

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

SHABBAT LASHEM

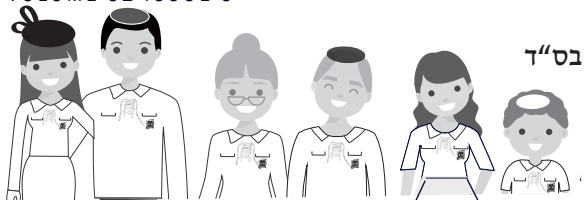
THE VOICE OF BNEI AKIVA UK

PARASHAT LECH LECHA

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בס"ד



EMULATING AVRAHAM NETANEL NADAV SHEVET REFAEL

This week's Parasha, Lech Lecha,

begins with Hashem commanding Avram to

לְדַלֵּךְ מֵאַרְצְךָ וּמְוֹלָדֶיךָ וּמִבְּיַת אֲבִיךָ אֶל-הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אֲרָאֶךָ
(בראשית יב:א)

*Go out of your land, your birthplace and your father's house,
to the land I shall show you.*

(Bereishit, 12:1)

Hashem tells Avram that He will make him into a great nation, that he himself will be a blessing, that those who bless him will be blessed, and that those who curse him will be cursed. Finally, we read:

וּנְבָרְכוּ בְךָ כָּל מִשְׁפַּחַת הָאָדָמָה

(בראשית יב:ג)

It is difficult to accurately translate this pasuk into English. Let's look at this a little more closely.

An obvious interpretation comes to mind immediately: that we ourselves, the descendants of Avraham Avinu, are a blessing to the rest of the world. That somehow, the mere existence on this planet of Avraham and his descendants makes it a better place. True though that may be, I'm not sure that's what this means.

Rashi says that the generations to come will bless each other by saying "May you be like Avraham", much like the way we bless our children on Friday night, wishing them that they should be like Efraim and Menashe. However, do we usually hear people blessing each other this way? I don't think so. I'd take a guess that there are 'Families of the Earth' for whom the name 'Avraham' is meaningless. Perhaps his words are shorthand for a much deeper concept.

Rashbam gives us an interpretation that may seem controversial to us today: that all the families of the earth will be mixed with Avraham's, and so they too will receive a blessing. The Talmud in Yevamot (63a) seems to give weight to this idea by saying that Hashem told Avraham that he will be blessed by Rut the Moabite and Na'ama the Ammonite. We see here the mention of two converts to Judaism, two

members of other families who joined our own.

Another interpretation is possible: the pasuk deals with two concepts that may well be unique in Judaism – blessing and family.

The English word blessing comes from an old root which means to mark with blood, a pagan custom of sanctification. The Hebrew root of בִּרְכָה, blessing, is quite different. It is בִּרְךְ, meaning knee. The ancient custom amongst our people in blessing, was to fall to one's knees in acknowledgement of the source of that blessing.

We preserve the custom in the way we pray the Amidah each day by bending our knees on the word בְּרוּךְ. We are, so to speak, making ourselves smaller before another individual, to acknowledge that they are the source of our blessing.

This is the concept of blessing in Judaism – it is the establishment of a reciprocal relationship.

Family, מִשְׁפָּחָה, is also a different concept for us. Family, in the West, essentially denotes consanguinity – blood relation. There is only one other word in the Torah that shares a root with mishpacha, and that is שְׂפָחָה, a maidservant. A shifcha, a lowly maidservant is also considered a fully-fledged family member, showing that the Jewish concept of family is inherently inclusive.

Avraham Avinu is the epitome of חֶסֶד, kindness. Furthermore, the members of a family are each in a reciprocal relationship of giving and receiving, in an environment where that reciprocity is acknowledged and expressed.

This, perhaps, is the true meaning of our phrase. Hashem is telling Avraham that he must leave his previous life behind, must move away from the family model of his origin and build a life that acknowledges the reciprocal relationship inherent in receiving Hakadosh Baruch Hu's blessing. By doing so, his family will become a universal model for families across the world.

So we could read our pasuk:

וְאֲבָרְכָה מְבָרְכֶיךָ, וּמוֹלִלְךָ אֶאָר, וּנְבָרְכוּ בְךָ כָּל מִשְׁפַּחַת הָאָדָמָה
Those who bless you I will bless, and those who curse you I will curse, and through emulating you, all the families of the world will be blessed.

May it be so.

**NETANEL WAS A CHANICH ON GIMMEL
MACHANE 5781**

SHABBAT TIMES

London In 17:51 Out 18:55

Manchester In 17:57 Out 19:03

Cambridge In 17:46 Out 18:54

Oxford

In 17:52 Out 19:00

Bristol

In 17:58 Out 19:05

Birmingham

In 17:54 Out 19:02

Leeds

In 17:51 Out 19:00

Glasgow

In 17:58 Out 19:10

Jerusalem In 17:31 Out 18:43

PSYCHOLOGY AND TORAH WITH ELAD ESHEL

LETTING GO TO MOVE FORWARD



Development is something that we normally associate with childhood and adolescence.

Physically, there are certain milestones that a child is supposed to achieve by a certain age – crawling,

walking, etc. So too when we look at psychological development, children tend to begin imaginative play when reaching a certain age, and develop the ability to think abstractly at an older age, and so on and so on.

Yet, when it comes to the longest period of our lives – adulthood, we do not see it as a time for development in the same way. It is as if once we leave our teenage years, we are now more or less fully formed, no longer with the ability or the will to change who we are. Now, don't get me wrong, there is some basis for this assumption, as indeed change becomes harder after the brain has 'solidified', so to speak, during adulthood. However, this is not the full story.

When we look at the life of Avraham as told in the Torah, we can identify an interesting theme. Throughout his journey, Avraham is constantly demanded to relinquish his hold on things most dear to him, things that provided him with security and guaranteed his future. After arriving in the land of Canaan, he is immediately forced to leave; after his return he forfeits his safety to rescue Lot; he is forced to expel Hagar and Yishmael; most of all, he is asked to give up his remaining son and heir, Yitzchak, as a sacrifice.

This is also the case with the first test of Avraham, at the beginning of our parasha – to leave his home, his land and father's household. He had to leave the security and support of his family and community and to journey to a foreign land. However, it seems that he struggles with this mission. He doesn't completely let go of his father's house – yes he leaves, but he takes Lot with him. Maybe he brought him as a security and an heir, since we have been told that Sarah is barren. Avraham seems to struggle to let go of all of his support when leaving Haran, and takes Lot as an insurance policy, so that there will at least be someone to inherit him and continue the journey.

After Avraham arrives in the land, Hashem blesses him, but it is a limited bracha, all of one line:

לְיִרְעָךָ אֶתְּן אֶתְּהָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת

(בראשית י"ב:ז)

I will give this land to your offspring

(Bereishet 12:7)

Later on in the parasha, upon their return from Egypt, Lot and Avraham part ways, no longer being able to coexist in the same camp. Immediately after this, Avraham is blessed with a much more expansive bracha, spanning 4 pasukim: "Raise your eyes... look to the North, to the South, to the East and to the West. For all the land that you see I will give to you and to your offspring forever..."

The Torah highlights the connection between the separation from Lot as the impetus for the bracha, introducing it with the words "After Lot left him, Hashem said to Avraham...". What is the significance of this?

THE JOURNEY OF AVRAHAM IS TEACHING US THE MODEL OF DEVELOPMENT IN ADULTHOOD

The journey of Avraham is teaching us the model of development in adulthood. It is a process of letting go and leaving part of ourselves behind, trusting in ourselves and trusting in the future.

For example: a person, so scared of having a car accident, obsessively checks their mirrors to the extent that they don't pay attention to the road ahead. One may fear social isolation, so they try too hard to make friends, ultimately turning people away. One is so scared of not having a stable income that they remain in a job that is unfulfilling and stifling, not allowing themselves to take a chance on a new opportunity.

Development in adulthood is so often a process of leaving part of ourselves behind. Yes, this is who we used to be, and yes, this is difficult, but we cannot stay the same and change at the same time. We have to be willing to give up parts of ourselves, to make a sacrifice, in order to open up new horizons, and truly grow. Avraham teaches us that when we hold on too tight, we can't move forward.

RAV ELAD IS THE NEW BA SHALIACH IN THE NORTH. HE ATTAINED HIS UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE IN LAW AND PSYCHOLOGY AT HEBREW UNIVERSITY AND SEMICHA FROM WORLD MIZRACHI.

MEET THE MAZKIRUT

SHIRA COLLINS | ISRAEL AND SIXTH FORM WORKER



Hi, my name is Shira Collins and I am the new Israel and Sixth Form Worker! Originally from Manchester, I have grown up in the Tnuva being actively involved with both Sviva and Machanot across the years, including being Sganit of Salford Sviva and Rosh of Leeds! After attending Torani - Midreshet Harova, I went to Leeds Beckett University where I studied Childhood Development and Playwork, and graduated in 2020.

I have just finished my first year working on the Mazkirut as the Camps and Social Action Worker. It was an extremely unique year with the constant challenges of the pandemic and I'm sooooo excited for this new year and to bring back BA classics like Israel Machane, please G-d!!!!

I am looking forward to having such a fun year working with Sixth Form Students and supporting our Chaverim currently on gap years in Shevet Hineini, as well as those in Shevet Dorot who are currently applying. I am particularly passionate about ensuring Chaverim of all ages are represented and look forward to continuing to channel this in the Tnuva and throughout the year.

CONTACT SHIRA AT ISRAEL@BAUK.ORG

MY ALIYAH EXPERIENCE

Our Shabbat Lashem Correspondant caught up with Matti Radivan (Shevet Ne'eman), to hear about his move to Eretz Yisrael.

Where are you from and when did you make Aliyah?

I am from Manchester. I made Aliyah officially in December 2017 but I've lived in Israel since September 2016.

When did you first think about making Aliyah?

Aliyah has been a concept all of my life but my first time I actually saw myself living in Israel was when I was a Chanich on Israel Machane in 2014 during **צוק איתנו**. As absurd as it sounds, seeing the achdut throughout all of Israel really resonated with me.

Why did you decide to make Aliyah?

At the end of the day, whether or not you agree that living in Israel is a mitzvah, in my opinion, living in Israel is integral to Jews. Shmitah and fruit mitzvot like Maaser Rishon are only applicable in Israel, but they only apply to people with fruit trees. A better set of examples that I think people will resonate better with are things like sleeping in your succah. Shabbat atmosphere and generally zmanim are things I struggled with in England because they're designed for living in Israel.

What's the best thing about living in Israel?

The relaxed, giving mentality. Seeing someone on Friday and they invite you for a meal that night, being invited to so many people's houses when yeshiva closed at the beginning of Corona and being available at a moment's notice to help a friend out are all examples of this. I have so many examples of the kindness of the olim community and I work on it constantly to be half as good as the people around me.

What challenges come with making Aliyah?

I can't talk for everyone, but I know from my own experience that I thought that once I got through all the paperwork and finally, officially, made Aliyah that all of the bureaucratic stress would be over. Nefesh b'Nefesh helps a lot with making Aliyah but, at least for me, once you get here, you're on your own. Reach out to people who made Aliyah before you, find olim living in your neighbourhood and talk things over with them. It's something we've all gone through here and we're happy to help.



What's the best advice you were given regarding Aliyah?

I'm not sure if this is a British problem or a point of pride but so many people, myself included, find it impossible to ask for help - even when we need it. Throughout this entire interview I've spoken about the caring nature of Am Yisrael; the natural, intrinsic bond between all Jews. It doesn't matter what's going on or how big the wall in front of you seems, you never have to go through it alone and if you can't ask then don't be foolish enough to deny help when it's offered. It applies to everyone but it especially applies if you make Aliyah without your family. Sometimes it can feel like you're all alone and no one can help you but here you're surrounded by Am Yisrael.

MATTI WAS SGAN OF GIMMEL MACHANE 5781

SHEVET HINEINI ENJOY PIZZA IN THE PARK

Over 35 Bogrim in Shevet Hineini, many of whom are currently participants in Bnei Akiva's Hachshara programs met in Gan Ha'atzmaut in Yerushalayim for a pizza night, organised by Israel and Sixth Form Worker, Shira Collins. Ruby Kwartz, who is on Kivun, said, 'It was so fun to see loads of other Brits who are all on different gap year programmes, and to get to chat about our experiences and how our years are going so far'.



BNEI AKIVA UK RUNS TWO GAP YEAR PROGRAMS, TORANI AND KIVUN, WHICH ARE COLLECTIVELY CALLED 'HACHSHARA'. TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT HACHSHARA GO TO WWW.BAUK.ORG/HACHSHARA OR EMAIL SHIRA AT ISRAEL@BAUK.ORG.

WHAT'S GOING ON?

- **Calling Year 13s!** The **Shevet Dorot Shabbaton** will take place at the London Bayit on the **22nd-23rd October!** Sign up now at www.bauk.org/shevet-shabbaton

- Calling all Bogrot! **Lishma is back!** Don't miss this amazing **Torah learning opportunity**, now with a brand new **choice of Chaburot!** Sign up: tinyurl.com/Lishmah-BA

- BA is looking for some **charismatic Bogrim in both London and Manchester** to go into schools to run **lunch and learns**, as well as take part in other exciting opportunities! To get involved, contact Josh and Dania at chinuch@bauk.org

- **Mazal tov** to **Dana** and **Michael Rainsbury** (Mazkir 5771, Shevet Amitzur) on the birth of a baby boy!

- Keep an eye out for **exciting Bnei Akiva updates** for all ages!

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

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



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