

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

SHABBAT LASHEM

THE VOICE OF BNEI AKIVA UK

PARASHAT PEKUDEI

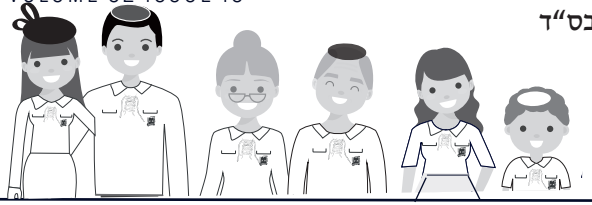
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בס"ד



THE CLOUD OF UNCERTAINTY HADASSAH WENDL SHEVET NE'EMAN

When I was younger, I would often

lie in our garden and look up at the sky to observe the clouds passing by. While I was watching the clouds moving and changing, sometimes quicker, sometimes slower, I would not move an inch. I wasn't moved by the clouds. They were merely pleasant to look at. The cloud at the end of Parashat Pekudei is a different kind of cloud. Like the clouds we would carefully observe, this cloud also moved, but more importantly, it also had the power to move us, the Jewish people.

In Pekudei, we read about the final steps regarding the building of the Mishkan and all the descriptions of these objects, parts and pieces that served as means to connect to Hashem when the Jewish people were on their journey through the desert. The Mishkan, for which all these objects were made, was a place of connection between Hashem and His people. However, in the last verses, the focus moves away from the construction itself: a heavenly cloud hovers over the Ohel Moed (Tent of Meeting) and Hashem's presence fills it. Then the Torah talks about the Jewish people being led by this cloud. But what does it mean to be led by a cloud?

When the cloud would rest over the Ohel Moed, Bnei Yisrael would not travel. When the cloud moved higher up in the air, Bnei Yisrael understood this as a sign that they would now also move on and continue their journey to Eretz Yisrael:

וּבַהֲעִלּוֹת הַעָנָן מֵעַל הַמִּשְׁכָּן יִסְעוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וּבְכָל מַסְעֵיהֶם

When the cloud lifted from the Tabernacle, the Israelites would set out, on their various journeys (Shemot 40:36)

Bnei Yisrael were led by a cloud – a unique one. It was Hashem's presence, as Abarbanel explains in his commentary to this verse, that Bnei Yisrael felt being accompanied by and led by during the time of the Mishkan. Being led

by this cloud, this ענן, must have been a uniquely and vividly spiritual experience of closeness to Hashem. A cloud in physical terms, on the other hand, is something quite different. The US National Geographic Society defines clouds as, "visible accumulations of tiny water droplets or ice crystals in the Earth's atmosphere." Water condenses in the sky and this lets us see clouds. They can come in many shapes, forms and hues. Perhaps it is intentional that we read about a cloud leading us, not because the cloud in Pekudei is like any cloud in the sky (it's not) and not just because experiences of spirituality and closeness to Hashem can come in many different forms (like clouds do).

Perhaps we read about the cloud guiding Bnei Yisrael on their way to Eretz Yisrael because of the meaning we attribute to clouds. Clouds can symbolise uncertainty. When it's cloudy, the sky isn't clear. Our minds can be clouded with thoughts and something can be clouded in secrecy when we don't know the essence of something.

The Jewish people, spearheaded by Moshe, prepared meticulously for the construction of the Mishkan and the Ohel Moed. It is mentioned repeatedly in this and the preceding parshiot that they carried out these instructions just as they were told to do. Now though, they would be moved, guided on their subsequent journeys by uncertainty – by a cloud, the cloud of Hashem. What we can read into that is, I suggest, the following: no matter how well we prepare, no matter how many tools we take with us on a journey, our journey will still be one of uncertainty. Can we predict with certainty where exactly we will end up? Can we say for sure when we will leave a place in life and when we will arrive at the next one? What we do know is that it's Hashem's presence guiding us and accompanying us wherever we go.

**HADASSAH IS A PARTICIPANT ON THE LILMOD
UL'LAMED EDUCATOR PROGRAM**

SHABBAT TIMES

London	In 17:30 Out 18:38	Oxford	In 17:32 Out 18:42	Leeds	In 17:31 Out 18:44
Manchester	In 17:37 Out 18:47	Bristol	In 17:37 Out 18:48	Liverpool	In 17:37 Out 18:50
Cambridge	In 17:26 Out 18:37	Birmingham	In 17:34 Out 18:45	Jerusalem	In 17:03 Out 18:17

PSYCHOLOGY AND TORAH WITH ELAD ESHEL

PARASHAT PEKUDEI - REPAIRING THE BETRAYAL



Over and above the difficulty many of us experience engaging with the parshiot of the Mishkan, with their intricate details and a vocabulary that we don't usually encounter, the parshiot of Vayakhel

and Pekudei present a unique challenge, being a repetition of the exact same descriptions found in Terumah and Tetzaveh. With the well-known principle in mind of the frugal use of words in the Torah, it begs the question: why are we speaking about all of this again?

It seems that the answer to this question lies in the significant events that happened between the first set of Mishkan parshiot a few weeks ago, and these parshiot of Vayakhel-Pekudei. Parashat Ki Tisa, sandwiched in between the two pairs of Mishkan parshiot, describes the cataclysmic events of the Eigel Hazahav (Golden Calf). After such a tremendous rift has been torn between Hashem and the Jewish People, it seems that there may no longer be a need for the Mishkan. As Hashem tells Moshe in the aftermath, "My presence will go and leave you to yourselves." (33:14)

What purpose could there be to build a house for Hashem, a resting place for the Shechina (divine presence) when the Almighty would no longer be accompanying the people? After the destruction of the Luchot, what would be placed in the Aron HaBrit? Additionally, without the Aron, what would be the function of this construction?

As we know, at the end of Ki Tisa, Hashem does return to the people, Moshe's tefillot are accepted, and the incumbent destruction was averted. And yet towards the end of Moshe's interaction with Hashem, he concludes with a final request that is unclear as to whether it is accepted:

וַיֹּאמֶר אֶם-נָא מָצָאתִי חֵן בְּעֵינֶיךָ ה', יִלְדָּנָא ה' בְּקִרְבְּנִי כִּי עַם-קָשֶׁה-עֵרָף הוּא וְסִלְחָת לַעֲוֹנֵינוּ וְלַחַטָּאתֵנוּ וְגִחְלַתֵנוּ

And (Moshe) said, "If I have gained Your favor, O my lord, pray, let my lord go in our midst, even though this is a stiffnecked people. Pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us for Your own!" (Shemot 34:9)

We finish off the parasha with Hashem dwelling in Moshe's tent – which is placed outside the camp. And so the question remains – will Hashem return to the camp or not?

Truth be told, at the beginning of Vayakhel, Moshe didn't seem to know the answer either. He instructs the materials to be collected and the Mishkan to be built, but there is no reassurance that the Shechina will actually return. It is as if Moshe says to the people, "let's build the Mishkan, and see what happens."

This seems to be the answer to our questions above. The entire detailed retelling of the construction is necessary because this was an entirely different construction. This is not the building with an assured outcome, as was the nature of the first description. In our parasha, where the idea is now actually built, the sense of uncertainty is palpable. The ultimate outcome of the effort of construction is unknown. It is only after everything is complete, and Hashem indeed fills the Mishkan with His presence that the people learn that their efforts have been accepted, and a full repair of the Eigel HaZahav has been achieved.

When we have caused another pain or hurt, or maybe we have betrayed someone's trust, the relationship can be repaired. However, this can only be done if we accept responsibility for the damage we have caused, and similarly accept the responsibility to repair it. Just as we initiated the rift, we must initiate the reconstruction. We won't always know how our efforts will be accepted, or even if they will be accepted at all. But the genuine extension of an offer, and display of regret, with a sincere desire to fix the action of the past, regardless of whether the gesture will be reciprocated, is the only way a true rectification can be achieved.

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

MY ISRAEL EXPERIENCE

Bnei Akiva UK runs two different gap year programmes (known collectively as Hachshara); Kivun and Torani. Our Shabbat Lashem correspondent caught up with Kivun participant, Ruby Kwartz (Shevet Hineini), to hear her thoughts on her Hachshara year so far.



What are you doing this year?

I'm doing Kivun. It's a co-ed gap year programme which focuses on learning about Israel and Judaism through hands-on experiences rather than through books. It promotes family style, independent living with a group of

like-minded people from around the world, including the UK, USA, Europe and Mexico. There are many different aspects of the programme throughout the year, such as Kibbutz, internships and volunteering. There is also the option to choose between Marva (an army experience), Magen David Adom or Sem/Yeshiva.

Why did you decide to do Kivun?

I chose Kivun because I wanted a varied gap year where I could have a large range of different experiences all around Israel. I was particularly interested in the internship elective as this is a really good opportunity to gain skills for the future in a field of interest. I have been involved in Bnei Akiva for a long time so I was certain that they would provide a strong balance between education and fun.

What does a typical day on Kivun look like?

The amazing thing about Kivun is that there is no typical day. Depending on what part of the programme you are on, your life can look completely different! One thing that is always consistent, whether you are living in a kibbutz, doing internships or volunteering with MDA is the family-feel of the group and the amazing range of talks and peulot that are distributed throughout the week

What has been a highlight so far?

The month we spent on Kibbutz Kfar Etzion. Working and living as part of the kibbutz was such an interesting insight into this unique path of Israeli life and was a welcome break from all of the busyness of the city. I found we really bonded as a group in this period and enjoyed all of the activities that the kibbutz had to offer, including working in the fields or gan, regular sports games and fun arts and crafts.

Have there been any challenges?

An amazing thing about Kivun is that it has such an international cohort. Whilst this allows us to share and learn about cultures from around the world, it also comes with its challenges as you have to navigate cultural differences in day to day life and make sure that everyone feels happy and comfortable.

What's an important lesson you have learnt so far?

As Kivun really promotes independence, I have certainly learnt more about being responsible for myself and others. Having to cook for ourselves, clean the shared apartment and go shopping in Israeli supermarkets has taught me so much about independent living and the importance of budgeting and sharing tasks fairly.

How do you think Kivun prepares people for life after their gap year?

Kivun prepares you for life after gap year in so many ways. Firstly, the independence and shared living that you experience on Kivun is good training for living as a student or in shared housing. We also learn so much about Israel, Zionism and Judaism which we can use to fight antisemitism and antizionism when we return home at the end of the year.

THE WEEK IN PICTURES



Bogrim enjoy themselves at the Kenigsbergs' for Melave Malka!



The bayit all ready for a clothes swap!

WHAT'S GOING ON?

- **Lishmah** is now open to **all Bogrot and Sixth-Formers!** Don't miss this amazing **Torah learning opportunity!** Sign up: tinyurl.com/Lishmah-BA

- Calling all male Bogrim! Join **Rav Joel** for a **Va'ad** on Tuesday evenings at 10:15!

- **London Student Bet Midrash** is taking place weekly on **Thursday evenings** for high school and university students. For more info about London or Birmingham SBM email chinuch@bauk.org

- **Tafkid applications** are now open for **Summer Machane!** Junior Tafkidim: bauk.org/junior-tafkid
Senior Tafkidim: bauk.org/senior-tafkid

- Calling all Bogrim! Sign up for **Shabbat Bogrim** at bauk.org/ShabbatBogrim

- Applications for **Israel Machane** and **Machane Yehudi** are now open! Apply now at bauk.org/israel

-Hatzlacha to **Leeds Sviva** for their **Shabbat Ha'irgun** this week!

- **Mazal Tov** to **Talia Kozielek** and **Josh Kenley** (both Shevet Ne'eman) on their **engagement!**

- **Mazal Tov** to **Felicity Ginsburg** and **Gideon Ezra** (both Shevet Avichai) on their **engagement!**

- **Mazal Tov** to **Anna Lawson** (Shevet Avichai) and **Benzion Joseph** on their **engagement!**

- 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 Tnuva.

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

Also happening in Manchester 03/03

LIMMUD MERCAZI

London

SUNDAY 6TH MARCH

8.30 - 10.30pm

JOIN US FOR OUR ANNUAL ACHDUT LEARNING PROGRAMME FOR HIGH SCHOOLERS (YEAR 10+) AND BOGRIM IN MEMORY OF THE MERCAZ HARAV MASSACRE ON THE 6TH OF MARCH 2008.

MALES: TORAS CHAIM FEMALES: NER YISRAEL



BNEI AKIVA ISRAEL PROGRAMMES

5782/2022

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Applications now open!



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