

WHAT'S GOING ON?

- **Winter Machane** applications are open! To apply, please go to bauk.org/camps. For more information, please email camps@bauk.org.

- **Israel Machane madrichim applications** are open! Apply at <https://form.jotformeu.com/92955366587375>.

- **Israel Machane applications ARE OPEN NOW** - head to bauk.org/israel for details of how to apply.

- **Student Bet Midrash** continues every **Thursday night at Kinloss!** Come along at 7.45pm for a great opportunity to hear amazing speakers, eat great food and learn with friends or madrichim! Email Chana at chinuch@bauk.org for more details or if you have any questions.

- **Student Bet Midrash** is thrilled to launch our brand new **Women's Jewish Educator Programme - ללמוד וללמד**. We are looking for highly-skilled female leaders aged 18-21 to be trained as educators within the Jewish community. For more information and for an application form please contact hreuben@theus.org.uk. Deadline 25th November.

- **Bogrim** are invited to a **Melave Malka** with Rav Joel Kenigsberg, Sarah Kenigsberg and Rav Yogev Cohen on 30th November at the home of the Kenigsbergs. For more information contact Chana at chinuch@bauk.org.

- Sign up for our **Mega Siyum in memory of Marc Weinberg** now! Part 1 of the Siyum aims to complete Tanach by Winter Machane. All welcome to join at bitly.com/megasiyum. For more information contact chinuch@bauk.org.



- **Applications for Hachshara** are open for a short time longer! Apply at worldbneiakiva.org/application before 1st December 2019.

- Bnei Akiva are proud to send a delegation of Bogrim on **March of the Living UK's** 10th anniversary trip including a trip to Bergen-Belsen. Sign up at marchoftheliving.org.uk. For further information email mazkir@bauk.org.

- To get involved with your local sviva please contact Zoe at svivot@bauk.org.

- **2019 marks the 80th birthday of BAUK!!** Keep an eye out for events in your local community! For information on our **'80for80'** campaign and to set up a standing order head to bauk.org/bachad.

- Sign up now for **Mas Chaver** for 5780! To apply head to bauk.org/mas-chaver.

- Be sure to like our **Facebook page (Bnei Akiva UK)** and follow our **Instagram (bneiakivauk)** to get regular updates with what is going on in the Tnuva.

- Visit bauk.org/feedback for contact details for all Mazkirut members and to leave any general feedback!

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

1. Why did Eliezer go to a well outside the city? (See **Malbim on 24:11**)
2. Why does the Torah repeat the story at the well? (See **Chizkuni on 24:42**)

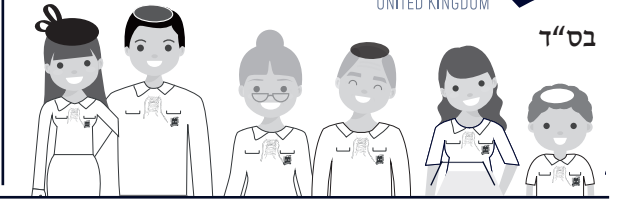
SHABBAT SHALOM!!!

זכור את יום השבת לקדשו.
ששת ימים תעבד ועשית כל מלאכתך,
ויום השביעי שבת לה'

SHABBAT LASHEM

THE VOICE OF BNEI AKIVA UK

PARASHAT CHAYEI SARA
25TH CHESHVAN 5780
22ND & 23RD NOVEMBER 2019
VOLUME 30 ISSUE 10



KNOW YOUR WORTH
LURIE REZNIK
SHEVET AVICHAI

This week's parasha begins with a business deal. Avraham Avinu is negotiating with Ephron the Hittite for the ownership of the Caves of Machpelah. Ephron begins by offering it to Avraham free of charge, but Avraham insists on paying. Ephron puts the price at four hundred shekels (an exorbitant price in its time) and Avraham agrees, paying the full price.

וישמע אברהם אל עפרון וישקל אברהם לעפרו את ההקפר

"And Abraham listened to Ephron, and Abraham weighed out to Ephron the silver..." (Bereishit 23:16).

Commentary notes that after the transaction, the 'vav' disappeared from Ephron's name. On this, Rashi says that Ephron was talking a big talk and not following through; starting off generously offering to donate the land and ending up falling prey to his lowly desires, causing his spiritual standing, and therefore the numerical value of his name to decrease.

The Ba'al Haturim has a different interpretation that I found in a book by Rabbi Yehonasan Gefen. The gematria of Ephron without a 'vav' is four hundred – the exact amount that Avraham gave him for his land. By accepting this money, Ephron began to define himself through it. As he saw himself as being worth four hundred shekels, that is who he became. He was more concerned with his financial status than he was with his spiritual standing, and therefore his name in the Torah was changed.

Furthermore, the letter he lost – 'vav' (which on its own means 'and') – is a letter of connection. It joins two words/concepts together and is also shaped like a hook, which is used to combine two or more objects. What Ephron failed to bring together was his body and his soul. He felt that physical gain was what was important and therefore valued himself in that way.

How relevant this is today. We are living in a world where social standing is based on who has the money to afford a big house, nice clothes, fancy cars, exotic holidays – the list goes on. The age of social media has made it even more difficult to escape from. All this physicality is clouding over the real essence of a person. Even if one tends to stay away from the internet, the emphasis people put on things like which university one goes to and what job one does means they're missing the point.

Avraham, when approaching the Hittites, calls himself a "stranger and a resident" (Bereishit 23:4). Avraham recognises that he will not really be the owner of the land; Hashem is the owner, and he is merely going to making use of it. Nothing material in this world really belongs to us. Everything we have comes from Hashem and it is not due to our own work that we receive what we have. True, we put in our hishtadlut, but when we are successful, we should never let our egos tell us that it was all up to us.

Ephron believed that by receiving this money, his importance had increased. However, losing a letter of his name shows that he actually lowered his value in the eyes of the Torah. By gaining in material wealth, he declined in spirituality and connection to Hashem. We should know that our worth is not measured by anything physical or external, but rather by our mitzvot, middot and our Avodat Hashem.

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CHAYEI SARA 5780: PURE MOTIVES

RAV JOEL KENIGSBERG | RAV SHALIACH



The Torah doesn't waste words. Sometimes we have entire halachot learnt out from a letter out of place, or from the order of parshiyot. So it's unusual when not just a few words, but an entire story repeated in almost identical form, as is the case with Eliezer's mission to find a wife for Yitzchak.

The story appears first as part of the Torah's narrative, and then again in the words of Eliezer himself when he meets with Lavan and Betuel, the family of Rivka. A lot can be learned by analyzing the subtle differences between the two accounts.

When Avraham initially instructed Eliezer to go in search of a wife for Yitzchak, Eliezer's reply was one of concern lest his mission be unsuccessful. "אולי לא תאבה האשה ללכת אחרי" - "maybe the wife I will find will not want to come with

me" (Bereishit 24:5). It seems like an innocent response, the concerned servant is raising the possibility that things might not go as planned. However when the story is repeated, the word אולי is spelt differently as אלי which could also be read as "to me" (ibid. 24:39). Chazal explain that Eliezer had a daughter, and he had hoped that Avraham would choose her to be the wife of Yitzchak. When Eliezer raised the possibility that his mission might not succeed, it was his way of hinting to Avraham that he should not look elsewhere but rather turn to Eliezer and have his daughter marry Yitzchak. The question to be asked is why this motive was only revealed in the second version of the story?

Rav Dessler explains that the Torah is revealing a deep insight into human psychology. When a

person has ulterior motives, he becomes blinded and is unable to recognise them. Many times we convince ourselves that our actions are for all the right reasons, but subconsciously there is a hidden agenda guiding us. When Eliezer first spoke to Avraham he genuinely thought that he was acting out of concern for his master. Only after he had found Rivka and understood that there was no longer any chance that his daughter would marry into Avraham's family, was he able to reexamine his earlier actions and reach the conclusion that in fact his motives had not been completely pure.

A different answer is given by the Sfat Emet. He explains that the verse is not coming to criticize Eliezer but rather to praise him. Despite the fact that he had other motives, despite the fact that deep down he wanted the mission to fail, nonetheless he put his own interests aside and did what he knew was the right thing. Eliezer could have sabotaged the entire trip and made sure his daughter would be the one chosen, yet he did exactly the opposite. He invested the maximum effort in order to make

sure that Avraham's wish, rather than his own, was fulfilled. The Sfat Emet explains that Eliezer explained this to Lavan and Betuel - just like I had a personal interest but overcame it, so too you should overcome your personal interests and let Rivka go to marry Yitzchak.

Now we can understand why the Torah only revealed these motives in the second version of the story. In the first account, Eliezer's personal interests are irrelevant, and revealing them would serve no purpose other than to denigrate him. However in the second account, after we have seen Eliezer's dedication to make his mission succeed, revealing that he overcame his interests serves as an example to us all. May we too be guided to act not for our own desires but for the greater good of the Jewish people.

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MEET THE NIVCHARIM

BEN ROTHSTEIN | SHEVET AVICHAI



Hi everyone! Chana asked me to write a short bio to introduce myself. I contend that nobody's interested, but apparently (some of) you are so here are the 'fun' facts of my life: I grew up attending Barnet sviva, my Roshim including (but not limited to) such illustrious figures as Zechariah Creeger and now-Rabbi Aaron Rosenberg. I was schooled at Hasmo and, despite the best efforts of some of my fellow students, remained a committed and involved member of Bnei Akiva. After going on Israel Machane (Group 5), I finally began to grasp the impact that BA had had on me, seeing that IM had further cultivated and strengthened my connection

A TASTE FROM THE ARCHIVES: MUM'S THE WORD 5770

SARAH MICHELSON | SHEVET LAVI

When one thinks of Sara Imeinu they tend to think of her in relation to other people, as the wife of Avraham, the mother of Yitzchak, the first of the four matriarchs.

What people often miss out on is the unique nature of Sara the individual which, coupled with her relationship with her family, led Chazal to idealise her as the perfect woman, the Eishet Chayil we sing about each Friday night. Out of all the righteous women in Tanach what is it that prompted Chazal to choose Sara as the Eishet Chayil - the woman of valour?

Rav Meir Schwartzman explains that Kiryat Arba, the town Sara was buried in, was so named because of four special traits of Sara and it is the combination of these qualities that set Sara above the rest.

Firstly, she was a good wife who was devoted to her husband and supportive of his spiritual endeavours, standing by his side throughout their lives together. Secondly, she was an exemplary mother who supervised Yitzchak, continually dedicating herself to his spiritual advancement, even when it meant making difficult decisions such as the sending away of Yishmael. Thirdly, Sara was involved with her community, pursuing acts of chesed and charity to help those in need. Lastly, Sara was a spiritual leader and one of the seven prophetesses.

with our homeland; though more broadly, my identifying with the whole ideology of Am Yisrael, B'Eretz Yisrael, al pi Torat Yisrael.

This epiphany propelled my Bnei Akiva journey as I took my first camps and continued running sviva in Barnet. I went on Hachshara with Bnei Akiva, learning in Yeshivat Hakotel on Torani, and as soon as I got back, I wanted to play an active role in helping guide the movement that forms such an integral part of my ideology. As such, I have been elected onto the Hanhalla. I will do my best to direct the movement towards what I believe is the best expression of the synergy of halachic observance with modern life, but in a movement such as ours each and every person has an integral role to play, thus I welcome any suggestions, from any chaverim, re the improvement of Bnei Akiva.

B'virkat chaverim l'Torah v'Avodah!

The Sfat Emet explains that Sara was the only matriarch to receive ruach hakodesh in her own right, rather than in the right of her husband, such as when Sara was able to speak to Hashem prior to her marriage to Avraham. Not only this but Rashi takes the incident with the sending away of Yishmael as proof "שהיה אברהם טפל לשרה" - "that Avraham was inferior to Sara in prophecy" (Rashi on Bereishit 21:12).

To excel in any of these fields, as a spouse, parent, member of the community or spiritual leader is hard enough, but to excel in all is remarkable. The need to look after your own as well as the wider community is a recurring theme within Judaism, one which we first see exemplified through Sara and her actions.

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