

WHAT'S GOING ON?

- **Applications for the Mazkirut 5781** CLOSE THIS WEDNESDAY!!! For further information or to apply please email mazkir@bauk.org. Deadline 18th March 2020.

- Applications for **tafkidim on Summer Machane** are open! Apply now at bauk.org to make a difference this summer!!

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

- Year 13s: **Bet Midrash Programme 5780** will take place on 3rd-9th August 2020. A week of learning, inspiration and hadracha exclusively for **Shevet Orot!** for more details email chinuch@bauk.org. To apply head to bauk.org/bmp-tafkid.

- **Student Bet Midrash** continues every **Thursday night at Kinloss!** Come along at **7.00pm** for a great opportunity to hear amazing speakers, eat great food and learn with friends or madrichim! This week 19th March we will hear from **Rabbanit Sarah Kenigsberg**. Email Chana at chinuch@bauk.org for more details or if you have any questions.

- **Shabbat Bogrim** will take place on 4th April in Tring! For more details contact mazkir@bauk.org.

- **Year Tens**, the **Shevet Seenai Shabbaton** will take place on 25th April 2020! Register your

interest at www.bauk.org/seenai-shabbaton!

- **Shabbat Ha'Irgun** season is continuing! To sign up, head to bauk.org/shabbat-hairgun. To get involved with your local sviva please contact Zoe at svivot@bauk.org.

- Good luck to **Leeds sviva**, who have their **Shabbat Ha'Irgun** this weekend!

- **Rav Joel's 'Lights of Religious Zionism' shiur series** continues on Monday 16th March at 7.30pm in the London Bayit. Chulent and kugel provided.

- **Rav Joel's Campus Roadshow** will continue on Thursday 19th March, when he'll be visiting **Queen Mary University**. Look out for him on your campus in the coming months! Contact rav@bauk.org to arrange a visit.

- 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.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

1. Why is it strange that Hashem commanded Bnei Yisrael to remove their jewellery? (See **Sforno on Shemot 33:5**)

2. Why is the mitzvah of the Para Aduma performed by Elazar? (See **Ramban on Bamidbar 19:3**)

SHABBAT SHALOM!!!

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SHABBAT LASHEM

THE VOICE OF BNEI AKIVA UK



LEARNING FROM OUR MISTAKES
MATTY HANDLER
SHEVET AVICHAI

An often-overlooked section of this week's parasha is the repetition of the mitzvah of Shabbat, mentioned in a peculiar place; between the appointment of Betzalel to build the Mishkan and just before the first set of *luchot* are given to Moshe. Not only this, but the wording of the commandment is also unusual.

וְשָׁמְרוּ בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־הַשַּׁבָּת לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת־הַשַּׁבָּת לְדֹרֹתָם בְּרִית עוֹלָם: בֵּינִי וּבֵין בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֹתָהּ הוּא לְעֵלָם כִּי שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים עָשָׂה ה' אֶת־הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת־הָאָרֶץ וּבְיֹום הַשְּׁבִיעִי שָׁבַת וַיִּנָּפֵשׁ:

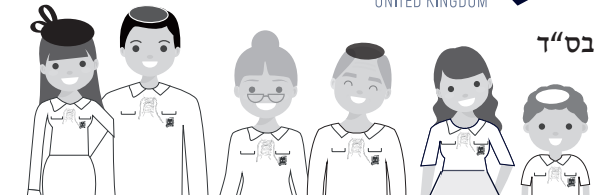
"Bnei Yisrael shall keep the Shabbat, observing the Shabbat throughout the ages as a covenant for all time. It shall be a sign for all time between Me and Bnei Yisrael. For in six days Hashem made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He ceased from work and was refreshed." (Shemot 31:16-17)

This pasuk comes at a critical point in the parasha, just before Bnei Yisrael committed the grave sin of the formation and worshipping of the golden calf. It's an interesting context in which to mention what seems to be a commandment completely unrelated to such an event.

There are two possible reasons for this peculiar organization of the parasha. One could be the interpretation of the Talmud Yerushalmi, that the mitzvah of Shabbat is more important than all the mitzvot of the Torah together, hence at a point where we are discussing the building of the Mishkan which is the basis for the rules of Shabbat, it is necessary to mention this mitzvah which has significant importance in relation to the building of the Mishkan.

London	In: 17:47	Out: 18:54	Oxford	In: 17:48	Out: 18:59	Leeds	In: 17:49	Out: 19:02
Manchester	In: 17:52	Out: 19:04	Bristol	In: 17:54	Out: 19:04	Liverpool	In: 17:55	Out: 19:07
Cambridge	In: 17:43	Out: 18:54	Birmingham	In: 17:51	Out: 19:02	Jerusalem	In: 17:15	Out: 18:28

PARASHAT KI TISA
18TH ADAR 5780
13TH & 14TH MARCH 2020
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Alternatively, it may be the wording of the commandment itself that explains why it is brought up here. The other place in the Torah where the word *ot* is used to describe a 'sign' is in Bereshit, when God shows Noah the rainbow after the flood and says:

אֶת־קַשְׁתִּי נֹתַתִּי בְּעָנָן וְהָיְתָה לְאוֹת בְּרִית בֵּינִי וּבֵין הָאָרֶץ: "I have set My bow in the clouds, and it shall serve as a sign of the covenant between Me and the earth." (Bereshit 9:13)

These two verses can teach us a very important life lesson. Before the flood, we may perceive the people on Earth to be inherently wicked; they simply knew no better than to act in the way that they did. It was the covenant between Hashem and humankind following the flood that served as the forewarning for people to act morally. Humankind was taught to have hindsight in its actions and to recognize that it had made mistakes that it now knows not to repeat.

The case of the golden calf employs a very different message through the word *ot*. Here, Bnei Yisrael already been given the Ten Commandments and understood the significance of keeping the mitzvot and the consequences of transgressing them and should have realised that their actions have consequences. The reminder of the mitzvah of Shabbat and its paramount importance, as the Talmud Yerushalmi points out, should have served as an implicit reminder to Bnei Yisrael to keep the mitzvot, but they did not have the foresight to anticipate their potential future mistakes and how they would react to a situation such as Moshe 'disappearing'.

This week's parasha teaches us to always think carefully about our actions: to learn from our previous mistakes and consider the consequences of our future plans, so that we always act appropriately and in the best way possible, in both our observance of mitzvot and our middot.

MATTY WAS A MADRICH ON BET CHALUTZI MACHANE 5779.

A TASTE FROM THE ARCHIVE: KI TISA 5755

This week's sidra opens with Hashem telling Moshe: "When you take a census of the Israelites to determine their numbers, each one shall be counted by giving an atonement offering for his life. In this manner, they will not be stricken by the plague when they are counted." (Shemot 30:12)

The question must be asked on this pasuk: why would counting Bnei Yisrael by number, as opposed to by their giving a donation of *Machatzit Hashekel* (half a shekel), bring upon them such a calamity? Indeed, we see in Shmuel Bet perek 24 that in the days of David such an event did occur, with the forewarned consequences.

In Parashat Bamidbar, Hashem tells Moshe to count Bnei Yisrael a third time, again through the donation of coins. The tribe of Levi, however, was not included in that count, but was numbered separately, "according to the word of God" (Bamidbar 3:16), which Rashi explains to mean that Hashem told Moshe the number of people in every household of that tribe.

So how could the tribe of Levi, the tribe set aside as the servants of Hashem, be counted by number? Why was there no fear of a plague here?

The tribe of Levi were chosen for the Avodah (service of the Temple) in place of the firstborn boys who had held that post until now, in this week's sidra, when Moshe beheld the sin of the golden calf:

"And Moshe stood up...and announced, "whoever is with God, join me!" All the Levites gathered around him. He said to them..."let each man put on his sword...and kill his brother, his friend and his relative." The Levites did as Moshe said and approximately 3000 people were killed that day." (Shemot 32:26-28)

The Netziv asks: if only 3000 of Bnei Yisrael were killed, why was it only the tribe of Levi that answered Moshe's call? Surely only those 3000 had sinned, and the rest were "with God"?

He also asks; why did Moshe not say, "each man must **even** kill his brother" rather than "let each man kill his brother" – for surely he did not mean that everyone should only kill his brothers and friends?

The Gemara in Pesachim 8b discusses the rule of שלוחי מצוה אינם נזיקין - those who are doing a mitzvah are safe from danger", and it concludes that in a place where there is an obvious danger, this rule does not apply.

The Netziv explains that one who puts himself into a dangerous position is as if he is advocating

to Hashem that he is sure enough of his own righteousness to be saved. Hashem will then judge this person strictly, *b'midat hadin*, to see if this is correct.

The Gemara in Ta'anit 25b says that at a time of drought, it was only when Rabbi Akiva prayed that Hashem answered with rain, because he had overcome his natural tendencies in order to serve Hashem earlier in his life. Only a person who can truly ignore his natural sympathies in order to carry out the will of Hashem can be assured of Hashem ignoring the rules of nature for his sake. *Midda k'neged midda* (sake for sake).

That was the true meaning of Moshe's call, "whoever is for Hashem, join me". Who is so fully devoted to carrying out Hashem's will that he is willing to kill his brothers and friends, despite any personal sympathies towards them?

Only such people could be assured of not being hurt in the forthcoming battle; for them Hashem will overcome the laws of nature and let them emerge unhurt from these dangerous circumstances.

Only the tribe of Levi could honestly reply "yes" to that question. Rashi explains that if Bnei Yisrael are counted individually by number they will be subject to an *Ayin Harah* (evil eye) which will result in a plague. What this means is that by counting individually it would highlight one's individuality. It is as if one is saying, "I count. I am important," and as such is exposing himself to being judged *b'midat hadin* (strictly) by Hashem.

Only those who have ignored their own natural tendencies for Hashem's sake can be promised that Hashem will ignore any punishment which is naturally coming to them and hence survive being judged strictly *b'midat hadin*. Hence, there was no fear of a plague resulting from the counting of the tribe of Levi individually in Sefer Bamidbar, for they had fulfilled this hardest of conditions and were thus chosen to act as the fully devoted servants of Hashem in the Mishkan and Bet Hamikdash.

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ASHIRA LASHEM

BEN ROTHSTEIN | SHEVET AVICHAH

בְּרוּךְ הַגֵּבֵר אֲשֶׁר יִבְטַח בָּהּ וְהָיָה ה' מְבַטְחוֹ

Blessed is the man who trusts in Hashem; Hashem shall be his trust. (Yirmiyahu 17:7)

As musical ruach songs go, Baruch Hagever is brilliant – set to the classic 1950s doo-wop chord progression of **I-vi-IV-V**, borrowing some of its musical motif from Speedy Gonzales and lyrical inspiration (in the addendum) from Ernie Maresca, Baruch Hagever has secured itself a place in the annals of Greatest Ruach Songs. But what do the actual words mean? (The Hebrew words bit. Not the Ernie Maresca bit.)

The song comes from a pasuk in Yirmiyahu which presents itself as a chiasmic parallelism:

Blessed is the man who **trusts (A) in Hashem (B)**,

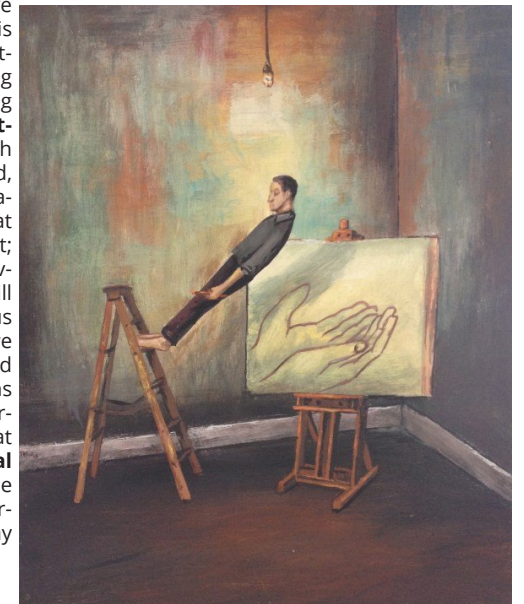
and **Hashem (B) is his trust (A)**.

(The translation doesn't really capture the eloquence of the Hebrew.)

One understanding (Metzudat David) is that according to how much we trust God, God will be our trust. That is to say, the more we trust in Hashem, the more He will help us and protect us.

On the flipside, Radak suggests this indicates a reciprocal action – if we begin by trusting God, He will reciprocate and give us cause to trust him, that we need not fear evil. Hashem understands that it can be difficult for us to commit wholly, without reservation, and simply trust. Thus, He makes an allowance for this, and once we trust in Hashem, He will in return help us learn to trust Him.

On a deeper level, Malbim suggests there are two ways of trusting in Hashem. The first level is trusting that Hashem may save me through natural means. Malbim cautions against this being the extent of a person's trust. If I am only hoping for salvation from Hashem **restricted to the natural ways which I can envisage**, then my faith is really in those natural means. This is not bad, however, but it is not worthy of the "blessed" status of the individual described in our pasuk. That accolade is reserved for the higher level of trust; Hashem saving me without any means whatsoever. To be clear, this is not to suggest that God will break the laws of nature to save every righteous person who trusts in Him. On the contrary, we cannot expect God to pull out all the stops and produce miracles for us, as the Gemara learns out: אין סומכין על הנס, we may not rely on a miracle (Talmud Yerushalmi Yuma 1:4). Rather that our trust is placed in God **without the natural means**, and we understand that God is the One orchestrating our means of salvation. Our understanding and trust transcend the means God may use to save us, residing instead in God himself.



BEN IS A NIVCHAR HANHALLA 5780.

'The Trust Test' - Duy Huynh