



בס"ד

Dear and beloved community,

As we have been these many, many weeks, also in Parshat Yitro, in which we were privileged to receive the Torah, we are in the midst of war. A war that is already in its 118th day and has exacted an unbearably heavy price on us.

Many soldiers returning from Gaza say that in many homes of Gazans, there is a picture of the Temple Mount with the Al Aqsa Mosque.

First and foremost this teaches us what our enemies really want, to vanquish the entire Land of Israel and the capital of Israel, Jerusalem.

But beyond that, this teaches us what the war we are in is really about. This is not a war over money or the country's borders. If there was a war over these issues, maybe it would be possible to reach a compromise agreement. But the war is a religious war. It is a war over who God is and what the Torah commands us to do. Is it as our enemies believe, that God sanctifies death, or as we the people of Israel know and believe, that God commanded us to sanctify life.

And so our parsha of the week in which we received the Torah is particularly relevant this year, because it teaches us the essence of the war we are in the midst of. The war is about the people of Israel being able to live in the Land of Israel, and the divine Torah that we received at Sinai, in order to enlighten the entire world and make it a better and holier place.

Shabbat Shalom Umevorach! B'sorot tovat