

Session 231

Korach – Is the War Over or Just Beginning

29 June 2025

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EXgcIJoM8wE>

Jeremy

Shalom everybody, welcome to the Land of Israel Fellowship. Let me know if you can hear me. Yes? You can hear me, ok, excellent. It's great, wonderful, beautiful to see all of you, to see your beautiful faces. With wars all around us, I'm clearly getting soft, literally seeing your faces makes me teary-eyed. I'm just so happy that we're going through all of this process in Israel together. And life in Israel is never boring. It's been head-spinning, but our Fellowship like an anchor of sanity and stability in this volatile world has been here the whole time.

And we were in the middle of an almost two-year war, since October 7<sup>th</sup>. And then a war with Iran started without really any warning. It shocked us, it left Ari stranded in America and somehow found his way back to Israel on a sailboat, and then 12 days later the war with Iran came to an abrupt end. The country came to a standstill for almost two weeks. There was no school, all the kids were home, only essential businesses were open. You couldn't gather together in large numbers because they were scared of a ballistic missile hitting and causing mass casualties. And then, just like that, the war ended and kids are back in school and life is just moving on. And now we're just living in the afterglow of the miraculous time that we lived through.

And you know after Korach's downfall, the people still struggled to understand the path forward. That's this week's Torah portion. And God instructs Moses, "Take the staff from all the tribal leaders, place them in the Mishkan, overnight, only Aaron's staff blossoms. A dry piece of wood comes to life. Buds, blossoms, almonds, and it's not might, but life that validates HaShem's chosen path.

So, too, after military conflict, the real test is not just victory, but vitality. Can Israel turn its strength into healing? Can the Jewish people turn their resilience now into rebuilding, into shining its light. And that's exactly where we're holding right now in history. And will Israel blossom and renew? What we're going to see today is that the signs of the time that Israel has never been more unified, never been more strong spiritually, and we're really in for very exciting times as we chart this path forward.

And you know now, looking back, we have like Jewish humor that always keeps things entertaining. And Tehila forwarded me this funny WhatsApp that was inspired by Donald Trump's tweets during the war.

"My husband now exclusively ends his sentences with 'Thank you for your attention to this matter.' So, 'Honey, I'd like a steak for dinner, thank you for your attention to this matter. Honey, I can't find the remote, thank you for your attention to this matter.'"

And I just thought this was so funny, that that's how this husband communicates with his wife. It makes me want to communicate with Tehila this way. "Thank you for your attention to this matter." But soon Tehila is coming on and she really has a beautiful Torah insight into war, into the Torah portion. But now that the dust is settling, we look around, and we see providence and spice carts really everywhere. Just this week it was reported that since October 7<sup>th</sup>, 45,000 Jews have made Aliyah. The same week as the war with Iran came to an end, it was recorded that 45,000 missiles, rockets and drones had been shot onto Israel since October 7<sup>th</sup>. From Gaza, Yemen, Iran, the north, 45,000 Jews made Aliyah, this exact same number of projectiles fired in Israel. It's just another spice cart, nothing here in Israel is an accident. Everything points to something much greater that's happening. Everything is a communication from above, calling on us to see the hidden Hand of God in everything that happens in Israel.

And so, with that, I just want to kick off the Fellowship with a prayer, a prayer of gratitude for the miracles that we've lived through and witnessed and with all of us here together, I just saw on the chats – from Germany and Holland and America and South America, it's just such an opportunity to bring all of us together from around the world, like a House of Prayer for All Nations around the world. It's like a window into the future. And so, with that –

Master of the Universe, HaShem, our Rock, our Redeemer, we gather here today as we do every Sunday to start off our week, Your Fellowship. Jews and the righteous among the nations, from Israel and around the world. We are filled with gratitude and awe. You, HaShem have shown wonders in our time. You stood with Israel in her hour of danger, You have performed miracles, hidden and revealed during this war with Iran, against all odds. You guarded Your people, guided the Hands of our soldiers, and humbled our enemies. We thank You for the courage You gave, for the wisdom You poured out and for the lives that were spared by Your mercy. We do not take any of Your miracles for granted.

Please, HaShem, continue to protect and strengthen our soldiers in the IDF as they fight to bring justice and peace in Gaza, in the Land of Israel. Give them courage and strength, power without

pride, and success in their mission to uproot evil and restore security to the Land You promised to our fathers, Avram, Yitzchak, and Ya'acov.

Bless all the members of this Fellowship, wherever they may be, from around the world. Bless them and bless their families with health, protection and light. Bless them for standing with Your people in these trying times with their hearts, with their prayers, and with their love. May they always feel Your closeness and be uplifted by the blessings of Zion. Together, HaShem, may we be builders of Zion, and may we prepare the way toward our redemption. May we bring Your light into the darkness around us, may we see the day when our swords will be turned into plowshares of productivity. And the whole world will know that You are One and Your Name is one. Amen

All right my friends, just last week we had days where we had to run to the bomb shelter several times a day, several times a night. We would see absolute destruction caused by the ballistic missiles that got through the defense systems and hearing these thundering booms right above our heads. And you really felt how delicate life is. And such a narrow bridge. And those moments though in the bomb shelter, it caused the people of Israel to reflect. Those times really got people thinking about life. Are they living a good life? Are they proud of the life they're living? The time inspired people to soul-search.

And in some ways, Israel has been changed forever. Y-Net, Israel's top internet news site reported that Israelis, 63% are praying more now, 59% are talking to God more now, and 45% are reciting the Psalms more often now since the war. And from what I can gather, Israel is the only country in the modern world that as it's becoming more prosperous, it's becoming more spiritual, more connected to God. Every other country in the world, as it becomes more wealthy and more successful, it forgets God. But Israel is the one exception that as it continues to grow and to develop, and become more prosperous, it's becoming more spiritual, more connected to God. We can't always see it, but if we live by the principle, that everything that happens TO Israel, happens FOR Israel. That means that even the hard times, they're just molding Israel into who we were created to be.

And so, I want to give a short introduction to our fearless leader who is my wife, who is the most beautiful of all creations. I just adore her, I'm so happy that we have a chance to learn with her. She is a pillar of the Fellowship and she is a woman's voice in a woman's world. And so, with that, I want to invite her to come and join us in the Fellowship, Tehila? You want to come? What's a woman's world? You're the boss, so a woman's world in my world. You're the boss.

Tehila

Wow, thank you, hi everybody. So great to see you guys! Ok, so, thank you Jeremy for that amazing Torah and update and introduction and overwhelming introduction, thank you. Ok, hi guys, so this coming week's Torah portion is the portion of Chukat. And you know, I think it is the most concentrated amount of wars in any portion. Israel's war after war and each one blends into the next and so, of course, at a time like this, dealing with what we're dealing with here in Israel, that's what caught my eye and kind of got my attention.

I don't think that in Israel there's ever been such a concentration of wars... in the Independence War and the Six Day War, and the Yom Kippur War. We fought against a lot of countries in the same war, but the last almost two years, it's like while one war is going on, another one starts, another one finishes, we haven't finished one and another one is already gone somewhere else and we're still on the old war. Hezbollah and Houthis and Iran and then, wait, there's still Gaza. And so in this recent round with Iran, we were all kind of holed up in our houses for 12 days and then suddenly you can go out again and you see people in the supermarket, it's like, "Hey, how was your war?" "Mine was ok, how was it for you?"

And then we finish that war and it's like, "Ok, I guess we're back to the old war cause you know my son is going back to Gaza, my nephew is going back to Gaza." So you don't know when one war is finished, which war you are referring to. Like how's that going for you? So of course, this portion with this kind of concentration of battles, interestingly more this year, I noticed something that was new to me. Up until now, all of the stories that we've read in the Torah from the Exodus, all took place in the first two years. There's Mt. Sinai, and the calf, and the Tabernacle, and the laws, and then there's supposed to go to the Land, but whoopsie-daisy, the spies, and now they're stuck dying in the desert.

And then, we have Korach this past Shabbat, some time in the desert, we don't know exactly when, and then fast forward, here we are in this coming Shabbat portion of Chukat, to enter the Land in the 40<sup>th</sup> year. We've just glossed over 38 years, fast forwarded and all of our great leaders suddenly die and we're in the 40<sup>th</sup> year, we're ready to go into the Land. So this is our first time in the Torah meeting the new generation. The old generation has died out and this generation never saw a war. The old generation, their parents, they saw the Egyptians at the Sea, they saw the Amalekites, some of them went out to even try to fight to get into the Land after the sins of the spies and they were decimated. This generation, they've never seen war.

And then, suddenly, in the last year, they lose two out of their three great leaders, Miriam and Aaron, and now they have to face for the first time in their adult lives, conflicts with other nations. HaShem has been kind of carrying them through the desert on the clouds of glory and

their fathers, they weren't ready to go into the Land. This is the generation that we know is poised to win. They are the generation of redemption. But they need to become that, they need to become that. Their parents weren't able to teach them that, their parents weren't that.

So now, in previous years when I would read this portion, to me it kind of read like, you guys know when you read the book of Judges that it just kind of feels like...then they sinned and they said, "Sorry," and then HaShem saved them and then they sinned and then they said, "Sorry," right? So I kind of always read Chukat in that same kind of melody. Like, they asked to cross over somewhere and then someone said, "No," and then we fought, "Great job," next we tried to go through. And I never kind of got into the nuances.

But this time around, I noticed that when you look at the development of these wars in the portion, you can actually see a development within Israel between confrontations to confrontations, we're actually growing. I want to suggest that maybe, I'm throwing this out as an idea, maybe it's prophetically showing a way that we would also have to develop again in the future. Up until this recent round of wars, people would say, "Oh, you know, the generation of 1948, the generation of 1967, those guys were courageous. This generation, the teenagers now, they just watch TikTok, and play on their I-phones."

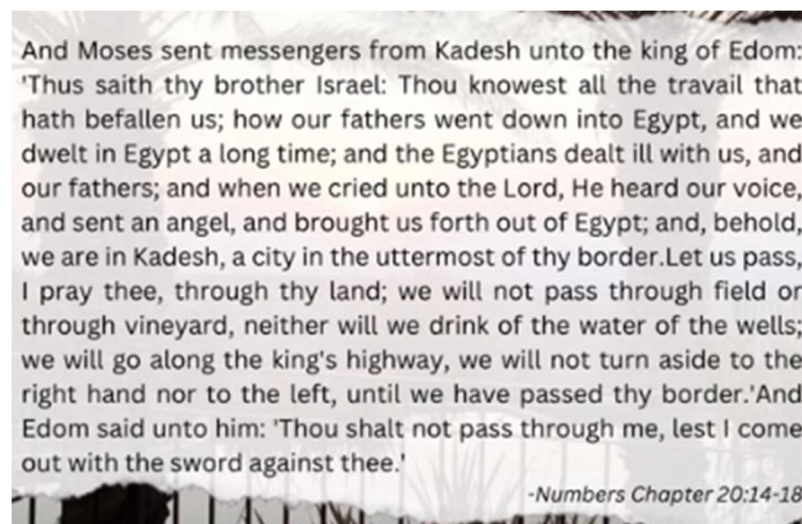
But in this period of time we discovered something incredible. That this generation has nothing to be ashamed of in comparison with the early Zionist pioneers. Maybe even in comparison to the Maccabees and the warriors of King David. We've seen courage and self-sacrifice parallel to the best of any generation, deeper than the courage and the self-sacrifice. I think that anyone in Israel would say that there is also a different spirit now among the young generation of Israel among the young warriors of Israel that's different than the spirit of their parents or their grandparents.

And when you think about it, the first generation, the parents of the grandparents, the generation that sinned, the parents of the generation that we're reading about in Chukat, the generation that sinned in the sins of the spies, just two portions ago, it's only two portions ago, but it's actually 38 years ago. We always remember the ones that were of these uncourageous hearts, these fearful hearts, and they were crying, and they were scared. That was only one spirit in the nation. We sometimes forget that right after that, there was another sin, the sin of the machpilim, the ones who rose up to try to conquer the Land of Canaan, even without permission. And they seemingly had good intentions. If HaShem is mad when people are cowardly, then surely He's going to appreciate it if we courageously go and try to grab the Land. But Moshe said, "No, don't go, HaShem is not with you." And they were of course, we know, beaten very badly.

When I look at it, it kind of reminds me of our previous generation in the Land. You have Jews in the exile saying, “No, it can’t be done. The nations won’t let us, the Land is too treacherous.” And most of them, unfortunately, perished in the desert, in the exile. And at the same time, you have those who are like, “Yeah, let’s go conquer Israel, let’s be Zionists, let’s be pioneers.” They weren’t entirely, but at least mostly coming with a secular and very anti-religious, anti-God kind of spirit. And I don’t think it’s a coincidence that they actually called those boats of the first Jews that were trying to sneak into the Land against the British Mandate, they called those people, Machpilim, the same name as the ones who went in against Moses’s advisement and tried to conquer the Land.

So, unlike the original sinners in the desert, they actually successfully and courageously returned to the Land and were able to create the State of Israel, but at the same time, they did have a spirit that was lacking in faith in HaShem. They said, “We can do this on our own. We don’t need old fashioned traditions and religion.” And it worked for awhile, but ultimately many of those groups, their children lost faith in Zionism and tried to promote giving away the Land and trying to appease our enemies because they weren’t guided by Torah values. So ultimately, that didn’t sustain itself.

Now, just like we’re seeing in Israel, in Chukat, we have a new generation. And now, let’s watch the development that happens to this new generation. So the first conflict, the first kind of like meeting that they have with another nation is with Edom. Those are like our cousins, the children of Esav. They should have some common ground with us, like a little bit of good ole memories. And if we look at Numbers, chapter 20, it says in verse 14:



Fair enough, right? Let’s tell the nations about how hard it’s been to be a Jew and all of the bad things that have happened to us. Surely they’ll have compassion on us, right?

The sword. How familiar does that sound? It’s like, listen international community, we’ve been through such a hard time, we were mistreated by the

Nazis, and our fathers were mistreated in Pogroms, would you mind if we just kindly go into our Land? We’re not going to ask anything from you, we won’t bother anybody, but would you just

give us permission and maybe vote for us to be able to have our Land? Would you mind if we just go and exist? Would it offend you if we existed? And they're like, "Yeah, no."

And how do we respond? We like say, "Hey, that's not cool with us. God is with us. You better watch out." It just says that we went around Edom. We just kind of retreated and found another way.

Now, look what happens. Something crazy happens. No matter how hard Israel tries to avoid conflict, conflict comes after us. We try to speak and get mercy, beg mercy of the international community, but nothing actually helps. And no matter how hard we try to appease and avoid conflict, we just defend ourselves, retreat, the war comes after us because look what happens right after that. In chapter 21, it says:

The Canaanite king of Arad, who lived in the south, heard that Israel had come by the route of the scouts. He waged war against Israel and took a captive from them. Israel made a vow to God and said, "If You deliver this people into my hand, I will dedicate the spoils of their cities to You." God heard Israel's voice and gave them the Canaanites. The Israelites destroyed all of them and dedicated the spoils of their cities to God. They called the place **Chormah** ["Destruction/Dedication"].  
-Numbers Chapter 21:1-3

It's not clear in the Hebrew if it's (captive) singular or plural, but he takes "hostages." So we're just sitting there quietly trying to appease everybody and then they take hostages.

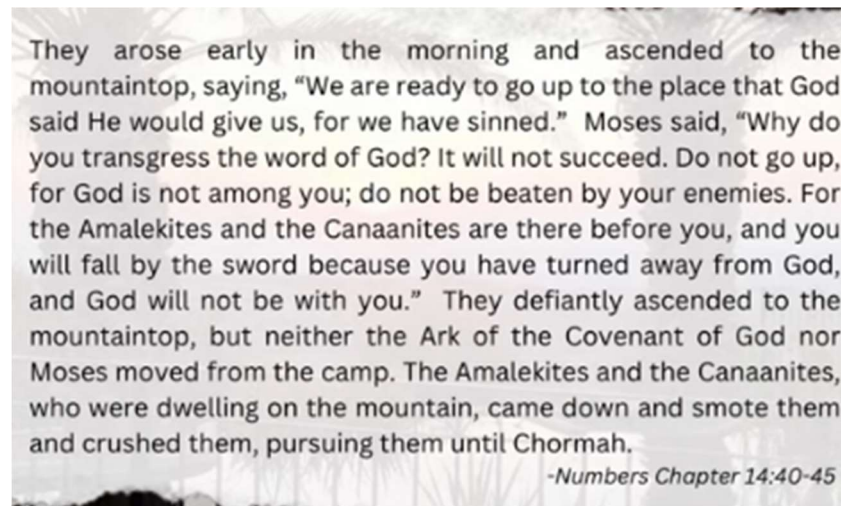
And then what do we do? Imagine on the one hand, we know that HaShem has taken us this far, surely He's going to take us into the Land, but on the other hand we seem to be losing, we're having this Pogrom that's happening to us, hostages that are taken from us, we're not sure if HaShem is with us or not with us. What do we say? Israel made a vow to...

The Canaanite king of Arad, who lived in the south, heard that Israel had come by the route of the scouts. He waged war against Israel and took a captive from them. Israel made a vow to God and said, "If You deliver this people into my hand, I will dedicate the spoils of their cities to You." God heard Israel's voice and gave them the Canaanites. The Israelites destroyed all of them and dedicated the spoils of their cities to God. They called the place **Chormah** ["Destruction/Dedication"].  
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So the Canaanites are attacking us on their own initiative. What happens to us when we tried to avoid conflict? Did they have mercy on us? No, they took hostages. It's such an interesting turning point

because looks what happens now in the spirit of the nation. If you look at the words, they're so purposely reminding us of the sin just two portions ago in the portion of Shelach when the

machpilim went to go fight for the Land with God's permission. Look what it says. Also back there it says:



They arose early in the morning and ascended to the mountaintop, saying, "We are ready to go up to the place that God said He would give us, for we have sinned." Moses said, "Why do you transgress the word of God? It will not succeed. Do not go up, for God is not among you; do not be beaten by your enemies. For the Amalekites and the Canaanites are there before you, and you will fall by the sword because you have turned away from God, and God will not be with you." They defiantly ascended to the mountaintop, but neither the Ark of the Covenant of God nor Moses moved from the camp. The Amalekites and the Canaanites, who were dwelling on the mountain, came down and smote them and crushed them, pursuing them until Chormah.

*-Numbers Chapter 14:40-45*

Where did they crush them until? You guys reading the verse? Hold onto your chairs. Until Chormah, the exact same place. Is that unbelievable? You know when we talk about teshuvah or repentance, we always say you only really know that you've repented if you end up in the same situation but act properly. They're fighting the

same enemies, it's the Canaanites, it's not just any Canaanites, it's the Canaanites in the south of Israel, same ones, 38 years ago. But instead of being beaten until Chormah, they beat them until Chormah.

What was the difference, the story is turned on its head. The fathers were going with a rebellious spirit. Moshe said, "HaShem isn't with you." "We don't need HaShem, we got this, we can do it on our own." What would have happened if they won? It might have been very cool and nice, militarily, but spiritually it would have been a disaster because what would that teach everyone else? Might is what matters, not having HaShem with you. Now they said, you know what? They don't come with a haughty spirit at all. They say, "We don't know if HaShem is with us. But they've taken hostages so we need to fight, we can't just leave our hostages. We don't want to have a haughty spirit of our forefathers. We're going to declare that if we do win this, it's not our win. It's HaShem's win. We're going to dedicate this win completely to HaShem. We don't have a choice but to defend ourselves, but if we're successful we know exactly where it came from. It comes from HaShem."

And then they're successful and then they do what they promised. Now what happens after that? Look at the maturation process. The next war that they go in, the next conflict that they have is in verse 21. We go to Sichon, the King of the Amorites and we say, "Can we pass through your Land?"



Israel sent messengers to Sichon the king of the Amorites to say Let us pass through your land. We will not venture into fields or vineyards or drink well-water. We will walk along the king's road until we have passed through your territory." Sichon did not permit Israel to pass through his territory. Sichon gathered all his people, and he went out to the desert toward Israel. He arrived at Yahatz and fought against Israel. Israel smote him with the sword, and took possession of his land from the Arnon River to the Yabok River, and as far east as the Ammonites, for the border of the Ammonites was strong.

-Numbers Chapter 21:21-24

No more, "Hey guys, would you have mercy on us? Would you mind? We've had a really hard life." Just straight-forward, "This is what we need, this is what we want, would you be ok with that? We have some common interests, we'll have a good alliance, we won't

use your resources, would you just mind letting us through?"

Sichon did not permit them to go through his territory. He gathered his people toward Israel, fought against Israel and Israel smote them with the sword. Did we run away this time? We took possession of their Land this time. We did not look for the mercy of the nations, maybe a little bit of diplomacy, just in respect, a friendly alliance, but when that doesn't work, and they come out with their guns blaring, we don't retreat, we fight and we win.

I think that it's not a coincidence that they act differently this time because they've been encouraged by what just happened in the conflict with the Canaanites because they saw that HaShem is indeed with them and that gave them courage. And now look what happens in the last war in the portion. There's no dialogue, there's no asking permission, they say:

They turned and ascended toward Bashan. King Og of Bashan came out toward them with all his people to wage war at Edre'i. God said to Moses, "Do not fear him, for I have delivered him, his people, and his land into your hand. You will do to him as you did to Sichon king of the Amorites, who dwelt in Cheshbon." They smote him, his sons, and all his people, leaving no survivors, and they took possession of his land.

-Numbers Chapter 21:33-35

It's a whole new way of looking at things. This is a whole new generation now in the deepest sense, not just technically a new generation. Now they've actually become the generation of victory. More and more people...I'll say this, they have a

new way of looking at things.

When you turn to HaShem, when they turn to HaShem and they were successful, that made them more courageous. But not courage in the way that's saying, "My might and my strength," but a true deep courage. The deepest courage comes from a place of faith and that leads to ever greater success, ever greater courage. And I think in Israel we're seeing this process, too. Because people are turning away from that early Zionist ethos of "my strength and my hand and

I don't need God." Some of them have turned away and become fearful, run away, maybe moved away from Israel or tried to appease the nations. But many, maybe even most have come closer to faith, closer to tradition, closer to Torah. And then we see miracles and alongside the hardship and there are hostages being taken and we call out to HaShem, we see even greater miracles with the Chezbollah and even greater miracles with Iran. We're becoming and growing little by little, battle by battle into people who don't have trembling knees and ask for mercy, but rather people who are willing to strike courageously when we're threatened, with or without the national community.

So, we still have...we're in a growing process here in Israel and we still have a lot more to grow, please God, but I think that this portion prophetically maps out a process that we will ultimately be going through here in the Land. So, may that process be as merciful as possible and Israel and our warriors continue to grow in their faith and in calling out to HaShem. May we continue to see miracles and be successful. Bye guys!

Jeremy

Wow! I love that. And I also just think that the fact that we proactively struck Iran before they attacked us, it really aligns perfectly with the Torah portion that we just continue to gain more and more confidence and more and more trust in HaShem. The Prime Minister of Israel went to the Kotel, said the Shema, put a little note within the Kotel and instead of seeing ourselves as grasshoppers, which is how the spies saw themselves, we started to see ourselves as lions.

And so, if we're already talking about lions, so then we have to introduce the lion of Judah, the son of Abraham – Ari Yehudah Abramowitz, who is here with us today. He just got off a military exercise and he just had time, just enough to make this Fellowship live. So, guys, welcome Ari.

Ari

Shalom everybody. Ok, I think I'm in the screen, I'm on Jeremy's computer, so it's a different echo-system that I'm used to. Ok, good, good, ok. It is so good to see all of you, big time. I'm really happy that we're all here together. Yes, so I did just have a military exercise that ended rather unceremoniously. It was advanced laser-systems on our helmets, on our weapons, so we're sort of getting each other...I'm not going to go into the details. But, we're still very much in the throes of training and preparing, the war is still on.

And you know, I'm still working through throwing my hands up and just trusting HaShem that He knows what He's doing in this war. And I know it sounds crazy for me to even say those words. I'm just being honest. You know I shared with you last week. I have this feeling of sadness in my heart that things didn't go as I thought they should go. I mean, it's really

unbelievable. Overnight, life has gone back to normal, whatever that means. Here in Israel, we went from being on the verge of what felt like milchemat Gog u'magog, you know, WWII, Armageddon, the Apocalypse, whatever you call it. To me it sure felt like we were on the verge of it, or in it. And we went from that to the sense of calm and security that arguably we haven't felt since before October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023 when Chamas launched that brutal, vicious, traumatizing, genocidal surprise attack on us.

Now you'd think that we as a nation would be feeling nothing but gratitude. Right? You'd think as I as Ari Abramowitz, after everything that I have been through would be overflowing with joy and thankfulness. But still, even after our therapy session last week, still I'm not. And I know I'm not alone and while there is some small comfort in knowing others feel the same, it's only a slight consolation. Because no matter how hard I try, I can't seem to let it go completely. I can't fully accept the way things have turned out. And that makes me feel ungrateful. And I don't like feeling ungrateful.

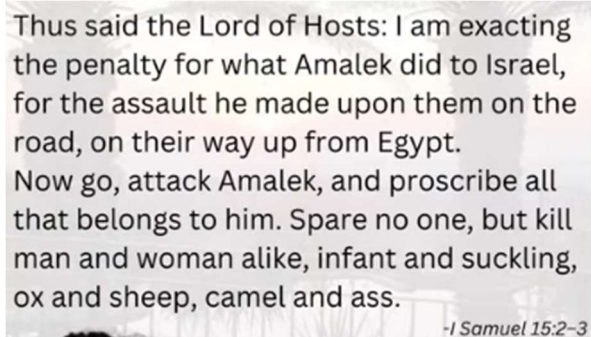
It reminds me of that joke, I may have told it to you before. A Jewish grandmother is at the beach with her little grandson, he's playing in the sand. And suddenly a huge wave comes, crashing and sweeps the boy out to sea. The grandmother falls to her knees, lifts her hands up to heaven, cries out, "Dear God, please return my grandson to me. After all I've suffered in my life, he's all I have in the world. I'll be more observant, I'll light Shabbat candles, I'll give charity, just please bring him back." And miraculously another wave rolls in and gently deposits the boy right back at her feet, unharmed. And she looks him over carefully, then she glares up at the sky and says, "He was wearing a hat."

Like, I can't help but to feel like I'm that grandmother. HaShem has done these incredible miracles and I'm looking up saying, "Yeah, but You could have done it like this." But what can I do? It's the simple truth of how I often feel over the past week at least. And it's as if we were standing on this brink of a massive fundamental upheaval of biblical and historical proportions. Not only in the story of the stage of Israel, and not only in the saga of the Jewish people, but in the destiny of mankind.

You know we've spoken before about how the ultimate struggle in history began in the Garden of Eden when Adam and Eve defied the explicit command of HaShem by eating from the Tree of Knowledge. And as a consequence of that rebellion, the evil inclination was infused within them and by extension, within each and every one of us. And this force of confusion and doubt, doesn't exist only within us, but also manifests in the world all around us. It takes its purest and most potent form in the nation of Amalek, whose very essence is dedicated to extinguishing the

light of the One true God of Israel. And by extension, eradicating His people from the face of the earth.

And there have been moments when it seemed like Israel might finally defeat this darkness, once and for all, redeeming that primordial sin and bringing humanity back toward the gates of the Garden of Eden. And I know that might sound grandiose to equate what's happening in Israel around to that, but in truth, I really believe that's what's happening. That's what's at stake. The last time that we really had Amalek cornered to the degree that we could have completely finished him off was in chapter 1 of the book of Samuel. He says here, chapter 15, Samuel 1, chapter 15:

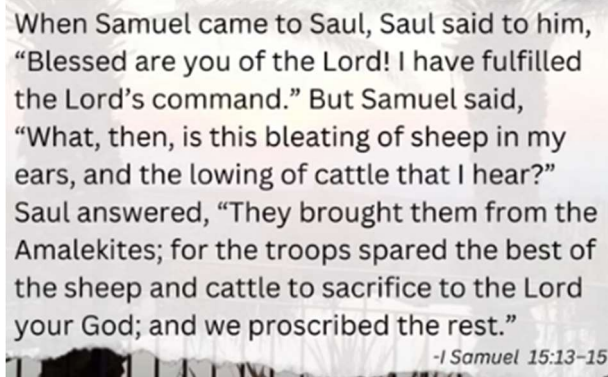


Thus said the Lord of Hosts: I am exacting the penalty for what Amalek did to Israel, for the assault he made upon them on the road, on their way up from Egypt. Now go, attack Amalek, and proscribe all that belongs to him. Spare no one, but kill man and woman alike, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass.

-1 Samuel 15:2-3

But Saul doesn't do it. He doesn't see it all the way through. Samuel of course, knew this prophetically, he went to meet Saul on the battlefield and here's what happened.

Samuel 1, chapter 15:



When Samuel came to Saul, Saul said to him, "Blessed are you of the Lord! I have fulfilled the Lord's command." But Samuel said, "What, then, is this bleating of sheep in my ears, and the lowing of cattle that I hear?" Saul answered, "They brought them from the Amalekites; for the troops spared the best of the sheep and cattle to sacrifice to the Lord your God; and we proscribed the rest."

-1 Samuel 15:13-15

Samuel of course, sees through this and confronts him directly. And Samuel said, this is chapter 15, verse 22:

But Samuel said: "Does the Lord delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obedience to the Lord's command? Surely, obedience is better than sacrifice, compliance than the fat of rams. For rebellion is like the sin of divination, defiance, like iniquity and teraphim. Because you rejected the word of the Lord, He has rejected you as king."

-I Samuel 15:22-23

So our sages teach us what we already know. I think we already know this, intuitively we know it to be true, that it was that pivotal mistake of Saul that empowered Amalek, keeping him alive and forcing us to continue this devastating war against their evil darkness.

Directly in the book of Exodus, we see it right here. This is in sefer Shemot:

For there is a hand on the throne of God: The Lord will be at war with Amalek from generation to generation.

-Exodus 17:16

Meaning that until that war is over, war itself will never be over. And Saul had the opportunity to end it all right there. He could have done it right there.

The great sage, Rabbeinu Bachya says of the verse:

Were it not for the sin of Shaul in sparing Agag and the best of Amalek's cattle, Amalek would have been entirely destroyed, and the Name of God and His Throne would have been complete.

-Rabbeinu Bachya on Exodus 17:16

The Midrash goes on to explain: If Shaul or Saul would have killed Agag as commanded, Haman would not have arisen, and Israel would not have suffered that decree. (Midrash Tanchuma) Right? Let there be no mistake about it. Ayatollah Khomeini and Iran IS the embodiment of the progeny and the legacy of Amalek in the world today. I think I've shared with you the way

Ayatollah Khomeini's name is actually pronounced in Farsi, did I tell you this? It's not Khomeini, it's Hamani. The K doesn't really exist there. It's Hamani, that's right, it's just like Haman. He is the Haman of our generation. He is the Agag of our days, he is the Amalek of our times.

And just last week it was clear that through the great miracles of HaShem, the armies of Israel were being wielded as a sword in God's Hands. And just as in the days of Samuel and Saul, the forces of Amalek were being decimated in glorious fashion. And yet, right at the moment when Agag, himself, was brought to his knees and the sword was in our grasp, we listened to the voices urging us to back down. To hold back from finishing the task. Whatever the reason or the justifications, they're ultimately irrelevant.

And now, once again, we're plunged back into the confusion. There's talk of reviving the Abraham Accords, which sounds good. But somehow, in the midst of the discussions, the words – Palestinian State are being thrown around. It's utterly insane and absurd, precisely the kind of thinking that brought us into October 7<sup>th</sup> in the first place. You'd think we wouldn't be falling back after all we've been through. We're falling back in to that.

It all so deeply undermines the truth and the beauty of the Abraham Accords themselves, whose genius was that they weren't contingent on anything other than the genuine desire of both sides to reconcile and build peace as the children of Abraham. The moment you make peace contingent, especially on establishing a terror state in the heart of the very Land that God promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the children of Israel, the minute you promise it, you sabotage the very foundation upon which the Accords were built. Even whispering such ideas undermines any chance they might have had. If only we had just possessed the faith I keep saying, just to see this through, to do whatever was necessary to end this darkness and this nightmare for Israel and the entire world, regardless of what the empires and the nations and the superpowers might say. If we simply finished that mission, it would have at the very least brought tremendous glory to HaShem's Name in the world instead of allowing others to sweep in and claim even a measure of that glory and credit for themselves.

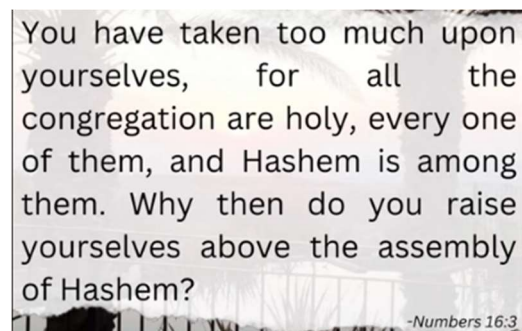
The heart of the matter is this. It would have required tremendous faith in God and trust in Him, alone, to summon the political and military and the national will to finish what needed to be done. And the national world by the way was there. Everybody I meet was saying, "Let's just do this!" And that faith on all those levels, that courage to defy Trump and the UN and the entire world, calling for de-escalation, that may have been the very faith necessary to rectify Saul's original sin. To obliterate Amalek and to sanctify HaShem's Name before all of humanity.

But again, that's not what happened. Now my struggle is to accept that reality as HaShem's will. That's HaShem's...whatever happened, the way it played it out, is the way HaShem wanted it to play out. And to internalize the truth that HaShem alone is running the show. And that redemption itself will unfold in His perfect wisdom, not according to my limited perspective and understanding. And so, my consolation, part of my consolation is that my anguish and my existential pain over this whole matter is not about me, it's not for myself. That much I know with certainty. It's a burning jealousy for HaShem's honor, which feels trampled and diminished in the wake of such great miracles and kindnesses and mercies that He poured upon the nation of Israel and upon me, personally.

So my internal work now is to seek deeper insight into why this element of our national character continues to plague us. And instead of resenting it and resisting it or lashing out in

anger or judging it too much, I'm just striving to humble myself and ask HaShem for the wisdom to understand it. To understand why. Why do we seem to come so close to finishing the mission, only to step back at the last moment? Why does redemption always feel like it's right there, just within reach, and yet it slips through our fingers?

And so, as I've been wrestling with that question, my thoughts have kept returning to this week's parsha as they always do when we seek understanding for the challenges we face, both personally and as a nation. Which brings us of course to Korach. Korach was a man who stood on the brink of greatness. He was brilliant, charismatic, he was a Levite of noble lineage, and yet he fell into the same trap that ensnared so many throughout history, including King Saul and his war against Amalek. Korach's rebellion was not merely a political power grab. It was an ideological rebellion. He claimed:



You have taken too much upon yourselves, for all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and Hashem is among them. Why then do you raise yourselves above the assembly of Hashem?

-Numbers 16:3

That's what Korach said to Moses. On the surface, his words sound really righteous, like there's merit to them, right? Equality, holiness for all, but Moshe saw through it. He understood that Korach's real sin was not about seeking holiness. But about refusing to accept HaShem's will when it clashed with his own desires and understanding. Korach couldn't accept that HaShem chooses who leads. HaShem sees the

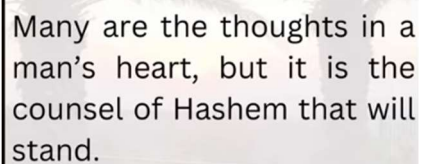
hearts of man. HaShem understands how the world unfolds and how redemption progresses.

Korach wanted holiness, but he wanted it on his terms. And that's not true of holiness. And that, my friends, is my own personal struggle right now. Jeremy always says, "Oh, you turn to the Fellowship and you pour it all out and share your struggles," but that's what I'm struggling with. I want redemption, but apparently, I want it on my own terms. I want Amalek wiped out, but on MY timeline. I want HaShem's glory revealed to the whole world, right now! But Parashat Korach reminds us that sometimes our spiritual yearning no matter how righteous it feels can become a rebellion if we demand that HaShem's will matches our will. Korach felt because he couldn't surrender to the mystery of HaShem's plan and that's what I'm wrestling with right now. It's so easy to look at the geo-politics, the armies, the deals, the super-powers, and to imagine that we see the full picture. But we don't. Saul couldn't see it all, Korach couldn't see it all, and neither can we. We stand in the middle of a cosmic tapestry, from our limited vantage point that looks like threads are tangled and frayed and out of control. But from above, from HaShem's view, it's a masterpiece in progress.



And that's why Moshe fell on his face when Korach rebelled. Because the only way to navigate confusion and disappointment is with humility. To admit, I don't understand, but I trust You, HaShem. And that's where we're trying to get. My heartbreak over what didn't happen in Iran over the retreat from wiping out Amalek once and for all, that heartbreak is real. But if I cling to my own vision of how redemption should look, I risk becoming like Korach. Certain that my plan is better than HaShem's plan. And so, I'm coming to the realization that my avodah, my inner work and maybe some of you share this with me, very often we tend to be on the same wavelength, but my inner work, my service of HaShem is to hold two truths at once.

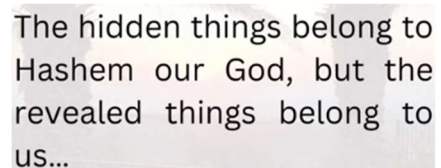
On the one hand, to continue yearning with all of my heart for HaShem's Name to be glorified, for Amalek to be destroyed, for Israel to dwell safely in our Land, for the holy Temple to be built. And not only to yearn for it and to pray for it, but to do everything in my power to seek to manifest it in the world. While at the same time, to surrender to HaShem's plan. Even when it makes no sense to me at all. Because ultimately, King Solomon said in Proverbs:



Many are the thoughts in a man's heart, but it is the counsel of Hashem that will stand.

-Proverbs 19:21

Or as Moses says in Devarim, in the book of Deuteronomy, chapter 29:



The hidden things belong to Hashem our God, but the revealed things belong to us...

-Deuteronomy 29:28

So my prayer for myself and for all of us is that HaShem gives us the strength to keep fighting for truth, to keep yearning for redemption and at the same time, to trust Him completely. Even when the path takes a turn we don't expect. Because one thing I know for sure. Geulah is coming. Redemption is on its way, whether it happens the way we imagine it, or in a way we never dreamed. It will come and may we all merit it speedily in our days. Amen. Back to Jeremy.

Jeremy

All right. So, Ari, thank you for coming. Thank you for leaving the military exercise and just coming directly here to be able to address the Fellowship. I know that everyone here appreciates it. That's just amazing. And you know, speaking on Ari's point. Ari and I, we've said this before, but it feels like we are at the edge between the Kingdom of Saul and the Kingdom of David. And, King Saul had incredible military victories. But there was one thing that made Saul's action incomplete. He was unable to finish the job, totally wipe out evil.



And I'm looking at the war in Gaza and Gazans are still there in the Land of Israel and the war with Iran. And we've accomplished things that Jews haven't accomplished in 2,000 years. But it's undeniable right now. Israel has been unable to finish the job. Hamani is still alive, in power, and it's remarkable that Saul came before David. And we're right now we're living exactly in that transition. We're literally living through and witnessing and watching the Kingdom of Saul transition into what will soon be the Kingdom of David. And that's just remarkable and exciting and historic, and it's beautiful to see the pattern play out.

And with that, we do have to recognize the incredible miracle of this war with Iran. In one of the most daring and historic operations in Israel's history, Israel is a country a fraction of the size of Iran, geographically and demographically. And it completely neutralized Iran's nuclear program, dominated their military, controlled their airspace in less than a day, and I just made a short list of the historic, miraculous, successes that this little tiny country was able to take out one of the largest countries in the Middle East. And I mean, Israel eliminated the top military leaders of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard, including General Mohammad Bagari and General Hossein Salami, with a bunch of other high, like the entire upper echelons of the Iranian army were taken out. Dozens of prominent, nuclear scientists were eliminated and Israel eliminated all of Iran's aerospace force leadership. The entire leadership of the Air Force, and it was like a precise intelligence airstrike. Israeli intelligence lured the top commanders into an underground bunker by staging a fake strategy meeting. And then this just launched the IDF into a targeted strike, killing the entire command in one swoop.

And it decapitated Iran's air operations. It disrupted their missile and drone coordination in the beginning of the war. And the operation was one of the most shocking in military history. We combined the Mossad, the Israeli Intelligence, Cyber tactics, surgical air power and it all happened in the first day. The nuclear infrastructure, Israel took out all of the nuclear facilities in Iran and with America's help, we put the final nails in the coffin and completely neutralized and eliminated Iran's ability to make a nuclear bomb. And Iran's ability to further nuclear weapon was set back by years now. And without scientists who knows.

And we never know what's going to happen as far as maybe the war with planes and jets and missiles are done. But Israel still has operatives in Iran, so you just never know how this war may continue. But Israeli warplanes struck about 50% of Iran's missile launchers as well as underground missile bunkers. And the key warning radars near Tehran were taken out, which secured our air superiority. And Israel within a few days dominated and controlled Iranian airspace. It was so embarrassing because this little country was just flying around Iran with no one to stop it. And over 100 military targets were hit, including military compounds, Iranian air

bases, radar installations. The Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of Intelligence and other government buildings were destroyed.

I mean, the intelligence and the covert drone smuggling. That was my favorite story throughout the whole war. The Mossad agents built a small air base inside Iran. They smuggled slowly pieces of kamikaze attack drones, embedded teams to infiltrate Iran before the first strike, and what happened is, right as Israel was striking, it allowed for precise targeting and effective prestriking, disrupting the Iranian air defenses. And it was like a surprise attack like no one else. It was one of the boldest, out-of-the-box Mossad operations, rivaling the beeper operation in Lebanon. I mean who builds an air base for attack drones inside the enemy's territory? It was just unbelievable. And I'm sure we will be reading about Israel's operations and the Mossad activities for years to come.

But the fact that each one of those operations went on without a mistake, without a flaw, without some sort of something that went wrong, everything always has something that goes wrong. And everything that Israel touched turned to gold. That was the miracle of the war. And right now, somehow there is a question that somehow is still up for debate. And the people are asking it, legitimately, like real, it's real question. Who won the war? And to me, it's obvious. Israel won! Israel came out on top. Israel's the greatest war, Israel hasn't experienced such a victory since the Six Day War. We should call this the 12 Day War miracle. I mean, synagogues all over Israel were saying Hallel, expressing gratitude for all the miracles. And during the war, it felt like Israel was existing within a miracle. I've never felt a sensation like that anytime in my lifetime. Where I've actually felt like I was living inside a miracle.

And all military experts were saying that thousands of people, ten thousand people were going to die on the Israeli side from the ballistic missiles in this operation. And every soul is the entire world, but less than 30 people died. That's a fraction of a fraction of a percent of what people thought was supposed to happen. Hundreds of ballistic missiles, over 1,000 attack drones were launched at Israel. It's statistically impossible.

So now, with these blatant miracles and this incredible success the forces of evil don't want to recognize Israel's victory or God's glory, so now come the lies and the distortions.

And here's a tweet just from right now, from the leader of Iran, Khamanei.



And you say like, what is this man saying? And the answer is, he's just saying blatant lies. He's just manipulating his public because evil doesn't not lie. There's no morals, there's no right, there's no wrong. They'll say whatever they want to say.

But apparently even China only aired that Iran had a national victory on its television. And Israel was badly damaged. And that Iran actually came out on top. And what are the people in China supposed to believe if they're fed blatant lies from their leaders?

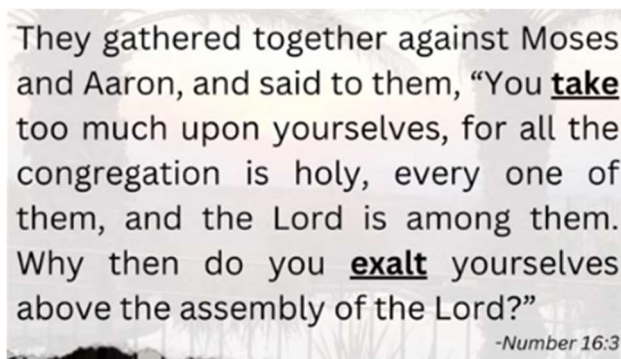
And then I saw this website polling people's opinions called "World of Statistics." And here, people actually vote. And it said:



And I'm like, "What is going on in this crazy world? I live in Israel. I know who won." It was a marvelous, unprecedented historic victory. And now the forces of evil are trying to distort that and trying to manipulate it and trying to lie.

And so where does that leave us with this new war on truth? And when it comes to lies and deceptions, this week's Torah portion taught us a lot.

If you look at Numbers 16, verse 3, Korach brought his people



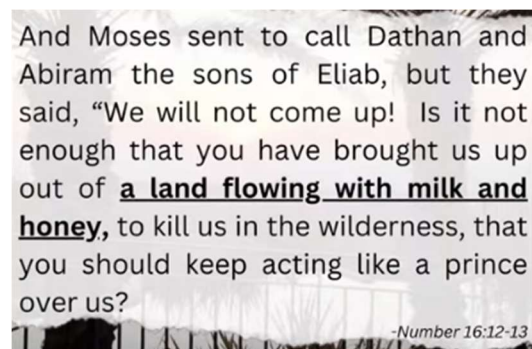
The word "exalt" comes from the word "miknaseh" which literally means "to lift up." But it also has another meaning. It means "arrogant." And there's something really deep about that, but I believe we've spoken about this before. But this event with Korach is the archetype of an attack on Israel, particularly on the leader of Israel.

And the Torah describes one attribute that Moses had that made him unique from everyone else. The Torah doesn't say that Moses was smarter than anyone else, or stronger than

everyone else. It doesn't say that he was more spiritual than everyone else. The Torah describes Moses with one word. He was the most humble of all men. The most humble man in the world.

And now, his enemy is attacking him for lifting himself up, for being arrogant? The most humble man in the world is being attacked for lifting himself up in arrogance? That's the key. It's like when the enemies of Israel come to attack Israel, they will attack us not only with lies, but with the anti-truth. They'll take our greatest virtue and claim that it's our worst vice. They'll call Israel an apartheid state, the only democracy in the Middle East surrounded by tyranny and oppression. The only place where people are actually treated equally and they'll say that Israel is committing genocide, even though Israel has less civilian deaths to combatant deaths than any war in modern history. The most careful army in the world fighting against a satanic enemy and we are still with the claims, the lies, the libels against us. It's not just a lie, it's the anti-truth. It's literally taking the truth and then saying it's the opposite. It's such a lie, it's the opposite of the truth.

And with the anti-truth, they're going to attack Israel. And that's what we have to know, that's what we have to live with. Here's just another gem from this week's Torah portion.



And Moses sent to call Dathan and Abiram the sons of Eliab, but they said, "We will not come up! Is it not enough that you have brought us up out of a land flowing with milk and honey, to kill us in the wilderness, that you should keep acting like a prince over us?"

so many lies.

Natan and Aviram are calling Egypt "the Land flowing with milk and honey." That's like the description of eretz Yisrael. The distortions and the spin and how they're trying to disrupt and confuse the nation. It's like the confusion that are going to be thrown at people as we come closer and closer into entering into the Promised Land. As we enter into the Promised Land for the last time, so many falsehoods,

And as we come closer to the end of days as we know, the lies will only spread wider and so we need an antidote. We need a solution to all the lies that are spreading around the world now. And with AI and fake news, the world will be filled with lies and deceptions, we have to have a solution. And just so you know, HaShem has created a solution before AI and before fake news. A truth that we can all hold onto and keep our heads on straight. And I think what we need to do is really drill down to understand something extremely fundamental.

The parsha that we all read in the heart of the war was Shelach, the story of the spies who came back to Israel with an evil report about the Land of Israel. And obviously, it was beautiful to see

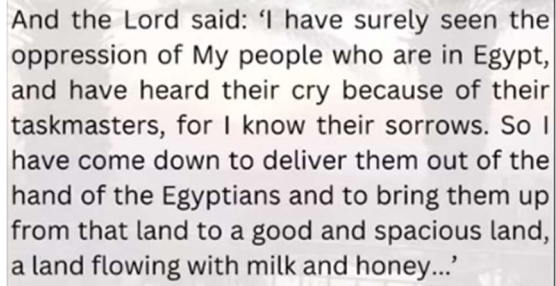
tens of thousands of Israelis fighting to get back into the Land during a war while we remember the tragedy of the spies who convinced the people to not want to go into the Land. Watching Ari come back on a sail boat with missiles exploding over his head. It felt like the perfect rectification of the sin of the spies.

But there's something else I want to talk about, it's more fundamental. The episode of the spies in Parashat Shelach is considered the darkest moment in the entire Torah for the children of Israel. There's a reason that the tragic legacy of the 9<sup>th</sup> of Av was born, a day that would become the saddest day on the Jewish calendar. It's a day on which both Temples were destroyed, the day the Jewish people have mourned with fasting for 2,000 years. What made the sin of the spies so severe? That's the question. Why does it surpass all other sins? Korach and his people tried to overthrow Moses, not as bad. The Israelites worshipped the golden calf immediately after receiving the Ten Commandments, not as bad. Why is the sin of the spies the greatest of all sins? We really need to understand that because some people just write it off as a cliché. "Well, God loves the Land, so don't speak ill of the Land." And that's nice, but I know there's something much deeper going on.

Rejecting the Land of Israel is rejecting the cure to the fake news, to the lies, to the false AI's. To not want to enter into the Promised Land is like...we represented the rejection of the meta-purpose of the people of Israel. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were given one singular promise. That their descendants would inherit the Land of Israel and build a country there. This was not just a gift of Land. It was a mission to sanctify God's Name in the eyes of the world, to bring a truth to the world. It was meant to be eternal, tangible, undeniable, no AI could deny it, no fake news could fake it. The presence of the Jewish people in the Land would be a living testament to the sovereignty of God in the world.

And when the spies slandered the Land and convinced the people not to enter it, they weren't just expressing fear, they were undermining the very reason God chose Israel and took them out of the Land of Egypt in the first place. They rejected their purpose. And in doing so, that really is committing the gravest sin. You can make a mistake, you can fumble, but once you reject your entire purpose, then what do you have left?

And the purpose was made clear when God first speaks to Moses at the burning bush in Exodus chapter 3, verses 7 and 8:



And the Lord said: 'I have surely seen the oppression of My people who are in Egypt, and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters, for I know their sorrows. So I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up from that land to a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey...'

-Exodus 3:7-8

The entire reason why God took us out of Egypt was not to give us the Torah, wasn't to give us holidays, wasn't to give us commandments, He stated His purpose was to fulfill His covenant with the patriarchs, to bring their descendants to the Land of Israel and the rejection of that mission by the generation of the spies was a rejection of their Divine destiny.

And that's why it remains such a tragic turning point in our national story. The sovereignty of the people of Israel in the Land of Israel is not a matter of national identity or geopolitical interest. It is a living expression of a Divine promise fulfilled and in itself sanctifies God's Name in the world. I mean throughout the Torah, God repeatedly promises the Land to Abraham, to Isaac, to Jacob. It's not a symbolic inheritance. But as a physical, eternal home for the children of Israel, for the children of Jacob. This is not a small detail. It's the central pillar that the entire biblical narrative stands on. It's made not once, but dozens of times across generations. God binds His Name to it.

So when the people of Israel live as a sovereign nation in their Land, it signals that God's Word is trustworthy, that His covenant is eternal. This isn't abstract, it's history that can be seen, touched, visited, no one can deny it. It's a truth in the world, it's literally soon going to be the only truth that stands. No other ancient nation has returned to its homeland after 2,000 years of exile, revived its language, rebuilt its cities, reestablished its independence. The very existence of a thriving, modern Israel is something the world cannot explain through conventional logic. That itself is a testimony that something higher is at work.

And it's what Ezekiel the prophet speaks of when he describes God bringing His people back to the Land. "Not for your sake, but to sanctify My great Name that was desecrated among the nations. That's Chapter 36, verses 22-24. The return to the Land is not just to benefit the Jewish people and give us a place to live. It's a visible act of God reclaiming His honors in the eyes of the watching world, a living testimony. When the Jewish people walk freely in Jerusalem, plant vineyards in Samaria, teach Torah in Be'er Sheva and in Judea, and serve in the army that defends their homeland, Israel fulfills prophecies spoken thousands of years ago. Each one of these realities echoes the truth that the God of Israel is not an idea. He is active in history, His Word endures, His people endure. This sanctifies His Name because it places the truth of His promises on display, not just in the books.

And the return of the Jewish people to the Land, it challenges ideologies that denies God's ongoing role in the world, it denies the people that want to say that Israel was forgotten or Israel was replaced. It's harder to claim that history is random, or that the Jews are just another people when we live out the exact destiny foretold in the Bible. The world's perception of Israel comes from this deeper tension. If Israel's story is true, then God's story is true and the world demands a moral and spiritual reckoning. And so in essence, the sovereignty of Israel in its Land, it's not political, it's theological, it's a revelation.



And when you look at this priest in Sorrento, Italy, you see that on his religious garb, this Catholic replacement theologian, has said, "It's my religion to have a Palestinian flag sewed onto my priestly garment." The priest has taken the Palestinian flag and made it a part of his religious clothes because for him, being an enemy of Israel is his religion. It's not a political war, it's a spiritual war.

And our success is a thorn in the eyes of every enemy of Israel, of every enemy of God, because there's one truth that's undeniable. As long as this Fellowship is broadcasting from Judea and there are Jews back in the Land of Israel that was promised to the people of Israel, we are a living testimony that God runs the world, not the European Union, and not the United Nations, but the One King of the Universe.

All right my friends, with that, I want to bless you from this place with the blessing of Aaron the Priest who blessed all of the nation in the Temple, who I bless my children with every Friday night, whom my father blesses me with every Friday night. And I just feel like we are right now living in a time of blessing and I want to take the blessing of Israel and reflect it on to you and channel it to you that you and your loved ones should only be blessed.

Aaronic blessing (Hebrew)

May HaShem guard you and bless you. May HaShem shine His countenance upon you and be gracious to you. May HaShem lift His countenance upon you and bless you with shalom.

- Shalom my friends, have a beautiful week. See you again soon!