

Shabbat Times

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London	15:37	16:46	Cambridge	15:29	16:47
Manchester	15:34	16:48	Leeds	15:27	16:43
Birmingham	15:36	16:49	Liverpool	15:35	16:55
Oxford	15:36	16:54	Jerusalem	15:59	17:15

Coming up....

-Winter Machane is coming up 22-29th December
 -Hadracha training day for all Madrichim in siva is this Sunday 11th December at Stanmore United contact Zechariah on Zechariah@bauk.org for more info
 -Israel Machane forms are now out, for more information contact Ollie on ollie@bauk.org

Shabbat debate

Every week we will be writing weekly debates to discuss over Shabbat. The debates will then be continued on Facebook, on Sunday at 2pm.

Was Yaacov getting a taste of his own medicine when he was tricked by Lavan as he tricked Yitzchak.

SHABBAT

פרשת ויצא
 PARASHAT VAYETZEI

The most widely distributed weekly Torah periodical written by our youth in the United Kingdom.



תנועת בני אקיבא
 BNEI AKIVA UK

LASHEM

שבת לה'

The Importance Of Unity

Zoe Daniels

Parshat Vayeitzei, starts off with Ya'akov leaving Be'er Sheva and going to Haran. He reaches the place where he decided to settle down for the night and he took 'some of the stones of the place' – 'מֵאֲבְנֵי הַמָּקוֹם' (Bereshit 28:11).

In the Midrash, Rav Yehuda teaches us that the twelve stones were a symbol from Hashem that the Jewish descendants would consist of twelve tribes. Upon awakening in the morning and seeing that the twelve stones had become one, Ya'akov knew that he would become the forefather of a single united nation originally from twelve tribes/sons.

Rabbi Simcha Schepps, asks the question as to why if Hashem wanted to show Ya'akov through a symbol that he was going to be the father of twelve tribes, why didn't he have Ya'akov go to sleep on one stone which became twelve the next morning?

By quoting a further Midrash, Rabbi Schepps answers his own question. When Hashem told Avraham "I will make you into a great nation" [Bereshit 12:2] Avraham questioned Him saying "but you already have 70 nations who are descended from Noach, what will be so special about another nation?" The Almighty replied Avraham — "The nation that will descend from you is the nation about whom it will be said "For which is such a great nation?" - 'כִּי מִי-גוֹי גָדוֹל' [Devorim 4:7] – that is the nation that will emerge from you." This shows that there is a special connotation to the word "gadol". "Gadol" does not mean 'big' as in numerically large. Rav Dessler argues that the interpretation of "gadol" is revealed to us by its first appearance in the Torah when referring to the 'great light' (the sun) in the Story of Creation. Thus, "gadol" means the ability to give to others. The sun is not called "gadol" due to its size. The sun is called "gadol" because it delivers light and warmth to the entire universe.

The practical interpretation of "gadol" is the ability to help and be concerned about others. Every gadol who we can think of was a person that was always concerned about the community, as seen with Noach, Avraham and Yonah. This is the true definition of a gadol. Thus, Yaakov says, "If I take 12 stones and they become one, this symbolizes a nation that has unity amongst themselves." If there is unity between people, then individuals are concerned for everyone and want to help both themselves and others. Whereas, when people are selfish and only interested in their own state of affairs, then disunity takes place in the world.

Yaakov knew that the sign from Hashem that he would be the forefather of the "Goy Gadol" which was promised to Avraham is for him to take 12 stones that would turn into one, demonstrating this idea of unity and the want to for care for and look after each other. With Machane fast approaching us, I think this is a powerful message that we can take from the parsha for both madrichim and chanichim alike. We are all individuals with our own talents and weaknesses, however by working together and showing that we have the ability to care and look after each other, proper unity can be formed helping to make the Machane atmosphere that little bit better.

Zoe Daniels is in Shevet Eitan and was a Head Cook on Bet Chalutzi Machane 5776

HADRACHA DAY

Join us for a morning dedicated to improving you hadracha skills. We will be looking at advanced informal education skills as well as the necessary legal safeguarding

DATE: 11th December 2016

TIME: 10-1



The Challenge of Tefilla

What is the value of Tefilla? What is its meaning for the modern person? Why must we be systematically forced to suffer through it every day of our lives?

Tefilla is a practice that so many – both young and old from across the spectrum of observance and background – find uninspiring. While there are many *mitzvot* people struggle with, there are two fundamental points which make Tefilla stand-out as one in need of more focused attention:

First, there is practically no other *mitzvah* which is quite as demanding of a person. The average person must dedicate between one and two hours minimum to Tefilla daily (not including travelling time to and from *shul*). Other *mitzvot* – while they may be uninspiring – are not nearly as consuming as Tefilla. That means that of “Jewish things” the average person performs, Tefilla is the most overbearing.

Second, Tefilla is unique inasmuch as it is defined by the enthusiasm it is performed with. In contrast to practically all other *mitzvot* that essentially involve performing physical acts, Tefilla is called *avodah she'balev* – serving Hashem in our heart; it is all about the understanding, meaning and intent we ascribe to the experience. It is as such that making Tefilla meaningful is of such critical imperative.

We must first establish that Tefilla is not prayer, which is a term that comes from the Latin word *precarius* – meaning “obtained by entreaty”. We do not request, beg or plead from Hashem when we engage in Tefilla: Hashem knows our thoughts, there is no need to inform Him of our wants and needs. Moreover, if Tefilla was prayer it would make more sense to use our own words, instead of following a systematic text from the Siddur. Prayer is ultimately a philosophical absurd – if God is omniscient, omnipotent and omnibenevolent then He placed us in the situation we are in out-of our best interest, why then would we ask for that situation to change?

There are several approaches to understanding Tefilla, each revealing a different perspective and dimension of how it is so valuable and inspiring for the modern world. In our *parasha* we indirectly learn one of those insights.

The matriarch, Rachel, longs to have children. The pain of barrenness is especially potent due to her sister Leah's higher birth-rate. After her second son is born (albeit through her mistress), Rachel names him Naphtali. The meaning of this name is explained (Bereishit 30:8):

“I have connected to my sister with divine ties.”

Many commentators (Rashi, Rashbam, Sforno) agree that the name Naphtali comes from the Hebrew word *p'til* – meaning a tied thread. Rachel was now “tied” with her sister with regards to childbirth. Rabbi Nachman of Breslav explains that the Hebrew word “Tefilla” shares the same root as *p'til*, and it too bears the similar meaning:

“The principal means of intimate connection to Hashem is Tefilla ... Tefilla means connection.”

Tefilla is not an exercise in communicating information to God, rather it is one of sharing common ideals, visions and aspirations with Him. Tefilla is not to notify Hashem of what we want, rather it is to cultivate an intimate relationship with Him.

Now, perhaps the greatest challenge of Tefilla is that so many modern people are not interested in cultivating this relationship. Who and what is Hashem? What is the nature of our relationship with Hashem and how can we nurture this relationship?

Rabbi David Aaron explains that the Name of Hashem “... comes from the word meaning ‘existence’ or ‘reality’, and is connected to the verb meaning ‘to be’. In other words, we believe in the Ultimate Reality Who always was, Who is and always will be; Who is the source of all being ... Therefore the best translation for the word for Hashem that we find in the Torah is the ‘be-er’.”

Hashem is not some mystical man in the sky. The God of Israel is the transcendent source and context of reality, and the imminent and intimate source of all existence, Who brings us into being. In the modern era this is so important. In the hyper-paced society, with a very rigid definition of success, Tefilla reminds us that the underlying motivation behind our goals and aims should be idealism and values. We should be striving to fulfil our potential, not society's superficial definition of success. We should be striving to be ourselves, not what culture wants us to be.

Tefilla is not prayer; it is not throwing our requests to God and begging Him for our wants and needs. Tefilla is an exercise of connecting to Hashem. It is that catalyst to reconnecting to the source of our being, to our ideals and aspirations, and thus to our unique essential self.

The Week that Was...

On Sunday night we held our fundraising dinner in memory of Arie Handler Z”L. Monday was our last Limmud of the term we will be restarting again after machane in January. We also had our monthly whiskey tasting event one Tuesday night for our Bogrim.



Sviva Spotlight

Dvar Torah and Update from one of our Svivot

Mill Hill BA

A vibrant and growing sviva, Mill Hill is very much at the heart of the Mill Hill community. Madrichim take pride in helping out at communal events and form the backbone of a very successful youth. This enables the Madrichim and chanichim to instil the community at all levels with a passion for torah and Israel! With Keren Davis leading us on, the Mill Hill tzevet is going from strength to strength!

Humility- The Ultimate Character Trait

Gideon Davis

In this week's Parshah we witness the fleeing of Yaacov to the house of Lavan (his uncle) who was known to be a devious man and even managed to trick Yaakov into marrying Leah instead of Rivka. During the years in which Yaakov was working for Lavan, he was a shepherd much like Avraham had been before him. We also know that David Hamelech would be a shepherd before he was chosen by Shaul to play music for him and Moshe was a shepherd for Yitro. So why were so many of the great men of the Jewish faith in such sheepish surroundings?

Well, in this week's Haftarah, Hoshea is leading a rebuke against the ten Tribes who have become arrogant and sinful (as this was after the two tribes had split off) and he reminds the people that even the great Yaakov Avinu had been a shepherd. Hoshea told the people that they should not become arrogant as they have only become great due to help from Hashem.

Modern Rabbis teach that there are three steps towards acquiring greatness or creating a single good character trait. The first stage of this is inspiration, the second is to work alongside the inspiration and to practise good deeds requiring the trait and the third is to have the trait and reap the benefits of it. Furthermore, the inspiration, of the first stage, is a gift that is given to us from Hashem and it is only through this gift that we can even take the first step towards acquiring a good trait.

We also witness this through the three forefathers. The First was Avraham who was given the original inspiration that there is only one G-D - the origin of monotheism. Later it was Yitzchak (who seems to be allocated limited space in the Torah) who maintained this greatness and carried the heavy load of Avraham's legacy and Yaakov who gets to receive the glory of having a nation named after him (Bnei Yisrael) - and these are the next two stages.

Therefore, we see that it is only through inspiration given from Hashem that we can achieve greatness and reach our true potential.

Gideon Davis is in Shevet Morasha and is a Madrich at Mill Hill BA