

Session 230

Shelach – The War, The Wonders & The Long Road Home

22 June 2025

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

Ari

Shalom, shalom, can you hear me? Baruch HaShem, thank God, ok. As always, like, as often having some technical difficulties, but it is so good to see all of you. So good, I hope you can see me well and hear me well. Please give me a thumbs up if you can because this is not the ideal scenario, but great. Ok. Anyways, so I got to tell you, you're looking at a new Ari. Ok, maybe not a new Ari, but definitely a changed Ari. You know, I've always considered myself a grateful person. But I have to say that being back here in Judea, finally, holding my wife and children close after all I've been going through, well the gratitude is far beyond anything I have ever experienced. I feel like you're experiencing it with me. I see it on your faces. He who sows with tears, reaps with joy. And I know that you suffered with me, you've been crying with me, and you're celebrating with me. And I feel it, and I see it, and I love you for it.

So, I'll tell you now that I'm back home, we're trying to get into like the swing of things. Shaena and I decided to divide and conquer. Now she's not totally on her own anymore. I'm here and I'm here for her. And so I've been sleeping in the miklat (מקלט), in the bomb shelter with Dvash and Shilo curled up on a mattress beside me. That way, when the sirens go off, we don't have to wake them or move them. This was Shaena's idea and it's been a game changer. Before we had to wake up all the kids and they're flipping out and they're losing it and now they're sleeping in there. As a matter of fact, as I said, I'm now broadcasting not from our normal studio, but from my safe room in my house. Jeremy's doing the same thing. Just in case Iran decides to further antagonize the God of Israel and send missiles over, trying to ruin this Fellowship. We're not going to let them do that.

Anyways, last night at around 4:00 A.M., lying right there in that bed behind me that you hopefully can't see because I blurred my background because this room is crazy looking, I did something I try not to do. I checked my phone in the middle of the night. Am I alone, by the way, in doing this? Not in general, but lately, like over the last...how many of you have found yourself doing this over the past 10 days? Ok, good for you. I was expecting more hands to go up. Ok, good. You know, I checked my phone and what do I see? Last night, 4:00 A.M., news just minutes old, the U.S. launched a massive B52 bunker busting strike on Iran's nuclear facilities.

Anyways, now that I'm back home in Judea, I have to say that I'm just grateful that my faith is quite strong. I don't take credit for it. I know by now that it's a gift or it's not. But I did, despite that, feel a little bit of a knot in my stomach. Number one, because when America comes in and everyone's like...someone sent me a message..."Trump is Mashiach, Trump is Messiah. Thank God." And it feels like we're starting to put our faith in other places again. And that is never healthy and it's never good for us.

And also, you know, it just wasn't theoretical anymore. This was game on. This can become a world war in no time flat and everybody can feel it. If you think that this could deteriorate or just evolve into a world war any minute, raise your hand. Ok, so most of you do. I'd be interested to know why let's say Stan does not. But ok, we could talk about that another time. The point is, nobody knows what's coming next.

And you know, I looked down at my children, sleeping on the floor, peacefully, unaware of the storm raging outside around them, and they were just so adorable. I had to take my camera and just turn on my flash and capture their beautiful innocence.



That's Shiloh sleeping on the floor with his leg over Dvash's face. It was just...you know, it's just so cute. And in that moment, I was just overwhelmed with gratitude deeper than I can ever remember feeling just to be with them, just to be here. Because I knew, I knew the unbearable, almost unthinkable torment I would have been enduring if I were still separated from them. With the very real possibility

now that this could spiral into a global war, World War III. And so, just looking at them, I felt strangely calm, you know, I felt ready.

It felt so selfish, the way like in America when I was there, I was like, maybe Iran will agree to a ceasefire and they'll have negotiations, just until...I actually wanted the entire trajectory of the World War and the unfolding of redemption to go differently just so I can get back home. But now that I'm back home, I just felt strangely calm and ready. And it wasn't because the situation had changed, it hadn't. It was just because something inside me had. You know, I felt infused with trust and anchored in faith. I felt HaShem's Presence surrounding us and holding us and protecting us.

And the truth is, I didn't sleep the rest of the night, I'm pretty exhausted, but I just sat there. You know, tracking the unfolding events, praying, reflecting, and just whispering thank You to

HaShem for the one thing above all – just bringing me home to my family. You know, I got up early anticipating an immediate response from Iran. I thought it was going to happen immediately. They said missiles are on their way. For the first time since returning home, 4:00 A.M., I just got up, I put my uniform back on, and I was bracing for the worst. Not fearfully, just to be ready, but it didn't come, at least not then.

Instead, it came this morning. Just as I sat down to begin gathering my thoughts for this very consequential Fellowship, the sirens blared. Iran had launched a massive barrage of powerful missiles into Israel, missiles with growing precision, increasing speed, and terrifying destructive capacity. I mean, are you following what's going on? Some have managed to pierce through our air defenses into very sensitive spots. You know, Haifa the port was just hit today.

So Shaena and I quickly ushered our children into the bomb shelter and at that moment, I couldn't stop thinking about Ben Gurion's famous words. "If you live in Israel and you don't believe in miracles, you're not a realist." I just knew that despite the massive barrage coming in, that HaShem would continue doing miracles for us. Sometimes I feel like the miracles from above are coming at us with such rapid succession that it almost numbs us and blurs us where the miracles become like nature. That's what it feels like so much because yes, we have suffered tragic, devastating losses. But the miracles, they're everywhere. They're so frequent, so woven into our lives now, like I said, we barely recognize them anymore. They're just become the new normal.

So, there we were, in the miklat together, and I was quietly reciting Tehillim. I walk through the valley of the shadow of death. You are with me. I was reciting Tehillim. And Shaena, in her beautiful way of focusing on others rather than herself, just wanted to keep the kids calm and happy. Because keep in mind, now this is my second time since the war was launched that I was even in a safe room. I don't remember safe room etiquette. I've always been patrolling and patrolling, but they haven't had an opportunity yet to get me full speed into the army. And these are also very different missiles than before. They seem to be really working on how precise they are, and so they're much more lethal and much more dangerous and the chances are much higher.

And so Shaena wanted to keep the kids calm and happy and she launched into a round of freeze dance. You guys know what freeze dance is? The soundtrack is now an iconic anthem echoing throughout the Land of Israel. It's echoing in everybody's head. I just heard Tabitha playing it just now. "God may be blessed, always loves me, and it will always be good for me. And it will be even better." I'm not going to sing it. You know what I'm saying. "Even better, even better,

even better.” It’s just an expression of faith in HaShem. I mean, everyone in Israel is singing this. And so, this is what it looked like this morning in my miklat, in my safe room.



Ok, I want you to know the recorded video is four times as long and I just realized that it would just be too much. But if I could, I would just sit here for the entire Fellowship and show you pictures and videos of my kids, you know me.

But anyways, so that’s what it was. The truth is about this Fellowship, it’s hard to even know where to begin. Because honestly, with today being as intense and chaotic as it’s been, I didn’t have the time to really craft or condense the Fellowship in exactly the way I would have liked. You know, maybe that’s ok because while there’s so much to say, there’s also really on some level nothing really to say at all. You know, I truly believe we’ve entered that sacred phase of this war.

I keep telling Jeremy, it’s such a weird analogy, but it just goes into my head because we live out here on the Arugot Farm in the desert, in the cusp of the desert. So our cars get so dirty, and you know when you’re getting a car wash and they’re like, “To the right, to the left,” and then your cars are in that groove and they’re like “put it in neutral and take your hands off the wheel.” It feels like it’s like that.

You know like the part of the Exodus where Moshe, Moses described the Israelites as they stood trapped between the Red Sea and Pharaoh’s army. And what did he say to them? “God will fight for you and you shall remain silent.” I mean, I felt that more than ever because I’m always outside during the sirens, you know, during the alarms, watching the missiles, patrolling, proactively defending. And here I was for the first time. I’m just sitting like everybody else, helpless, inside. It was a little bit embarrassing for me, for my children to even see me like that. But it was real, and I just tried to be real. Last week I tried to be real with you, and I was. I hung up, and Tabitha, you can ask her. I said, “Should I have said all that? I feel like I really exposed my vulnerabilities,” but she said, “Yes, that’s what this Fellowship is. We’re real with each other.”

And so anyways, you know, in my heart, I believe everything we’ve endured together since the very beginning of this Fellowship has been preparing us for this moment. You know, strengthening our emunah, strengthening our faith, fortifying our bitachon, our trust in

HaShem, weaving bonds of trust and love amongst us with each other, that no distance can shake.

You know, honestly, this Fellowship would be worthwhile to me, I've said this before, even if we did nothing sometimes more than simply gather here and just gaze at each other with hearts full of faith and friendship and love. I know that sounds weird, but I just love looking at your faces. It was so wonderful to see so many of you in America, it just confirmed that. I mean like for me, a part of the unfolding redemption is us all being together here in Judea and in Jerusalem. But we're not here just to gaze at each other. We have so much to share and so much to discuss and so much to pray for. And so with that, I want to begin with exactly that. I want to begin with a prayer.

HaShem, Avinu Malkeinu, our Father, our King, we come before You with hearts full of gratitude and awe at the great wonders that You're doing in the world. Thank You for bringing us together again as brothers and sisters, seekers of truth and lovers of Your Name. I thank You, HaShem, for carrying me safely back, back to my home, back to the Land that You promised our forefathers. I thank You for the embrace of my family, for the peace of standing once again on holy ground, and for the precious prayers of this Fellowship that lifted and sustained me while I was far away. May every word that was whispered by my beloved friends in this Fellowship return to them a thousandfold. May all the words we pray for, we pray for ourselves, for each other, for Israel, and for Your great Name, be received with the love and devotion with which we offer them.

Tonight, we join our voices together in gratitude, in gratitude for Your mercy, for Your miracles, and for the gift of another day to serve You. We ask for Your divine protection over Israel, over the soldiers and families, over every innocent soul caught in the fire of this war with Iran. Shield us beneath Your wings. Send forth Your light and truth. Empower the forces of righteousness, the forces of light to overcome evil and deception and destruction. We cry out for Your justice and also for Your mercy. Fulfill Your promises, HaShem, to guard Your people and to sanctify Your Name among the nations. May this be the hour when truth rises, when unity deepens, and when Your glory is revealed.

And now, HaShem, we take a moment to lift up the personal prayers of every soul gathered here. You know the needs hidden in our hearts for healing, for strength, for money, if we need money, for purpose, for peace. Hear them all. Answer us not according to what we deserve, but according to Your infinite kindness. May this Fellowship be a beacon of hope, a vessel of Your Spirit, and a small flame in the fire of redemption You are lighting in our days and before our eyes. Amen

Ok, so here's how I thought we'd begin. I want to share with you my own miraculous testimony, the unbelievable journey of Divine orchestration and providence that brought me home. But more than just telling the story, I want to draw out the principles behind it. And then sort of zoom out to the larger picture of what we're dealing with right now. Because while everything around us seems volatile and uncertain and even chaotic, we know the truth. That every detail is being directed with exacting care by the Creator of Heaven and Earth. Every moment is precise, every twist is meaningful and every step, even the painful ones are an expression of His love.

So, from the personal to the national, from what's going on inside our hearts, from our inner lives to the headlines, all the way to the Torah portions unfolding week by week, none of this is random. And I need to share my journey, not just to express my overflowing gratitude to HaShem, not just to fulfill the mitzvah of publicizing miracles, right? Like on Chanukkah, that's how I feel, like I have my own personal Chanukkah. But because you, because of all of you in this Fellowship, you were an inseparable part of this story in so many different ways, in so many different angles. I'm not just talking about your prayers and your love and your strength that were with me every step of the way. But the existence of this Fellowship and where you've all led it and formed it. We've all formed it together.

But before I sort of launch into this daunting into this mission of sharing it all, it is my great joy and privilege to introduce my beloved friend and brother, Jeremy. He reached out to me this morning as the missiles were falling, just to say welcome home. Just to say welcome home and to tell me how grateful he was that I had returned. I really do, I bless each and every one of you to have a friendship like the one Jeremy and I share. Anyways, Jeremy, my brother, shalom, the mic is yours.

Jeremy

All right. Can everyone hear me? Tabitha? Yeah? Great, excellent. Ok, so first of all, Ari, Baruch HaShem that you are back home. Baruch HaShem that our Fellowship is gathered here together to live through these historic times together. And the first thing I want to do is just give praise and thanks and all glory to God. We are living in a miracle. And what I want to do in the time that I have because I really want to give it over to Ari because he really has the legendary story. But I have just some ideas because I've been in the midst of this war, and I've been living through it and thinking about it. And what I want to do, is I want to share what's happening in the Land of Israel from a higher perspective.

You see, Israel has been fighting a war now for almost two years. It's been a real war of attrition that should have just exhausted our nation. On one front in Gaza, the other front in Lebanon

with the Chezbollah, Syria, then Yemen with the Houthis. In Israel we were attacked by jihadists in our own borders in Judea and Samaria. And when we should have been exhausted and just done and our economy and our people, we've been in reserve duty. Exactly then, we go and take on Iran? It's just unbelievable. It's like, they're the largest and most powerful enemy of them all.

And we establish dominance in the first 24 hours. Every military expert says what Israel accomplished in that small window of time is unprecedented in history. And then comes America and puts on the final nails on the nuclear plan in the coffin and puts that to rest in an unprecedented surprise attack where Israel and America were totally coordinated. It's like we're experiencing things that we've never experienced before.

And what's happening is a miracle. There is no other way to explain the power and the success of this small outnumbered nation up against impossible odds. We are a living testimony that the God of Israel is with the people of Israel, and our return to the Land of Israel is a part of biblical destiny. And you can stand with us and be blessed. You can choose to stand against God and be cursed. But open your eyes and see the miracles. Open your hearts and see Israel for who they are.

I mean, after the U.S. strike in Iran, Iran retaliated by firing another barrage of missiles onto Israel. And again, no one was killed. And check this video out.



That is a picture of a direct hit of a ballistic missile. And there was no one in the building. There was no one there because it just so happened that it had no occupants because the strike hit with a building that was under complete renovation and all the people who lived there were vacated the building leaving it totally empty. With tens of thousands of apartment buildings in Tel Aviv, the one missile that hit, hit the one empty building under renovation? Statistically, rationally, what's happening in Israel is simply not possible. And at some point, you have to open your eyes and realize that even though God operates in these times, hidden within nature, there is supernatural protection, supernatural blessing on Israel.

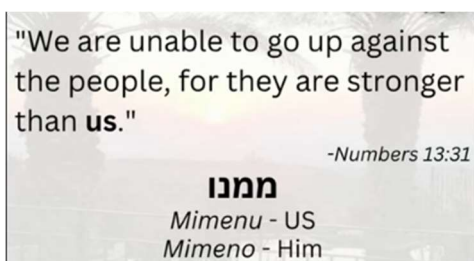
And exposing that is the whole purpose of this war. Putting us up against impossible odds is trying to make people wrap their mind around what's going on because it doesn't make any sense statistically or rationally. There must be something that's beyond the rational. There must be something that's beyond statistics.

The way that I feel what's happening inside Israel, imagine a slave in Egypt before Moses arrived on the scene. He had never seen God, never experienced anything other than exile and slavery. But he heard about the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in his family tradition probably. And maybe hoping but not really knowing what to think. And after 200 plus years of slavery, what could you expect of someone like that?

And then all of a sudden, he starts seeing the 10 plagues. The Nile becomes blood red, frogs are everywhere, one miracle through nature after another. What that Israelite slave in Egypt went through so long ago, so many Israelis are going through right now. And it's really overwhelming. If you have your head on straight, it's obvious that the Hand of God is on Israel now, but so many people are experiencing and witnessing the supernatural and have to come to terms with God all around them in their lives. Living in Israel right now is just overwhelming, it's humbling, it feels historic, it feels like words are not enough. Only praise and song can express what's in the hearts of Israel right now.

And what's happening in Israel is something, but something much bigger is happening to the nations of the world. It may not be as acute, but the change is happening. Christians, Muslims, atheists, everyone is watching as the spotlight of world history is on where? On Israel, of course. And we can see it perfectly in this week's Torah portion. It's something that's truly deep in the Torah, but you can only really appreciate it when you read the Hebrew.

This week's Torah portion was Shelach, when the spies were sent to Israel and returned with an evil report about the Land. And they terrified and demoralized the people to the point where they no longer wanted to go into the Land of Israel. And after Caleb encourages the Israelites saying, "No, we can do it," the spies retort by continuing their evil report about the Land. In Numbers chapter 13, verse 31. Here's what it says:



Every single translation reads it just like that, but notice how the word "us" is highlighted. Because in Hebrew it says mimenu. But the Hebrew verse is so deep and explains everything that we need to know about the God of Israel, the people Israel and the Land of Israel. The word "us" is mimenu. But also in Hebrew, the same exact word spells out mimeno which means "him."

So they're also saying, "We're unable to go up against the people, for they are stronger than Him," meaning God. And right there is the great secret. The people of Israel live a very unique existence. Like today's war with Iran, we live within a miracle, but that existence is entirely

within the natural world. And the Israelites saw what happened in Egypt, the splitting of the sea, how they were sustained through the desert, but that existence became the natural, normal way of being. They just had manna coming from heaven every single day. That just became normal for the people that grew up like that in the desert. That's just the way they got their food, like picking an apple off a tree. That's just the way it happened.

And right now, when they saw the giants and fortified cities, they naturally said, "Listen, we can't go up against these people. They're stronger than us. That's just in the natural world in which we live. It's statistically impossible. It's not going to work."

But being the chosen people of God, we are representing His ways in the world. What the Israelites are saying is that the enemies of Israel are stronger than Him, stronger than God. As a representative of God, when we say they're stronger than us, what we're saying is that they're stronger than Him. What does the chosen people mean? It means that our victory is His victory. Our defeat and failure is His defeat and failure. We are the witness of His Presence in the world and His representatives of His sovereignty in the world.

This morning, I got a little teary eyed when I heard a clip from President Donald Trump. After the attack, he thanks God and blesses Israel. Check this out.



Trump

There's never been a military that could do what took place just a little while ago.

Tomorrow, General Kaine, Secretary of Defense, Pete Hegseth will have a press conference at 8 A.M. at the Pentagon. And I

want to just thank everybody, and in particular, God. I want to just say, "We love You, God. And we love our great military, protect them. God bless the Middle East, God bless Israel, and God bless America. Thank you very much."

Jeremy

Right there. He's not just giving credit to God in front of the world. He's declaring love for God in front of the world. Blessing Israel in front of the whole world. Well, right there, he just sealed the fate of America and America will be blessed. Pete Hegseth, the Secretary of Defense, gave a press conference right after and he said, "We give glory to God for His providence and continue to ask for His protection."

This is the most public spiritual war in history. It's a public showdown between the God of Israel and the enemies of Israel. America has sealed her blessing for the whole world to see. And the radical, violent Shia/Muslim world which has been humiliated and taken down by Israel and then finished off by America. In Lebanon the Hezbollah and the Houthis in Yemen. That version of Islam that is hellbent on jihad and against Israel has fallen before the people of Israel in the Land of Israel.

There's going to be a shift now. When this war is over and Israel stands victorious in our Promised Land, it will force the violent jihad Muslim world to reflect on their theology. Just like replacement theology in Christianity did after the Six-Day War. Christian Zionism really took off in the 1970's because people realized all the promises, all of the gifts, all of the prophecies, it's happening to Israel. And they left their theology of replacement theology.

The Abraham Accords in the Middle East, they're about to explode. And much of the Muslim world will reform their views because God Himself in reality granted victory to the Jews. Very soon we are going to wake up to a new Middle East and a new peaceful world. And we are charting a path toward redemption and our Fellowship is leading the way toward peace and prosperity and biblically based spirituality.

And with that, I want to bless all of you. Israel, that's our deepest desire, is our deepest purpose, to be a blessing to the world. Because mimenus, us, is mimenus, is from Him. And God wants to bless all of His children. And at the end of this war, the whole world will be blessed through Abraham. All right my friends, happy apocalypse, as we will march toward our redemption.

Ari

Amen, amen. And I always thought I was the apocalyptic one, but yes, 100%. So, I'm just listening to what Jeremy said. I can't help but to think, you know, these massive paradigm shifts that are happening even now. Sometimes I feel like we're that baby elephant that's tied to that little wooden stake that doesn't let it move and then it gets older and older and older and now it would just easily be able to knock it over, but it can't make that shift in its mind.

You know, I feel like there are tectonic shifts. I was just overhearing a conversation between a builder, a developer that was saying, "Yeah, we have to redo the building because you have to build the safe room here and the safe room there." And I interrupted, I said, "You know, there's a chance that at the end of this war, we won't need to have safe rooms anymore. We won't need to. We'll cut the head off the jihadist snake." And they looked at me like I'm crazy. Like, "We wouldn't need safe rooms." It's just such a paradigm shift.

The truth is...what is preventing us, the nation of Israel, from actually going in and rebuilding the Temple? Like I'll just start off right now, off the bat, going for the Temple. What is stopping us right now? Who is going to go crazy over it? I think that that is the next logical move. I think that that's where this is all going. And the light and the peace that that Temple would bring because everybody thinks, "Rebuild the Temple, it's going to be World War." You don't understand that we're already on the cusp of that. It's the only thing that could prevent a world war, that can actually bring world peace. But that's the bigger picture.

You know, I really want to share my story with you. I need to. You know, I could sum up the story for you in a quick 45 second recap, but I feel deeply in my heart that it deserves to be told in a little bit more detail than that because in some way, the more you zoom in, the more you see the Hand of God. Because the lessons I learned, the miracles I witnessed, they weren't just personal. I truly believe that they carry strength and clarity for all of us, for the times we're in right now, and for the uncertain days that lie ahead.

So, here's where it begins. As many of you know, the Israel Summit was canceled just a few weeks ago. I know it feels like three months ago or three years ago, but no, it was just a few weeks ago. And it all started when Jeremy and I woke up to this message from our dear friend, Joshua Waller, a message that said:



This message would come to haunt me in the days that follow in ways I couldn't imagine. Don't go to the airport! It didn't say the Israel Summit was cancelled, you should decide what you want to do. Go if you want to go. It said, "Don't go to the airport!" And I ignored it. You know ultimately, it was because of this Fellowship

that I did ignore it, that we ignored it because the Shabbaton that we had planned at the home of Ann and John Stacy, it was because of that Shabbaton that we decided to make the trip because we knew that so many of you were going to be there. I don't think at the time Jeremy and I fully realized just how many of you would be coming down specifically for the Shabbaton. I mean, people were flying from all over. Montana, Canada, across the U.S., just for that one Shabbat together. There were people that flew in, they couldn't make the Friday night, they flew in just for the afternoon together! From California, from all over the states. The people that were not even staying for the Summit itself. You know, I didn't know that, but in retrospect, if we hadn't gone, how could we not go?

Shaena said it, Tehila said it, and deep down, we knew it, too. And so, we went. But once we arrived, I found myself in a real dilemma. A major piece of this trip was the wedding of a beloved family, the Levine's who had adopted me when I came to Israel as a lone soldier. They weren't just friends, they were family. They adopted me. They took me on family vacations when I came back from the army exhausted, beaten, bruised. They cooked me meals, they did my laundry, they were my family. And we've become like family, and they wanted me to come to the wedding. And they honored me in the most beautiful way by asking me to be a witness under the chuppah. You know, that's a big deal. I couldn't miss that.

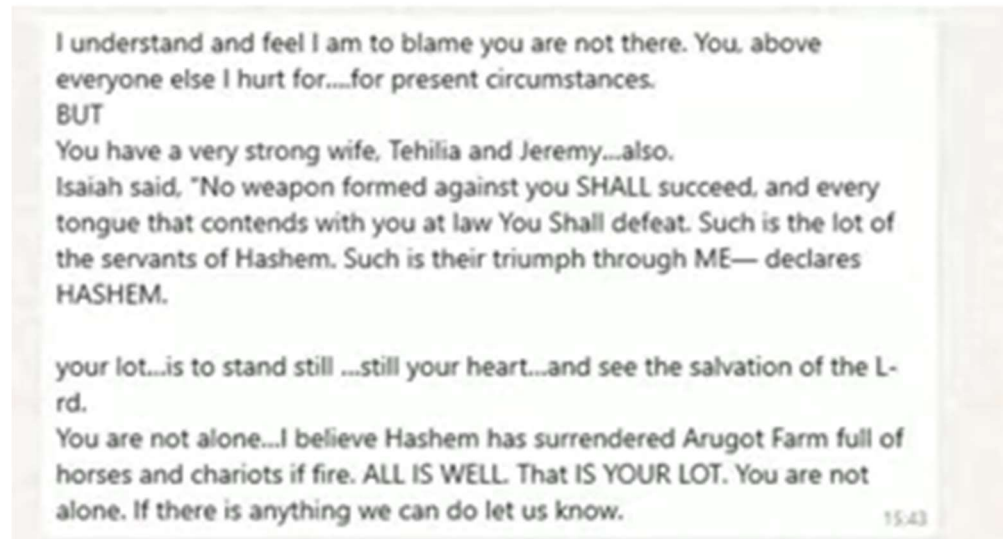
But with the Summit canceled, there were now three full days between the Shabbaton and the wedding. And I started to wonder, was this HaShem nudging me to head home early to get back to my wife and kids before it was too late? I mean, I was so plagued by this dilemma. And at the same time, the Levine's were so full of joy about me being there. They had been counting on it, they sent me these long messages that it was just such a wonderful honor. My father was there vicariously through me and their father who passed away. I mean it was just so much, and I so badly wanted to be there for them in this sacred moment.

So I turned to Ann Stacy who had been hosting me in her home with a level of warmth and generosity and faith that could only be described as biblical. You know, she hosted the Shabbaton, she hosted us, she hosted the entire Waller family. I mean I've truly never seen a home outside of Israel so fully transformed into a sanctuary for Judea and Samaria, a hub for the Jewish people and the God of Israel. I could feel the spirit of the Land radiating from her home...in the exile. It was something like maybe at the grave of the Lubavitcher Rebbe I felt something similar.

And Ann reminds me of my mother, the Texas drawl, the southern hospitality, the deep maternal love, and it just felt right to ask her. I just unloaded the whole scenario, the whole dilemma on her, how I was just so concerned that something would break out while I'm in America, I'm so concerned, I've got to get back to my family, but there's this wedding, and what should I do and what should I do? I laid it all out and without hesitation she said, "Ari, I think you need to say for the wedding. It's the right thing to do." And there was something in her voice so grounded, so clear, so true. In that moment, I just knew.

I wrote to my travel agent right then and there, "Change my ticket, I'm staying." Because I had already changed my ticket to go back and then I said, "Change my ticket, I'm staying." The changed tickets, the amount that I was paying for change for one way and change for the other way. Jeremy's like, "What are you doing?" but I said, "I'm staying and they say that there's no happiness other than the resolution of a doubt." And I felt a peace. Ok, Ann said to do it.

And then, everything happened. And when I found myself stranded in America, vulnerable, unsure, I shared the raw message with you on last week's Fellowship. I'm shocked that I didn't start crying during that message. But right afterwards, Ann sent me a message, here's what she wrote:



I mean, it was such a beautiful message, it's such a Fellowship message. It's just such a message I could imagine getting from any single one of you. It was so beautiful and it broke my heart that she may be suffering because of my lack of faith. And I immediately responded as you may have read there. I said -

"It is not your fault. Everything is from HaShem and for the good, but it's not always easy to receive it, so I'm suffering right now, but it's not your fault. It's what I need to be going through for reasons that will be made clear at some point. You are nothing but a source of light and blessing and please don't spend even one more moment feeling guilty."

And at the moment I wrote that to Ann, I really did mean it. I really think HaShem just filled me with a wave of strength and emunah just enough to deliver that message with sincerity. But soon after the tide turned. And again and again I was overcome by these waves of crippling doubt and fear and regret. I was just like, "Oh, I forget, how could I have done that? How could I?" It was agonizing, it was agonizing. Not just because I feared that I may never see my family again, but because I felt like a fraud. You know, I felt like a hypocrite. After everything, after all the teachings, all the Fellowships, all the proclamations of faith and courage, this is what I looked like when the crisis came? Right?

So, but now looking back, I believe I needed to go through that fire. I believe that there are times when HaShem in His great and mysterious love throws us into the furnace. And while

we're in it, all we feel is the searing pain of the flames. But on the other side, we begin to see the refinement, the transformation, the strength, the new strength that is forged within the suffering. And if we knew what it was for, if we understood it all while we were burning, it wouldn't work. The flames wouldn't refine us, they couldn't.

You know, we spoke about this before. King David went up against Goliath. Was he scared? Yeah, he didn't know the outcome of it. He didn't know if not only would he die, but he would be a desecration of God's Name and all the Israelites would become slaves to the Philistines. He didn't know, he wasn't supposed to know. Not knowing is what made it so precious to God.

And HaShem knew my deepest vulnerability, my family. And that's exactly where He pressed, not to break me, but to build me. I keep thinking of that mysterious man in Yoseph's story, in the story of Joseph. The one who met him as he was wandering in the desert and looking for his brothers, right? And redirected him to Dotan. You know, to Yoseph, to Joseph, he may have just seemed like just a stranger, a shepherd who happened to know where his brothers were. But we know from the sages of Israel that he was actually the angel Gabriel, an emissary of God the Most.

I imagine Yoseph weeping on his long journey, lonely journey. Maybe he wasn't, but I think there were definitely times on this that he had to. From the pit to slavery to the accusations of rape, the false accusations, to be thrown in prison again. How many times did he look back and wish he had never met that man? How many times did he wonder, "If only I had turned the other way?" But what he couldn't have known was that this detour, this descent was precisely the path that he needed. It was the journey that made him Yosef Hazadik, it was the journey that made him Joseph. The Joseph that we know, the one who would bring salvation to his family, to his people, and to the entire world.

So, in retrospect, it's clear as day to me. Ann Stacy was that angel for me. She sent me down a path that HaShem wanted me to walk and only she could really deliver the message in the way that she did that would just speak to my heart in the way that it did. And so, I had to walk that path, a path that would shape me into the Ari that I am now, an Ari that I'm still sort of just getting to know, that I like more than the other Ari.

So I stayed, the ticket was changed, and I flew to Philadelphia before the wedding to visit my cousins and to attend the elementary and Middle School graduation of their beautiful children before the wedding because if I'm there already...anyways, then that Thursday night, I turned on the TV and Israel had attacked Iran. I fell to my knees, literally. I ran to the bathroom and was retching over the toilet. I immediately called Shaena, tears in my eyes. It was 4:00 A.M. for

her. I told her to take the kids, go to our dear friends, the Gabbi's, stay with them , I said, "Stay with them, get off the farm." Those were some of the most terrifying moments of my life.

And now, at Tabitha's suggestion, from here, I want to share my testimony from the boat itself. So here you go. Here's my testimony.



Captain Jack

Departing the marina, we will be enroute to Haifa, returning on Friday.

Ari



So, are you ready for this miracle? Are you ready? So, I try to never leave Israel because I'm so afraid of the possibility of the gates shutting, of the gates shutting while I'm gone. But the mission called and I went to speak at the Israel Summit in Texas organized by our friends at Hayovel, the Israel Guys, which ended up getting cancelled anyways because of quote credible threats to our lives. But that's a whole nother story.

Anyways, Murphy's Law, Israel finally went for the head of the jihadist snake and attacked Iran right in the middle of my trip. And of course, the skies to the Holy Land shut immediately and indefinitely. Now, to say that this was distressing would be an understatement. Because this isn't just any war. This could become a regional or global war at any moment, particularly at the beginning when nobody had any idea what was going on. And the thought of my wife and children huddled together in a bomb shelter without me to comfort them and protect them, the thought of my people and my nation in the Land of Israel, and I can't be there with them, a part of this as it's happening. Well, it's hard to describe the anguish and the heartbreak. I cried more than I have at any point in my adult life.

And at that moment, I would have given anything, anything to get back home. I didn't know in my heart whether I would ever see my family again. That could sound crazy to you, but it's true. Anyways, I would have swam the backstroke through these shark-infested waters to get back. And so, after prayer and consultation and deliberation, I decided that as long as the world skies

were open, I needed to get as close to Israel as possible so if the war did take a sharp turn, the sea would still be an option. So, I booked a ticket to Cyprus and started practicing my backstroke.

And then, and THEN, I get a call from my beloved friend, Greg, who told me that he has friends who retired to Cyprus seven years ago that may be able to host me at their house until I find a way back home to the Land of Israel. And so, he reached out to ask them if they could host me. And when he called me back, well, let's just put it this way. It's a phone call I will never forget. Greg said, "Ari, you're not going to believe what I'm about to tell you." So, here it is.



He said, "My friends, Jack and Debbie are not just any people. They are very special people, they are Christian Zionists who love Israel and love the Jewish people. And after they retired, they thought to move to Israel, but they felt in their hearts that the Land of Israel is for the Jewish people to live in. But they still wanted to be close. So, they felt like if they moved to Cyprus, the day would come that they would be able to serve Israel and bless the Jewish people in a unique way from there. And years ago, Greg explained, they bought a boat

and took a skipper navigation course. And now they know why. It was all for this moment, Captain Jack explained.



Captain Jack

We moved to Cyprus about seven years ago to be closer to Israel, to be near Israel, looking for opportunities just like this, to be able to serve.

Ari

And so when this war broke out and Jews were stranded, you felt like, how did you feel at that moment?

Ari

And so they decided to sail stranded Jews stuck in Cyprus back home to their families. And Greg explained to me that they have one spot left on their very first maiden voyage to the Holy Land. And that spot, he said, that spot, Ari, is for you! I could not believe my ears. And the tears started to flow. I literally fell to my knees in gratitude that I was actually on my way home to see my wife and my children and be with my people in my Land to weather this crazy storm of redemption together on our mountaintop in Judea.

So, Captain Jack, he said, "It would be between 20 and 30 hours at sea. I didn't care what it was. I was going home. And here we are now, in the final hours of this seabound journey. And I can already feel the Land of Israel in my bones. And it has been an adventure.



Ari

Captain Jack, could you tell us where we are right now?

Captain Jack

(laughter) We are on the water. On the water.

Ari

According to this, it looks like we're in Beirut.

Captain Jack

Yeah, well we're close. The GPS has been scrambled and so we can no longer rely on this as warning.

Ari

We were circled by sharks, there were missiles overhead. Captain Debbie, expertly maintained control over the boat to avoid a head-on collision at 3:00 A.M. I mean, we're five passengers here on this boat, and it's the entire political and religious spectrum.

Ari

Ok, we're going to do a quick introduction. Like then Gilligan and Skipper too. That's what's happening now. So you are?

Crew

I am Debbie. Jack. Captain Jack.

Passengers

Nick, Na'ama, Lishai, say something.



Shema. My name is Lishai. My name is Evelyn.

Ari

And there has been nothing but love and support and gratitude bonding us together. Anyways, there is so much more to share, but I'll end this video here with gratitude, just gratitude to the Creator of heaven and earth for sending me these two beautiful angels. You can see Captain Jack right behind me, Skipper Debbie, she's down taking a nap. They've been alternating all night.

And you know, in this crazy world where the forces of darkness are seeking our death and destruction with all their might, to see these two angels of light rise up with hearts of zealous love for Israel and the Jewish people, you know, to bless us, to save us, and bring us home to our families. Well, I just think it's another sign that God is doing great things with us. And even greater things are in store. So may we merit, my friends, to see the full redemption soon in our days with our own eyes and see the building of the Beit HaMikdash. Amen. (end of video)

Ari

Ok, was that awesome? I hope, I know it doesn't convey the depth of what we went through. I mean, there are just so many angels. There was Captain Jack and Skipper Debbie, there was Greg Uppam who connected us, who was there for me every step of the way, just a beloved friend of mine for 20 years. There's just so many...Ann Stacy, all of you. I can't begin to describe the power of that journey. It felt biblical. At one point I even turned to Captain Jack and said, "You know, if the waters start getting too rough, don't hesitate. Just toss me overboard. I'm pretty sure that there is a whale out there waiting for lunch." Like, I wouldn't be surprised if that happened.

You know, from the very moment we set out, something just shifted. It just shifted. And, you know, as we launched into the open waters, I recited Tefillat Ha'Derek, with more conviction, more urgency, more kavana and intent than I ever have in my adult life.



I just have to tell you, I'm like looking through all your faces right now. And I see Captain Jack. He's here with us! I don't see Skipper Debbie, but Captain Jack is with us. I'm going to invite him later soon to say a word if he wants to. No pressure, he's just so humble and unassuming and he plays the part of just being a normal person. I have come to know that he is very far from that.

But anyways, you know I recited that blessing and I remember the moment we were in Israeli waters and Captain Jack hoisted the flag of Israel on the boat. I forgot to send this link to Tabitha. I don't know if you can see it here. Maybe not.

Anyways, you know it was just so powerful for the first time, I will never forget the first time my eyes beheld the Holy Land.



You know, laying eyes on my beloved Land for the first time after facing the very real possibility that I may never see her again. There are no words. None. I thought I loved Israel before. I didn't know the capacity for love in the human heart, the capacity for Land, the capacity to love a little piece of earth with

the Spirit of God upon it. You know, it was overwhelming, it was holy, it was beyond anything I could ever have imagined.

And yet, as powerful as that moment was, there was one moment that eclipsed even that. The moment I walked into my sister's home in Modi'in and was finally reunited with my family. I didn't even let myself go there. I didn't let myself imagine or think about it because I just had to focus and pray and hope and the thought of getting my hopes up and that never happening would be too devastating. Shaena called me one morning and immediately the video was on and I saw Shilo and I burst out weeping, I just hung up. I think I told you that last week. It was just so hard for me.

So the moment I walked into my sister's home in Modi'in, and just finally reunited with them, that embrace, that breath, that first look into my children's eyes. My sister caught a glimpse of it on video, just a sliver of it that she got. For me, it was an eternal moment.





It was heaven. It was heaven on earth, you know, being together with my family over Shabbat. We stayed in Modi'in by my sisters for Shabbat. We were all together in the bomb shelter. That was the first time in the war that I was in the bomb shelter. Being there in the bomb shelter with them, it was heaven. I know, it sounds strange to say, like it sounds probably strange for you to hear. Like heaven? Huddled in a miklot in a bomb shelter? But what can I tell you?

What I experienced on that journey wasn't something you can learn in a shiur, in a class or read in even the holiest of books. It was open heart surgery performed by God Himself. And I know, deep in my soul that I will never be the same. And I know that we are all enduring that right now in different ways by what He is doing in the world through Israel, through the nations. We are all going through that, you know, and I just felt like it was happening in my soul, I had to experience it.

And for this all to be happening during Parashat Shelach. I mean, come on, right? Could HaShem have spoken any louder? In Parashat Shelach, the children of Israel stand at the threshold of their destiny. The Land is right before them. but instead of stepping forward in faith, 10 of the 12 spy's freeze. They see giants, they see danger, they see impossibility. They forget that when God says, "Go up and take the Land," it's not a suggestion. It's a promise. A promise that He will go with us.

You know, I was outside the Land when this crisis broke out. As you know, the skies were closed, the gates slammed shut and you know, just like the generation of the spies, there were voices around me saying, "It's too dangerous, don't even go back, wait it out, you'll never get back if you try, just wait for the flight. Instead of you going, bring your family to you! Stay in the exile." They were saying I should bring my family to me, even the transportation minister of Israel, trying to calm the public said to those frantically seeking return, she said, "You're abroad, stay there. Enjoy yourselves."

Now, I don't mean to vilify her. She was doing her job. You know she was trying to calm people down, but the contrast was glaring. You know, the night before I sailed, I slept on Captain Jack's boat, surrounded by Israeli families, disembarking into Cyprus. They had escaped the Land. But I and tens of thousands of other Israelis were desperately, desperately trying to get back in. The amounts that people were paying, it's hard not to say it was a little bit extortion, but you know, it was what it was and people would pay anything. I would have paid absolutely anything. And I'm not judging, you know everyone has their journey. But I had never before felt such a dramatic disconnect between those fleeing the Land and those aching for her soil.

You know, some Jews of course were devastated to be stuck abroad. They wanted to return, but simply couldn't. They live in the United States, but when I saw them, they were riddled with yearning for the Land. But others, I met more than a few who had no desire to go back. Who saw Israel as the last place that they would want to be. We'll visit, they said, we'll visit once the war is over. We'll go for our visit, we'll stay in our hotel and we'll do our thing. I'm really trying my very best not to judge. I don't think that I'm judging. I have only love for them.

But you know what? The contrast between them and the tens of thousands that were just doing anything they could. There's no country in the world like this. I don't think there is, at least where so many of her people are pulled toward her like scattered pieces drawn to a magnet. Like little fragments of a magnet drawn to it, like rays of the sun, like connected to the sun being pulled back. You know, looking back, yes, I was scared, I was shaken, I was broken in a lot of ways. But maybe, just maybe, like I said, that was me at my best. Because HaShem wasn't asking for perfection. He wanted to see what I'd choose from that place. And I'm grateful beyond words that He gave me the strength to choose faith over fear, to choose movement over paralysis, to do everything I could to get closer to the Holy Land, to position myself for redemption.

Never in my life had I seen the Calebs and Joshuas of our generation so clearly. The contrast was so great. And just like those two righteous spies who stood up against the tide and declared, "We can surely go up." Our choice to believe that God would make a way actually opened the sea. Literally. Jack and Debbie's boat became our modern-day physical and spiritual ascent to the Land, like actual ascension, overcoming the odds, on a ship like in the days of old. Just as HaShem split the waters in ancient times, He stirred the hearts of righteous Gentiles to part the waves, to part the waves. This time with sails and charts and unwavering faith to bring us home.

Because Parashat Shelach, I really hope you all read it. If anything is probably the most precious portion in the Torah for me at this point in my life, at this point in history, because it's so

encapsulates the calling of our generation. It's a call to action. When we step toward our destiny with trust in HaShem, miracles follow. This wasn't just my personal journey. It was a living parable of our collective yearning, a glimpse of what it means to long for eretz Yisrael with your entire soul. To move toward her no matter the cost. How many tickets? You know the only ticket I was able to get back from America was business class. I've never flown business class. I've never even gotten close to flying business class. So, one could say, "Well, business class, wait for the skies to open, it could come any day now." You have that business class, you're not going to get a refund for it because El Al does not give refunds for return flights, only for round trips. You're going to throw away thousands of dollars to pay, thousands more to get..." But I said, "This is what money is for. I will give anything to get back,"

And as I stood before God feeling utterly unworthy of the redemption that He had just gifted me, that I was on my way home, I asked myself, "What can I possibly take upon myself in gratitude?" I felt like I needed to take something on. Tehila says that a lot, it's sort of wired in the soul of the Torah, to like take something on. What did Jacob say before he left the Land? "If you bring me, if you give me clothes to wear and food to eat, I will tithe." He took something on. What could I take upon myself? There are things that are personal, there are things that I want to share with you, there are things that are related to the redemption of all of mankind.

And one of the things I realized, the sin of the spies, it wasn't just an issue of fear. It was also about ingratitude. They looked at the Land through a lens of doubt and dismissed the Divine gift right in front of them. But my journey, you know, maybe it could be a small tikkun, a small rectification. At a time when the gates were closing and the skies were hostile, my heart really truly was aching for Zion. I refused to be comforted in the exile. Not I refused, I couldn't. It wasn't even in my realm, my range of free will. And I know the truth, that if I was single, if I was alone, if my family wasn't in Israel, I would have close to, if not the same level of desperation to return.

I remember when Jeremy and I flew out from Israel, I was in seat 40J, an aisle seat, right next to the bathroom, like the worst seat in the plane. Actually, Jeremy may arguably have had the worst seat on the plane because he was in the middle seat next to me. So, he was next to the bathroom in the middle seat. But one could debate which is the worst seat on the plane. But between Jeremy and I, it was covered. You know every time that door opened, let's just say it wasn't a pleasant. It was not a Divine fragrance, and I was resentful to be in that seat.

But unbelievably, on my flight from New Jersey to Cyprus, the one that I paid thousands for the day of, I was in the exact same seat. And this time, I cherished it. I celebrated every bump, every waft of every smell, every time my seat wouldn't recline. I celebrated it because I was

moving closer to the Land, I was on that flight, I would be within sea distance. That changed the whole game. And you know, suddenly every inconvenience became a gift.

You know, when the spies cried out, “Let us return to Egypt.” The tens of thousands clamoring to return were saying something else. Not with words, but with actions. “We want to return, not to Egypt, but to Zion. We want to go to the Land of HaShem. We want to go home, it is a good Land. They’re bread in our mouths. They’ve been delivered to us.”

It was a message of faith. And in that collective soul deep yearning, I believe we were healing something ancient. Every Jew there in Cyprus, that pain, that anguish, that yearning, something was healing in the nation. We were correcting a blemish etched into our national soul. And standing before HaShem, I made a commitment to rekindle the fire of Caleb and Joshua in the hearts of my people. I can’t blame them for not having it. How could it be but not extinguished after thousands of years of torment and persecution? It’s just natural. I would try to rekindle that. You know, maybe Caleb and Joshua’s voices didn’t change their generation. Maybe they didn’t succeed, but maybe ours will. Maybe mine will. After all I’ve endured, all the love and grace I’ve been given, undeserved and overflowing, I believe that if I cry out from a place of love and humility, louder than ever before, that possibly it’s within God’s power that the dormant fire of Israel in the hearts of the scattered exiles in the diaspora can still be ignited.

I’m telling you, Jack and Debbie’s boat, it wasn’t just a seabound vessel. It was a modern-day tevah, a modern-day ark, Noah’s ark of faith carrying precious souls across the water, towards a new chapter of redemption. A chapter foreseen by the prophets of Israel, that never made sense to me, definitely not in a personal way. Before this trip when the prophet Isaiah exclaims:

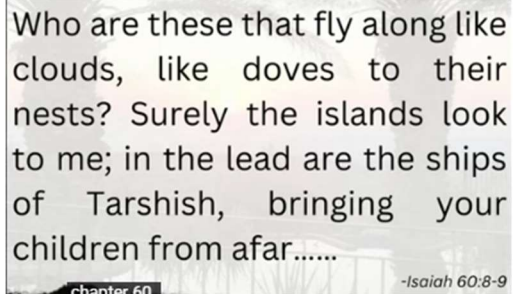
Behold, I will lift up My hand to the nations, and raise My banner to the peoples; and they shall bring your sons in their arms, and your daughters shall be carried on their shoulders.

-Isaiah 49:22

Have you ever read it that way? Jack and Debbie, totally righteous of the nations, they were prophetically prepared in advance to step into this sacred role. They’re not just kind-hearted sailors. They are fulfilling the words of Isaiah, carrying the sons and daughters of Israel home. They weren’t guided just by a compass and a miss-wired, dysfunctional GPS.

They were guided by the banner of HaShem, the God of Israel, raised high among the nations.

And so, just 10 chapters later, Isaiah sees their sails once again. Isaiah chapter 60:



Who are these that fly along like clouds, like doves to their nests? Surely the islands look to me; in the lead are the ships of Tarshish, bringing your children from afar.....

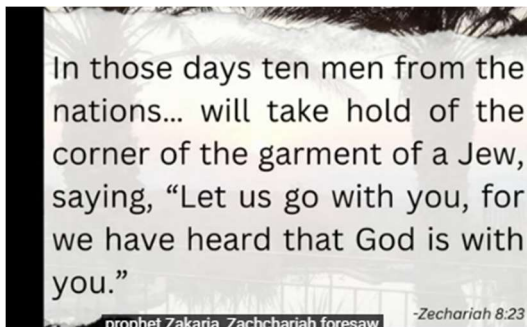
chapter 60

-Isaiah 60:8-9

You know, my journey on that sailboat, it wasn't a private miracle, it was like a real whisper of prophecy, a living echo of the ancient vision. It wasn't just a crossing of the Mediterranean. It was the nations rising up, not in judgment, but in joy to bring the children of Israel home. Jack and Debbie, they didn't just steer a boat. They stepped into the pages of the

Tanakh, of the Bible, of the prophets. They said, "Hineni, here I am. Use me for redemption. Let my hands, my sails, my life serve Your Divine plan."

And it wasn't just Isaiah who saw the. The prophet Zakaria, Zechariah foresaw this moment as well.



In those days ten men from the nations... will take hold of the corner of the garment of a Jew, saying, "Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you."

prophet Zakaria Zechariah foresaw

-Zechariah 8:23

They led a boat filled with Jews from all walks of life, bound together by faith and longing and love. They took hold of us and they brought us, you know, and on those waves, I saw a glimpse of what's coming. Really, a unity that was so deep, a love that was so real that it can only belong to the footsteps of Mashiach.

You know, during the final leg of our journey home I turned to Jack and I said, "You know, there's something so beautiful about this moment." You see, over the years Jeremy and I have taken more than a few slings and arrows for our love, our friendships, and our outreach to the Christian world. And now, it's Christians who are saving me. Could you ever imagine me saying those words? I was saved by Christians. But it's just true. It's Christians who are saving me.

And I will never forget Jack's response. And I invite Jack to please consider just sharing a word with us at the end. You know, there was a question I asked him that was accidentally cut off in that video. Maybe he can answer how he was feeling then. Or if there's anything I said, my mind was a crazy haze. If there's anything I said that was off, but I'll never forget his response when I said that for the rest of my life. He looked at me and said, "We have learned so much from you. We have learned to love Israel, to feel connected to the Jewish people because of what you and Jews like you have shared with us. You kindled that fire for God in our hearts. So really, who saved who?" That's what he said as we were there on that boat in the middle of the Mediterranean.

And that moment, I think it just broke something in me so beautifully. Since then, you know, I've told everyone I meet about Jack and Debbie, and I mean everyone. And I'm sure, Jack and Debbie, their phones are ringing off the hook with requests from stranded Israelis because they've committed to keep sailing until they're no longer needed. I mean, I'm still recovering from the 25 hours on that boat. But Jack and Debbie waited three hours, just three hours, collected their return trip passengers of Jews seeking to leave the Land for reasons that they needed to leave the Land for and they returned to Cyprus for the next 25 hours. The self-sacrifices simply beyond, and now they're prepping I think tomorrow morning to head to Israel again.

You know, I tell everyone about them. I tell them about these selfless, loving, Israel loving, Jew loving, Christian Zionists who moved to Cyprus with the hopes that the day will come they can bless Israel and the Jewish people from there. And yes, I have seen some raised eyebrows, I have. I've seen the skepticism, even the cynicism, I know it. I'm familiar with it, I understand it. It's born of 2,000 years of rarely, if ever meeting anyone who will stand with us without any other motives in our time of greatest need. And so people, Jews, so Jews, assume there are just strings attached, either financial or more likely to convert us to Christianity.

But when I tell them that Jack and Debbie refused to accept any money, when I tell them about my conversation with Jack in which he made it clear that he has no desire to missionize, to evangelize, to proselytize, when I testified to the sincerity in his eyes, when he looked directly into mine and told me plainly, "We're all saved by our faith in the God of Israel. I just want to love you and to bless you, not to change you."

You know, when I share all of this with them, I see something shift. I see a spark in their eyes. I see a softening of their hearts. "And could it be, could we really not be alone? Could there truly be people out there who love us, not in spite of who we are, but because of who we are, with no ulterior motive at all?" You know, in those moments, I witnessed something holy, something healing, like a different type of fire that is being kindled, a fire that only real love can ignite, a fire that has the taste of redemption to it.

And that brings me back to all of you because from the very beginning, it was your fire that illuminated this Fellowship. Your love that fueled this mission week after week. Without you guys jumping on board at the very beginning, we couldn't have done it. You know, through the ups and the downs, through Covid, October 7th, rejoicing together in our moments of joy and holding each other when we were broken, the Fellowship has been like a rock for me in my life. I don't think we'll ever fully grasp the light this Fellowship brings to the world. But through this

wild journey of personal redemption, I've seen just a glimpse of the light it's brought into my life.

And so, my friends, you know, I know how easy it is to get swept up in the fear, the ICBM's, the bunker busters, the shifting alliances and darkening clouds. Even with great faith, it is normal to be afraid of what's happening, and just stay glued to your phones and the alerts and the headlines. It all feels like we're watching the final war unfold before our eyes.

But let us not forget that every single detail in our lives and in the world is being orchestrated by the Master of the Universe with great love and perfect precision. And if we can just pause, breath, and pray. If we can look at the world even for a moment, not through eyes of fear, but with Mashiach eyes, we may merit to catch a glimpse even now of the great light of redemption that is at this very moment rising on the horizon. May we merit to see it and even more may we merit to be a part of it.

And with that, I would like to end with a blessing and then open up the Fellowship to hear from Jack, to hear from all of you. But I would like to end with this blessing.

Avinu, Malkenu, HaShem, we thank You for this holy gathering, for the souls You brought together from every corner of the earth, Jews and righteous from among the nations, united by a shared love for You, shared love of truth and of Israel, and of Your unfolding redemption. Thank You for sustaining us, thank You for protecting us, thank You for guiding us, even through the fire, even through the storm towards our destiny.

We stand here tonight as vessels of gratitude, grateful for every breath, grateful for every moment of safety, grateful for every glimpse of Your Hand guiding history with unfailing love. May this Fellowship continue to be a sanctuary of light in a darkening world. May our unity grow stronger, our courage deepen, and our faith burn brighter.

And as the missiles rain down, HaShem, protect us. As alliances shift and the war with Iran unfolds with terrifying speed and global implications, we turn to You with our hearts wide open because You alone are our shield. You alone are our strategy. You alone are our hope. We come to you not with answers but with longing, and not with pride but with surrender. And we declare before all of creation ain ode milvado – there is nothing but You, there is none but You.

We thank You for the miracles both hidden and revealed that have sustained us until now. We thank You for the strength to rise each day, the clarity to choose faith over fear, and the love that binds us together as one people and one body and one soul. May You bless the soldiers of

Israel who stand in defense of Your Land and Your people. May You shield the innocent. May You frustrate the plans of the wicked and may You confuse those who plot destruction and turn their weapons into dust and turn their weapons into silence.

We plead with You, HaShem, reveal Your justice, uplift the righteous, silence the liars and let the world know through us that Your Name is one and Your world is eternal. HaShem, may the day come soon, so soon when the swords will be beaten into plowshares, when the tears will be wiped from every face, and when all flesh will see together that You alone are God. And until that day, may we each be granted the strength, the humility, and the joy to take our place in this great unfolding redemption. May the fire of Caleb and Joshua burn within us. May the love of this Fellowship sustain us, and may we live to see the day when all the world...all of the world joins together in singing, "HaShem, may He be blessed, always love me, and it will always be only good and it will be even better and even better and even better."

And with all of that it is my great joy to bless all of you with the blessing of Aaron the High Priest. And while as you know, I am not personally descended from Aaron, the Torah teaches us that we are an am kohanim v'goy kadosh, a nation of priests, a holy nation. And it is in that capacity that I bless you with the blessing of Aaron the High Priest.

Aaronic blessing (Hebrew)

May HaShem bless you and protect you. May HaShem shine His face upon you and be gracious to you. May HaShem lift His face toward you and grant you peace. Amen.