "God, why did I bother? Fool me once, shame on you; fool me twice, shame on me. Like every time I try to do something good, nothing works. And like if you really read it, you can get into like the pain that Moshe must have been experiencing. So then Moshe turns to HaShem, and in verse 22 he says:

So Moses returned to the Lord and said, "Lord, why have You brought trouble on this people? Why is it You have sent me? For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in Your name, he has done evil to this people; neither have You delivered Your people at all."

-Exodus 5:22-23

and to try to affect good in the world, and then You like don't even help me? Why am I such a failure? Why did you bother putting this mission in my heart if you're not going to help me effectively fulfill this mission?"

Now it's a really interesting question because it breaks up into two parts. One, is about like reality, like why does everything have to be so hard in the world, why does everything have to be so hard for the Jewish people? But that's not the only question he's asking. He's also saying, "Why me? Why am I the one feeling called to do all these missions, and I feel so drawn and guided by You, HaShem, to go out

Now HaShem's answer is so interesting because if we have that question and Moshe has that question, maybe HaShem's answer to Moshe is also HaShem's answer to us. If you listen to the answer, it seems like just on the plain reading, that the answer is more the answer about the collective. HaShem says in chapter 6, verse 1:

Then the Lord said to Moses, "Now you shall see what I will do to Pharaoh. For with a strong hand he will let them go, and with a strong hand he will drive them out of his land."

And God spoke to Moses and said to him: "I am Hashem. I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as El Shaddai, but by My name Hashem I was not known to them."

-Exodus 6:1-3

Meaning just wait and see, you're only seeing just one part of the story, it's going to get better for Israel. And then the chapter goes on to say, "I've heard their cries, I'm going to give them the Land," meaning Moshe, I'm not harming the Jews, it only looks like that to you, but this is actually part of the redemption.

So that might answer his question of like, "Why are you making it so bad for the Jewish people," but what about the personal question, "Why me? What is my part in all of this?" Now the answer here is not in plain view. You have to kind of like tease it out.

Now if we look in chapter 6, there's this whole explanation how everything is part of the plan, but then there's verses 2 and 3 in chapter 6.

And God spoke to Moses and said to him: "I am Hashem. I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as El Shaddai, but by My name Hashem I was not known to them."

Now the name in Hebrew, here we just have HaShem in English, in the Hebrew, it's Yud, Hey, Vav, Hey, like the name of HaShem that we do not say, the personal name of HaShem

that HaShem revealed to Moshe at the burning bush. And then he says, "I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as El Shaddai, but by My name, HaShem, I was not known to them."

Well that's a weird segue. What does it matter what name the forefathers knew Moshe by? How does that answer the question? Why would knowing one or another of HaShem's name answer what Moshe is trying to say? Like why is all this bad stuff happening to me, why is nothing I'm doing being successful?

Now Rashi says something so interesting here. He says, "What is that explicit name of HaShem? As we saw at the revelation at the burning bush, that name of HaShem that we don't pronounce, essentially encapsulates HaShem's existence over past, present, and future. Rashi says that that is the name that expresses HaShem's faithfulness to keep His promises, the promises that were made in the past, being fulfilled in the future. Meaning our forefathers, they were tested in their present moments. Like in Lech Lecha, HaShem says to Avraham, "Go," and is he going to go? Will you sacrifice your son? Like will you show your face in this moment?

But you, Moshe have been revealed a different aspect of Me, HaShem. You have seen my name, that means past, present, and future. That means the fulfillment of promises. So that's where you're going to draw your strength from. He doesn't say to Moshe, "Don't worry, it's

always going to be easy. I'm going to help you out, I'm going to be with you all the time, everything will be fine." He doesn't say it's going to be easy. What he says to him is that you're only going to be able to understand it when you draw strength from that name that I revealed to you that shows that I'm faithful over the span of time. That HaShem actually, that I actually control the world and permeate every single aspect of existence.

And you see this in the action item that HaShem actually gives to Moshe a few verses later. Because then it says:

Therefore, say to the children of Israel, "I am the Lord."

And here again we see the explicit name of HaShem that we don't pronounce... "and I will take you out from the burdens of Egypt. I will save you from their labor."

Meaning you are special, Moshe, because you've been awakened and enlightened to this aspect of HaShem and your job is to take that understanding that I gave you at the burning bush, that I am everything, that I created everything, that everything is one and share that with them because that's what's going to lift them out of that burden.

And I found that to really give me strength in like my little breakdown that I was having. I was sitting in the car thinking about this and I started meditating on these words that just kind of like came into my heart, which was just every single thing is from HaShem. Because that's the essence of HaShem's name, that HaShem permeates all of existence. It's not on me to solve every single problem. HaShem gives us the ability to connect to His name which is the realization that everything is in His hands.

And it was amazing to see for me that even though nothing in my actual physical reality changed, I felt this burden lift off of my shoulders. And what started out feeling like my worst day, by the end I went to bed feeling like this was an amazing day because I can go to bed with a clean heart knowing that I'm doing the best that I know how to do and I can say to myself even Moshe hit a brick wall, but HaShem guided him to understand that everything is from him. And when we work on our inside game, on our inside understanding that HaShem will fulfill His promises in His own time, that's really like what will help us through those moments, at least it's what helped me.

And sorry...I have one more source that I want to bring you guys because you know that helped me kind of deal with my inner breakdown. Then it struck me how interesting it is that on the national level, if you ask somebody like a kid or ask somebody that you know, to tell you the story of exodus. What was the story of exodus? I'm sure if I ask my kids, like, "What was the story of exodus?" They would say, "Well, the Jews were slaves, and then HaShem brought the ten plagues, and then HaShem split the sea, and then we were redeemed." Right? Wouldn't

that be like a fair encapsulation of the story? But when you read the story, this massive space is given to the almost starting of redemption, and then this seeming massive failure. Like that is built in. So, I found that to really give me encouragement also in our national struggles. It's like we have this establishment in the state of Israel, we had the 6 Day War, we feel like everything is like on the up and up, and then there's so much suffering and so much difficulty, and there's October 7th, and there's you know, Iranian missiles pointed at us, like what is going on? It's like the Torah has built into it, telling you, "You want to understand redemption? Redemption is always going to have this kind of up and down. The redemption is going to start and then you're going to feel like you're nose-diving. And only then the next part of the redemption is going to begin."

And I found this amazing source in Rabbeinu B'chaya. Rabbeinu B'chaya was a Spanish sage who if I tell you when he lived, you're not actually going to believe me because his words sound so prophetic and so perfectly matched to the time that we're facing right now. Rabbeinu B'chaya lived a thousand years ago. He lived a thousand years ago in Spain. And if you listen to what he said, he said, "You must know that the first exile"... he said about these very verses that we're studying, "the first exile, the exile of Egypt, is a hint for what is going to happen in the final redemption. This is because when the final redemption comes, it's going to look like the redemption is beginning, and then terrible suffering is going to come."

He said, "And then the nations are going to turn on Israel." Meaning, there's going to be this suffering that comes after the time that it looks like the redemption is beginning. And THEN, there's going to be terrible suffering, then the nations are going to once again turn against Israel. This is after the redemption has begun."

Could he have been describing any more perfectly like our exact times that we're living in? And only then will come the completion of the redemption. He says, "The redemption in prophecy is compared to a deer that like a deer that goes between the trees. Like you see it peaking out, and then it hides back away and then it peaks back again. Our redemption is not going to progress linearly, it's going to progress with this up and down. And then he says the most amazing promise. If there comes a time where it looks like redemption has begun and then the Jewish people go through terrible suffering, he says look for Him, meaning look for Mashiach because He is on His way.

And I thought that those words were very encouraging to draw out of this chapter in Shemot. So both on a personal level for me, maybe for you guys, too, and on the national level for what we're going through. I hope...that for me was a lesson of Pesach that kind of gave me strength in all those areas. So with that, I wish you guys to have a beautiful Pesach. You know, it's interesting in Pesach, we always have these holidays where we do these really grand preparations. Like on Sukkot, we have to build something. On Shavuot we get all of our fruits ready. In Pesach, the main thing is not like an act of building something or collecting something.

It's actually just clearing out. Clearing out, cleaning up, and what is that internally? Like making space to see the miracles that HaShem has in store for us. It's not that we have to be doing, we have to be clearing out and making room in our hearts to just stand and witness what HaShem has in store for us. So I wish you guys all a chag sameach, a happy holiday. Bye guys.

Jeremy

Thank you, Tehila, thank you, Tehila. Hold on one second, there we are, alright. Thank you, Tehila, that was absolutely beautiful. The way you articulated it, just that last thought, that the service before Pesach is just to clean up shop. That's exactly what needs to be done, just to clean up the clutter that's in our hearts. I need to work on that, I still have a little bit of time.

Alright, so I want to kind of riff off of what Tehila just said. Moshe is sent on a mission, and it doesn't just kind of go smoothly, it gets worse. And then the taskmasters make them collect their own materials, make the same amount of bricks. The nation of Israel is disappointed, they come back to Moses, Moshe is like, "Why have you made this even more troublesome for the people?" And I want to show that there's a template here.

And the same thing happens to Abraham. Abraham is called on a mission. Lech Lecha, go to the Land of Israel, be blessed, be a blessing to the world. Abraham's like, "I'm on it. I hear you, God, loud and clear." He comes to the Land of Israel and you would expect it to be like, "Alright, and then him and Sara build a palace in Jerusalem and live happily ever after." But that's not what happens. He can't eat, there's no food, there's a famine, he almost dies of starvation. He's promised to go into the Land and be blessed and the exact opposite happens. He was doing just fine out there in Charan. All of a sudden, he walks off into the desert to an unknown Land, just following God. He comes to the Land of Israel, and instead of being blessed, it seems like he's being cursed. His situation gets much worse to the point where he has to escape down to Egypt. And in Egypt he doesn't have a very nice time, either. He meets the dictator, Pharaoh, who kidnaps his wife. He comes back to Israel, he has to go out to wars against kings. It's like what is going on here? What is the Torah teaching us?

Listen to God in your life, follow Him, live a guided life, and maybe your wife will get kidnapped, you might die of starvation, you're going to have to go out to war? Like that is the worst sales pitch ever! If the mission of the Torah is to teach us to follow God in our lives, and we watch these two templates unfolding that as Moshe is going and as Avraham is going, both of them, as they start their journey, it gets worse.

And I want to tell you, in my own personal life with Tehila, we were called to sell all of our stuff, sell our home, sell most of our things and move out to the Arugot Farm. And I was so excited because it was one of the only times in my life where I felt like such clarity that we were doing what God wanted us to do. We were taking the path of courage, we were taking the path of faith, we were living as an example for our children, we're going out to the deepest settlement

of Judea, how many prophecies are about God taking His inheritance in Judea, and the Jewish people returning to the mountains of Israel and making them blossom. We're going to be on the cutting edge of this move! We're going to be the apple of God's eye, we're going to be at the edge of Jewish settlement in Israel! We're going to be fulfilling all of the promises! This is going to be amazing!

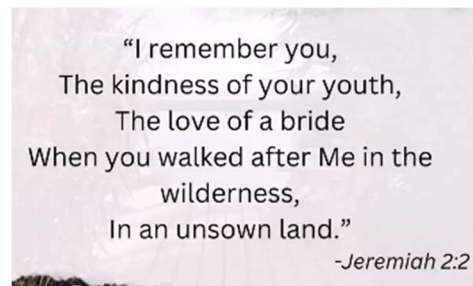
And I remember Tehila, she was like, "Oh, it looks like it might be pretty hard. I mean we can do it, but I think that it may be a little bit difficult." And oh my goodness. It was so hard. I mean, everything was going great. We sold our home, we were moving out, and the first year of selling our home and moving out to the farm where we only had a compost toilet, and we had an extension cord that gave our whole house power. So we could maybe turn on air conditioning and a washing machine. But if you turned on an air conditioning and the dryer...that's it, no electricity. And then I promised Tehila security systems, and a security dog, and I gave her Dreidel, our chihuahua, that's all we had as our security in the most contested real estate in Israel. We had a chihuahua named Dreidel as our guard dog.

And my whole family is looking at me and Tehila's parents, they didn't want us to go. And everyone's looking at me like, "Jeremy, what have you done? You have six kids, you've taken all of your life's savings and you've just thrown it into this Farm on a mountain? You have a compost toilet with six kids? I mean, what have you done with your life?" I mean the story is so long and so complex, but it was so hard, and I feel like that is a template. It's a template of existence, it's almost a template of faith, it's almost like, if you want to live in faith, know that it will be harder! There will be a time where you're walking out in faith and you will be tested. You WILL be tested! It's not like, "Well, it might be good and it may not be good."

No, no, no. The template in the Torah is that Abraham was tested, Moses was tested, Israel was tested, that's what it's about. Because only when you live through the test, only when you are challenged does the challenge mold you into who HaShem created you to be. That's actually what the journey is about. Those challenges and those hard times are what created Abraham into who he was and what created Moshe into the leader that he was.

And at the Seder, maybe the most important verse that we say in Passover with our family is, "In every generation, every person must see themselves as though they left Egypt. Everyone has to see themselves as though they've left Egypt right now. So some people take that to the point where they literally pack a suitcase, put it in like a backpack, and they pretend that they've got to like break out of the house. They got to run, they got to go! And then the kids like relive that moment. Like it's time to go, exodus is happening. Kids, pack your bags, let's go. And they make it a game that they're doing in the Passover Seder, to feel a little bit of it must have felt like.

But I think that there's something even deeper that's going on here. And it's interesting, Ari quoted a verse in Jeremiah that I wanted to quote today. And it's in Jeremiah, chapter 2, verse 2. And I told Tehila that if she would move out to the Farm, that I would make her a sign. And the entrance to our home, I carved out this sign in Hebrew in wood. And it says:



And I felt like that's exactly what Tehila did. I remember her, the kindness of her youth, she walked after me into the desert, in an unsown land. But Jeremiah there is talking about the love that God had for Israel. The love of our youth, just a nation born. And how were we born? Just walking after God into the desert.

And I think about that, that if we really had to see ourselves that way, then it's like that's the gut check. Passover is the only commandment that you're commanded to do as a family. I want you to think about that. Passover is the root of all holidays. And it is the one that you're commanded, the Passover sacrifice, you have to do with your family. Think about when the Jews left Egypt. What did they leave with? A backpack and their family. And it could be that a time is going to come, where the world as we know it, won't exist as it exists now. And all we'll have is a backpack and our family. And it's preparing us for those times. Will we be happy? We spend so much time thinking about our car, thinking about our bills, thinking about our home, thinking about this, thinking about that. All the stuff that overtakes most of our brain space, and God is saying, "No, no. Just for a minute, think of yourself like you've left Egypt. All that matters are the loved ones around you. Because that's all you take with you."

The korban Pesach, the Passover sacrifice, has nothing to do with atonement. That's a misunderstood, like a Christian interpretation that's also misunderstood. There's nothing about that sacrifice that was about atoning for sins. The Passover sacrifice was everyone inside their home. And what was going on there? Take the animal, put the blood on the doorpost, what's happening there?

And so, this insight came to me over this weekend. And I looked for sources, and I haven't found any sources yet that I'm able to connect this to. But as I'm reading this, I just feel that this is a truth. And what I want to do, is I want to take you guys all the way back to the book of Genesis. Because after Moses tells God, "Why have you made it so difficult for this nation?" God has an answer. And His answer is, "Don't worry, I'm going to show you what's going to happen. I am El Shaddai. Moreover, I established my covenant with your ancestors to give them the Land of Canaan, the Land of their sojourns."

And so His answer is, “I want you to know, Moses, all these hardships, I’ve made a promise to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob to give them the Land of Israel. I’m going to take them out of Egypt and I’m going to give that to them.”

So then, this year, I want to go back to that promise that was made to Abraham and I want to show you what happens. It’s actually in Genesis, chapter 15, verses 13 to 15. I didn’t have time to make a slide, but just read along with me.

So, HaShem tells them like this – He said to him, “I am HaShem who brought you out of Ur Chasdim to give you this Land to inherit it.” He then continues, “My Lord, HaShem Elohim, whereby shall I know that I am to inherit the Land of Israel?” Abraham asks God, “How am I going to know?”

Chapter 15, verse 9 – and He said to him, “Take for Me, three heifers, three goats, three rams, a turtle dove and a young dove.” He took all these to him, he cut them in the center, and he placed each piece opposite its counterpart. The birds, however, he did not cut up.

So Abraham takes all of these animals, cut them all in half, splits them, and it’s actually the covenant of the parts. This is the covenant that God establishes with Abraham, and this is the promise to give us the Land of Israel. So when God says to Moses, “By the way, I have a covenant that I made with Abraham,” this is the covenant that He’s talking about. And so it’s important to reference back what’s going on!

And then it continues like this, verse 13 – And it happened as the sun was about to set, a deep sleep fell upon Abraham. And behold, a dread, a great darkness fell upon him. And He said, “Know with certainty that your offspring shall be aliens in a land not their own. And they will serve them and they will oppress them 400 years. But also, the nation that they will serve, I will judge and afterwards they will leave with great wealth. As for you, you shall come to your ancestors in peace, you shall be buried at a good old age. And the 4th generation shall return here for the iniquity of the Amorite shall not yet be full until then.”

So God says two things in this covenant of the parts. One – people of Israel are going to be down in Egypt for 400 years. The second thing He says – the 4th generation that goes down to Egypt, they’re the ones that are going to come out again.

I’m not a mathematician, but I’m pretty sure that four generations is not 400 years. And it’s right there, that has to be asked immediately. God, which one is it? Is it 400 years or is it four generations? Cause in the same covenant, He says two times, what’s going on? What is this? Because God is telling Moses, “I made this covenant with you guys, I’m going to keep My promise,” and that is the essence of the Name, HaShem. That the promises of the past will be fulfilled in the future. I’m not just the God of the Creator of the world, I’m the God of history

that guides the world. And through Israel I prove my sovereignty. That I am an interactive guiding God.

But even in the promise that He made – one says 400 years and one says four generations. What's going on? And so, already here, we see that there is a biblical promise that there are two options of redemption. One is a time that's set in stone. Isaiah says, "In it's time, I will hasten it." And the same question is asked upon the prophecy of Isaiah. Is the redemption a set time? Is it the year, 6000? Or is it going to happen when God hastens that time? And God says the same thing to Abraham as He says to Isaiah. "If the people of Israel merit it, if the times call for it, I'll hasten it. It will be before 400 years. But if not, I guarantee, that by the 400th year, they're going to be out of there." And that's how the redemption is set up. We have a fixed time, but at any moment, it can unfold. And boy, we would love for it to unfold.

But then, look what happens here. And so it happened, this is now verse 17, the end of the covenant. "And so it happened, the sun set, it was very dark, and behold there was a smokey furnace, and a torch of fire which passed between these pieces."

On that day, HaShem made a covenant with Abraham saying, "Your descendants have I given this Land. From the river of Egypt to the great river, Euphrates." And that was the promise, that was the covenant, and that's what God says to Moses.

And so, what happens here? There's parts, and then God seemingly walks through the parts as like a furnace. And so the sages of Israel of course immediately connect that to Egypt. That's like the splitting of the sea, the pillar of fire, the pillar of smoke, the clouds of glory. They were marching through the pieces, that was sort of signifying the most cinematic, unbelievable scene in world history, the greatest most amazing miracle, the splitting of the sea. That's already promised to Abraham in that moment.

But then I want you to think now for just a second. What did the Jews do? They take the blood of the Passover sacrifice and where do they put it? On the doorposts. And then, what do the Jews have to do to get into their home? They also have to walk through those parts. They take the blood and they put it on the doorposts just like that. And then, just as God walks through the parts with Abraham, now the Jews, the people of Israel, the Israelites, they now walk through the two parts. They now are filling their side of the covenant. They're saying, "God, you made a promise to Abraham. Unbelievable, excellent. Now, it's our turn to walk through the parts."

And when you think about the pascal sacrifice, what was the sheep? If you look back to the story when Joseph first comes down to Egypt, they're put in Goshen for a reason. Because shepherds are seen as kind of an abomination to Egypt because sheep were the Egyptian god. And the Jews were shepherds that ate sheep. The Egyptians worshipped the sheep, that was

one of their gods. And the commandment on Passover, is to not cook the sheep in an oven where you can hide it or put it in a stew. You had to skewer it and roast it outside your home. And after you're done roasting the sheep, the god of the Egyptians, outside their home, you had to take the blood and mark your doorposts with the blood of the god of the Egyptians.

And so, if God doesn't come and deliver you the next morning, you can be sure that you are going to suffer the consequences of killing the god of the Egyptians and smearing its blood on your doorposts, literally giving a mark for everyone of the haters of Israel to come to the home that desecrated the god of Egypt.

And that was the act of the covenant, that was the act of us walking through the parts. Just as God walked through the parts during the time of Abraham, it was Israel's part now to walk through that part.

But think about what that means for us today. Every Jew now, I've heard, in Paris, they now have a new patent called a hidden mezuzah. Because of course the commandment of mezuzah is to put a little sign on your doorpost, it's like reminiscent of the Passover sacrifice. Put a sign, every time you walk through you can kiss the mezuzah, it's like God's name is on your doorpost, His blessing, His word, protection on your home. But it's also a sign that you're a Jew. It's also a sign that a Jewish family lives in that home. And so, all the haters of Israel, as they're marching through the streets of Los Angeles, chanting, "From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free," that's just code word for kill the Jews. That's what it's become. Don't let them think anything else. "From the river to the sea" means the death of Israel and the death of Jews.

So as they're chanting "kill the Jews, kill the Jews," imagine all the Jews right now with those mezuzahs on their doors as a direct sign saying, "I'm right here, come here people. Jewish family right here in this house." So now in Paris it's already come to the situation where they hide their mezuzah in the doorpost so people can't see it because they're just scared of attracting the haters of Israel onto them. And God is saying, "In order to truly be liberated, what you have to do, is you have to take the blood of the Egyptians, the Egyptian god and mark it on your doorpost, and know that I will redeem you."

And so, that outward statement, that declaration of our faith, was the precursor, it's like what we had to do in order to be redeemed. And the same is going to be asked of us now. There's no difference. The same thing is being asked of us now and I think that maybe it really depends where you live, it depends how you live, it depends who you are and what your family looks like. But everyone needs to separate themselves.

If you think about the two great stories of the Torah, we have Abraham, who left the center of civilization of his time which was Babylon. The tower of Babel, was the greatest and most

sophisticated tower. All of humanity was united with one king, and Abraham was like, “Bye guys, I’m leaving civilization.”

Egypt was the greatest civilization in their time. And the Jews were like, “Bye guys, I’m leaving civilization.” To be connected to God, to be connected to the Bible, to be a Jew, it means you are counter-culture. It means that you are the counter to the main-stream institutions of the world. You are the counter-culture to Hollywood, the counter-culture to Facebook, the counter-culture to Babylon and to Egypt. As most people are trying to get their way TO Egypt or get their way TO Babylon, the Jews are running away from civilization. Why? Because we’re called to build a new civilization. We’re called to build God’s kingdom. And that’s something totally different.

And in order to do that, fearlessly, we have to be ready to sacrifice the gods of those around us. And so, for me, that’s this Passover. I think that even within Israel, we have idols that we need to shatter. And only then, when we liberate ourselves from the shackles of the ...it’s like, we subject ourselves, it’s like a self-imposed, mental slavery that we’ve put ourselves into. And God is saying, “Just take the blood, put it on the doorposts, walk through your door, stay tight with your family, and I’ll take care of the rest.”

So that’s what Israel needs to do now. We are enslaved with a country that today is the modern day Egypt. And as it’s paying our enemies and paying us and profiting from both sides of the war, embroiling us in an endless conflict that will never end until we redeem ourselves. And in order to redeem ourselves, we will have to put our trust in God because our salvation is not going to come from Washington. Our salvation will come from HaShem. That has always been the case and that will always be the case.

And so, please God, this year when you think about seeing yourselves as if we left Egypt, I think another way to understand that, to see ourselves as though we left Egypt...it’s like we are just the next page in the unfolding story that Abraham started. God chose one man and one woman, Abraham and Sarah. The rest of the world is there now watching this one family that God chose. And He chose one family to teach the rest of the world that God can choose every single one of us. But Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, they are the living testimony. The people of Israel in Egypt, they were promised and they were redeemed and now the people of Israel, 3,000 years later, we’re just the next page in that story. We are just the next step of that promise.

We’re now building our third commonwealth in the Land of Israel. And the prophets say the third commonwealth will never be destroyed. Now there may be ups and downs along the way. There definitely will be according to the template that we’ve learned, but now, it’s to have faith to be able to sacrifice the idols, put their blood on the doorposts, and may our salvation only come from HaShem, and not from the mental subjugation that we’ve enslaved ourselves to.

Lord, just redeem us! Send us the leader that we need and we are ready, we are ready to join His army.

And with that, I want to give everyone here a bracha, a blessing of true liberation, of true redemption, of true salvation of true emunah. I think that if we all really integrate emunah into our lives, then as rockets are being fired from Iran, you can just roll over and go back to bed. Because God runs the world and there's nothing to fear.

Alright my friends, love you all, may you be blessed from Zion, may you be blessed with the most beautiful Passover, and may we all experience a geulah shlemah.

Aaronic blessing (Hebrew)

Shalom my friends, chag sameach, have a beautiful Passover!