

דבר אל-בני ישראל, ואמרת אליהם,
כי תבאו אל-הארץ, אשר אני נתן לכם
ושבתה הארץ, שבת לה'

SHABBAT LASHEM

THE VOICE OF BNEI AKIVA UK

PARASHAT CHAYEI-SARAH

25TH CHESHVAN 5779

2ND/3RD NOVEMBER 2018



This week's Shabbat Lashem is written in memory of those killed in The Tree of Life Synagogue



LOOKING BACK VS. LOOKING FORWARD

DANIEL LEDERMAN
SHEVET NE'EMAN

It is one of the curious features of the human experience that personal growth and development are most profoundly expressed in times of great hardship and suffering. Avraham was 137 years old when Sarah died. He had been through trauma unimaginable to most of us; the first, involving the near-sacrifice of his son who was conceived in wholly miraculous circumstances. When God says to Avraham "take your son, your only one, the one you love", it could be addressed to any casual reader of the narrative, asking searching questions about the nature of a transient life and ownership in a Godly world.

Then, after passing this test, Avraham is overcome by grief as his wife Sarah dies. Much has been said about the opening lines of Chayei Sarah, and the disjointed syntax of the Torah recording her age. Yet I think the brevity of the obituary is worth noting – we know comparatively little of the shared experiences and the time that Avraham and Sarah spent together, bringing good to the world, during 100 years of marriage.

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks asks a pertinent question. What does a man of 137 do in such circumstances? "Old and advanced in years", we would not be surprised - or indeed disappointed - to find that he spent the rest of his days in sadness and memory. After years of following God's will and being tested, he seemingly had very little to show for it. He owned nothing in the land promised to him, and he had one unmarried son – hardly a promising start for a nation supposedly as numerous as grains of sand or the stars in the sky.

Yet he did not.

In one of the most extraordinary passages in the Torah, his grief is expressed in five Hebrew words; in English, "Avraham came to mourn for Sarah and to weep for her." Immediately after this, he sought to buy a plot of land in which to bury Sarah and to find a wife for his son. These two activities correspond exactly with the divine blessings of land and descendants.

Avraham did not wait for God to act. He understood one of the most profound truths of Judaism: that God is waiting for us to act. Avraham realised that looking to the past means failing to see the future. Two people in the Torah looked back. Noah, the most righteous man of his generation, ended his life by making wine and becoming drunk. He had lost an entire world. While he and his family were safe on board the ark, everyone else – all his contemporaries – had drowned. Lot's wife famously looked back as the cities of the plain disappeared under fire and brimstone. Immediately she was turned into a pillar of salt, the Torah's graphic description of a woman so overwhelmed by shock and grief as to be unable to move on.

The shocking and tragic events of last week's shooting in Pittsburgh make this message, as I see it, all the more important. Bnei Akiva is a movement based on the dynamism and innovation of young people. Now more than ever, it is incumbent upon us, as individuals and as a movement, to seize inspiration from those who continue to live, even in the midst of sorrow, and remain passionate in our activism to build for a future based on Bnei Akiva's ideals.

**DANIEL WAS A MADRICH ON GIMMEL SUMMER
MACHANE 5778**

London In: 16:13 Out: 17:19

Manchester In: 16:15 Out: 17:22

Leeds In: 16:12 Out: 17:18

Cambridge In: 16:11 Out: 17:17

Bristol In: 16:23 Out: 17:29

Birmingham In: 16:17 Out: 17:23

Oxford In: 16:17 Out: 17:23

Liverpool In: 16:19 Out: 17:25

Jerusalem In: 16:08 Out: 17:37

A LINK IN THE CHAIN

CHANA BERNSTEIN | SHEVET NA'ALEH



I recently received an unexpected phone call from a genealogy organisation that had made an interesting discovery. They had traced a painting that belonged to my great-great-grandfather, which may have been forcibly sold in Nazi-Germany. I arranged a meeting with a representative of the company. He wanted to show me the evidence he had amassed that proved my genetic link with the owner of the painting. Much to his surprise, I was able to show him a full family tree and details of the auction in which the painting was sold, as well as describe the circumstances that may have led to its sale. I am fortunate that both sides of my family

have a number of keen amateur genealogists who have established records and stories detailing a rich family history. The recent incident with the painting has led me to wonder why this is the case. What benefit is there in knowing the names of my ancestors? Why am I and so many of my relatives fascinated by the lives of people long dead?

וַיְהִי חַיֵּי שָׂרָה מֵאָה שָׁנָה וְעֶשְׂרִים שָׁנָה וְשֵׁבַע שָׁנִים שְׁנֵי חַיֵּי שָׂרָה:

And the life of Sarah was one hundred years and twenty years and seven years; [these were] the years of the life of Sarah. (Bereshit 23:1)

The first pasuk of this week's parsha announces Sarah's death by describing the years of her life. This directs the reader to consider the importance of her life: It's an official statement marking a significant end to a significant life. The format of this pasuk is identical to the formats of the pesukim announcing the deaths of Avraham, Yitzchak, Yaakov and Yishmael. So why is it that Sarah is unique among the Imahot in the way her death is described?

A further question is raised when examining the death announcements mentioned above in further detail. Each of them is followed by the phrase **עַמּוּי אֶל עַמּוּי** - and he was gathered to his nation. This is an unusual phrase; it is often understood to mean 'he went in the way of his forefathers', but a

better word to use there would be **אֲבוֹתָיו**, not **עַמּוּי**'. Many commentators understand it to mean 'his soul joined the souls of tzaddikim like him'. However, this phrase is not used in connection to Sarah, who was unquestionably a tzadeket, and it is used in connection to Yishmael, which is a little more questionable.

Rav Jonathan Bailey understands **עַמּוּי אֶל עַמּוּי** to refer to a symbolic joining to one's nation. It can be understood as the Torah's report of someone having secured his place within a nation's continued existence; a closure of one's life having served as a link within the national chain. The report of the death of each of the Avot refers not only to a significant life lived, but also a significant part played in the continuation of Am Yisrael.

With this understanding, we can view Sarah's life in the context of this continuation. Later in the parsha we learn that Avraham remarried

and had many children. This implies that he had no difficulty fathering children, and the miracle of Yitzchak's birth was Sarah's miracle. She was therefore not only a link in the chain of Am Yisrael, but was responsible for creating that chain. This explains why she is the first character in the Torah to have her death

announced in the aforementioned format. We can also now understand why the phrase **עַמּוּי אֶל עַמּוּי** is lacking in Sarah's case. She was the first member of Am Yisrael to die. There was not yet a nation for her to be gathered to. By the time Avraham died this had changed, and all thanks to Sarah. This is why she merited having her death officially recorded.

There is something incredibly special about being a part of a people. It gives you a sense of belonging and a deep connection to those who came before you and to those who will come after. It is an astonishing concept that we are a part of that same chain that Sarah began, that the stories written in the Torah have a real connection to who we are today. I think this is the reason I enjoy studying my family history. A very average painting in a Dutch museum takes on a real significance when I can imagine it hanging in my great-great-grandfather's living room, looking down and watching the story unfold that would one day lead to my existence.

CHANA IS THE ISRAEL & SIXTH FORM DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR 5779 AND WAS ROSH OF GIMMEL SUMMER MACHANE 5778

**SARAH WAS NOT ONLY
A LINK IN THE CHAIN
OF AM YISRAEL
SHE WAS RESPONSIBLE
FOR CREATING IT**

DVAR HALACHA: WEEKLY QUESTION WITH RAV AHARON



Question: How quickly must one drink coffee or tea in order to make a bracha acharona on them?

Answer: There are two main relevant questions here: a) What is the maximum time one may drink

a rev'i't (the minimum amount to make a bracha acharona; about 75-85 ml/one third of an Imperial cup) to have it be considered one act of drinking that requires a bracha? b) Is this amount of time liquid-dependent? In other words, does it change based off of what one is drinking.

Regarding the first question, it is understood that the Shulchan Aruch (OC 612:10) paskens like the Rambam, that the length of time is equivalent to the time it would take to normally drink a rev'i't (just a few seconds). The Gra and Pri Chadash (brought in the Mishna Berura), disagree, paskening like the Raavad, that the minimum length of time is the same as for food, i.e. around six minutes. It would seem that the discussion about hot drinks would be an extension of this discussion.

Regarding the second question, the Ginat Vradim suggests that even though the Rambam ruled that the maximum time is quite short, if a specific liquid would be drunk over a longer

period of time, this would affect the question of making a bracha acharona.

What is the psak halacha regarding this second question? The Mishna Berura (210:1) mentions poskim (Machatzit HaShekel, Chayei Adam) who disagreed with the Ginat Vradim and said to **not** make a bracha acharona on tea or coffee, and the Mishna Berura says that this is the custom. He also adds that the custom among "anshei ma'aseh" is to leave a rev'i't until the drink cools down a bit and then drink the last rev'i't quickly, thus obligating themselves according to all opinions.

Despite the fact that the MB testifies that the custom was to generally **not** make a bracha acharona on hot beverages, many rabbanim over the years **have** made a bracha acharona (Chatam Sofer, Rav Chaim Soloveichik, Rav Isser Zalman Meltzer, Chazon Ish, Rav Elyashiv and others). Reportedly, although Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach himself **did** make a bracha acharona, he advised others to follow the custom of the Mishna Berura.

Bottom line: If possible, it is best to ensure the ability to say a bracha acharona according to all opinions, either by ensuring there is something else consumed that would require said bracha, or by leaving the last part of the drink till it cools. Those who would make a bracha acharona even without this, definitely have enough to rely on.

TO ASK ANY QUESTIONS PLEASE FEEL FREE TO EMAIL RAV AHARON AT RAV@BAUK.ORG

A TASTE FROM ISRAEL

Hi! Our names are **Talia Benjamin, Moriah Fink,** and **Natalie Maurer** and we are currently studying at **Midreshet Nishmat.**

Since arriving two months ago, adjusting to living and studying with our Israeli and American roommates we've thrown ourselves into the adventures that sem life has to offer. From learning Gemara for the first time, Ivrit B'Ivrit classes all day every day and learning how to shop without Kosher Kingdom, our first two months have been an experience to say the least!



A particular highlight of our time so far was our trip to Eilat, filled with many

tiyulim and bonding experiences with our group and other families that live on the Nishmat campus. It was most certainly a **תוויה** to see all of our friends every participant of Bnei Akiva Hachshara programs, from across the world, at the top of a mountain before 6:00 in the morning.

The atmosphere of the full Beit Midrash, bursting with the excitement of learning Torah along with the inspiration of being in Yerushalayim is something we are all really enjoying and can't wait to see how the year develops.

TALIA, MORIAH, AND NATALIE ARE IN SHEVET TZION AND WERE MADRICHOT AT HENDON AND BOREHAMWOOD SVIVOT

WHAT'S GOING ON?

- Winter machane is on the 23rd-30th December and applications are now open!! feel free to email Rafi H at camps@bauk.org if you have any questions

- We're launching a new Student Bet Midrash program on MONDAY!! Please see the poster for more details and feel free to email Eli at chinuch@bauk.org if you have any questions

- Svivot are continuing across the country and we're hearing incredible things from everyone involved with outstanding amounts of chanichim turning out every week! To get involved at your local sviva please email Rafi C at svivot@bauk.org

- Shabbat Bogrim is on the 23rd/24th November!! More details to follow

- BA does Mitzvah Day!! Asylum seeker centre assistance on Sunday 4th November and GIFT food collection

outside Brent Cross Tesco on Sunday 18th November. To get involved or for more details contact Rafi H at camps@bauk.org

- Rav Aharon and Shira have named their daughter Nediva Bruriah but we have gone to print before the Brit of their son so stay tuned to find out his name!!

Shabbat shalom!!

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

1. Why did Avraham not approach Ephron directly? (**See Rambam 23:7-9**)
2. Why wouldn't Eliezer eat until he "spoke his piece"? (**See Rashbam 24:32 and Akeidat Yitzchak 24:37**)
3. Why was Yitzchak's name mentioned before Yishmael in pasuk 25:9 (**See Mizrachi and Rashi**)

בס"ד

Launching a NEW Student Bet Midrash

Both days will take place in **Finchley United Synagogue**

LAUNCHING MONDAY 5th NOVEMBER

Every Monday

19:30 - Maariv
19:45 - Chavruta*
20:45 - Refreshments
21:00 - 45 min Shiurim

Every Thursday

19:30 - Maariv
19:45 - Chavruta/ Chabura*
20:30 - Dinner
21:00 - 45 min Keynote Speaker

*There will be two Batei Midrash - One for women and one for men.

*Learn with your Chavruta or a high school student.



BNEI AKIVA UNITED KINGDOM תע"ב

MIZRACHI UNITED KINGDOM

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KINLOSS