

Session 47

Behar/Bechukotai - On Our Way to Yerushalyim

9 May 2021

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8OrlKVkX8X8>

Ari

Shalom everybody! Ok, I hope you're doing well. I hope you can see me. Tabitha, let me know if they can't. Anyways, very, very excited to see you. It's so good to see you. I've really missed you. And let me just start, for those of you who celebrate it, Happy Mother's Day! And that's to my mother, too. I don't know if she's with us right now, but you mothers deserve it. The world is on your shoulders. And as the sages say, it is in honor of the merit of the holy women that we will be redeemed. So...Happy Mother's Day.

Ok, so now, I have to tell you that preparing for this fellowship was a daunting task. It was very intimidating. Because on the one hand, it's Yom Yerushalyim. It's Jerusalem Day. What do I do with that? How can I possibly do justice to Jerusalem? To talking about Jerusalem? On the other hand, the double Torah portions of the week, Behar and Bechukotai are so rich. To start with, there's the subject of the Sh'mittah, the Sabbatical Year, the 7th year in which you don't work the Land. It remains fallow. It's a year of rest for both the Land and the farmer. For thousands of years, the subject of Sh'mittah, the Sabbatical Year, it remained mostly abstract and academic, because it only applied in the Land of Israel. And the Jewish people were exiled around the world, so it really wasn't even relevant on a practical level. But now that we've returned to the Land, it is very real. Not only for our nation and our people, but for us personally. Because as you may have heard, I don't know if Jeremy told you, but we've built up this farm out here in Judea in which we're growing vineyards and olive groves, wheat, fruit, vegetables of so many kinds. And I'm telling you, this subject could be an entire fellowship.

And then there's the entire portion about the blessings and the curses, the rewards and the punishments that will result from whether or not we will keep God's commandments and follow in His ways. It's all so much deeper than it seems and there is so much to cover. But in my mind, the first thing we need to do is to mark the moment. For literally, as we're meeting together right now in this fellowship, we're entering sacred time together. We're about to be immersed in the great and the holy day of gratitude and miracles, Yom Yerushalyim. Jerusalem Day. The day in which Jerusalem was liberated and returned to the nation of Israel. Returned to the Jewish people. Returned to the nation that never stopped praying for one moment throughout our millennia of exile to return to our Land. Every word in the story of Jerusalem is a miracle of God.

And so, I will let my beloved friend and rebbe, Jeremy Gimpel, start by sharing a video that he made about the miracles of the 6 Day War. And he's right here with me. And so, Jeremy, you come in.

Jeremy

Hey, everybody. Great to see you! As you can imagine, Yom Yerushalyim is one of my favorite holidays on the planet. And the reason is, because it's what makes the Bible alive. It's what makes the Torah a living document. You know, most holidays, we're commemorating or celebrating something that happened thousands of years ago. And all of a sudden, it's like nope, the move, the spirit, God is guiding the world just as He guided us out of Egypt 3,000 years ago. He's guided us back to the Land of Israel in 1948. And He liberated Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria in 1967. And to be inside the miracle that we're living through in our own lifetime, it is what makes it so magical because so many people, they're not ready for it yet. I would say about half of Israel don't really celebrate Yom Yerushalyim. To really experience it for all it's wonder and worth. But then there's people from all over the world that come, real believers. And they march through the streets of Jerusalem, waving their flags, Jews, non-Jews, just celebrating the return to Jerusalem.

So before I share a video that I made for the 50th anniversary of Jerusalem's liberation, I just wanted to take a moment and pray together. Because, you know, right now, Jerusalem is under attack, not just by international forces, but right now, the streets of Jerusalem are literally on fire sometimes at nighttime. With the Biden administration, wired \$200,000 to the Palestinian Authority, a couple of months ago. And if you followed the news in Israel, then what you'll see is that terrorism has returned to the Land of Israel once again. And now there's money to sponsor riots. There's families of terrorists that are being paid. And right now, Jerusalem is under attack in a very real way. And Jerusalem is the only city in the world that we're commanded to pray for.

So I thought that together as our fellowship, we would just come for a moment and really pray for the shalom of Yerushalyim together. And then, just bask in the glory of Yom Yerushalyim. And I made this video because inside the miracle, inside the splitting of the sea, like you know, a famous rabbi said, a person just saw the sweaty neck of the guy behind him. He wasn't really in the miracle. You have to sort of take a step back to really recognize God's Hand of providence in the miracle of Yom Yerushalyim. So I hope the video does it justice. At least just for the first day of the 6 Day War.

But, in the meantime, Hashem, thank you for gathering all of us here together today, to celebrate Yom Yerushalyim, to experience Jerusalem together, to pray for Jerusalem together, to be one with Yerushalyim all around the world. And You know, tourism right now is cut off from the Land, for the most part. We can stream into Jerusalem like we are right now, virtually, praying for her, praying for her wholeness, praying for her security, praying for her prosperity. Let us recognize the miracles that we're living through right now. And let us experience those miracles in our own lives, and know that just as you've guided the Jewish people back to the Land of Israel and back to the city of Yerushalyim, You're guiding each and every one of us

exactly to where we need to go. And may You guide us all the way back to the center, to the heart of Jerusalem, to dance together in the courtyard of Your Temple. Amen.

Alright, friends, so here's my video. I hope you enjoy it.

(Video)

There are only two ways to live your life. One, is as though nothing is a miracle. The other, is as though everything is a miracle. Albert Einstein

The Muslim nations in the Middle East would not accept Israel's existence since its founding in 1948. They began amassing huge amounts of sophisticated weaponry, and lobbying for the implementation of boycotts, divestments, and sanctions against the Jewish State. On the 15th of May, 1967, on Israel's Independence Day, a three-week period began, which was one of the most tense and fearful periods in Israel's history. In direct contravention of international agreements, Egyptian leader, Gamal Abdel Nasser, removed the UNI Peace Keeping Forces and began moving tens of thousands of soldiers and hundreds of tanks into what was the demilitarized Sinai Peninsula, towards Israel's southern border.

Egypt also blockaded the Straits of Tiran, and opened international waterway, which was essential a declaration of war. Israel turned to the nations of the world, primarily to the United States, for assistance against Egyptian aggression, but somehow, all Western countries decided to remain neutral. Very quickly it became apparent tht the promises were all but forgotten. Israel with 2.5 million Jews was left alone to face the might of the Arab Nations. Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Iraq and Lebanon formed a military alliance and began moving forces into Jordan towards Israel's borders. When the Arab countries realized that the world had abandoned Israel, many other Muslim countries were openly calling for the destruction of Israel. The will and means to murder millions of Jews were evident.

Top IDF commanders expressed their concerns at the high price Israel was liable to pay in the war with the Arab world. Some military experts projected the toll between 20 and 100,000 lives. Israel prepared cemeteries all over the country, ready to accommodate many expected victims. Massive parks were prepared in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, and other cities, in case the cemeteries would have no more space.



World governments, instead of defending Israel's right to exist, warned Israel continuously not to attack. However, the people of Israel had no choice, but to go to war. To defend their country and their very existence.

At 7:15 a.m., on June 5th, 1967, the IDF launched operation, MOKED, Focus. Almost the entire Israeli Air Force was dispatched in a daring mission. Only 12 planes stayed behind. The risk of this operation was extraordinary, as the fighter pilots flew at an unprecedented low altitude of less than 20 meters above the ground. Egypt had the most advanced ground air missile defense systems in the Middle East. Most of the Israeli jets were old and outdated French planes. If the Israeli jets would have been detected, many would have fallen and Israel would have been left with practically no air force.

And then, a miracle occurred. The most advanced Russian MiG jets that controlled the airspace along the borders between Egypt and Israel were for that for that one critical hour, grounded. Incredibly, at that very same time, the top commanders of Egypt, Jordan and Iraq, flew together to observe the Egyptian forces invading Sinai. The Egyptian officers had ordered all anti-aircraft units not to fire unless given a direct order as long as they were in flight. This created total confusion on the Egyptian ground as Israel struck exactly in that window of time. By 7:45 a.m., the high hand of providence resulted in the Israeli Air Force reaching all the Egyptian air fields without even one plane being detected.

More than 200 Egyptian planes, almost half of Egypt's fleet, were almost instantaneously destroyed, also bombing the runways, and making impotent, the mightiest air force in the Middle East. General Moti Hod, commander of the Air Force said, in my wildest dreams I never would have conceived of such an incredible success.

A second wave of Israeli jets were directed to Cairo to confront the remains of the Egyptian Air Force. And here, another miracle occurred. No less miraculous than the first. Even though Israel had lost the element of surprise, and the anti-aircraft systems were operating with full capacity, Egypt was only able to hit one Israeli plane. The Israeli Air Force went on to destroy a total of more than 300 Egyptian planes. And every airfield in Egypt was neutralized. It was nothing less than a military miracle. Seemingly impossible.

And then, another miracle occurred. It was as if God hardened the heart of the Egyptian President Nassar, who continuously gloated about his glorious military victory over Israel. In the Arab media, President Nassar spoke of the end of Israel's Air Force and of the Egyptian tanks on their way to Jerusalem. Jordan, Syria, and Iraq believed these bombastic statements and wanted to join in the great victory against the Jews. All the Arab airpower struck simultaneously on multiple fronts. In almost any other scenario, Israel would not have been able to respond as quickly as it did.

The timing was seemingly orchestrated to position Israeli jets exactly where they should be. Not in 6 days, but in 6 hours, the war was won.

(news report)

A Biblical prophecy comes to pass as the forces of Israel sweep on in an astonishing triumph of strategy. After achieving air supremacy their forces thrust like an avenging sword to the very heart of Arab self-confidence.

Jeremy

And then, perhaps, the greatest miracle of all. A miracle Israel never expected. Jerusalem. Again, it seemed as though it was a Divine appointment in time.



Jerusalem was to be restored to the Jewish people, after 2,000 years. The enemies of Israel had twice as many soldiers as we did. Three times as many planes, four times as many tanks. The odds were stacked against us on every military front. The love of Israel, self-sacrifice and courage of the Israeli soldiers combined with Divine guidance and assistance, made these miracles possible. Yitzchak Rabin, then Minister of Defense was given the honor of giving the war its name. He chose the 6 Day War, recalling the 6 days of creation, as Israel, too was created with the liberation of Jerusalem.

As the center of gravity of the Jewish people has now returned to the Land of our Fathers, the Torah's center of the world has once again returned to Jerusalem. The chief rabbinate of the State of Israel has established the 28th of Iyar, a day of hallel and hodea, praise and thanks for the salvation of our people and the liberation and return of our capital, Jerusalem. Jews in Israel and in every country where they reside, come together in prayer and celebration, similar to Chanukah and Purim. It sometimes takes many years for the miracles to be fully recognized. For 2,000 years, our hope never died. Our faith as a people never wavered. Wherever Jews were and whenever they prayed, they prayed facing Jerusalem. Whatever happened the night

before, whether it was the Crusades, the Inquisition, Muslim oppression, or Nazis in Germany, the next morning a Jew would wake up, dust himself off, put on his tallit, face Jerusalem, and pray to come home.



Knowing somehow, somehow, God would bring us back. This is our greatest celebration. To be alive in this generation where the prayers of our fathers and mothers have finally been answered. To be alive and to take part in Jewish destiny. To experience the miracles of Divine providence. Bayamim hahem, bizman hazeh. Like in those days, and in our time. (end of video)



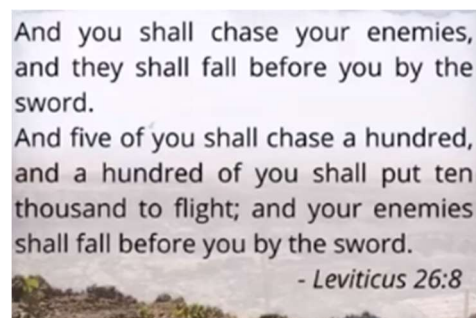
Ari

Welcome back. Thank you, Jeremy, I could watch that video a hundred times. I'm just watching the comments that you guys are making. Someone asked, is that the war of Gog u'maGog? As you know from the Tanakh, it tells us that there will be this great war. And so, two rabbis, three opinions. If you ask Yishai Fleisher, the war of Gog u'maGog happened and that was the Holocaust. I don't know anyone who says that it was the 6 Day War, but again, when it comes to these prophecies, it sort of is only really clear after the fact. But they definitely provide us with the comfort. I'll tell you, I could watch that video a hundred times. I probably have watched it a hundred times. It was beautiful. It's so important to see those images, to see the footage, to hear the words. It's just so important that such a video was

made because generations from now, people may think that it was exaggerated. That such a miracle couldn't have even happened. It's like such a miracle, such a miracle that in West Point Military Academy, I may have told you this before, in America, you know West Point, the Military Academy where all the high ranking officers. They don't study the 6 Day War. They analyze and study wars there, but they don't study the 6 Day War. And if you ask them why, they explain that West Point is a place to study wars, not miracles. And the 6 Day War is a miracle of God. That's according to West Point.

So the 6 Day War is so miraculous that it far surpasses the miracle of the war of Chanukah in which the Maccabees defeated the Greeks Seleucid empire. Because although they were both ridiculously outnumbered, that war took 29 years, not 6 days.

So I believe that the miracle of the 6 Day War is even alluded to in this week's Torah portion. In Vayikra 26:8:



That's Leviticus, Vayikra 26:8. Now if you think about those numbers, it's really interesting. Not only because of how closely they parallel the odds of the 6 Day War, not only in raw numbers of people, but in military assets and weapons and planes and tanks. But also, because our sages tell us that the ratios are different. I don't know if any of you are the economic types that caught it, but when 5 Jews pursue 100, that is 1 to 20 odds. But when 100 Jews pursue 10,000, that is 1 to 100 odds. Did you guys notice that? Our sages tell us that there is a greater ratio because the more Jews that come together with a united heart, the more power we have to vanquish darkness and defeat our enemies.

And united we were. You know, just as Jeremy told you, our backs were against the walls, graves were being dug, the world was writing off this 19-year-old experiment of the Jewish state as a temporary fleeting mistake, of some sort of Divine mistake that they thought that the world made. But through that War, through the 6 Day War, Hashem showed His strength. And in front of all the nations, He showed the world that the God of Israel lives and endures. If any of you, by the way were alive and you remember what that was like, I would love for you to share that. To send me a message or to write it here, I love hearing the testimony of my father. You know, he told me that he was sort of a short, small guy, and he would get beaten up all the

time. But he said that after the 6 Day War, there was a strange new respect that everybody had for Jews. They couldn't imagine Jews not being victims, but being victors. So I'd love to hear that from you.

But that's why Jerusalem needed to be liberated in such a miraculous way. So we remember that it's only through Hashem's blessing and protection and through Hashem's strength that we were blessed with victory rather than defeat. I know I've spoken about this so many times, but we just couldn't be confused to think as we talk about all the time here, that as Deuteronomy tells us, so we don't go around, God forbid, thinking for a moment that it was our strength and the power of our hands that accomplished this greatness. For that type of thinking has been a terrible stumbling block for the Jewish people throughout history. I think that's why I repeat things like that so often because there's a few real lessons that we need to internalize now and that's one of them.

Because the fact is that Jerusalem is a city of faith in God. Not faith in the strength of our hands. Jerusalem is not only the capital of Israel, but the beating heart of mankind. Rebbe Nachman of Breslev, he says, wherever I go, I'm going to Jerusalem. Because Jerusalem is not just a city. Jerusalem is an idea, but it's even more than an idea. Jerusalem is the why of the entire world. And I'll tell you at our farm, our House of Prayer on the very top of the mountain, you can look out the window and you see the buildings of Jerusalem in the distance. And it's so important for me to go there and pray because I sometimes feel that I'm a bit of a small-minded guy. I don't have such vision and I get so immersed in the magnitude of what we're doing on the farm that I get lost in the what of it and I forget the why. I forget why we're doing, everything we're doing, and that's for Yerushalyim. That is, in order to bring the Sh'kinah into the world. That's what Yerushalyim represents. It's the "why" of the world. And that's why Yerushalyim is a national holiday for us in Israel.

And with my whole heart, I believe that one day soon, the whole world will celebrate Yom Yerushalyim as one of the foundational benchmarks in the journey to universal love and brotherhood for all of mankind, which is coming up soon, believe it or not, I really know it. But in many people's eyes, what's happening right now, at this moment as we speak, in Jerusalem, makes that belief seem ridiculous. And you couldn't blame them for their skepticism. I want you show you now some footage of what's happening in Jerusalem just in the last 24, maybe 36 hours. Like this is happening right now as we speak.

(Video of Arab rioters in Jerusalem)

That's happening right now. That's not even the worst of it, believe me. There are Molotov cocktails. I've seen pictures sent to me which I'm not showing because it's too graphic and I don't have their permission. But of Jews, of Ultra-orthodox Jews primarily who were just beaten to a pulp. Stitches down the side of their face because they're in the wrong place at the

wrong time. And this intense wave of vicious violence started in the neighborhood of Shimon Hatzadik. The Arabs call it Sheikh Jarrah, have you guys heard about what's happening in Sheikh Jarrah a little bit? Anyways, the Arabs have attributed their murderous rage to some specific reason. They always find some reason and say it's about that. It's retaliation for that. And in this case, it's that a Knesset member set up an office in that neighborhood. But just like with all of their attacks, it's as if they're searching the news for anything they can pin the blame on so that they can call it retaliation, rather than what it is, which is an unprovoked, murderous violence, which is an expression of a deep-seated, intergenerational, seething hatred of the Jewish people. Which is really painful for me because I just cannot bring myself to match that hatred in anyway, not even close. I just can't have the hatred in my heart, to be on the receiving end of such hatred, that you're not reciprocating. It feels vulnerable. But you know what? I prefer it to actually harboring that hatred in my heart.

But of course, it wasn't just isolated to that neighborhood of Sheikh Jarrah, of Shimon Hatzadik. It immediately spread throughout the old city and even on the Temple Mount. And so last night, everybody was evacuated from the Kotel. From the Western Wall. They were evacuated, every Jew there, because the Arabs were throwing rocks and bricks over the Wall, from the Temple Mount, over the wall in hopes that they would land on the heads of Jews that were praying there. So here's the footage, actually from last night, in which the Kotel was being evacuated. You can actually see the stones fall.

(Short video)

Imagine such a thing. Imagine such a thing, it's an embarrassment to me that in our own Land, we can't even pray at the Western Wall. And with all this violence, how could I possibly have the audacity to say that a city which at the very moment is in flames, soaked in blood and plagued by riots and intifadas, how could I say that such a city is the city of peace? But we know that's what Yerushalyim is. Yerushalem, that it shall be seen as complete, or shalem is shalom, the city of peace. It's within the name of Jerusalem. But how could I say that the day will soon come in which love and peace will spread to the whole world, emanating from Jerusalem, flowing forth from the Temple Mount itself? Which is definitely without question, the most contested Real Estate on planet earth.

And the truth is, I'm still working it through. But Henry David Thoreau, I don't know if you've heard of him, I think he was a poet or an author, he said there are a thousand hacking at the branches of evil to one who is striking at the root. Let me read that again. There are a thousand hacking at the branches of evil to one who is striking at the root. We need to strike at the root here. We need to understand the answer to that question. And how do we do it? We need to pierce through this veil of excuses and multiplicity and lies and smoke screens and mirrors. We need to recognize that the deepest root of the hatred, conflicts, and resentments, that's at the deepest root.

And that root has nothing to do with this rabbi praying on the temple Mount, or that Jew setting up an office in a neighborhood in which Arabs live. Those are just smokescreens. The root...what is the root? The root is God, Himself. It isn't about Land, or occupation, or politics. I think we all know this in our hearts. It's about God. The root is the deep-seated feeling of resentment and inadequacy that the Arabs feel towards the Jews because they know that our shared forefather, Abraham, for whose love, they are still competing, sent their ancestor, Yishmael to die in the desert. And then when he survived and he came back, he left Yishmael behind with the slave and the donkey as he ascended to the Temple Mount to sacrifice his beloved son, Isaac, as God commanded. They are filled with this rage-filled jealousy that Abraham chose Isaac to be his successor and inheritor of the holy mission to be a light unto the nations and to bring the knowledge of God to the world. That hatred was born on the Temple Mount and so, too, that hatred is destined to die on the Temple Mount. But only when we, as the nation of Israel, rise to the occasion and rebuild the Temple. That's what really stands in the balance here.

The sages of Israel, they teach:



Visualize this. The world is like a human eyeball.... Our sages teach that the Temple Mount is the conduit, the vessel through which Divine Light flows into the world. Which makes sense because it's the evan hashtiah, the foundation stone, is the origin from which all existence was manifested. And when the Temple Mount is defiled, when the Temple Mount does not contain the divinely architected and divinely designed Beit HaMikdash upon it, then the light of Hashem flows into the world in these crooked, confused ways. The light flows in with confusion and concealment.

One of our great teachings in this fellowship that I talk about all the time, Jeremy talks about, it's something that I say many times a day – gam zu la'tovah, right? You remember gam zu la'tovah? That this too, the seemingly bad and unfortunate event? That this too, is for the good. But why does it have to be that way? Why does Hashem's goodness and blessing so often manifest and feel like curses? Why does it have to feel bad sometimes? And the answer is because the Temple is not yet established. Because the pure and pristine and direct vessel through which Divine Light can enter the world, the holy Beit HaMikdash, is not yet built. After all, there was a reason that the only recorded time in world history, where Israel was at

complete peace and harmony with the whole world was in the time of Solomon's Temple. Because the light of peace was able to illuminate the world through the vessel of the holy Temple on Mount Moriah. I mean, you can tell, just from the words of the prophets that they're talking about the lion and lying down with the lamb. That the very nature of being and consciousness will change when the Temple is in the earth. When the Temple is in the world. I think we've spoken about this before. That's why the windows of the Temple are small on the inside and larger on the outside. Because it's not the light from outside that illuminates the Temple, but it's the light from the Temple that illuminates the world.

And when you look at the Temple Mount now, the tensions, they feel more intense than ever before. And the tragedy of all of this, is that if the Arabs, if the world understood what building the Temple would mean for them, if they understood the unimaginable blessings that would be showered upon them, the only fighting we would see is them fighting against each other as to who would merit helping us build it.

So painfully, though, they just don't understand. They don't understand that we're not yearning to build a Jewish Temple that they can't be a part of. That's just a projection about what they would do. But we're yearning to build a Temple for all of mankind. As Isaiah said, for My House will be a House of Prayer for all nations. They're locked in this limited and constrained paradigm of us versus them. Zero sum gained. That there needs to be a winner and there needs to be a loser. And I believe that the reason that their hatred and rage grows so much, is that they feel the Temple Mount slipping through their fingers. They feel that they're losing their grasp on it. They don't just feel it, they know it. And they don't know what to do about it.

As a matter of fact, the sages of Israel explain that Ishmael willingly agreed to be circumcised at the age of 13. And this was such an act of self-sacrifice and dedication that he merited control of the Temple Mount for one hundred years for each year of his life up to his circumcision. Right? So he's 13 years old, that's 1,300 years. Now the Dome of the Rock was built in the year 648 C.E. And Islam lost control of the Holy Land in 1947, exactly 1,300 years later. So according to that narrative, if you believe that, if you hold by that, and I think that there's definitely something to it, their lease is up. But nonetheless, they're doing everything they can to stop the Jewish return to the Temple Mount. Anything they can.

And keep in mind of course, that they pray with their backs to the Temple Mount. They're facing Mecca. Jerusalem isn't mentioned even once in the Koran, but none of that stuff matters. When Jews go up to pray, they watch our lips like hawks, to see if we're praying. And if they do, then they have us arrested and detained. That they even have the power to do that is totally crazy. Because when we ascend, this happened to me so many times, they surround us like jackals, screaming at us and cursing at us. I've experienced it so many times myself, and on top of that, they systematically dig up these ancient and precious Temple artifacts and

destroy them. They riot, they murder, but nothing they can do can really stop us. Because the truth is, that the only thing that is really stopping us from building the Temple is us.

There's no one we can point to and blame other than ourselves. Because 50 years ago on this very day, we liberated the Temple Mount and unified Jerusalem. It was only because of these generals that were so terribly mistaken, that they believed that giving the keys and the semblance of control to the Jordanian Wakf would bring peace. It's only because of that terrible mistake that there are Jordanian policemen and uniformed Arabs on the Temple Mount. But everyone knows, everyone knows that within minutes, we could dismiss all these hostile actors from the Har Habayit, from the Temple Mount, and reassert our control over the entire mount. That reality is not up for debate. Everybody knows it. And if the leadership in Israel merely had the will and the faith to do it, then within minutes the Temple Mount could be liberated from being a place of Muslim prayer alone, to a place of prayer for all nations and all peoples. Again, in truth, the only thing standing between us and building the Temple, is ourselves.

So how do we do that? How do we build it? Well, I don't think this is a task for an individual or for a group. And this does not need to be done with violence or with force. It can only be done when there is the will of an entire nation. But how do we convince a nation to yearn for the Temple? Well, on some level, it's already happening. And each year, more people's hearts are ignited to go up on the Temple Mount than ever before. And you know, there's a lot of debate between rabbis, are you allowed to go up, are you not allowed to go up? There's a lot of fear around going up. But the fact is, I don't know if you've heard of Yehuda Glick, but he teaches all of the sources, that we're allowed, not only are we allowed, but it's a very holy thing to go up onto the Temple Mount. You have to stay around the periphery. We're not allowed to go up to the even hashtiah, the Land is too holy.

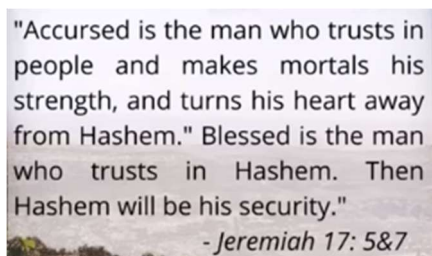
But, how do we convince this nation that already is being convinced, somehow every year the amount of Jews, the number of Jews that are lit up and going up, is going up by exponents. By a tremendous amount. But still, how do we build that Temple? That's a question that every God-fearing Jew asks himself every single day. How do we build the Temple? How do we really make that happen? And I'm not going to act like I know for sure, but I'll tell you what I think. I think that the Temple was destroyed because we were being hypocrites. Because we oppressed the widow and the orphan while offering insincere sacrifices. That the Temple was destroyed because we hated each other in our hearts, but still said the words and mouthed the prayers. That the Temple was destroyed because we treated it like a building, rather than the most intimate and loving relationship.

So, again, how do we build the Temple? How can we shine a light strong enough to illuminate the hearts and the minds of the entire nation of Israel and fan the flame of love for Hashem and the desire to build Him a dwelling place in the physical world? He's brought us back home. It's

time for us to bring Him back home. So how do we do it? I think by loving each other. It may sound trite, but it's not just any love. I'm talking about an unconditional love. A baseless love.

You know, this, I'm still consumed, I was sort of battling rather I should even bring up again what happened in Meron last week, but we in Israel, we're still licking our wounds. And the videos that are coming out of what's happening in the shiva homes, right? Where the people are sitting shiva? We spoke about what shiva is? That for seven days the family sits and they mourn and people come from all around the country and it's so unbelievable to see the secular Jews with tattoos and earrings and they're going to these houses of the ultra-orthodox and they're writing about it, how moved they are by the positivity and by the faith. And I'll tell you, I really feel like Hashem decides who is going to be that sacrifice. Who these 45 holy souls were that died in Meron, based on the spiritual stature of not only the people themselves, but their families. That when they're thrust into this darkness, this tremendous light emerges. And I'm seeing this light coming from what happened in Meron in an unbelievable way.

But the type of love that we need to have is, I'm talking about unconditional, and baseless, the type of love that makes no rational sense. That can only be the product of the deepest, internalized, spiritual truth. By loving Hashem and expressing our faith in the goodness of His ways, no matter how dark and difficult the condition He puts before us, that's the love I'm talking about. We can build it by listening to the words of the prophet Jeremiah in this week's Haftarah. You know sometimes I feel like there's better verses or quotes, but the Haftarah and the Torah portion really illuminates what is happening in our lives. And you know, the Haftarah, of course, is the portion of the prophets that we read alongside of the Torah. Right when we're done reading the Torah, we turn to the portion of the prophets. And this week it was the book of Jeremiah 17. And this is what he says:



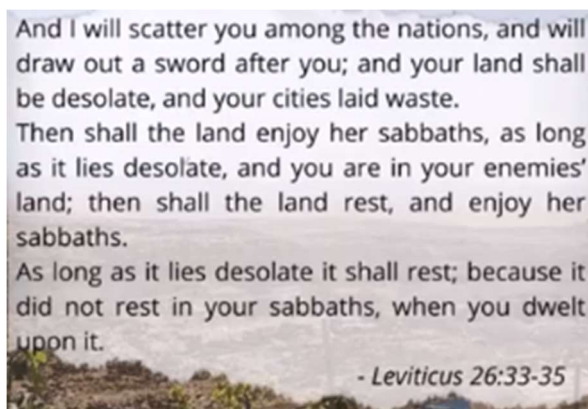
"Accursed is the man who trusts in people and makes mortals his strength, and turns his heart away from Hashem." Blessed is the man who trusts in Hashem. Then Hashem will be his security."
- Jeremiah 17: 5&7

When we finally understand that the hatred of the jihadist world against us is maxed out, I always hear these politicians saying, well if we do this, it will kindle the wrath of Hamas or Hezbollah. There's no amount of anger that they have left beyond...they're already maxed out. They hate us as much as they can. There's nothing that we could do to make them hate us more. When we finally realize that we have a responsibility to all of mankind, that our job is to love them, and not necessarily to have them love us. Because one of our biggest Achilles heels, is we just want to be loved. Finally, we just want to be loved, but that's not our task right now.

Our task right now is to love the world and to do what is our responsibility – to bring light and even if the world doesn't love us at the time, they'll love us when the time comes. When we realize that we can indeed stand alone in the world, because Hashem is with us, then we can move forward as a nation to build the holy Temple in Jerusalem.

And now, another hint in the rebuilding of the Temple, is found in this week's Torah portion and if I didn't have to prepare this fellowship, I wouldn't have connected these dots. Because as you know, as we just spoke about, the Torah portion, it illuminates our lives in the most precise orchestrated ways. So it's not a coincidence that Yom Yerushalayim falls out on this week's Torah portion. This portion, it opens up by talking about Sh'mittah, the Sabbatical year. Can I continue just by saying, Sh'mittah? Strangely enough, the Torah tells us that the exile of the nation of Israel from the Land of Israel, is due to their not keeping and honoring the Sh'mittah. Not keeping and honoring the commandment of the Sabbatical Year.

And so it's Leviticus 26. It's up on the board right now.



It's not like, the sages say. That is directly from the mouth of God. So as you see, the Torah tells us explicitly that we're exiled from the Land due to our negligence of Sh'mittah. And of course, as we know, the destruction of the Temple and the exile were synonymous. They went hand in hand. The Temple was destroyed and as a direct consequence we were exiled from our Land. It's almost as if there's no purpose in even being in the Land if we didn't have our Temple.

Now, why would that be the case? What is the connection about Sh'mittah and Jerusalem? What does the Temple have in common with the Land of Israel and keeping the Sh'mittah, Sabbatical year? So, I think at least, part of the answer is that the Land of Israel and the holy Temple in Jerusalem are both vehicles through which we have a relationship with Hashem. Because just as we treated the Temple as something that was separate and apart from us. That we didn't recognize our relationship with God that we had through the Temple. By not keeping the Sabbatical, by not keeping Sh'mittah, by not understanding that the Land, too, is a living

thing, and that we have a relationship with God through the Land and it needs to be honored and loved and respected. By not recognizing and honoring that truth, we deserve to be cast out from the Land. Just as we're cast out from the Temple.

You see, Sh'mittah, the Sh'mittah year wasn't only for the Land, it was for us as well. Honoring the Sh'mittah was a testimony to a very deep truth. Rav Chanoch of Alexander said that when we keep Sh'mittah for a whole year, it reminds us in a tangible, real world way, day in and day out, that Hashem created the world and that everything ultimately belongs to Him. That there's no real, absolute, ownership in this world. Right? We see that in this parshah, everything reverts to its previous owner. There's no true ownership. That everything ultimately belongs to Hashem. And if, God forbid, we don't keep the Sh'mittah, then we need another reminder that Hashem created the world. Therefore, Hashem sends us to exile and reveals to us that the world is indeed His. He created it and He can take it away from us.

Okay, so there was this girl that I went to grade school with in Texas. And she's now a teacher in a Jewish day school in Chicago. And she reached out to me a couple of days ago and asked me if I could make a short video for her students explaining how the Land could survive a year of not being worked. Now whenever I have the opportunity to connect with Jews in the diaspora and share the beauty of Israel with them...I'll jump at it. I don't care what I have to hook it onto. So, while I could tell you what I told them, I wanted to take you all along with me to see how I answered this question for a class of Jewish 5th graders from Chicago.

(Video)

Shalom to my holy friends at Hillel Torah. My name is Ari Abramowitz, and your teacher, Mrs. Fox and I were in school together many years ago in Texas when we were just kids. And now she has a beautiful family and is teaching all of you at Hillel Torah, and I'm a farmer here in Judea, in the Land of Israel. It's funny how Hashem leads us all on our own unique journeys. Now Mrs. Fox asked me to reach out to you and share with you a little bit about Sh'mittah, or in English, the Sabbatical Year.

Now let me give just a little bit of background first. About six years ago, I came out to these mountains and there was nothing here but rocks and thornbushes. Nothing. We brought out the water, we brought out the electricity. We planted nearly 5,000 fruit trees, three vineyards, we created this unbelievable fresh water oasis down there, I don't know if you can see it, but it's really, really beautiful. We built this enchanting beit kenesset, right behind us. And what was empty, barren mountains, is now a diamond in the crown of Judea. And I say Judea because the reason Jews are called Jews is because we are from Judea. This is our indigenous Land. We only ended up in America because our Temple was destroyed. We were exiled around the world. That's why I was born in Texas and you're all watching this video in Chicago.

And when we were exiled around the world, we were no longer able to be connected with the beating heart of our nation, which is the Land, itself. We started believing we were a religion, instead of a nation connected to a Land. And we're no longer able to keep the laws of the Land, such as Sh'mittah, the Sabbatical Year, which Mrs. Fox asked me to share about with you. A little bit about Sh'mittah. And she asked, how is it that the Land itself can survive without the farmer's help?

Now, this is a great question. And way before modern agricultural science understood the tremendous value to the Land, for this practice of not working it, not planting it, not ploughing it, not sowing it, not harvesting it, nothing, just totally leaving it. Before science knew how good this was for the Land, Jews were giving the Land a rest. Why? Because Hashem told us to do so. And why is it so good? Well at the simplest level, it's good for the soil. As it helps the soil recover and replenish itself from constant farming of the same crops which deplete these important nutrients out of the earth. And one thing that's become very clear to me since establishing this farm in Judea, is that just as we're living beings, so is the Land. And just as we need Shabbat every seven days for us to rest, there is a Sh'mittah year every seven years for the Land to rest as well.

Now many societies throughout history have used crop rotation to overcome this effect of the land being depleted, from over farming. And even today, crop rotation is recognized as an important aspect of farming in order to maintain this optimal soil composition. But no amount of crop rotation is as good as complete rest for the Land, itself. And definitely that applies here to Judea and to the Land of Israel where Hashem commanded it. And so letting the Land lie fallow is not only an important sign of respect for the Land, but it's also a sign of faith we have in Hashem, that He will provide for us. And Hashem actually makes this promise in Vayikra, kaph hey, that's the perek, kaph, hey. I'll read it in English.

And if you shall say, what shall we eat on the 7th year? Behold, we shall not sow, nor gather in our produce. Then I will command my blessing upon you in the 6th year, Hashem says, and it shall bring forth fruit for three years. And you shall sow the 8th year and eat still of the old fruit until the 9th year, until its fruits come in, you shall eat of the old store.

It's a crazy thing, and it's really quite rare, for Hashem to make such a promise in this world, which He does. That if we keep the Sh'mittah, He will provide plenty for us in both the 6th and the 8th year. It was very much a continuation of the manna from the desert, in which we for 40 years, right? It was supplied, we received a double portion of manna on the 6th day, for all 40 years. So even before modern, agricultural scientists knew how good this year off for the Land was, we as the Jewish people knew it. Just like we knew how important it is for us to have a day of rest before every psychiatrist in the world says it today. And think about it. Picture it. Anybody could walk onto any farm and just eat from the fruits. Eat from the wheat. Everything

belonged to everybody as a reminder that it's all from Hashem. And that it all ultimately belongs to Hashem.

And even for the farmers themselves, even for ourselves, no longer does our job define us. For one year, we're reminded that we're more than just our profession. We're also just Jews who can spend this year learning Torah and enjoying our families. There's so much more to say about Sh'mittah and to share with you and to show you, but the Sh'mittah year hasn't started yet, so I've got to get to work. But I invite all of you to come out and visit and eat from our trees and our wheat and our fields and our vineyard to your heart's content. This coming year is Sh'mittah. It's all yours. Either way, I hope to meet all of you someday here in the Land of Israel, in the Land of your heritage. Shabbat Shalom, my friends. Shabbat Shalom from Judea to all of you, to Mrs. Fox, and to all the holy students of Hillel Torah. Shalom.
(end of Video)

Ari

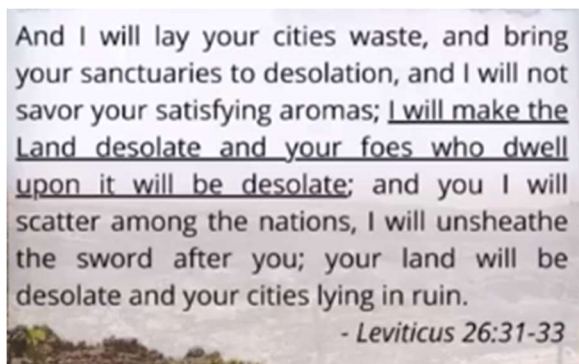
So, you know when I sent that off to her, I really didn't know how she was going to respond. Whether she would even play it for the kids. Because American Jews are just, they can be a little bit nuts sometimes. It's a thing. And maybe it was too Zionist. And maybe it was encouraging aliyah, or maybe it was, I didn't know. But, you know, I sent it to her and she said that the kids loved it and that the rabbis loved it and they sent it to all the different rabbis and the principals, and I was like, it was a private video, but I was watching the view count and it was really getting up there, just from the private views, so I'm so grateful that there really is a thirst, because think about it, there's these kids in Chicago, in like the slums of Chicago and like the concrete jungle of Chicago. And hearing that and seeing that is so foreign to them. And I'm so displaced and so disconnected from that. I don't even know how they receive it.

Because you see, we've been in exile for so long that we've forgotten what it means as a nation to have a relationship with the Land. Not only because we haven't been able to live long enough in any country to develop a real durable bond with the land, it's only like two, three, four, generations really maximum, that we've been in any place for too long. But even if we had, the relationship wouldn't have thrived, or flourished because it wasn't meant to be. It's not bashert. Have you guys heard the word, bashert?

So bashert is a Yiddish word that the Jews use, and it means soul-mate. It means divinely intended for each other. The nation of Israel and the Land of Israel are bashert. We're soul mates. And each of us cannot truly thrive and live lives of vitality as our best selves, without the other. Whether we realize it or not, we're simply incomplete when we're not together. But when you've just been disconnected for so many generations, it sounds foreign and ridiculous until you actually come back. Which is why I was just having this conversation with my friends, talking about his parents. He wants them to make aliyah. I said, don't ask them to make aliyah. Do not do it. Do not do it. Just tell them to come for one year. A sabbatical. Tell them to come

for a sabbatical year. And once they're here for a year and they're staying for one year, they're just not going to leave. They can't, they won't be able to bring themselves. I've seen it so many times.

Anyways, in this Torah portion, in the section that goes into this explicit detail of what will happen to us if we violate God's decrees and don't keep the Sh'mittah year, it's so intimidating, but hidden among these horrible warnings, is a secret of blessing. I don't know if it's a blessing, it's more of a consolation of sorts. Again, we find ourselves in the 26th chapter of Vayikra. Do we have the slide, Ben? Great.



Now I found all of these different sources of testimonies from Mark Twain, who talked about this barren expanse of desolation. Of all the testimonies of how desolate the Land was. But, why is it so significant? Why is it a consolation for us? Because among these warnings, these almost curses, God does indeed console us, amidst that suffering and pain in the exile, that we can at least know that the Land is not giving forth its fruit to our conquerors. And it's not engaged in a loving relationship with our enemies.

You know, even before knowing this truth, I always had this, like a sensitivity that I've had, you can ask Shayna, you can ask my friends, whether I was in the Swiss Alps, or the islands of Thailand, which is pretty much all the destinations I've ever been to, whatever I saw, I would never gush over beautiful sites and shout about how wonderful and beautiful it was. It never felt right to me. I always felt that it would be like a husband oogling over and admiring the beauty of another women in front of his wife, or even behind his wife's back. It always felt like a betrayal to think such a thing, let alone to actually say it. Because the fact is, that the fruits of the Land, they're just another form of the manna that fell from the heaven in the desert. But rather than falling from the sky, it grew forth from the Land.

So, there's the Chatam Sofer, the Chasam Sofer as the Ashkenazi say. He's a great sage. He explained that the Jews that left Egypt knew from their youth that the fruits and the grains from the... that grew from the earth, that was just the natural order of things in Egypt. That's how things were in Egypt. And therefore, when they saw the manna raining down from

heaven, they couldn't control their excitement. They would scream, food is falling down from heaven, can you believe it? We've never seen anything like it before! You can imagine, you'd feel the same way. But the Chatam Sofer goes on to explain, that the children who were born in the desert, didn't consider the manna falling from the sky as a miracle at all because that's what they'd always known. Since the day they were born, their food falls out of the sky. So when they came into eretz Yisrael, when they entered the Land of Israel and saw food growing out of the earth, they were amazed. They would scream, who could believe such a thing? Food is growing from the ground? From the earth? Who could imagine such a thing? How great is Your creation, Hashem.

Because for them, nature as we know it now, was a miracle. So just as the manna in the desert was the bread of faith, the fruits and the vegetables and the grains of the Land of Israel are also the same thing. And just as the Israelites that gathered a double portion when they weren't supposed to...remember what happened to that double portion when they weren't supposed to? It was infested with maggots and worms. That was an expression of their lack of faith by collecting double. And in the same way, the nation of Israel, we expressed our own lack of faith by working the Land in the Sabbatical Year. And therefore, we didn't deserve to remain in the Land because doing so was not only a betrayal of the Land itself, but of Hashem, even worse.

Which brings us back to this moment, to Yom Yerushalyim. A while back, I was interviewed by dear friends of mine, about the holiness of Jerusalem. And so I thought it would be meaningful to share that video with you so you can actually hear my words echoing off the walls of the holy city of Jerusalem. So here it is.

(Video)

Welcome to yet another episode in the Joshua and Caleb Report, stories from the heartland of Israel. Luke Hilton here with Caleb Waller. We are just outside the Old City of Jerusalem at Jaffa Gate. We are waiting for Ari Abramowitz to arrive, but just a quick word, you've probably noticed that we have this series progressing in Jerusalem and that is so exciting to me because we get to see all of the history, but today, we are bringing it up to the present day of why the Jewish people are here in Jerusalem.

Caleb

Ari Abramowitz is a phenomenal man. A man of great character and a man who truly loves this city. The things that we're going to touch on today have to do with the "why." Why Jerusalem has been the center point for the Jewish people for thousands of years. And why still today, the struggle is fighting for this city.



Caleb

Ari, I'm ecstatic to walk through the streets of Jerusalem where every single stone has a story and the history is so evident everywhere we walk, but I think, to me as a Christian walking here, it doesn't have near the depth that it does to a Jewish person. So to me, what is the meaning of Jerusalem to you?

Ari

What's the Jerusalem to me? A better question is, what is my meaning without Jerusalem? Asking what the meaning of Jerusalem is to the Jewish people is like asking what the meaning of breathing is for the human body. Jerusalem is the pulsating heart of the nation of Israel. It's who we are. It's never left our consciousness, even for a moment. We should just start, before we even go through, to say it's impossible to put Jerusalem into words. It's like the difference between reading a sheet of musical notes and experiencing a Philharmonic orchestra. Jerusalem is an experience. And Jerusalem has never left the consciousness of the Jewish people for 2,000 years. At every moment, when we build a new house. My partner, Jeremy, builds a new house. And the first thing he does when he moves into this completed home, is scrapes away a portion of the wall, so there's a bare, empty, paintless portion of the wall. The Jews do around the world because why should our house be built when God's House lies in ruins. The first thing we do after we eat, any meal – the rivers of Babylon, we sat and we remembered Zion. That's the blessings after the meals. That's what it's all about.

A Jewish wedding, the first thing we do, right before we celebrate, is break the glass, because the Temple is destroyed and then the groom says, if I forget thee oh Jerusalem, may my right arm lose its cunning. What does that mean? Think about that. My right arm lose its cunning, it means without Jerusalem, we don't have our strength. We're not able to accomplish anything. Jerusalem is not just a city, it's an idea. It's a mission. It's the mission of the Jewish people. And I know, it sounds like abstractly philosophical and spiritual. But sometimes, the most spiritual, abstractly, philosophical things are really the simplest truth. And that's the simplest truth of what's happening here in Jerusalem and in the world. That this is a spiritual war that we're in and that the truth of God will go to the entire world.

I'll tell you, when I think about being here and these stones of Jerusalem, when I actually allow it to internalize into my heart, I picture my grandfather, my great grandfather, my great, great grandfather, for thousands of years, if I was able to tell them, I'm living here. I'm walking through Jerusalem. They would faint. They would not believe it's even possible. And I'm meriting to live it, to experience it, to walk through it. And that's the miracle of what Israel is.

So there's a reason that God took the Jewish people out of Egypt on a circuitous route, and not directly to Israel, that it took 40 years. Because it's one thing to take the Jew out of the exile. It's another thing to take the exile out of the Jew. So when we came into the Land of Israel, when we conquered the Temple Mount, we clearly still had exile eyes, because we passed right over the Temple Mount to the Western Wall. And we gave the keys to the Temple Mount to the Jordanian Wakf, because we weren't ready yet. We weren't there. But we're approaching the Yovel, the Jubilee Year from the liberation of Jerusalem of the Temple Mount. This is a turning point where the real, true liberation that's happening, isn't geographic, it's right in here. The only thing standing between the Jewish people and building the Temple is right in here.

The first verse in the Torah is – Bereshit bara Elohim et hashamayim v'et ha'aretz. God created the heavens and the earth. Why does it start with that? Our greatest commentator says because in the end of days the nations are going to come against us and say the land of Israel doesn't belong to you and your answer should be, God of Israel created the entire world and He gave us the Land of Israel. That is our right to be here. Israel should stand up to the nations of the world and say, Jerusalem is our capital. Jerusalem is the beating heart of our nation. That's where we serve the God of Israel who's much more powerful than all of you put together.

When you look at the forces of darkness and evil and repression that are turning against the Jewish people now, even more than ever, what are they turning against? Judea, Samaria, Jerusalem. So we know that these are the front lines. This is what they want to take from us. This is what we need to fortify. This is what we need to stand firm and unwavering about, even if the entire world is against us. That's what we need to do and that consciousness that will force us to stand against the world and put...because we're going to be afraid. There's fear in the world, but we can decide, is that fear, fear of man? Fear of the nations? Or fear of God?

Luke

So Ari, overlooking the Kotel, right here, what should the place of the nations and Christians be to the Western Wall today? And also, is there a place for the nations in the restored Temple?

Ari

So, before I can answer what the Western Wall would be for the nations, it's important first to understand what it is for the Jewish people. Because the nations are simply an extension, just like in Judaism, we have priests that are the children of Aaron that are in some ways the intermediaries that are the facilitators of our service to God in the Temple. The Jewish people

are an am kohanim. We are a nation of priests. So what the priests are to us, we are to the entire world.

So the Jewish people, let me try to explain what the Western Wall is like. It's like, imagine a father that gets so angry with his son that he says, leave, leave. I never want to see you again. He says, go. And the son leaves. But then, he just waits a second and he goes back and he puts his ear to the wall and he hears his father crying. When we put our ear to the Western Wall, we hear God crying. That's why it's called the Wailing Wall. Because of all the tears. Because this place is the conduit for all prayers. When Jacob was here on Mount Moriah, when he was here, he said, this is the House of God, this is the gateway to heaven.

Yerushalyim ends in ayim. And only words that end in ayim in Hebrew has an equal and exact opposite. Why does Yerushalyim have an equal and exact opposite? There's a Yerushalyim shel mala and Yerushalyim shel mata, Jerusalem the spiritual and Jerusalem the physical. The two worlds come together. So when we put our hand on that wall, we're actually able to encounter the world. We can feel the tears of all of humanity. Because they've gone through this place. Right up to God.

What is it we've been speaking this whole trip as we're walking? It's that the redemption is really about a consciousness. An awareness. And what is that awareness? Prophet Isaiah says it, Chava Kook says it, he says, until the knowledge of God covers the earth as water covers the sea. It's like the story of two fish in a fish tank and one says to the other, I don't know, do you believe in water? Because we're so immersed in godliness, sometimes it's hard to see it right before us. And that's what the Temple Mount represents. That knowledge that God will push from our heads into our hearts. It will permeate all of existence to the degree where we'll be able to take this gun right here and beat it into a plowshare. There will be no need for hatred or violence. There will be no need for jealousy or sadness or grief. That's what this is all about. That's what the Temple Mount is about. It's universal. It's about bringing God to the world.

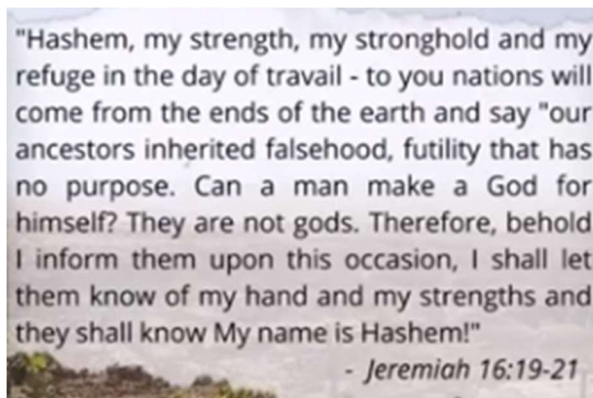
The prophet Zechariah says, and the righteous of the nations will attach themselves to the House of Israel on that day. And on this day, when the whole world is against us, for all of those around the world who are standing with us, who are literally being a comfort to us that we're not alone, for those of you who are doing that, you're attaching yourself to the House of Israel and I want to invite all of you and implore you, please come to Jerusalem, come and experience it. Because we don't only consider you our friends, we consider you to be our family. And when we're praying for that Temple to be rebuilt, we're praying for you to be right there by our side. (end of video)

Ari

I hope it was ok that I shared that with all of you. I really felt like I was able to express my heart there. And I just want to apologize, clearly time has gotten away from me and we're going a

little bit longer than usual. I hope that's ok. But, let's just bring it back together now. We're ushering in right now the holy day of Yom Yerushalyim. And we're connecting to each other from Yerushalyim. It's hard to imagine, it really is, to let it sink in, how far we've come and how close we are to the final redemption. And I think we all feel that what we're doing together here in this fellowship is a part of that journey towards the building of the Temple and the ultimate redemption.

And I'll tell you, it hit me this past Shabbat, after reading the Torah portion in the synagogue, right, we went to the Haftarah. Now it's hard to read the Torah portion, this one, and not to feel down and to feel sad. Because, unfortunately and painfully, when we read through these painful and horrific admonitions, at this point in time, they sound less like threats and more like an accurate description of the last 2,000 years of exile. There isn't even a single one of these dark nightmares that hasn't come true for the Jewish people. But as I was feeling down and thinking about all of this, we arrived at the words of Jeremiah and I felt comforted. Because of all of you. You were what came to mind when I read the words of the prophet, Jeremiah. You and this fellowship. For the prophet Jeremiah says in the very first verse of the Haftarah:



That's from the Haftarah, from the book of Jeremiah. And I doubt there's one of us in this fellowship that doesn't identify with that to some degree, that has not had to shatter some sort of falsehoods that we've inherited from our ancestors, really at no fault of their own. But we've had to shatter these falsehoods in our quest to connect with Hashem in truth. And that is what Jerusalem is. Jerusalem is the city of truth. And by seeking Hashem with all of our hearts, I want to bless us all, that we may be a part, even a small part, I'll take it, a part of the building of the third and final Temple in the holy city of Yerushalyim. May it be rebuilt fully and completely, soon in our days, Amen.

And now, it's my greatest joy to bless you with the Kohanic blessing. But afterwards, if you don't have to run off, please don't run off. I know we're going overtime anyways, but in honor of Yom Yerushalyim, I want to share with you a song by the holy Rav Shlomo Carlbach, that will touch your soul. It touches mine every single time I listen to it. But first, before I play that for

you, it's my greatest honor to bless all of you. And I want you to know when I close my eyes and I bless you, the physical distance between us is not of any consequence. I'm picturing all of you exactly right here with me because on a spiritual level, that's really what we are.

Aaronic blessing

May Hashem bless and protect you. May He shine His light and His countenance upon you. And may He give you peace. Amen.

Ok, now, my friends, I'll leave you with Rav Shlomo Carlbach, the song is called, I'm on My Way.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1t3MPxKSESI>

אם אֶשְׁכַּח יְרוּשָׁלַם תִּשְׁכַּח יְמִינִי. אִם לֹא אֶעֱלֶה אֶת יְרוּשָׁלַם עַל רֹאשׁ שִׂמְחָתִי
תְּהִלִּים פֶּרֶק קל"ז פסוקים ה"ו

Im eshkech Yerushalayim tishkach yemini
im lo e'aleh et Yerushalayim al rosh simchat
Tehilim Psalms 137:5-6

If I forget you, O Jerusalem, let my right hand wither if I do not keep Jerusalem in memory even at my happiest hour Psalms 137:5-6

There is no pain in the world that can make us forget Yerushalyim. There is no joy in the world which can make us forget Yerushalyim. For 2,000 years, whenever we prayed, we prayed all the time, we directed our thoughts, our being, our minds to Yerushalyim. If you would have stopped one on his way to the gas chambers, you would have asked him what are you thinking about, he will answer, I am thinking of Yerushalyim. I'm on my way to Yerushalyim. If you would stop one on his way to Siberia, what are you thinking about, he will answer, I'm thinking of Yerushalyim. I'm on my way, I'm on my way to Yerushalyim.

