

## Coming Up...

Full details of all our events are available on our Facebook page, or call the Bayit on 0208 209 1319 to speak to one of the team.

- Watch out for Winter Machane applications, which are out now! For full information, contact Yehuda at [camps@bauk.org](mailto:camps@bauk.org)
- For those in Shevet Eitan and above, Winter Tafkid Machane applications have opened! Apply through our website: [www.bauk.org](http://www.bauk.org)
- Calling Shevet Ne'eman... Israel Machane reunion Shabbatonim are on 21<sup>st</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> November! Spend one more amazing Shabbat with your group! Contact Esther at [israel@bauk.org](mailto:israel@bauk.org) for details.
- Come along to the Bogrim's shiur with Rav Ari on Thursday evenings! Email [rav@bauk.org](mailto:rav@bauk.org) for more information.

## Catching up with our gap year programmes in Israel...

### Shalom from Israel!

It has been an incredible month in Israel with Hachshara. Every spare moment filled with an amazing opportunity to experience Israel and learn about its' past and present.

A visit to Tel Dan in the north with many additional participants from Shevet Na'aleh across the country gave us a very real gateway into the past, to the times of our forefathers.

Davening at Rabbi Akiva's tomb with its amazing view overlooking the Kinneret was another highlight.

Hachshara's fantastic events combined with the intense enjoyment of the Yeshiva experience are set to make this an unforgettable year.

Shabbat Shalom!

### From Rafi Cohen

Rafi Cohen is in Shevet Na'aleh, and is on Hachsharat Torani

Volume 21 - No 5  
15<sup>th</sup> Cheshvan 5775  
8<sup>th</sup> November 2014



תנועת בני אקיבה  
BNEI AKIVA UK

# Shabbat Lashem 'ושבתה הארץ שבת לה'

וירא - Vayera

## An Opportunity, Not a Burden

Abi Newman

This week's parasha begins with Avraham sitting at the opening of his tent in the heat of the day, 3 days after his Brit Mila. The Lekach Tov asks, why was this particular incident of Avraham's hospitality the one which was recorded in the Torah? He performed many great acts of hospitality throughout his life – what was so important about this specific story?

The Lekach Tov brings the following idea from Kahalat Yitzchak:

How often in life do we find excuses for not doing Mitzvot? 'I've got so much homework', 'I'm tired', 'someone else would do the job better', 'I have no free time', 'I do loads of other Mitzvot, I don't need to do this as well'. As a result, sometimes people who really need help don't get the help they deserve.

The act of chessed, kindness, that is described at the beginning of this week's parasha is the antithesis of the attitude described above. Avraham had very valid reasons to exempt him from doing the Mizvah of Hachnasat Orchim, welcoming guests. He was a 99 year old man who had received his Brit Mila 3 days earlier, and he was still suffering from the pain. Furthermore, the passuk tells us that this story occurred in the heat of the day – surely the most uncomfortable time of day for an elderly man to be running towards unknown guests, begging them to accept his hospitality, and preparing a huge meal for them. But Avraham would not let anything deter him from doing a Mitzvah. Despite his condition, he was eager to do the Mitzvah himself and not delegate it to another member of his household.

This is why the Torah records this particular incident of Avraham's hospitality. It teaches us that we should aspire to Avraham's enthusiasm for Mitzvot, to see Mitzvot as an opportunity rather than a burden, and to go to every length to perform them.

Abi Newman is in Shevet Lehava and was a Madricha on Aleph Chalutzki Machane 5774.

## Editor's Corner

Shalom!

Nearly sixty chaverim in Shevet Eitan had a wonderful Shabbat last week, learning about their gap year options.

We have also enjoyed promoting our Hachshara programmes with information evenings and participating in the Seminary and Yeshiva fairs in London and Manchester this week.

The Mazkirut and Shlichim have also visited our great Bogrim in Manchester and Leeds!

Our weekly learning at the Manchester Bayit kicked off on Monday with a great shiur from Rav Ari. We look forward to seeing even more people in future weeks.

Shabbat Shalom!

### THIS WEEK'S SHABBAT TIMES

	🕒	🕒
London	16:08	17:11
Manchester	16:10	17:16
Birmingham	16:09	17:20
Cambridge	16:03	17:13
Leeds	16:01	17:12
Liverpool	16:11	17:22
Jerusalem	16:05	17:22

To receive Shabbat Lashem by email every Friday, or for sponsorship details, send an email to [shabbat@bauk.org](mailto:shabbat@bauk.org)

## CHILDREN'S CORNER

### Mystery Melacha

Eli Ginsburg

Elin Ginsburg is in Shevet Lehava and was a Madricha on Bet Chalutzki Machane 5774

**There are 39 activities that Jews are not allowed to do on Shabbat. These are called "Melachot" or "Acts of work". Can you guess which Melacha this riddle is about? Log onto the Bnei Akiva Youtube channel after Shabbat to see if you're right!**

Over which activity do you...

Make a bracha, but not eat...

Need a knife, but not a fork...

And a chicken, but not an egg...?

Connect with Bnei Akiva, and download our app, at [www.bauk.org](http://www.bauk.org)

Bnei Akiva is proud to be supported by UJIA

facebook.com/bneiakivauk

twitter.com/bneiakivauk

youtube.com/bneiakivauk

Celebrating a simcha? A special birthday coming up? Include Bnei Akiva in your celebrations by sponsoring Shabbat Lashem! For details email [shabbat@bauk.org](mailto:shabbat@bauk.org)



Binyan Ariel

## Insight and Inspiration on the Parasha

Rav Ari Faust, Rabbinical Shaliach

### The Legacy of Avraham

We are often concerned about how our surroundings affect our spirituality; we want to place ourselves amongst positive influences within a situation that will be conducive to our spiritual advancement, and not the opposite. While this is certainly a noble consideration, we must nevertheless challenge its validity. Is the goal of Judaism focused on individualistic spiritual growth, or is this merely a more refined, “spiritual” expression of egotism and selfishness?

The early Mishanic-era sage Antignus taught a very poignant lesson regarding this (Pikei Avot 1:3): **“Do not be as slaves serving the master in order to receive reward.”**

Thus, the focus must not be placed on the spiritual benefits in fulfilment of a Torah lifestyle, although those undoubtedly exist. This seems to indicate that personal spiritual fulfilment is **not** the goal of Torah, and thus should not be a person’s sole consideration in determining his or her lifestyle.

An analysis of a *pasuk* in our *parsha* can elucidate this message: Hashem decided to destroy the cities of Sdom and Amora. The Torah tells us what Hashem contemplated before doing so (Bereishit 18:17):

**“And Hashem said: 'Shall I hide from Avraham that which I am doing?!”**

Before destroying Sdom and Amora, Hashem wondered whether or not He should inform Avraham of His plans. Ultimately, Hashem did warn Avraham of His intention – which leads to Avraham arguing that the cities should actually be spared – but the very contemplation itself is strange; why does Hashem deliberate? If Avraham is a prophet, than surely he should be informed of significant future events, just like all prophets. And if he is not, why should Hashem consider revealing the future to him?

The great 19<sup>th</sup> Century Rabbi, the ‘Chatam Sofer’ suggests a revolutionary insight to this (Pitucheit Chotam):

**“In fact, Avraham hadn’t achieved the great level of prophecy, because he didn’t have time to devote himself to introspection and contemplation [which are necessary to achieving prophecy], since he was too concerned teaching his students and his thoughts were preoccupied with others and how to enlighten them to the divine presence...”**

This notion is totally shocking! Avraham had not achieved the prerequisite spiritual level to receive prophecy, due to his constant interactions with people who were not on a high spiritual level themselves. The commentary continues and explains that despite this, Hashem deemed that it would be unjust to prevent prophecy from Avraham when the latter’s spiritual “lowliness” was totally for the sake of Hashem and the revelation of His Name.

The Chatam Sofer suggests a further insight that relates to our opening question:

**“For if Avraham would have uplifted himself to be like the angels, he would have only elevated his own soul, and would have left the rest of his generation – who were wanton sinners – behind (this was the case of Chanoch before the flood). He therefore concluded that it is better for man to minimize his personal spiritual fulfillment in order to increase the glory of Hashem ... for what contribution would man make by adding another ‘angel’ to the myriads that Hashem has already.”**

Avraham did not initiate a spiritual revelation and establish our faith by being overly concerned with his own personal fulfilment. Ironically, the search for spirituality can sometimes contradict the will of Hashem; it may be good for us, but not good for the world and not good for Him!

This message is very powerful. We are not in the world to bask in spirituality; rather we are here to increase G-dliness in the world. While this lesson should not be taken to an extreme, and everyone must have the self-awareness to know the unique way in which they are to make the world more G-dly, it certainly alters the normal paradigm and shifts the focus of Jewish life.

The question of authentic Jewish life mustn’t be “how does my environment influence my spirituality” but rather “how does my spirituality influence my environment”. This lesson is the legacy of Avraham and the great charge of the Jewish People.

Rav Ari Faust is in Shevet Yechiam, and is Shaliach for Bnei Akiva and the Jewish Agency for Israel



### Kibbutz Lavi

Ben Dov Salasnik

Kibbutz Lavi is a Religious Zionist kibbutz in the Galil, just a few miles west of Tiberias and the Kinneret.

Kibbutz Lavi was founded in 1949 by members of Bnei Akiva of Great Britain who had made Aliyah together shortly after the founding of the State of Israel. They had learnt about farming and agriculture at the famed Bachad farm at Thaxted in Essex, through the Bnei Akiva Hachshara scheme. They applied the knowledge they had acquired in the English countryside to farm in the rather different environment of the Galil.

The original members of the Kibbutz came from cities and towns all over the UK, and on a walk around the Kibbutz nowadays you will still hear a variety of regional British accents. A large proportion of the original Kibbutz members were German Jews who had arrived in England on the Kindertransport and were housed in Bnei Akiva Hachshara farms at Bromsgrove or Grwyth Castle in North Wales prior to making Aliyah.

The beginning years of the Kibbutz were very tough, with the idealistic Chalutzim living in flimsy tents without running water. However, over the years, the Kibbutz has grown, and become very successful. It has diversified and now also has a factory which specialises in making furniture for shuls around Israel and across the world. In the 1960’s Kibbutz Lavi opened a guest house, and over the years it has expanded, becoming a large and successful hotel with over 180 rooms.

The name of Kibbutz Lavi originates with the ‘Pundaka d’Lavi’ – an inn or ancient ‘service station’ mentioned in the Gemara Yerushalmi, which stood in ancient times on the site of the modern day Kibbutz. The Pundaka is mentioned as a place where many travellers -including the Amoraim of the Gemara - would stop at on their way between Tiberias and the prominent town of Tzipori, where many of the leading Rabbis of the generation lived after the Bar Kochba revolt.

How appropriate that the Kibbutz founded by Bnei Akiva Olim from Britain should be named after a pub!

Ben Dov Salasnik is in Shevet Lavi and is the Mazkir