

Session 239

Re-eh – Why Only Family Can Save Israel and the World

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yUpLLjC4IAc>

Jeremy

Shalom everybody, welcome to the Land of Israel Fellowship. Can you hear me? Excellent, ok, thank goodness. Tehila and I have taken the kids for our summer vacation. We've spent a week now in Ashkelon, on the sunny beaches of Ashkelon. It's been amazing. It's been a little bit weird, and maybe that's obviously Divine providence. Ari spoke about this a little bit yesterday, but Ashkelon is the city that is closest to Gaza. And so every so often you hear booms and explosions and the kids are making sand castles in the beach, next to the water. And it's like we're in the middle of a vacation, because the war has now been almost two years and the war is happening so close that we hear buildings being exploded right next to us, it's making this vacation really like no other vacation that I can remember.

But I feel like all of us really needed just a break. Lavi, my oldest, he is in a ten year army program where he spends four years in Israel's Technion, which is kind of like the MIT of Israel where he's studying physics and electrical engineering. And he's always sort of been the smartest kid in the room, and now he is not. Now he's just another one of the 28 people out of the country that have been selected and approved to join this program. You spend four years learning and then six years in a secret unit developing the laser iron dome that now shoots that now shoots rockets out of the sky, using light. I mean that's just the brilliant minds of Israel. So Lavi's a very smart kid.

And he just finished his last test of the semester and it was so nice seeing him just dig a big hole in the sand with my nine-year-old Noam. It was just the cutest thing. And now we've just had a time to breathe, but I don't know how to explain it. It's not like a vacation in another country. We literally hear the war in Gaza as we're on the beach trying to give our kids just a breather. And so, I guess that's what life in Israel is really all about. There really is no break, there is just reality. And evil doesn't rest. And so too, the forces of good can't rest.

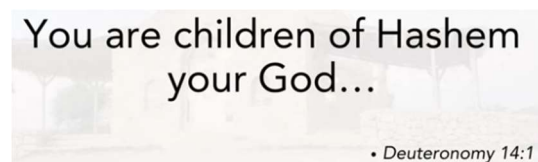
And so, with that, I have a public service announcement. Because one of the great forces of good that I know is Tehila Gimpel. And tonight, there is a Women of Valor interactive interview tonight with Tehila. She spends a lot of time thinking about who can be the best interview, who is the heart beat of Israel, who represents the topic of that month, who is a woman voice that no one would ever get a chance to actually meet, listen to, ask questions. And each time it's been a banger. And tonight, at 8:15, right after the Fellowship, it's like a little bit more than an

hour after the Fellowship, that's happening. Women of Valor, it's a special, unique gathering. Because of righteous women the world was redeemed and the world will be redeemed. You don't want to miss it.

And Tehila has been working on this new series based on the women heroes of the Bible. And I read a lot of Torah, thank God, I listen to a lot of teachers, and I'm telling you, the original insightful, brilliant teachings that have been coming through Tehila for the women of this Fellowship, is some of the greatest Torah teachings in the world today. And I'm not saying that because I love my wife and I have to say that. I'm saying that because I love the Torah and I think it's true. The Women of Valor has brought the best out of Tehila and now she has deeper relationships with so many more people in the Fellowship. It's been an absolute blessing. So again, tonight, 8:15, Israel time, you don't want to miss it.

I also want to take this opportunity, this Fellowship, I would love to dedicate the last part of the Fellowship to a Fellowship Connection, and really give us a chance to experience what this Fellowship is all about – a connection, a community, a relationship, a global movement that somehow found each other. And I want this opportunity to hear from you live, to connect, so write down your questions, write down your comments, your insights, your challenges and we will meet up soon. I can't wait for that. That's going to be at the end of this Fellowship.

So anyway, all right, let's get right down to it. Right now, like I said, it's summer vacation in Israel. All of Israel is out and about. Schools are out, Yeshivas are out, the rhythm of life changes, families spend much more time together and sometimes it can feel chaotic, it can feel exhausting, but actually in reality, it's the essence of life. And right before entering into ELUL, which we just now entered into, preparing for the High Holy Days, there is a short season that is potentially 100% dedicated to family. And then this week's Torah portion, we literally read Deuteronomy 14:



That verse is extraordinary. The Torah isn't just calling us servants of HaShem, not just His nation, but His children. That changes everything. There has never been a religion before Judaism, before the

Torah was given where people saw the gods as their father. It's a totally different relationship. Because children are not loved because of what they accomplish or what they do. They are loved because of who they are. A parent's love is unconditional. And it's through that lens that the Torah is teaching us to understand God's love for us, to understand our relationship with Him through the paradigm of father and children.

And it took us until Deuteronomy to get there. Right before we enter into the Land of Israel. And so in some ways, family is meant to be the paradigm, it's meant to orient our entire world view. And just as HaShem calls us His children and cherishes us, we have to cherish the gift of our own children.

And the Rambam says that the mitzvah to love your neighbor as yourself, arguably one of the most important mitzvahs in the Torah begins at home. You first learn how to love your neighbor by just loving your family. You begin with a love of your family and then it can expand. And then in this week's Haftarah portion, HaShem completes the picture. Isaiah chapter 54, verse 13:

And all your children shall be taught of Hashem; and great shall be the peace of your children.

• Isaiah 54:13

So in the same way, we're called to teach our children of HaShem, the Rambam writes that all of creation was formed in order that we grow in our understanding, in our emunah of HaShem. Just as we're called to teach our children about God, HaShem

is in a constant movement towards us, drawing us closer to Him. And in that way, in our most loving relationships, the more we understand each other, the more we can grow in our understanding of HaShem.

There's a reason that family is under attack. Having children is under attack. The population is exploding, there's overpopulation in the world, China limited the amount of children they're having, and now the world is in the middle of a population collapse. I mean in the modern secular world, the populations are shrinking because secular people are simply not getting married, are not having children. And people are being robbed of the most love and joy they can experience in life. And it's in place of being sold a bowl of lentil soup. I don't even know what they're replacing that love with, but there can be nothing greater than the love we have in our own families.

And so, summer is not just vacation. It's the ultimate opportunity to live the Torah's teaching, that you are children to HaShem. We slow down, we see our children, our grandchildren with fresh eyes. We have to invest in them, to love them, to guide them, to hug them. Hug your family as often as possible. That is the best advice that I can give anyone. Hug as much as possible.

And the future of Israel, it's not in politics, and it's not going to be in armies, it's in our homes, it's in our families. And the way that we raise our children to know they are children of HaShem. Love and shalom, in our personal homes is the foundation stone for the redemption

of the entire world. That's why the entire Torah is framed around family. It's the story of husband and wife and their children. Everything. Adam and Eve and their children, Noah, his wife, his children, they all enter the ark. Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rivkah, Jacob and his family. Without family there is no Torah. Family is at the heart of it all, it all started with Abraham's family and it will end with the Abraham Accords. And it will end with a giant movement of family.

I mean, ultimately, the mission is to take the love that we feel for our family, and try to extend it as far as we can. That's why so many people in this Fellowship call it the Fellowship family. Just on the chats now, I saw so many people saying, "Hey, family, so good to be together with our family." We've been together now for a few years, but there's some newcomers here. That immediately when they plug in they realize, "Oh, this isn't just another community. There is something that's bonding here, that's deeper than that." And it's expressing that exact idea, one day, the vision is that we will be walking down the streets of cities, anywhere in the world, and there'll be a feeling of belonging, a feeling of caring, of togetherness.

Right now, it's literally the opposite. It's like, "Are you with me? Are you against me? Are you right? Are you left? Are you a terrorist? Are you a climate change activist?" There's not a feeling of togetherness or of shared destiny. Our Fellowship is a living testimony that it's possible to come together, people from different backgrounds, people from different languages, people from different nations, countries, cultures, and actually build a community that is an extended family.

And so, with that, I want to take this opportunity to bring us all together in prayer because we have one Father in Heaven and all of us are truly brothers and sisters.

HaShem, Abba, our Father, our King, thank You for today, chodesh tov, thank You for coming out into the fields to meet us. Thank You for this Fellowship, thank You for bringing us all together in these times. We dedicate this time to You, we start off our week aligning our lives with Your will and learning Your Torah. Open our eyes to see You in all things. Let us see You in the blessing of peace and let us see You in the storm of war. When life feels like a blessing, let us never take it for granted. And when life feels hard like a curse, let us remember it's Your Hand guiding us, shaping us, raising us, as a Father raises His child. Teach us to live with yirat shamayim, to see with the eyes of our soul, to know that everything...the joy, the pain, comes from You.

Bless all of Israel, inside the Land and out. Guard our precious soldiers, bless them with courage and strength, guide them toward victory, and comfort every broken heart among Your children.

Bless this Fellowship, bless every soul gathered here, bless them, bless their families, bless their loved ones. We are all aligning our destiny with Israel. Bind us together as family, rooted in Torah, connected to the Land of Israel, alive with Your light. May our prayers, our lives, and our very being bring glory to Your Name. And may this spiritual House of Prayer for all Nations, that we're building from around the world be a stepping stone toward a physical House of Prayer for all Nations in a new Jerusalem. Amen.

All right, my friends. You know, as we journey through this world, we're given anchors along the way, keeping us grounding, kind of guard rails, keeping us on the path and connected to HaShem and His truth. The Torah portion is a constant guidance, and living with the Hebrew calendar gives every day, every season, a flavor, an energy. It's a direction, a spiritual potential is being offered.

And today we just entered in the month of ELUL. It's the month when the King leaves His palace and walks among us in the field. The month when HaShem comes close to us wherever we are. We can relate to Him, not on a distant throne up in heaven, walking with us like a father among his children. And when we see that the King is in the field, that means that sometimes, we'll get caught off because we're in the field and we've got some dirt under our fingernails and just unprepared, we're shocked. But that's exactly the point. No preparation is needed. We are where we're supposed to be. We're exactly where HaShem wants us. It's where we're meant to be.

And it's in that place that HaShem meets us. You are children of HaShem your God, that's actually the essence of ELUL. To remember who we are, to strip away the noise, the fear, the confusion, and come back to the simple truth that HaShem is our Father, we are loved, and the tshuva of ELUL is to simply return to that simple truth.

And so, before we start off with the Fellowship and go even deeper, I want to invite Ari Abramowitz. I know that he is already back on the Farm in Judea. I know that he has a beautiful Torah to share and so I want to pass it off to you, Ari.

Ari

Hey, Jeremy, thank you so much. I really needed to hear what you said there. That was very good, that was a beautiful blessing. Indeed, I am actually not on the Farm because I was gone for two weeks now in Ashkelon. And then I returned with my children and they were saying, they don't even remember what our house looks like. Because Shiloh is three, so he was gone for two weeks, it's already, "Are we going to go back to that home?" So of course when we got back, they got right back into it, but of course, the electricity wasn't really working right, the

internet was down completely and totally, so now I'm at my in-law's house in the settlement of Efrat, which is right near around the corner that I came here to broadcast to make sure it would actually work. But you're right, Jeremy, the King is in the field. And I really needed to hear that no preparation was necessary and I'm happy to hear that we need to be giving hugs. Because if hugs are the only preparation, then I've been doing it! Because that would really summarize the last two weeks of my life. I mean you see me with those kids. That's all I do, I just hug them all day long and to see my kids playing with your kids.

You know someone ran into us on the beach, and were like, "Ari and Jeremy, you're like neighbors on the Farm, not just neighbors, but you're all that you have for each other. And then you go on vacation together?" It's really a crazy thing, it's a very special friendship. And it's really a testimony to Tehila and Shaena.

But anyways, so yes, the King is in the field and we get to see Him there and "see," that's what this Torah portion is about. It's about seeing, it's really a special parsha. And it feels particularly relevant for where we are in history, we're at a time of seeing, seeing HaShem, seeing HaShem in our lives, not only our personal lives, but even more so, our national lives. At least for me. My personal life has been, my cup overfloweth. I've experienced so many pieces of personal redemption. But then I look around and it's not exactly that way all around me.

And so, the opening words of the portion, which is called Re'eh, the parsha of vision:

"See I place before you today a blessing and a curse."

And at first glance, it seems straight forward. HaShem is telling us, "Choose wisely. Choose life, choose blessing. See that, see that." But we know that every word of the Torah is infinite, and layered with secrets beyond what we could possibly comprehend. And therefore, this pasuk is not only instruction, it's not only HaShem instructing us, but it's really revelation. There's something new that is being revealed to us here.

Because let's for a moment contrast this word, re'eh, with the word that we're far more familiar with – shema, hear. Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One. We say it three times a day, when we're born and when we die. It's like such a critical part of the Jewish essence, is that verse that Jacob said to his sons. It's a part of the genetic DNA of the nation of Israel. The Torah could have said, "Shema, hear, listen." That's usually how the Torah addresses us, but here it actually says, "Re'eh, see."

So why does it do that? I think because seeing is in some ways, it's deeper than hearing. Or at least it's profoundly different. Maybe there's an argument, hearing is abstract. Hearing means I understand in theory. But seeing means it becomes real, undeniable. When you really see something, with your own eyes, it is difficult to convince you otherwise after that. Our sages teach us that re'eh calls us to develop spiritual vision, to pierce through the surface of reality. Most of us walk through life hearing about HaShem. We know, we learn, we read, but the avodah, the service that is being demanded of us is to open the eyes of the soul and actually see HaShem in our lives. To experience the Divine in the here and now.

Now one of the beautiful dimensions of this Fellowship, is that we open the door, not only to different conceptual ideas, but also to different dimensions of the language, itself. So the next word is anochi, re'eh anochi, which is defined as "I." If you open the King James, JNS, whatever it is, I don't even know how to translate it differently than I. But that's really not...it doesn't do it justice. Ani means I. Anochi is very rare. Anochi is actually the same word that began the Ten Commandments. I am the Lord thy God. Anochi, it represents the deepest Divine essence, the I that transcends all names.

So here HaShem is saying, "When you choose blessing, you are really choosing to align with the anochi, God's innermost essence, which is beyond comprehension, yet really even beyond comprehension if we're able to align with it on that transcendent dimension. It's really revealed in who we are and everything we do and it's sensed about us. That we are aligning with that inner anochi.

And so what does that mean? We learn that when the word anochi is used, it's not just HaShem speaking, it's HaShem conveying His very essence, the deepest of my life beyond names and attributes. Every mitzvah, every teaching, every pasuk, every verse that flows from that essence. But here it comes to the surface. Anochi notem, so God in His deepest essence is giving something. HaShem is saying that what He's giving is from His very essence. HaShem's very self is being given, and not some day in the future, but hiyom. Anochi notem hiyom, I'm giving today. And some days it's not just that He's giving His blessing today, but today is the blessing. Each day anew.

And as we have learned and hopefully internalized by now in the Fellowship, the Torah is not recounting something that happened thousands of years ago. Every word is happening right now. That's what the verse is saying. HaShem is giving you of His essence today and today is the expression of His essence in the very moment, in your struggles, in your choices, in your life.

And where do we see this most clearly? In eretz Yisrael. Sometimes I feel like I needed to go on that crazy trip to America where I was rescued on a boat by these god-fearing, lovely Christian couple – Captain Jack and Skipper Debbie. I needed to go there, I needed to go to America because I needed to experience the confusion, disorientation, of what life is like there. I can't dodge it, I can't miss it, it's like this immediate, heavy weight of confusion came over me. I mean, you guys heard me, I broadcasted from that Fellowship. I went back and I looked at that broadcast, and I was a little bit embarrassed. But I'm happy that I did it because it was real. It's really where I was, it's where I was at. But I was not in a great place, I just wanted to get home. And I didn't have that faith that we talk about every single week. Maybe I had the faith, but I didn't have the internalized trust infused within me.

And I feel like a large part of that is that I was outside the Land of Israel. That's why our Fellowship needs to be broadcast from the Holy Land. That's why it is only from Zion that the Torah will come forth and the Word of God can only illuminate the world from Yerushalyim as Isaiah said. Our sages teach that the Land of Israel is the gateway to heaven. Outside the Land, HaShem is hidden beneath layers upon layers. And here in the mountains of Judea, the veil is thinner. I mean, there's still a veil, believe me. Jeremy and I have been struggling, we're helping each other out as dear, beloved friends, trying to pull the veil off of our own eyes, off of each other's eyes. We've been going through a lot.

But here, in the mountains of Judea, the veil is thinner and we're given an extra layer of strength, an extra infusion of spiritual power that we can fight this mask of multiplicity in the world. The inner light shines stronger. That's why the Torah is filled with the call to see the Land, to lift your eyes. And when I walk on these hills and I see the vineyards returning and homes rising, the families planting themselves into this soil, it's not just history. It's re'eh, it's HaShem saying, "See with your own eyes that I'm faithful to My Word. See redemption unfolding before you."

But here's where we get to the confusing part of the verse. At least for me, it threw me off a little bit. The one that so many of us, when you hear Torah ideas about this portion, it's the first verse that people talk about because there's so much just in that verse. It says, "Re'eh – see, anochi – HaShem is giving forth His very essence, hiyom – today, a blessing and a curse." A blessing and a curse. If we're talking about God's very essence, how can anything emerge from that other than pure blessing? But here it seems He's saying, no. From His very essence emanates both blessings and curses. Why would HaShem give us both? Why not just blessings?



So the Kotzker Rebbe says, “There’s no such thing as an absolute blessing or an absolute curse. Ultimately, the truth is, everything that comes from HaShem is good. But the only question is, do we have the eyes to see it? What looks like a curse on the surface may in its essence, always in its essence, is a blessing. The only question is, whether it’s just a blessing or the greatest of the blessings. And very often, there’s that inverse relationship between the pain of the curse and the greatness of the blessing that is hidden and infused within that curse. Two people can undergo the same event. One experiences despair, the other discovers HaShem’s closeness. The difference is not in what happens, it’s in how we see it.

And when the inner eye of the neshama is closed, life can feel like a curse and there’s frustrations, setbacks, confusions. But when the eyes of the neshama, of emunah, of faith, of trust, are open, even the challenges become doorways to blessing. And yes, the pain is still there. It’s real. I can’t at least, maybe one can, but I can’t yet dodge the pain. But even while you’re going through it, you know it’s a blessing.

The Ba’al Shem Tov teaches in every descent is the seed of an ascent. The so called curse is just to give you that momentum for the blessing to arise. So what’s HaShem calling us to do? Not simply to choose between good and evil, but to choose vision. Re’eh, to choose to see life as infused with Divine Presence. See today, in this moment that HaShem is here, giving Himself to you. And that all of reality is pregnant with blessing, if only we have the eyes to see it. That is the work that we all have in the world today, that’s the work of the Jewish people in the Land of Israel today, that’s the work of every single one of you, wherever you are in the world. That is our work, that is what is being demanded of every God-loving, Bible-believer who is connected to the Torah as a live wire. What is being requested of us is to lift our eyes above the headlines, above the noise, and to see redemption with clarity. To know that the curses surrounding us, the wars, the hatred, the confusion of the nations are part of the same story that is carrying us toward blessing.

And like I said, I’ve been really struggling with that, just today. Just today. I feel like I just need to always come clean on this Fellowship because otherwise I feel like a fake. And if I’m just honest with you, then it’s just us talking together. Because just hours before this Fellowship, my heart sank. Yes, it’s hard not to see the blessings in my personal life and in my family, like I said. But on a national level, we’re really feeling isolated. A guy came to me in Ashkelon on the beach, hearing me talk to my friend, Rabbi Tuli Weiss, we were walking on the beach together. And he said, “You’re from America?” He just assumed that I’m from America, that I’m living in America. “Go back, we need ambassadors, we need people to convince the world, to teach the world, to let the world know that we’re righteous, that we’re doing right things. You need to...” And he was just going on and on. “Please, please, please,” and everybody’s feeling it.

But unimaginably, more and more of the world, even people that we used to consider true friends and allies. I was just watching Megan Kelly...Megan Kelly! I don't think she's anti-Israel. I think she's a wonderful, truth-seeking person, I really do. But she's talking to Marjorie Taylor Greene, who's just saying lie after lie after lie, that I know are lies! Megan Kelly, I'm sure afterwards is I'm sure going to do a research and see that what Marjorie Taylor Greene said wasn't true, but the damage is done. She's like, "Oh my goodness, really? You can't burn the Israeli flag in America?" All these different things, and it's just like, is there anyone that's with us? It seems like everyone's turning against and siding with this jihadist, genocidal, death cult of Chamas over us. It's like a twilight zone, it's like what is going on?



And we just lost another soldier yesterday. This is where my heart sank today. It was just released today, another soldier, Ori Gerlic of Meitar. Another entire world lost, and for what? To strike some deal with Chamas and let them continue existing and building up more and more so they can implement even more vicious and horrific October 7ths?

And then there are these rabbis in America, I don't know if you heard about this, but this list of rabbis that came out like really condemning the war, condemning Israel. It's just the virtue-signaling, unquenchable thirst of even rabbis in Israel. I mean, keep in mind, the ten spies were great sages of Israel, they were rabbis. Having the word rabbi before your name doesn't mean anything. On any front, sometimes it means that you are more susceptible to spiritual attacks because the name, the title, gives you more authority. And that authority can be used for darkness.

And these rabbis wrote this thing and it's just like...aaugghh. And it's being disseminated through the Arab world, do you know what I'm talking about? Did you hear about this petition of these rabbis? A lot of you are saying no, I'm glad you're saying no, please don't google it, it's just too depressing. But anyways, I look at the headlines, and sometimes my heart falls. And then I walk out onto my balcony and it doesn't feel abstract. It's like I feel HaShem whispering to me, "Ari, re'eh, look, but don't just look. HaShem is saying, "See. See the story that I'm writing through you. See the blessings hidden in your struggles. See the blessings hidden in what appears to be the curses and the pain of Israel today. What is happening to Israel and the Jewish people, what is happening to the entire world," HaShem is saying, "It's not random happenstance. But my very Essence, anochi is within it. From what's playing out on the world stage today with Israel at the center, HaShem is saying geulah, redemption will spread forth from this. You just need to have the eyes to see it, and just trust Me. I'm Your Abba, you're My children," like Jeremy said.

So my friends, as we close I want to bless all of us with the courage to truly see, not just to hear about HaShem, not just to read the words on a page, but to open the eyes of our souls and to see Him in our lives. And the blessings that shine brightly and even in the struggles that can feel like curses. May we be granted the vision to recognize that everything emerging from HaShem's essence is good, even when it comes wrapped in pain. May we see with clarity that the story unfolding in our days is the story of redemption, a story written not only in the heavens, but also in the soil of Judea. In the blood and tears of our soldiers, and in the return of our people to the Land.

I bless you in your personal lives, in your families, in your communities, you should be able to pierce through the surface of reality, and see HaShem's loving Hand guiding you step by step. And may we merit to open our eyes wide, to rise above the headlines, and to see clearly the blessings hidden even in these dark days. And may it be HaShem's will that very soon the entire world will see – re'eh, the entire world will see. Not just hear rumors, not just imagine, but see with their very own eyes that HaShem is One, His Name is One, and His people are alive and shining in the Land He promised them.

Shalom, my friends, may we walk this week with open eyes, with strong hearts, and with unshakeable faith, unshakeable emunah. Thank you, back to you, Jeremy.

Jeremy

Amen, that was absolutely beautiful. I think that's exactly what the calling is, is to see. That's the only thing we have control over. But right now, we are standing in the heart of the book of Devarim, the book of Deuteronomy. It's Moshe's final words before Israel crosses into the Promised Land. And these Torah portions, just like what Ari said, they're not just a speech and instruction given to the nation 3,000 years ago. They are the Torah's blueprint for how we enter into the Land of Israel today. How we're called to live in Israel now. The Torah is eternal, God's Word is eternal, the Land is forever. HaShem's promise of the Land of Israel to the people of Israel is forever. Everything we're witnessing today – the war in Gaza, the war in Iran, the UN's obsession with Israel, it's all surrounding that one question. Will the people of Israel inherit the Land of Israel as promised by God of the Bible, or not? It's like the world can't let this go. It's what everything rests on. It's like Jenga, the one thing you pull out and the whole thing comes tumbling down. And so, everyone is just watching and waiting.

And just as we had enemies in the Land of Israel then, we have enemies in the Land of Israel now. They were our obstacle in inheriting the Land and establishing God's kingdom then, not much has changed. And there are so many different dimensions to learning the Torah. But for us, in our generation, the dimension that must be explored is how is the Torah speaking to us

right now in our generation? Let's see how Moshe's words guide not only that generation but ours.

So I want to point out that these Torah portions given over to us, as we're standing overlooking the Land of Israel, right at the border, we're about to enter into the Land, they shine a new light on why exactly did God give us the Land? Last week's Torah portion, Moshe makes it very clear for the first time. Israel's inheritance of the Land was not earned by Israel's righteousness. We weren't very righteous in Egypt, we were almost lost in the 49 Gates of Impurity. We'd almost entirely lost our identity. In the desert, just read the book of Bemidbar, the book of Numbers, we weren't that righteous either. But it wasn't for our righteousness. Because of the corruption of the nations that lived in the Land. Deuteronomy chapter 9, verse 5:

It is not because of your righteousness  
or the uprightness of your heart that  
you are going in to possess their land;  
but because of the wickedness of  
these nations Hashem your God  
drives them out from before you...

• Deuteronomy 9:5

Some radical teaching. Israel wasn't chosen because we were perfect, but because God's mission had to be carried forward, in this Land specifically. It's more about the Land then the people. And the nations

currently living in the Land had desecrated the Land through their abominations.

And until now, we were told the purpose of entering into the Land was to fulfill God's covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He made one promise, the children of Israel would inherit the Land, the fate of the world was resting upon this promise. But now, He's saying it's not only about that. The nations who live in the Land are so wicked, they can't stay there. It takes the covenant, made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to the next level. It gives us insight into why He chose to make this covenant with the people bound to this Land. The Land of Israel has a purpose, it has a mission. God's light is meant to be reflected through this Land, evil and wickedness cannot occupy the Land because the Land will not serve as a window into HaShem's light. And the light that He wants to bring into the world.

There is one people on earth that are commanded to live by the Torah, in the Land, build a family that will ultimately form a society that will be so beautiful and good that God's Presence will dwell among us. It will lead the world to a spiritual revival, an understanding that in truth, all of us are brothers and sisters, with one Father above us. The Land is meant to be the show and tell for the world.

Our time, right now, we see the enemy of Israel, you can't make this up, the enemies of Israel occupying the Land are the exact mirror opposite of what should be. The war in Israel, it's not like another war. It's not like Russia and Ukraine. It's a war between two diametrically opposed civilizations. One, an embodiment of good, and one, literally an embodiment of evil. That's exactly what their wickedness was exposed as, 3,000 years ago. Moshe doesn't leave it abstract. He doesn't just call it evil. In Parashat Re'eh, he names the sin that defiled the Land.

For every abomination to Hashem, which He hates, they have done for their gods; for even their sons and their daughters they burn in the fire to their gods.

• Deuteronomy 12:31

In the days of the Bible, the Land of Israel vomited out the wicked nations because they turned their children into sacrifices. They desecrated the most sacred. We just spoke about the importance of children, the importance of family. And here

civilization corrupts the most precious. God calls us His children, teaching us how to see each other, teaching us how to relate to each other, how to relate to Him.

And the evil of the nations, is that they're taking the most sacred, intimate, and loving relationship and turning it into evil, violence and destruction. You look at what happened then, and you look at what's happening now. Chamas and the nations. Friends, is it not chilling that today we're fighting an enemy in Gaza that does the very same thing? Chamas literally has turned their children into sacrifices, using their own civilians, sacrificing it to their god and their ideology. They hide rockets in school, they dig tunnels under hospitals, they place launchers in neighborhoods, knowing that Israel going to be forced to defend themselves. And then they parade the casualties before the world as propaganda.

People used to say, "Chamas is using civilians as human shields." But then, a truth was brought to the world when people started saying, "It's not human shields, Chamas is using human sacrifices. They are burning their sons and daughters on the altar of the fire of war." Cynically sacrificing to rally the nations against Israel and it's working. I always point out the WOKE supporters of Chamas against Israel, they chant, "Free Palestine." But Chamas and the jihadists never chant "Free Palestine," they always invoke their god. Their murder and terror is not an act of political defiance. It's an act of worship.

The Torah said it 3,000 years ago – there is an abomination that defiles the Land. That's why the nations that practiced that vile behavior, sacrificing their children lost their right to live in the Land. The same principle applies today. There is no room for anyone practicing jihad in the Land of Israel today. They need to be eliminated or they need to be deported. There cannot be any coexistence with such evil in the Land. They have done every abomination to HaShem,

which He hates, they have done for their god. It's like a quote from the Bible that is speaking to us, directly now.

And when you think about the ways of HaShem, the ways that will lead us toward the Messianic era – love, compassion, freedom, honoring your wife, honoring each other... the war in Gaza is the final war because it is the ultimate clash of what will be established in this Land. When you see Chamas terrorists with their faces wrapped around and just their eyes showing, holding guns, and you see what they did on October 7<sup>th</sup>, and what they continue to try to do to the Jewish people.

It's like I used to think growing up in the shadow of the Holocaust that Nazis were the embodiment of evil on earth. But then in this generation, evil has become even more refined, more pure. The Nazis tried to hide their atrocities from the world. The Chamas continuously broadcasts their evil. You realize that this is nothing less than a spiritual showdown between good and evil. And the Land of Israel is nothing less than the battleground between the forces of light and darkness.

And in the Land of Israel, good must prevail. So look this up. There are about two billion Muslims in the world today. In the Land of Israel, there's about seven million Jews. The protests in Europe and America that are against Israel, they're mostly from Muslim immigrants. I mean, first I think that's a good indication that those cities, what they're going to face in the near future. If they support Chamas now, it's only a matter of time until those same Muslims protest and turn against their own host countries.

But secondly, it really makes you come to grips with the reality that Israel truly is alone and it's up against insurmountable odds. Seven million against two billion? It's like, there can only be one reason for Israel's victory and you can see it in this picture that was recently taken of these IDF soldiers about to enter into Gaza.



This is the fighting force of Israel, the embodiment of good. The Jewish people emerging victorious in the Land of Israel is naturally impossible. The only way we win is because God has our back. And the stage is being set for the world to see miracles.

I mean, I just read a short article written in the Sunday Telegraph last week by Allister Heath. It's exactly the public's, the conversation that Israel is meant to spark. And so, I want to read you an excerpt. It's so beautiful.

"There's something about Israel that makes people uncomfortable, and it's not what they say it is. They'll point to politics, settlements, borders, and wars. But scratch beneath the outrage, and you'll find something deeper. A discomfort not with what Israel does, but with what Israel is.

A nation this small should not be this strong. Period.

Israel has no oil. No special natural resources. A population barely the size of a mid-sized American city. They are surrounded by enemies. Hated in the United Nations. Targeted by terror. Condemned by celebrities. Boycotted, slandered, and attacked. And still, they thrive like there's no tomorrow. In military. In medicine. In security. In technology. In agriculture. In intelligence. In morality. In sheer, unbreakable will.

They turn desert into farmland.

They make water from air.

They intercept rockets in mid-air.

They rescue hostages under the nose of the world's worst regimes.

They survive wars that were supposed to wipe them out, and win.

The world watches this and can't make sense of it.

So they do what people do when they witness strength they can't understand.

They assume it must be cheating.

It must be American aid.

It must be foreign lobbying.

It must be oppression.

It must be theft.

It must be some dark trick that gave the Jews this kind of power.

It must be blackmail.

Because heaven forbid it's something else.

Heaven forbid it's real.

Heaven forbid it's earned.

Or worse, destined.

The Jewish people were supposed to disappear a long, long time ago. That's how the story of exiled, enslaved, hated minorities is supposed to end. But the Jews didn't disappear. They actually came home, rebuilt their land, revived their language, and brought their dead back to life — in memory, in identity, and in strength.

That's not normal.

It's not political.

It's biblical.

There's no cheat code that explains how a group of people return to their homeland after 2,000 years.

There is no rational path from gas chambers to global influence.

And there is no historical precedent for surviving the Babylonians, the Romans, the Crusaders, the Inquisition, the pogroms, and the Holocaust, and still showing up to work on Monday in Tel Aviv.

Israel doesn't make sense.

Unless you believe in something beyond the math.

This is what drives the world crazy. Because if Israel is real, if this improbable, ancient, hated nation is somehow still chosen, protected, and thriving, then maybe God isn't a myth after all.

Maybe He's still in the story.

Maybe history isn't random.

Maybe evil doesn't get the last word.

Maybe the Jews are not just a people... but a testimony.

That's what they can't stand.

Because once you admit that Israel's survival isn't just impressive, but divine, everything changes. Your moral compass has to reset. Your assumptions about history, power, and justice collapse. You realize you're not watching the end of an empire. You're witnessing the beginning of something eternal.

So they deny it.

They smear it.

And rage against it.

Because it's easier to call a miracle "cheating" than to face the possibility that God keeps His promises.

And He's keeping them still."

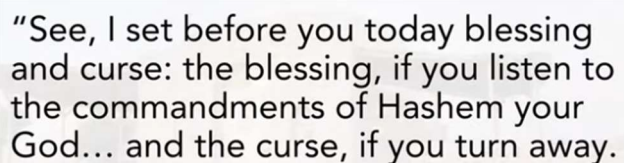
I love that article. That is exactly the conversation that the world needs to have with each other, that the world needs to have with itself. That's why Israel was chosen, was to spark that conversation because as long as the Jews are in Judea, we are a living testimony that God runs the world.



And so, one is a truth that people can see. And the other, is an inner calling that somehow, is finding its way into people's heart. It's like two movements that are happening at the same time. And you know when I think about how much attention Israel takes up in the media, at the United Nations. The United Nations has continuously blamed Israel for starving the Gazans, for weeks now. Reports keep coming out of the UN that around 90% of their aid trucks are being stolen by Chamas. At some point, we need to wake up and realize that the UN trucks aren't being stolen by the Chamas. They're being delivered to the Chamas. The UN is feeding and funding the Chamas as they sell the aid to Gazans for profit. It's the same UN who employed UNRA employees who participated in October 7<sup>th</sup>, who educated Gazan children to hate Jews and destroy Israel.

So it shouldn't shock us that the UN is categorically against us, working against us, blaming us, setting us up, cheating us, and then ultimately trying to destroy us. They are systematically feeding and funding the enemies of Israel and it will be a great day for the people of Israel when Israel leaves the United Nations. The only thing that stands between the United Nations becoming the governing power of the world, becoming the gods of the world, is Israel. That's why Israel is hated so much. The United Nations has the power and the political agenda, but the truth is out there for everyone in the world. It's like they can't help but look toward Zion and just wonder.

And here's the truth. Every Jew, every Christian, every Catholic, every atheist, everyone has to look at the influential book ever written, the Bible, the best seller of all times that has quite literally shaped modern civilization as we know it. And they need to look at Israel and see that all of the promises of the Bible are being kept and fulfilled through Israel today. And then they need to make a choice. What side of history will you be on? Israel is the calling to everyone, calling out saying, "Be on God's side, that's the right side of history." And that's what Israel's mission is. And Moshe says, "Re'eh," Deuteronomy chapter 11, 26 and 28. This is Israel's calling:



"See, I set before you today blessing and curse: the blessing, if you listen to the commandments of Hashem your God... and the curse, if you turn away.

• Deuteronomy 11:26–28

The choice is always before us. Sanctify life or desecrate it. Build or destroy. To be a blessing and to align our lives with God, or to fall into curse.

Later in Devarim, Moshe sums it up with this eternal phrase that reverberates throughout all of our history:

I call heaven and earth to witness against you today: I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore, choose life, that you and your descendants may live.

• Deuteronomy 30:19

like people of light versus people of darkness. It's why we in Israel plant vineyards in the desert, build families, establish communities. It's why prophecies of Israel's return to the Land is filled with revival, coming back to life, the revival of a people, the revival of the Land, the revival of the language. We're a force of life because that IS the blessing.

Gaza was given billions and billions of dollars. It's located on beach front property, where the sun always shines. And now Gaza looks like total destruction and Israel is still finding more terror tunnels. And instead of building, all they did was plan to destroy.

Israel was built by Holocaust survivors and Jewish refugees from Arab countries, fleeing from the jihad as Israel was being established. And Israel has become one of the most innovative, diverse, powerful countries in the world. And there are forces of life and there are forces of death. And there's no conflict in the world where the spiritual roots of the war are so clear.

And what the world doesn't fully comprehend yet is that the jihad, that force of death and chaos is coming for them next. The Jewish people are always attacked first, it's just a matter of time until everyone free will be attacked. And if Israel is always attacked, I think the question is, how have we outlasted all of our enemies? What is the secret to our resilience? What's the engine that's driven our nation forward? And why have the Jewish people outlasted all other nations who came to destroy us? And I think the answer is hidden deep in the understanding of that first verse in the Torah portion.

Behold, I set before you today a blessing and a curse: the blessing, if you obey the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you today; and the curse, if you do not obey the commandments of the Lord your God, but turn aside from the way which I command you today.

• Deuteronomy 11:26-28

do we do? I don't think the answer is so simple. It's not so shallow. I believe it's something

Israel's calling is to be the people that chooses life. It's not a coincidence that our sworn enemy worships death. Is there any other conflict in the world? The Israel Defense Forces, that's the name of Israel's army, versus the death cult of the Chamas and the jihad. It's

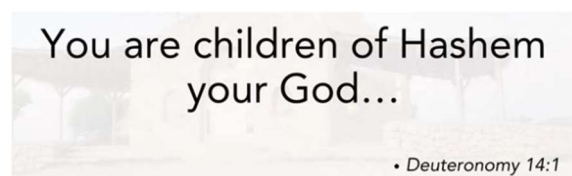
At first glance you could say, "Oh, the secret is keep the Torah and you'll be blessed. Don't keep the commandments and you'll be cursed." But there have been times in Jewish history where we didn't keep the commandments of the Torah, so what

deeper. It's not just outward observance, it's how the Jewish people see the world and engage with the world.

Moshe is telling us that life is a choice, it's how you see it. Blessing or curse. God places both of them before us. He is the source. If everything comes from HaShem, what does that mean? The idea that we've been trying to internalize over the last two years of this war – blessing and curse are not separate realities. They come from the same source. And in some way, they are two sides of the same coin. When we align ourselves with HaShem's will, we can see even difficulties as blessings in disguise, tools for growth, sparks of redemption, opportunities to rise. But when we resist or turn away, those same events seem like curses, overwhelming and senseless.

It's not that God sometimes blesses and sometimes curses. It's that God is always guiding, always giving. And it's our spiritual vision that determines how we experience His Hand in our lives. It's just categorically wrong to say, "The good comes from God, and the bad is from some other source, the devil, from something other than God." Something other than God? Ain ode milvado. There is nothing other than God. He is One, and if you think that every challenge is from the same source, you'll find the blessing. If you don't, you'll never find the hidden blessing within. You won't experience the guidance. That's why the Torah portion starts with the word, re'eh, to see. In English it's usually, "behold." But really the truer translation is just to say, "Look, watch, see with your eyes."

HaShem refers to Himself as Anochi. That's the same anochi as the Ten Commandments. Ari mentioned that. I am the Lord your God who brought you out of Egypt. Anochi, see Me, I am the source of blessings and curse. And when you go back to the beginning of what we spoke about:



The Torah begins by telling us who we are at the deepest level, children of HaShem. That's not just poetry. It's how HaShem relates to us and how we should relate to Him. Just as a father raises his child with love, discipline, patience, it's a vision of who that child can become.

So too HaShem is raising us. Children don't always understand why their parents guide them in a certain way. Sometimes it feels like love, sometimes it feels like restriction, sometimes it feels like a test. But it's all from the same place. A parent's desire is to bring out the best in their child. When HaShem created each and every one of us, he created within us a certain potential. He gave us a gift that only we can bring to the world. And if He is one, then all things, the sweet

and the bitter, the moments of light and the dark moments of life come from the same source. All of them are from the same purpose, to raise His children upright and whole, to shape us into who we are meant to become to allow us to grow into who He created us to be.

And so, that's the story of our people. From the wilderness of Sinai, to the hills of Judea, to the sand dunes of Gaza, from the exile to the return, from weakness to strength, HaShem has been raising up His children. And this generation in Israel is unlike any generation of Israel that has ever existed in the world.

He gave us the Land, not because we were perfect, because His light needs to shine from Zion to save humanity from itself. And the Land of Israel, it's not the most fertile Land, it doesn't have an endless supply of water. We have to rely on rain and prayers in its season. It's not packed with natural resources. All of it is designed to make the nation of Israel into who we can be. And when we truly see, we know who we are. We're not just a people, we're not just a nation. We are a family, the children of the living God. Loved not for what we do, but for who we are. We are being guided, tested, raised, and carried, all with a Father's love.

That is Israel's calling, to choose life, to plant in the desert, to build families in joy, to raise our own children with love, to show the world that life is holy. Life is sacred. God is alive and His promises are eternal. Israel is an ingathering, and we are being called to ingather a great nation, much larger than we see with our eyes today. And from among the nations, the people are coming back. And when they come back, they're entering into the largest family reunion in history. Look around, against all odds, surrounded by enemies, slandered by the nations, we live, we thrive, we return home, we speak the language of our prophets, we walk the hills of Judea, and we are preparing the world for redemption.

And so, with that my friends, I want to bless you. I want to bless you from this place, I want to bless you from this Land with the blessing that all the priests of Israel gave all the nation of Israel every day in the Temple.

Aaronic blessing (Hebrew)

May HaShem bless you and protect you. May HaShem shine His light upon you and be gracious to you. May HaShem lift His countenance upon you and bless you with Shalom.

