

Session 236

Tisha B'Av, Special Live Zoom

3 August 2025

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E0_YachUP9g&t=1s

Ari

Shalom, if you can hear me give me a thumbs up as usual. Ok, it's good to see all of you. Shalom, and shalom to all those joining us for the very first time from all around the world. This is our Fellowship, welcome to our family. What a moment for your first Fellowship. I can tell you, speaking for the entire team here in the Land of Israel, out here in the hills of Judea, hosting this Fellowship today was not an easy decision. The 9th of Av is the darkest day on our calendar, a day of heartbreak, fasting, lamentation, a day so deeply personal that every year, sometimes we hesitate to even open our mouths. And you add that to the heat of the summer, this is one of the hottest days of the year, the fast from both food and water for 25 hours, the exhaustion, it would have been understandable to just keep this private. But we couldn't, we wouldn't. The decision was unanimous, because somewhere deep in our hearts we felt, though we couldn't even necessarily articulate it at the time, or at least I couldn't, that this year, this day is different. And in this Fellowship, I want share why I believe that's the case. And why I felt this way.

But before I do, I want to introduce my beloved friend, Steve Wearp, who I think is part of the answer to that question. Steve founded a beautiful organization called Blessed Buy Israel (<https://blessedbuyisrael.com/>) to support the farmers and pioneers of the Holy Land. And for a number of years now he's actually been running programming for the nations to be part of the 9th of Av. And he's joining us with his whole group today, which by the way, I encourage all of you to join him after ours ends. So thank you, Steve and welcome.

You know I used to believe that Steve was bringing people who love Israel to sit in and sort of witness what we as the nation of Israel are experiencing, to see our mourning. I mean they love us and I thought they just wanted to be close. But now I'm starting to understand even more why I believe that those of you who are here from the nations are not just watching. You're not guests in this story. This day, this prophecy is about you, too, no less than it's about us. And the fact that we are gathering together in what may be the largest Fellowship we've ever had, and it's happening on the 9th of Av, is not a coincidence. It's destiny. It's part of the redemption that's unfolding before our eyes, and even through our very lives.

This is part, I believe, is part of the Great Awakening. The stirring of Israel and of the world, leading us toward the building of the Beit HaMikdash, the ultimate House of Prayer for humanity, the House of Prayer as Isaiah said, for the nations of the world. So to all of you around the world, to Steve, welcome, welcome, and thank you for being here.

Now I just want to give you a little bit of background just about me. I grew up in Houston, Texas, as I always say because of the destruction of the Temple, and the exile of the Jewish people around the world. And every year growing up there, I would sit cross-legged on the synagogue floor and chant the dirges of Eicha and Kinot, the Lamentations, just mourning tragedies that honestly, they just felt so distant, that they were almost abstract. Yeah, maybe you'd hear like a whimpering in the room or a trembling voice, but for me, and I suspect for most, it felt forced. We were safe there, we were comfortable. Our Jewish lives were intact, we had kosher restaurants, day schools, synagogues, Holocaust Memorials. Never again, that felt secure. The Holocaust, the most recent 9th of Av level catastrophe seemed firmly placed in the past. There was a movie about it, Schindler's List, it was sacrosanct, nobody was chasing down Jews in the streets. Things just felt ok and normal, but that world is gone. That world is gone.

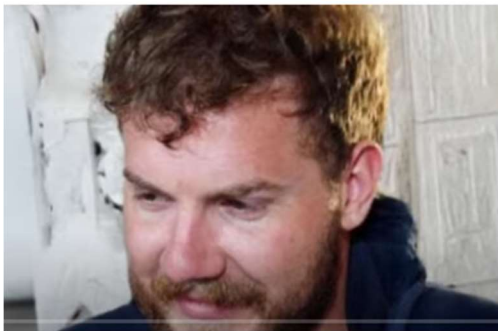
Those of you who know me, know that I'm obsessed with my children and that my favorite hour of the day is bedtime – 7:30 to 8:30 P.M. And my two oldest, Dvash and Shiloh who are 5 and 3 share a room and I tell them stories every single night. Two stories, two riddles, and then two questions for each of them and that is our little ritual. And I love it MORE than they do. And over the last 9 days, I tell them stories about the Beit HaMikdash, about the Temple, about why we mourn, why we fast, why we are waiting for its rebuilding. And I try to weave them into beautiful stories that bring it all to life for them. And it is alive for them. It is alive for them.

Little Shiloh doesn't build anything, whether from magnet tiles at home or sand on the beach. He doesn't really build anything other than the Beit HaMikdash, that's all he wants to build other than the Temple. "What are you doing today?" I'll ask Shiloh, "Building the Beit HaMikdash," he'll often answer.

Just yesterday, we stopped in the car, Dvash was in the back, to pick up a hitch hiker who it turns out was going in the other direction and didn't need a ride from us. And Dvash asks me, "Does that still count as a brick in the Beit HaMikdash?" She was of course referring to the teaching that every act of love and kindness is another brick in the building of the Temple. We are constantly talking about our mission to bring God's Presence in the world, to build His home in our midst, to bless all of humanity.

And then just two nights ago, as I was lying on the floor next to them with my fingers touching little Shiloh's pudgy little hand, and he was twiddling my fingers, it's just so beautiful. And I was just finishing the story that I called, "The Wonders of the Beit HaMikdash," that's what I called it. And right then, the sirens wailed. And it's just heart-breaking. Shiloh clapped his little hands over his ears and he closed his eyes, shaking his head, trying to shut the world out. And Dvash's eyes widened in fear as she clutched her baby brother, not letting him out of her embrace. I grabbed them, each under my arms and whisked them into the safe room, of course, reflecting upon how far it feels at times between the moment that we're in and the moment that we're praying for. The moment that feels like it's any moment now, but it seems so close and yet so far away. But the fact is, that this is their childhood. This is their reality.

Just this morning I sat in synagogue on the floor in Judea, in the nearby village of Ibei HaNachal. I looked around and all I saw was brokenness and grief. Not about what happened in the distant past, but what's happening right now. There's no one who is untouched. There's no one who isn't suffering. He lost his brother-in-law, and he lost his cousin, and his best friend died in his arms three months ago, and he's suffering from debilitating PTSD. Three of our holiest soldiers, elite warriors, protectors of the Land have taken their own lives in the past ten days.



We just lost Roi Wasserstein yesterday. Just look at his face, just look at his face. You can see the goodness in him, you can see the light, the compassion. In over 300 days in reserve duty, 300 days of evacuating wounded, retrieving the fallen, gathering body parts so families could bury their loved one with dignity. You know he fought not only in the battles of the war, but in the battles of the soul. Don't and please, I know that

nobody's judging, but it's just suicide is one of those things that you cannot judge. Please, don't. Some of the bravest, purest souls I have ever known have been crushed beneath the weight of trauma in that way. Particularly these holy beings of light. They're like angels in human form. They're not supposed to be exposed to this horrific evil darkness.

And so the trauma of October 7th is not behind us. We are still in it every day. Just last night, as the 9th of Av descended upon us, Israel endured yet another collective wound. Chamas, with calculated cruelty chose this holy day of mourning to release a video of our beloved Evyatar David, for whom we've been praying and yearning. The video shows him, skeletally, emaciated, traumatized, digging his own grave. Here's the video.



Evyatar

I don't know what I'm going to eat. I haven't eaten for days. What I'm doing now is digging my own grave. Every day my body becomes weaker and weaker. I'm walking directly to my grave.

Ari

This is the reality we are living in. We are all in that tunnel with him. We are all there with him. There is a part of each and every one of us, many, many of you I am sure. Every day, our sons are dying in Gaza. Every morning we brace ourselves for the radio when you turn on, "Who is it today? Whose family will be

shattered? Who is the next son or daughter of Israel that we'll bury in the ground?" And the world looks at Israel and perhaps they see a nation in endless conflict and debate.

But what they cannot see, what even we barely even understand is how profoundly connected we are to one another. Our souls are bound and Hamas knows this. They understand it more clearly than we do. Because they're the exact opposite. When the IDF drops leaflets to warn civilians to save lives, Hamas sends children into the line of fire, maximizing their deaths for the cameras, knowing the world will rush to condemn us. They weaponize our compassion because it's our greatest strength, and yes it does make us vulnerable. But it's who we are. There's nothing we can do about it, we are as the sages say, "Rachmanim, b'nei rachmanim - Compassionate, the children of compassionate." And even when one of our brothers or sisters is wasting away in tortuous starvation, a part of each and every one of us is there with him. Whether or not we allow ourselves to feel it, whether or not we succeed in numbing it with distraction, the truth is that our souls are bound together. A thread runs through us all. And when that thread is pulled, we all bleed. Why do you think they trade one hostage for a thousand of their terrorists? Because they understand what it is to us. Every day our sons and daughters are dying in Gaza. We wake up each morning and flinch, who is it going to be.

You know the truth is, I considered showing you all a montage of brief, even mild montage, just a glimpse of the horrors of October 7th, but I decided against it because to even watch a moment of that evil, it scars your soul. It can never be unseen.

I watched them, I watched these videos and I felt like I needed to watch them as a soldier, I felt I needed to know first hand the depravity of what we're fighting, to never forget what happens when those demonic hands seize what is most pure – our children, our sons, our daughters, all that is fragile, and all that is holy and all that is sweet. And they have made it clear that their mission is to extinguish every last light, to extinguish every light in the darkest way imaginable.

And we don't have the luxury here of embracing, comforting lies. We can't cling to the illusion that only some of them hate us. That the horrors of that day were just a tiny minority. Ask any hostage who's come home. It was not a minority, it was everybody, or just about...let's put it this way.

I believe that Abraham would have had more trouble finding ten righteous in Gaza than he had in Sodom and Gomorrah, and if this isn't pc, I'm sorry, I'm just telling the truth. Over 70% of the rapes, the murders, the beheading of babies were carried out not just by Hamas fighters, but by so called innocent civilians who stream across the border with glee. That's the truth that we're living in and that's the evil we face. Just listen to this woman from Gaza. She said it best.



Every house in Gaza, all of them. So when Israel thinks that it's eliminating Hamas, in every house there is Hamas. In every house there's Al-Quds Brigades, in every house there's a resistor. You will eliminate 2.5 million people? They are present in every house.

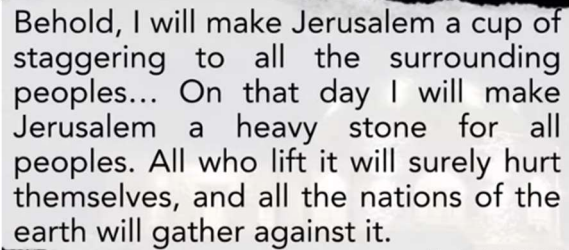
Ari

Ok, why am I sharing this with you right now, on the 9th of Av? Because as we remain entrenched in this devastating and traumatizing and utterly exhausting existential war for our very survival, I myself have been in the army since January with a week off during which I was trapped in America, away from my family, catching a sailboat back to the Holy Land. While we are all in this existential war for our survival, how is the world responding? Some of the nations, some of them that we really once counted as friends, countries that we really believed were our allies, how are they responding? Well, they're seizing this moment of our brokenness, to cloak their hatred in a mask of moral outrage. They feign compassion for Gaza while demonizing Israel, calling us evil, calling us the aggressor. They're calling us evil and these monsters in Gaza, they're calling them righteous, as the prophet Isaiah said would be:

Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!
-Isaiah 5:20

Just as the prophets foretold, the nations are uniting against Jerusalem in the final days.

The prophet Zechariah, chapter 12:

A landscape image of Jerusalem, showing the city's skyline and the Dome of the Rock, with a quote overlay.

Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of staggering to all the surrounding peoples... On that day I will make Jerusalem a heavy stone for all peoples. All who lift it will surely hurt themselves, and all the nations of the earth will gather against it.

-Zechariah 12:2-3

How is that even possible in biblical times? Well, we see it happening now. It's happening now before our eyes, it's culminating before our eyes. They can smell our exhaustion, our grief, our vulnerability. And like vultures, they're circling overhead, they swoop in, eager to strike, eager to hand victory to the very monsters who carried out

these atrocities.

And now, one by one, they begin to announce, with this self-righteous bravado, their intent to unilaterally recognize a Palestinian state.

News reporter

As Israel's actions in Gaza grow even bolder and settler violence in the occupied West Bank continues to rage on, more and more countries are moving forward with plans to recognize a Palestinian state. Canada became the latest with the Prime Minister saying hopes for a two-state solution are being eroded before our eyes.

Mark Carney – Canadian Prime Minister

For decades, it was hoped that this outcome would be achieved as part of a peace process built around a negotiated settlement between the Israeli government and the Palestinian Authority. Regrettably, this approach is no longer tenable.

News reporter

Similar moves from France, the U.K.

Keir Starmer – British Prime Minister

I can confirm the U.K. will recognize the State of Palestine.

News reporter

Portugal, too, said it is considering it. It would bring the total to more than 140, evidence of growing frustration. Germany is one of Israel's most loyal allies. The Foreign Minister is heading there to meet officials, including the President. He's hinted, Germany's support may be running out. In his statement, he said that Israel is increasingly finding itself in a minority position.

Ari

That's right, a minority position as the world is establishing this so called, Palestinian State, which of course would instantly elevate Chamas from a blood-soaked terror organization to

heads of state, complete with their own seat at the United Nations, their own international airports, no more tunnels, no more smuggling, their weapons would roll in on commercial flights, through Terminal 1. And even the so-called moderates, the Palestinian Authority, proudly enshrined in their law, the pay for slay program, you all know this. The monthly stipends that are being paid millions and millions and millions to the families of terrorists who slit Jewish babies' throats in their cribs. This isn't a conspiracy, it's not an accusation, it's their policy. To recognize such a state in the biblical heartland, itself, is to sanctify evil. To reward mass murder is to spit in our faces and cast the final stone at the people of Israel in our hour of greatest anguish. This isn't politics, this is prophecy, it's prophecy unfolding before our eyes.

And yet in the midst of this suffocating darkness, there is a blinding, beautiful light. And this light is the reason I shared everything I've shared up until now. The prophets spoke, not only about the nations gathering against Israel, but also of the righteous remnant.

The righteous of the nations will join themselves to the Lord on that day, and they will become My people; and I will dwell in your midst.

-Zecharia 2:15

And in chapter 13, he even goes further to describe the final days. He says:

I will bring the third through the fire; I will refine them as silver is refined, and test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, and I will answer them; I will say, 'They are My people,' and they will say, 'The Lord is my God.'

My friends, I believe these prophecies. Some say they're only speaking of Israel, I really in my heart that they're speaking of all of you as well. This prophecy, look around at this Fellowship. These prophecies are about you. You are the righteous remnant. You are the ones who refuse to bow to the

lies that are so prevalent in our world. You are the ones standing in a covenant of friendship with Israel, even as the nations are raging. And the more they rage, the more love we feel coming from all of you.

And I've said, it's taken me a number of years to understand the hearts of my friends like Steve who have been rallying the nations on this painful day. But I'm coming to see that truth, that you are not bystanders. You are part of this story. Your grief is not less and your mourning is not "other." The Temple we mourn today, it's yours, too. It was the place where heaven touched the earth for all of mankind. The source of blessing for the nations of the world, and

we are a nation of priests. We were priests, just as the children of Aaron were priests, to us the Israelites in the Temple, the entire nation of Israel are priests to all of you. We were the conduit through which that light and that blessing was to flow.

And one of the final awakenings before redemption is this. We in Israel, we are remembering, we are coming to, we're remembering that we are not here for ourselves, alone. But that we are called to bless the nations, to be a light to the world, to build a House of Prayer for all peoples. And with your loving hearts, and your spirits of brotherhood, you are helping awaken us. I can speak for myself, you've been helping these years of this Fellowship, awaken me. Awaken me, and I believe all of us to our truest calling, to our deepest purpose, to the very core of who we were meant to be. As King David declared,

In those days the righteous of the nations will say, "Look! Look at the great things God has done with you." And only then, when the righteous of the nations say that, only then will the Jewish people look and say, "Wow, look at the great things God has done for us."

So, yes, this is the 9th of Av that is different because even as the darkness deepens, the light grows brighter. And even as the nations rage, the righteous remnant, all of you are rising, together. Jews and the righteous among the nations, we mourn today and we pray and we prepare for the day when mourning will turn to joy. May this be the last 9th of Av that we cry. And may next year be the year that we dance together in the courtyards of the Beit HaMikdash.

And it is now my honor to introduce my best friend, my rebbe, and my commander, Jeremy.

Jeremy

Thank you, Ari, thank you. That was absolutely beautiful. My Tisha B'Av has already becoming more meaningful, just connecting all of the dots and remembering that we're not just commemorating something that happened 1,955 years ago, we are living Tisha B'Av right now. But Tisha B'Av is also the day that Mashiach will be revealed into the world. So amongst these hardships and these challenges, we know that something beautiful will be born of it.

And I just want to welcome everyone that's come here today. I want to welcome all the new names and the faces that I see here. Welcome to the Land of Israel Fellowship. You know it's a global community with representation from 50 countries. And we're a tight-knit group and we decided to open up the gates to everyone. And how beautiful it is that we meet every Sunday to learn together, to grow together, to stay plugged into what's really happening in Israel and get connected to the heart of Israel. But this Tisha B'Av, we said let's just open it to the world. And just so many people on YouTube now, livestreaming. So many people here in this Zoom

gathering, and it's just marvelous. And just stay tuned for Ten From the Nations, they'll be starting their Tisha B'Av right after the Fellowship. And so, what an honor it is to be hosting this event, to be this voice from Israel, to be this bridge between worlds, and so it's just beautiful to have you all with us here today.

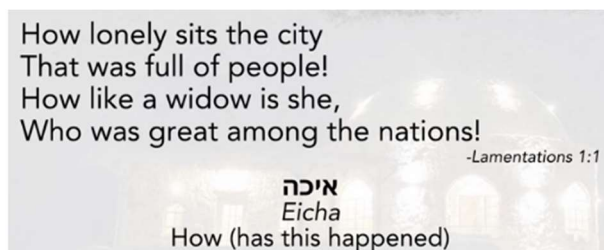
On the 9th of Av, we didn't just lose the House of Prayer for all Nations. It's like now, on Tisha B'Av, the fast, we've been fasting now all day, it's almost evening time here in Israel. We're literally modeling that dream that we lost. We've gathered people from so many nations together in this virtual House of Prayer for all Nations. And so I want to just take this historic opportunity as we pioneer this path for the world, and start this session with a prayer, uniting the different nations, the different countries, the different religions, the different educations, the different backgrounds, and bring us all together as we all have one heart for Israel. And I think if there's one thing we can learn from Tisha B'Av and from the Temple is that we have one world, we have one God, and that all of us are His children. So let's bring our hearts together from around the world and through this Land, facing Jerusalem and the Temple Mount. Let's pray.

HaShem, Master of the Universe, our Father, our King, we've gathered here together, Your Fellowship, and beyond. It's a fast, Tisha B'Av today, and we've come here together from so many nations around the world to align our lives with You, to learn Your Torah and to attach ourselves to the destiny of Israel. Every week, after Shabbat, every Sunday, we start off our week together, coming together. We are scattered around the world, but we are united with a single purpose, to see Jerusalem rebuilt and to see it shine as a beacon of light for all nations. Today we remember the destruction of Your House, the exile of Your people, and the fire that consumed the holiness and the closeness we once know with You in Your Temple. But today, HaShem, we don't only mourn the past, we bring before You the pain of the present. We cry for our hostages that are still being held by monsters. For over 600 days, the people of Israel in Your Land have been at war. And on this 9th of Av, HaShem, we lift our hearts in mourning for the brave soldiers of Israel who have fallen. Sons and daughters of Zion whose courage lit the darkness with hope. And for those who still stand, who carry the weight of this war on their shoulders, we ask You, Guardian of Israel to surround them with Your Divine protection, strengthen their hands, steady their hearts, and grant them victory in this battle between Israel and the Jihad, between good and evil. HaShem, look down at our Fellowship, and look down at this gathering that we've gathered here today. See what we've done together in this generation, a living model of Your ways on earth. A reflection of Your Temple in Jerusalem. Bless this Fellowship, bless everyone that has joined this movement, bless everyone that's come here live today, bless them and bless their families. In this time of transition between the world we know and the world soon to come, guard us all and guide us on the path of righteousness

and help us reflect Your light to everyone around us. And may this Fellowship be a seed of prophecy for soon Jerusalem will become a House of Prayer for All Nations. Amen.

All right, my friends, so I want to talk to you just a little bit about the book of Lamentations, the book of Eichah. It was written by Jeremiah the prophet who lived, before, during and after the destruction of the Temple. He actually wrote the book, Eichah, years before the destruction of the Temple. He wrote it to rattle people, to wake them up. And now, everyone last night, everyone this morning, that's the book that all of Israel is plugging into on this day of Tisha B'Av.

So imagine when it was written. It was like going to the doctor because you're not feeling great and instead of hearing a diagnosis, the doctor begins to read your eulogy. It's like, what's happening?! And so that's how Eichah was first written. And the book starts with the words, Eichah, which are usually translated as "alas." But that's not really the right translation. The word, eichah, is the expanded Hebrew word for "eich" which means "how." So the verse really means, how did this happen?



It's like eicha isn't just how, but it's like, how has this happened? This didn't need to be the case. It's a question really for us to reflect, "What did we do to bring this destruction? How could we have stopped it? How can we make it better now?"

And the first time that word appears in the Torah, it takes us all the way back to the Garden of Eden. And it says:



Where are you is ayeka. It's not said the same way, but it's literally the same, exact written word. Where are you? The same letters, in some ways, it's really asking the same question. How did this happen?

Where are you? Where are you this Tisha B'Av? Where are you in life? When tragedy falls upon the people of Israel, the response is always, how did this happen and where was I?

And that's really the entire purpose of this day, the purpose of this fast, the reading of Kinot and Lamentations. The purpose of this gathering, it's ultimately to call us to go inside, to reflect, to soul search, to take responsibility wherever we find ourselves. And one of the people who takes more responsibility than anyone that I've ever met is Tehila Gimpel, my wife. She has recently

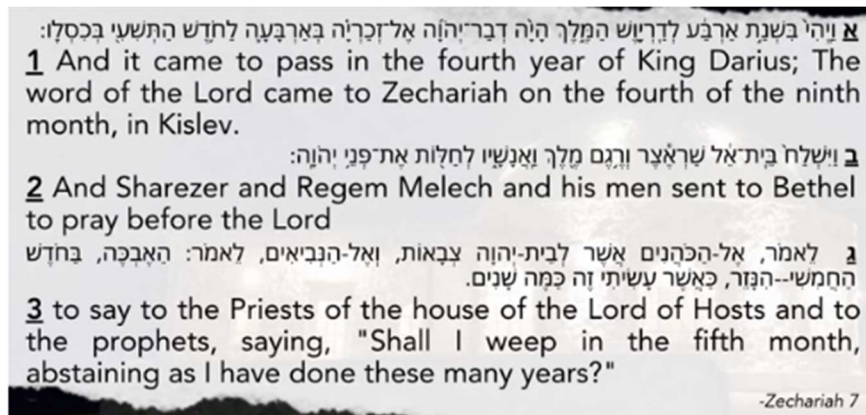
opened up a new community within the Fellowship. It's called The Women of Valor. And it's a place where righteous women can get together, learn together from around the world, connect with each other, really learn from Tehila. It's really one of the most beautiful initiatives I've ever seen Tehila do. And once again, she's just taking responsibilities for women around the world that are looking to connect to Israel, to connect to the Torah from Israel. And so with that, I want to introduce Tehila to share with us a Torah about Tisha B'Av and help make our day that much more meaningful and connected.

Tehila

Hi everyone, wow, I know it's a sad day, but I can't help but be a little bit happy to see everyone here together. Old friends, and new friends, friends that I haven't seen for a long time, friends that we get together with every week. It's really just so special to me.

So I want to take a second and go back to the biblical source of this day. When we think of time in the Bible, we think of the biblical feasts that are in the Torah. But the fasts for the destruction are also mentioned in the Bible as well. And so I want to open up, and if you guys have your Bibles with you, feel free to just follow along. I want to open up in Zechariah 7, Zecharia, perek zayin.

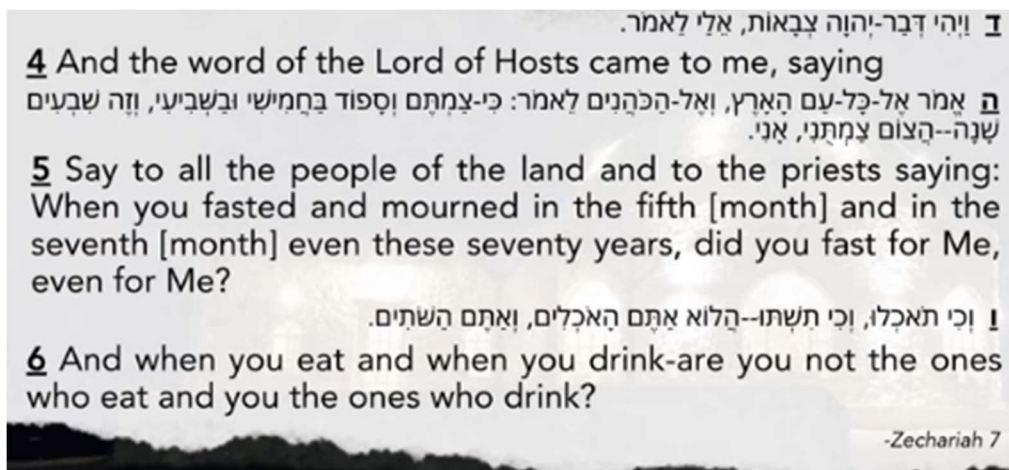
So, where are we in this chapter? So the first Temple was destroyed, the Babylonian exile, the Jews went out of the Babylonian exile, Cyrus gives permission to go back. Some go back to the Land, most of them don't. And the ones who come back to the Land, they're trying to set things up again, but the nations are giving them a very hard time. And then things start to perk up a little bit with Darius in the prophet Chaggai, Haggai, and Chaggai urges the people to start rebuilding the 2nd Temple. So they start building in the 2nd year of Darius and they're going to ultimately be building for four years until the 6th year of Darius. But this prophecy in chapter seven of Zechariah, happens in the 4th year, meaning they're half way through. And we can, in our times, can relate to what it feels like to being halfway, right? Like where you feel like there's this progress that has been made, but you're not quite there yet. On the one hand, they're in this really good trajectory of building things along, but they still have a lot of problems. And here's what it says:



So the 5th month is what we're in now, they're talking about Tisha B'Av, and they're asking a pretty logical question, right? We've started building the Temple, we're two years into the building process, can I have a sandwich? Right? It's about time.

How do we know when to stop being sad? How do you know when you can say like, "Ok, things are picking up, I can stop mourning."

And then, how does God answer? I fell off my chair when I read this for the first time. God appears to Zechariah, in verse 5 He says:



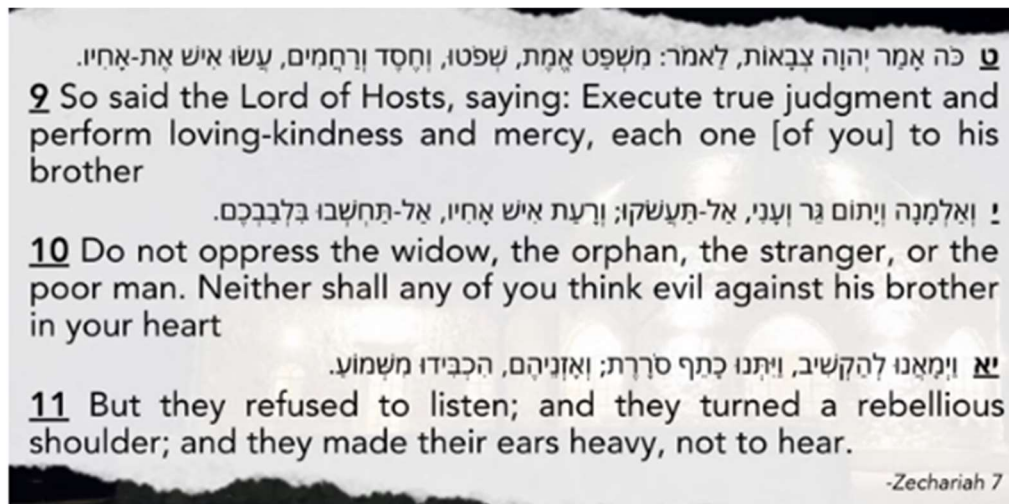
Seventh month, that's the fast of Gedaliah. He's asking them, why are you asking...it's almost a sarcastic response. It's like, "Oh, you were doing this

for Me?" It's a shockingly sarcastic answer coming from God, right guys? I did a doubletake the first time I read it because these people have come all the way to the prophets and to the priests, calling out to HaShem for guidance, isn't this behavior that we encourage? And God is like, "Why are you asking me this? Why are you bothering Me with this question? Am I the one fasting? Are you doing this for Me? What does this have to do with Me? Am I the one eating? You're the one eating."

Like, this is a "you" thing as my kids say, like "you do you." So, what HaShem is saying here, is "I get that you have this question," but HaShem is clearly not pleased with this question. You're not asking the right question. And then, what does the prophet go on to say? He says, "You're fasting and sad because I destroyed the Temple, but that's not a random tragedy. If you think

you're sad about the Temple, you're missing the point. What we're supposed to be sad about is why the Temple was destroyed. The prophets I sent you were telling you what to do, did you listen to them?"

And so, He says:



There reason the Temple was destroyed, it's not because rocks fell apart or because fire was set to it. It was because you refused to listen, it says in verse 11.

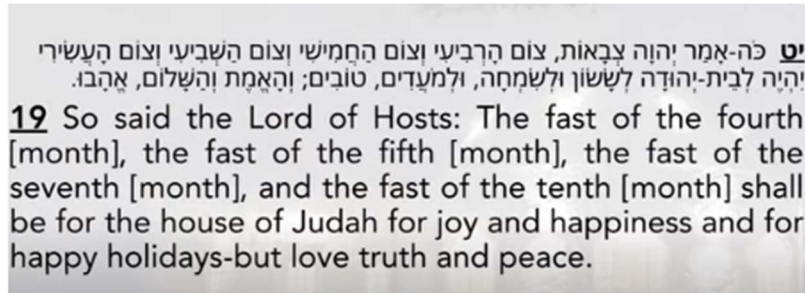
So HaShem is saying, "You didn't listen to what I wanted back then. So the Temple was destroyed now. You're fasting about the Temple being destroyed and asking me if it's a good time to stop fasting, but I never told you to fast to begin with. I told you what to do to prevent the destruction. I told you how to not get yourself in this trouble to begin with."

Now that's what interests me. You want to know when to stop fasting? Answer the question yourself. I'll say this to my kids a lot of times. I'll be like, "You asked me a question. Now you tell me what you think the answer is." HaShem is saying, "What do you think the answer is? I'm not going to answer you. You need to figure out if you're fixing the things that I've asked you to fix. Are you truly listening to the words of the prophet? Are you understanding the main point?"

And then the verses in this chapter go on to say all the things that went wrong in the exile and all the punishments that we received. Ok, fair enough. If that would have ended here, you would have been left saying to yourself, "Well, that really didn't answer the question, though," meaning yes, of course. Like great lesson, thank you Zechariah. But can I get a bagel? Like are

we supposed to go eat? It didn't really answer the question, but fair enough. Maybe HaShem just really isn't that interested in these fast days and He's saying, "Figure it out for yourself."

But then suddenly, in chapter 8, it seems totally the opposite. Suddenly God is saying this whole prophecy about what's going to happen in the times of redemption and it doesn't seem like HaShem is disinterested in the fasts at all. It seems quite the opposite. Look at verse 19 in chapter 8:



So that's the 17 of Tammuz and the 9th of Av. And Gedaliah, and the fast of the 10th month, that's the fast of Tevet.

So HaShem is giving this beautiful prophecy about all

the wonderful things that are going to be happening and of all the things that He can tell us, He's like, "Guess what guys? Great news." As if He didn't just sarcastically respond one chapter ago to the question of the people asking if they can stop fasting. HaShem is like, "Guess what guys? Great news! You always thought there were only three biblical feasts. I'm promising you there are going to be four more biblical feasts. Great news!"

And then you're like, "Ok, great news," but I am banging my head against these prophecies for days saying, "Is fasting significant? Are these days significant to God or not?" Because when they asked him if they could stop fasting, He was like, "Why are you asking Me?" And then when God gives us the good news, just a few verses later, He seems very enthusiastic about the destiny of these fasts becoming joyous days. Why couldn't He just tell them, "Yeah, here like ok, do X, Y, Z, and you can stop fasting, it's going to be joyous days." We've got this beautiful prophecy. Shouldn't chapter 8 have been the answer to the question of chapter 7? Could have been like, great question here's your answer. What is going on?

And suddenly it hit me when we were driving on a little vacation with our children. We have all these beautiful plans, we're going to go hiking in the beautiful mountains of Israel, and we have these great visions of all of our precious family time. And what are the kids doing in the car? Are we there yet? Can we go out and buy a snack? This gas station looks like a great place to get a snack. I'm hot. Can I get out of the car? Let's just get out here. We've been driving long enough. Let's get out.

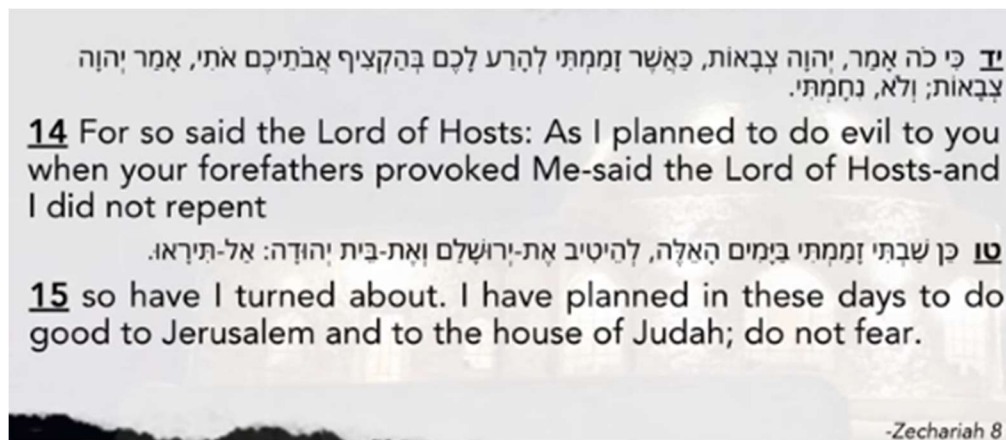
And I'm like, "Really?" What do you want your kids to be doing? You want them to be envisioning all the fun that we're going to have at our destination, being grateful, being excited. And instead, they're stuck in this like momentary question of, "Can I go buy a sandwich? Can we just get out of this squishy discomfort of this car?" I'm like, "Guys, we have a much bigger plan. You're losing sight of the destination when you are fretting over...are we there yet, are we there yet, are we there yet?"

And it struck me that maybe HaShem is upset at the question in chapter 7. Because it is fundamentally such a small question. What did they come and ask? They said, "Can we stop being sad? Can we eat?" And HaShem says, "What difference do you think it means to Me if you're sad and not eating? You're not asking the right question if you're asking to stop being sad because you're basically saying...what is the fundamental of that question? It's saying, "Are things unhorrible enough? We have like a quarter built Temple. Is that unhorrible enough to not be absolutely devastated anymore?"

What should we really be asking? What we should be asking is how do we make these days amazing? How do we turn around all the suffering of our Jewish history and give meaning to it? You know the names of the people asking the questions, they sound like Babylonian. They might have actually sent these people from Babylonia to ask God if they could stop fasting. That's not the question. The question is, "How do we join together to be so much bigger? How do we turn around the bad stuff and strive for true redemption, to dream something as big and beautiful in its magnitude as the magnitude of the suffering that we suffered?" Because that's how big HaShem is dreaming for Jerusalem.

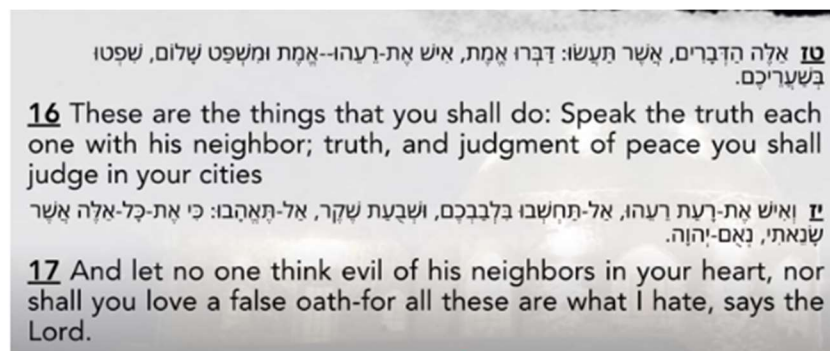
So don't ask if we can be less sad and eat a bagel, ask, "Can we make this into an epic, biblical level festival?" And so HaShem says, "The question that you ask Me, not the right question." But chapter 8 comes and says, "Here is the plan, guys." HaShem gives a plan. The 8th chapter of Zechariah is not just a prophecy, it's a plan. It is nothing less than a three-pronged partnership.

So there are three legs that this vision is going to stand on. First of all, HaShem makes His promises, and there are a lot of promises, I'm not going to read all of them. He says:



And then God lists all of the miracles that He's going to do, and the ingathering of the exiles and children in the streets, and the elderly in the streets. HaShem is saying, "As bad as the suffering of the Jewish people has been, that is how good in quantity and quality, how good it's going to be in My plan. Do not fear."

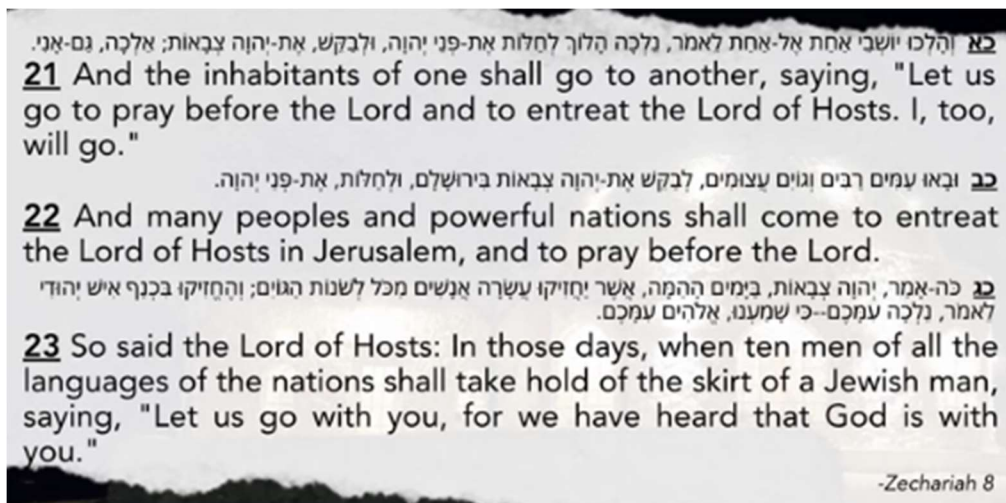
But that's not enough, because that is HaShem's promise. But then there's instructions for Israel. And He says..there's a lot of instructions to Israel, but there's always this one word that keeps coming back again and again...truth and peace.



It's not just a prophecy, it's a job description. So many of Israel's problems start with what it means when we do not live out the truth of what it means to be Israel. From the desert, trying to copy the Midianites, up until now,

trying to fit in to whatever the UN tells us we're supposed to be. Our biggest problem is trying to be someone else instead of doing what God put us here to be.

But then there's one more leg, there's one more piece to the puzzle. Zechariah goes on. How will you know that you've gotten there to the revolution where the fasts become festivals. It says:



There's a third element, that the righteous of the nations are tasked in this chapter to do their job. And when these three things come together, that is what we're shooting for. The goal is not to be less hungry on Tisha B'Av, like the people in the chapter 7 ask, the goal is to use Tisha B'Av to be hungry, to be hungry and yearn and work for that great, great destiny that HaShem has in mind for Jerusalem and for the world.

And in the middle of this prophecy, there's this incredible verse. I read it again and again, I can't get enough of it.

So said the Lord of Hosts: As it will be wonderful in the eyes of the remnant of this people in those days, it will also be wonderful in My eyes, says the Lord of Hosts.
 -Zechariah 8:6

Wonderful doesn't mean like really, really nice. Wonder, this is using the word in Hebrew that means like actual wonder, like shocking, wondrousness, is this actually happening? Like unbelievable wonder beyond wonder.

And it's so crazy because God is saying, "I know that this prophecy sounds hard for you to envision and believe. It's hard for me, I am in wonder as I am saying what is going to be. I Myself, God, am in wonder, watching what I see can be for Jerusalem."

And now, here I am sitting in wonder because I'm sitting in Judea, after HaShem has ingathered me, and ingathered the exiles, and put elderly in the streets of Jerusalem, and children playing in the streets of Jerusalem, and HaShem did His part! And here we are doing our little part to try and speak the truth from Zion and here you guys, everyone here, is coming from all over the world to seek out HaShem and I can't help but be overwhelmed by the wonder and the wonder if HaShem, Himself, isn't saying, "Wow, this is really a wonder in My eyes, too."

So, with that, I wish you guys a meaningful Tisha B'Av, and I hope we all join together in praying for that great vision to come and pass speedily in our days. Bye everyone, thanks for being here.

Jeremy

That is Tehila Gimpel. She is absolutely marvelous and what we want to do now, is we want to introduce our partners in crime, the Israel Guys. And we want them to be representations of the nations. And I don't know if Josh Waller, Luke Hilton, are either of you guys with us now?

Josh Waller

Jeremy, I can hear you loud and clear. Can you hear me?

Ari

Ok, good. So I'm going to get right to you, Josh, but I just have to say, you know 20 years we're together now. We've been friends. And for the first time, we're here together on Tisha B'Av, and we're mourning the destruction and the truth is, there are things about this whole thing of us being together that I still truly do not understand. We are not here together because we've solved every theological question, we're not here because we've worked out all of the logic, we're not here because of what's happening here, we're here because of what's happening HERE, in our hearts. Something is already begun, and that's what the prophets said. They said that when we return to the Land, God will take from us a heart of stone and place within us a heart of flesh, that we would have a circumcision of the heart. Not of the heads of the hearts, we don't need to understand everything or anything, but I want to understand you. We want to understand you. What is it that is making you want to be a part of the 9th of Av? What is the 9th of Av mean to you? Are you fasting today? Share with us, Josh.

Josh



Thanks, Ari, and yes, what a friendship, and I think that this may just be part of the redemption that's happening, as Tehila just gave such a great study, a talk there of the redemption. And I feel like the nations, there is something for the nations in this. And I know so many on this call right now are those from the nations that are listening in...something is happening, and like you said, Ari, it's not so much in the head right now. There's a lot that comes from the heart. And I think that, for me, specifically, yes, I am fasting with you. I am fasting, maybe in a different way, though. I'm fasting, cause I know the Jewish people. Ari, you and I spoke earlier this week, and you said you're fasting and seeking

God more on a level of reflection for you as a Jewish person. That the Jewish people, you teach that these evils that befell the people of Israel, the exiles, the destruction of the Temple came because of the sins of Israel.

As one from the nations, as I fast today, I reflect on what the nations did. Just as you as a Jewish person, reflecting on what you did that caused this, I'm reflecting on what we as the nations did that caused this...maybe you can't say caused, but those that dealt this evil upon the Jewish people. Those that actually committed the crimes of destruction, the ones that lit the fires in the holy place of the Temple Mount, destroyed the Temple with their own hands. The Jewish people would have never dreamed to do such a thing. So the depravity of the nations that I'm reminded of.

This morning I read, Ari, probably what you read, it was a list of just terrible things that befell the Jewish people. It's in some of the prayers that you probably read this morning as you sat on the floor in the synagogue. I wanted to hear what the Jewish people were reading. And I went through and I read those things and it was horrifying. To be one that, no I don't have a specific family member or great, great grandfather that did something that I know about, but in my mind, there's only two people groups. There're the Jewish people, God's chosen people, and there's the nations. And whether you're Chinese, whether you're American, whether you're Canadian, no matter who you are, you're a part of that group called the nations.

And the nations inflicted so much pain on the people of Israel on this day, that yes, everyone from the nations that understands that day should be fasting and should be seeking God on how do we rectify, how do we repent? Something really amazing happened this week, Ari. It just happened to be that these last nine days have been some of the most productive days of standing with Israel that we here at HaYovel have had in a long time. We were out standing with Jewish farmers, we took nearly 3,000 dunams of Land down in the Jordan Valley. And as our team was building fences for a new farmer to take over Lands that Jewish people have not been able to settle on for thousands of years, I thought, ok, this is real repentance. This is the nation's way of repenting. When we, ourselves, can come and do the very thing that we wronged you in by destroying the Land of Israel, we can come and be a part of building up this precious, holy, God-given Land to you. We can be a part in a positive way, not the destruction, not the tools of destruction upon this nation, but literally the tool of redemption, of restoration, of restoring this Land.

So, this week has been a really, it's been a beautiful week to see an opportunity. You didn't have to accept it, Ari, not one Jewish person should, really. You should have said, "We can do this on our own. You've hurt us too much, goodbye to the nations, we've tried this before." But

you didn't, you said, "Come on, we need you. This is a part of the story. Let's build together. And for that, I thank you, thank you, Ari. And to all of your people that have welcomed us to join this building process, it's been a humbling journey, but one of great, great fulfillment. So that's my reflections, today, Ari, as I am fasting, maybe in a little different light, maybe a little different than you as a Jewish person are, but that's the 9th of Av for me.

Ari

Well I'll tell you, I feel like on some level, the relationship between us is like symbolic of a greater healing that's going on between Israel and the nations, at least the nation that you represent at this time. And it's part of, not just facilitating the redemption, but it feels like it's part of the redemption, itself. But I had this thought that the very first 9th of Av, the root of all the sorrow, was when our ancestors spoke against the Land. The spies came back and they said the Land is good, but...and they filled the people with fear. And that moment of slander really shattered everything.

And so the relationship between us, Josh, isn't only about the House of Prayer for All Nations, but we're coming together to lift up HaShem's Name and sing the praises of the Land, the Land. You're rectifying that initial sin that caused our dispersion. You're praying in the fields of Judea, you're working our vineyards in Samaria. You're coming and you're saying the Land is very, very good. Jews come home! The Land awaits you! The world awaits you. Is that a big part of what this day is for you, also? Is it the Land as well?

Josh

Well, I have to say that yeah, there's something about this Land that's unlike any other Land, you know that from me. It is amazing to see the prophecy becoming a reality in front of our very eyes. When we see the goodness of God, as King David would say, in the Land of the living, there's so many atrocities that have come to the Jewish people on this day that we're fasting and we're still not completely there. But my, are we seeing the Hand of God alive in this country. And yes, the redemption that I see daily, the videos of people dancing and singing and worshipping on Har Habayit, the Tempel Mount, inspire me like you wouldn't believe. And yes, there is something about this Land that I believe is natural. You are beginning to be a light to all nations, the reversal of the destruction is literally happening right before us and there's something powerful when I even see a video of Jewish people worshipping on the Temple Mount. It's something that inside of me goes, "That's true worship." And I know everybody on this call is like, "Wow, something is happening because we from the nations feel there's something coming when Jewish people connect to the depth of that light that is beginning to shine, we're right at the beginning of it, when the Jewish people are taking hold of it.

And there's only one thing that I want to do, there's only really one thing...you can ask anybody who knows me. Ari, you know me, you would tell everybody this. I want to learn how to worship with you on the Temple Mount. And I think that that truly would be the rectification of this day when we together learn, as the nations come and we learn. Cause it's not something that we already know. And I'm almost a little bit jealous when I see the Jewish people in all out worship to God on the Temple Mount. And I don't know that what's happening, and I want to know.

And I think there's so many people of the nations also that want to know, that want to be a part of that. Because that is the ultimate prophecy that we're all looking towards here on this day, is when the nations can, and we can go up with you. That we can grab a hold of those tzit tzit, as Tehila read, and we go with you to Zion. And that's the whole redemption picture that we're all studying together. This is what we have so much in common with each other, is this prophecy of the redemption of the Jewish nation coming and growing and then being a light to all the nations. So, yeah, I'm excited about this Land thing, Ari.

Ari

That is beautiful, thank you, Josh, I just got to say, as I'm seeing you speak and I'm thinking about The Israel Guys, the program we have that's going on and now we have you on our Tisha B'Av and our relationship is coming so much closer and more loving over the years. I mean, you've done things for us that I can't even talk about in a public way because you'd probably get arrested or we would, or both. You know, there's not one of us that wouldn't die for each other. We don't even need to say it, certain things you just know. And that kind of love, that kind of brotherhood isn't just about alliances or shared interests or common things. That kind of love can only come from God, Himself. And it feels like it's part of the redemption. And so I want to ask you, am I alone here in being the messianic crazy dude, or do you also believe that this is the last 9th of Av before the Great Temple?

Josh

Ari, that's exactly what I would expect you to say. I'm with you and I remember...we've been saying this...this past Passover, it was going to be the last Passover. Every holiday for Ari is literally going to be the final redemptive moment, because every feast day has that moment, it's like the climax, and it's going to culminate in this redemption. And I'm with you, Ari, I think that is the hope that we have to carry in these days when nations are turning against and things look so terrible, as the nations literally begin to fall apart as Israel is coming alive. We have to hold onto that hope and that faith that yes, it is coming and maybe, just maybe this is the last one.

Ari

Amen, brother. Jeremy, can I call on you to introduce our brother, Luke, or should I bring him on?

Jeremy

No, I would love to. I just want to say that I've been friends with Ari now since we were 18 years old. And every Tisha B'Av is the last Tisha B'av and there's something about it that is so beautiful because he never gets tired, he never loses faith, he's always ready, and he's always expecting redemption to come and that really is the right way to live, expecting redemption, expecting salvation.

Ari

As we say in Texas, Jeremy, even a blind squirrel finds an acorn. Eventually I'm going to be right and it's going to be this one now. Anyways, go ahead, Jeremy.

Jeremy

Yeah, so I just wanted to say that like, the relationship that we have with Josh Waller and with Luke Hilton, we've spent hours with these guys. And it's become more than friends, they've really become brothers. And I just pray that our work together is a reflection of what was meant to be and what will be in the Temple, a brotherhood of man under the fatherhood of God. That's really what I hope our friendship represents. And so, with that, I want to introduce Luke to everyone here. And just let him speak from his heart. Luke, are you with us?

Luke



Yeah, can you hear me? Give me a thumbs up.

Jeremy

Yeah, 100% we hear you. What does Tisha B'Av mean for you, living in Samaria, in the Land of Israel, alongside the Jewish people, representing the nations? What does Tisha B'Av mean for you?

Luke

Yeah, thank you, Jeremy, thank you, Ari. So good to be with you guys. Normally you guys come here and we get to record a podcast together every week. If anyone does not know, you need to check that out. Every week we do an hour-long podcast together, Joshua and I and Ari and Jeremy. And if anyone here is from The Israel Guys audience and it's your first time on the

Fellowship, you need to make sure and figure out how to sign up for the Fellowship every single week, as this is just an amazing, amazing thing. Amazing to be a part of it.

So, I was thinking about Tisha B'Av and realizing that as a Christian, something from the nations, like Joshua was mentioning, and I know that there's Jews and Christians on this call, but I'm going to assume that the majority of people here are probably from the nations, probably a lot of Christians on the call. In that world, this is an unknown thing. Nobody knows what Tisha B'Av is, nobody's heard of it, it's a strange name. A lot of people know about Passover or Sukkot, even Yom Kippur, Rosh Hashana, but Tisha B'Av is a very like unknown thing and the question is, "Why should non-Jews fast? Why should non-Jew commemorate it?"

And this morning I was watching an animated film on YouTube with my children. I think it's called Temple in Flames, I know there's a book about it as well. Basically, it tells the story of the Temple being overtaken and burned by the Romans. It's like what happened on Tisha B'Av, one of the things that 2,000 years ago when Jerusalem was overtaken by the Romans. And it made me realize that we very much have a shared faith and a shared history here. And a good reason to commemorate Tisha B'Av. And as Joshua was saying, I think as those from the nations, we have a responsibility as well.

But I have a little bit of a different idea of things that I was thinking about today as to where we're at right now. And I specifically want to speak to people from the nations. There's a video that came out recently by Charlie Kirk, and he had a group of GenZ young people gathered in a focus group and they were talking about the topic of Israel. And the question was basically, "Should your generation care about Israel? Should this be an important topic? Are you tired of hearing about Israel? Are you exhausted?"

And the consensus among the generation of young people in their early 20's, 18, 19, 20, 21-year-olds was that they're just very tired of hearing about Israel. They feel like America has a lot of their own problems, they can't afford a house, inflation, open borders, crime, etc., and they're just kind of tired of hearing about Israel. And so, it kind of made me stop and pause like, how do we reach, especially the next generation for Israel, especially when they're so exhausted over this topic, I guess you could say. Because they're seeing war in Gaza, they're seeing starvation and famine, and they're seeing...they're just deluged. Social media is just overrun with the topic of Israel.

And specifically, one of the things that this group of GenZers said is that they don't really like the idea of needing to support Israel, only from the Bible. Basically, because the Bible says so. We all saw Ted Cruz kind of fumble, talking to Tucker Carlson. He quoted Genesis 12, but he

couldn't remember where the reference was. And then everybody jumped on him like, "Why are we supporting Israel just because the Bible says to?" And I've been mulling over that topic and that idea in my head, like, is supporting Israel just from the Bible a good enough reason, or should we also support Israel because Israel brings moral clarity and brings technology and brings so much good to the world? It's brought us so much to offer, which are all true things.

But I can't, as a Bible believing Christian, someone who has grown up with the Bible my entire life, I can't get over this idea that Israel should be a central part of our faith because of the Bible, because the Bible says so, like period. Like we have to stop there. And I feel like, somehow we have to reach the next generation. I'm 33 years old and I'm already looking at the next generation of 18, 19, 20-year-olds and thinking like, "What is the state of the world today?"

I was just watching some of the latest video clips with Candace Owens and Tucker Carlson and Piers Morgan. It can be so discouraging, right? Just 80 years ago, we had the Holocaust, worst event that happened to the Jewish people in centuries. And then, we have October 7th almost two years ago. Worse event to happen to the Jewish people since the Holocaust. And already in less than two years, anti-Semitism is at levels we've never seen before, unprecedented levels. You have countries lining up to recognize a Palestinian state now. It very much looks like there could be a lot of countries recognizing a Palestinian state in September at the United Nations general assembly. That's a very scary thing to happen.

I just saw this, just a few minutes ago. The name Yachya, and if you've been following, Yachya Sinwar was the leader of Hamas who thank God, was finally found and killed by Israel. The name Yachya was one of the top boy's baby names in the United Kingdom in 2024. Five hundred and eighty boys were named Yachya in the United Kingdom. The United Kingdom is now recognizing a Palestinian State. Like if that doesn't tell you the state of affairs that the world is in, I don't know what will.

And this is kind of the bottom line for me because obviously we could go on and on. It feels like what's next, right? It feels like what's next. And it also feels like, where are we going to stand? Because if you see all the news clips, you see that millions of people are following the likes of Tucker Carlson, and Candace Owens, and Piers Morgan and Dave Smith, and on and on and on, right? And it feels like the entire world's against Israel. And it also feels like those who are Catholic, those who are Evangelical Christians, Mormons, so many are now questioning...why do we support Israel again? Like, what's the deal there? Like what is the reason that we should continue standing with Israel? Young people, especially. And there comes a point when there's going to have to be a line in the sand drawn and we have to decide, is it worth it? Like are we going to continue supporting and standing with Israel?

My father-in-law, many of whom you guys know, Tommy Waller teaches very strongly and basically about Christianity and basically, and I very much agree with him, it comes down to, the question is, can you be a real Bible-believing Christian and stand against Israel and the Jewish people? And I tend to say, the answer to that is no. And I think the time has come to say that much more loudly and clearly, to say, "You cannot be a bible-believing Christian, someone who believes in the Bible, in the covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and stand against Israel.

But the problem is, the time is coming very, very soon, and we could be talking days, weeks, months, I don't think it's years when you're not going to be able to sit on the fence, you're not going to be able to just say that and be comfortable. The time is going to come where you're going to have to make that decision publicly and openly and then be prepared to take the consequences for that.

And I think that today, on Tisha B'Av, as we're fasting, and as we're commemorating and we're praying, and I'm teaching my children about the destruction of the Temple, and about baseless hatred, and how we should be praying and longing for the restoration of the Temple, and the rebuilding of the Temple, and it's centered around baseless love and loving each other, I think this our preparation for that. This is our preparation for the time when we have to make that decision. We have to decide where are we going to stand.

And so, I think the bottom line for me on this day is we have to teach our children, we have to teach our churches, we have to teach our congregations, we have to stand strong with each other, and you have to fast on Tisha B'Av, you have to fast on the 17th of Tammuz and Yom Kippur and you have to commemorate Passover and Sukkot and Rosh Hashana, these are all opportunities to practice standing with Israel and the Jewish people and ultimately it's going to come down to being a part of rebuilding God's Kingdom, and it's happening right here in the Land of Israel. Josh talked about the very physical, literal reality of building the Land of Israel and this is all part of it. Whether you're here in the Land of Israel, whether you're the young people that we have here building fences right now, or you're praying, or you're financially supporting, or you're standing up in your community, like that time is now. And all of these things, Tisha B'Av, that's one of the opportunities to practice because we have to be prepared to stand and to stand strongly. So I think that's my takeaway from Tisha B'Av, Jeremy, hopefully I came through ok.

Jeremy

Yeah, you came across amazing, thank you so much, Luke. I think that we're kind of echoing what Tehila quoted. One man from the nations will grab hold of the corner of the garment of a Jewish man and say take us with you. Or we have heard that God is with you. A remnant

among the nations, the righteous among the nations. It's not going to be a mainstream movement. Most of the world, and most of the countries are going to fall for the lies and stand against Israel. And then, that's the opportunity for the real righteous among the nations who really believe in the Bible, who really believe in God, to stand with Israel, separate themselves and align themselves with the destiny of Israel. And I see you as a frontrunner, as an example. And everyone that's here are living examples of this VIP exclusive club of the righteous among the nations that are aligning themselves with Israel and soon Tisha B'Av, we'll be celebrating together in a rebuilt Jerusalem. Thank you so much, Luke for coming.

Luke

Amen, thank you, Jeremy.

Ari

Amen, that is just so true. And you know, I'm going to bring this all together now, my friends, because like Jeremy said, it's a VIP club. It's smaller than we thought as some of the conventional people...Tucker Carlson, I thought he was a friend. Little did I know he's a rabid Jew hater. And if you know me well, you know I'm not the type to start pointing fingers and calling people anti-Semites and being a victim and all that. But I think it's pretty clear that's happening a lot.

I'll tell you, when we first opened our hearts to the nations, we began to see something really extraordinary. You know this righteous remnant was being gathered, almost mysteriously towards this moment. It's like, sometimes I see the world like an energy. Like beams of pure light drawn together as if some unseen magnetic force was pulling hearts from every corner of the earth into the same Divine frequency. That's how it felt for me. And a handful of righteous souls, shining in the midst of overwhelming darkness. Like I said, smaller than I imagined but brighter than I imagined. Because in the story of Israel, numbers never mattered. We read in Deuteronomy chapter 7:

The Lord did not set His love upon you, nor choose you, because you were more in number than any people; for you were the fewest of all peoples.

-Deuteronomy 7:7

From the beginning of our history, we were always outnumbered by armies, empires, by the tide of the world, itself. But that was never a flaw in the plan, it was the plan, itself. It was a living reminder that our strength has never been in our numbers or in our weapons but in the Spirit of

HaShem who fights with us and through us.

And so, tonight, if you are here, if you have chosen to step into this mourning, this pain with us, to feel our grief as if it were your own, then I believe it's safe to say, "You are that righteous remnant." The very souls that the prophets foresaw, drawn like light toward light, purified like gold in the fire of whom God, Himself would say, "Comfort, comfort my people. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem and proclaim to her that her warfare has been completed, that her iniquity has been pardoned, for she has received from the Lord's Hand double for all her sins."

And here's the mystery. You may think that we are blessing you by inviting you into this Fellowship, by leading this Fellowship, but the truth is, at least from our perspective, you're blessing us. Because we are not mourning the destruction of a building, we are mourning a relationship. Not destroyed, but deeply wounded. Between man and God, between nation and nation, between neighbor and neighbor, and we're mourning fear. We're mourning rage, hatred, jealousy, all of it is so unnecessary, all of it is a lie. Because each of us, each person, each nation carries a gift that humanity desperately needs. And Mashiach will be the conductor that brings that all together, that will bring this unique light, a frequency when joined together will create a harmony the world has never known.

And maybe, maybe just maybe we here in this Fellowship are the foundation stone. In this Fellowship, we are the harbinger of what is to come, of what is possible. Because if we, after thousands of years of hatred and suspicion and bloodshed, if we can somehow find our way back to one another, if we can move from enmity to brotherhood, then it means something far bigger than ourselves. It means reconciliation is possible for all of humanity.

And so tonight, I want to invite you, gently and lovingly with open hearts, not just to watch the Fellowship from the outside, but step in and join us. Become a part of this story, a part of the prophecy, a part of the healing of the world. And may we merit to see in our days the rebuilding of the holy Temple. Not as a monument of stone, not as a building, but as the beating heart of a world made whole. A House of Prayer for All Nations. A house where the light of every people will rise together and illuminate the earth with the glory of God.

And with that, it my great blessing and honor to share the blessing of Aaron the High Priest with you. And as you know, I tell you every week, I am not of the descendants of Aaron, I am not a priest in the Temple. But as the Bible says, we are a nation of priests and a holy people. So, with that:

Aaronic blessing (Hebrew)

May the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord make shine His Face upon you and be gracious to you. May the Lord lift His Face toward you and grant you peace. Amen.

Thank you, my friends, thank you. May the next time we meet be dancing in the courtyards of the Temple. Jeremy, if there's anything you want to share, if there's anything anyone has on their hearts, please, go ahead.

Jeremy

May this Tisha B'Av be the last fast and may it be the beginning of a new feast. A new feast of the Bible that we celebrate Jerusalem and we celebrate this gathering of the nations coming together.

Ari

Amen, amen. Thank you, I'm shocked at the degree of energy and vitality that I had, as today was a hot, long day without drink or food. But as always, this Fellowship, these are my righteous brothers and sisters that always give me a life force and us a life force for which we will be forever grateful. All right my friends, thank you so much, shalom, shalom. See you soon in the Temple Courtyard on Mount Moriah.

