

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

SHABBAT LASHEM

THE VOICE OF BNEI AKIVA UK

PARASHAT SHEMOT
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DON'T STICK TO THE STATUS QUO ILAN WRESCHNER SHEVET TZION

וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֲלֵהּ בִּי ה' לֹא אִישׁ דְּבָרִים אֲנִי גַם מִתְמוּל גַּם מְשַׁלְשִׁם גַּם מֵאֵז דְּבָרָךְ אֶל־עַבְדְּךָ כִּי כְבֹד־פָּה וְכִבְד־לִשׁוֹן אֲנִי:
But Moshe said to Hashem, "Please, Hashem, I am not a man of words, not since yesterday, nor since the day before yesterday, nor since You first spoke to Your servant, I am heavy of mouth and heavy of speech". (Shemot 4:10)

Rashi teaches us that, at this point, Hashem had been speaking to Moshe for six days trying to convince him to be His leader (it'll be seven days total when Moshe finally agrees). So far, Hashem has performed several open miracles for Moshe, such as; the burning bush, turning Moshe's staff into a snake, turning it back into a staff, afflicting Moshe's hand with leprosy and healing it. Despite all this, Moshe still doesn't want to be the leader. His reasons until now were a simple 'Who am I?', 'the people will want to know who sent me' and 'the people won't believe me'. These were all categorically refuted by Hashem.

Moshe has one final reason why he isn't fit for the role. "Please, my Lord, I am not a man of words, not since yesterday, nor since the day before yesterday, nor since you first spoke to your servant, for I am heavy of mouth and heavy of speech". This is an odd thing to say. Did Moshe really think Hashem didn't already know he had a lisp before coming to him? At the very least, they've been speaking for the last six days! Clearly, a lisp wasn't significant enough to stop Hashem approaching Moshe or continuing to speak to Moshe. Furthermore, should a lisp even be an issue anyway? Both Winston Churchill and Thomas Jefferson had speech impediments, it certainly didn't inhibit their abilities to lead world superpowers! Churchill through a World War, Jefferson the formative years of a newly independent state. Lastly, Hashem had literally just healed him from the leprosy on his hand, why didn't Moshe have faith that Hashem could heal his lisp too?

The Daat Zekeinim explain that Moshe was really concerned for Hashem's honour, not his own. He felt it was improper for a messenger of Hashem to show up to the king's palace with a lisp. Pharaoh and all of his advisors were fluent in the seventy languages of the world, should the messenger of G-d arrive unable to even properly speak his own, Hashem would be subject to horrendous ridicule.

Whilst this interpretation shows Moshe in a positive light, Ramban at the end of his comment gives an alternative interpretation that appears to show Moshe as being punished for proclaiming that his lisp shouldn't allow him to lead the people. The punishment was Hashem not healing him, despite this being the original plan. He teaches that all Moshe had to do to be healed was put effort in and daven for it. However, the fact that he complained instead of praying meant Hashem didn't heal him. Based on the Daat Zekeinim above, Moshe had assumed Hashem wouldn't heal him because he hadn't been healed 'yesterday, or the day before yesterday, nor since he was originally afflicted with the lisp'. Surely, it must be that Moshe was just meant to have a lisp. However, as we can see in the Ramban, this was the wrong inference for Moshe to make.

There is an important message to take out of this encounter between Hashem and Moshe. You should never just accept the status quo, rather, make every effort to affect the situation you're in and improve it. Moshe had lived with his lisp for so long that the possibility of healing had slipped from his consciousness. There was a clear problem in his life but he became passive towards it. However, had he become active and davened, Ramban tells us it would have improved. So too with us, we all have our own ailments that we have stopped, or even never started, trying to change. Whether you're studying subjects that aren't interesting, growing disillusioned with the country you live in, or whatever else applies to you, never feel passive. Always try and change a negative situation to enable you to live your life to the full.

ILAN WAS A MADRICH ON SEENAI MACHANE 5781.

London	In: 15:55 Out: 17:10	Oxford	In: 15:56 Out: 17:14	Leeds	In: 15:47 Out: 17:09
Manchester	In: 15:54 Out: 17:12	Bristol	In: 16:03 Out: 17:20	Liverpool	In: 15:55 Out: 17:16
Cambridge	In: 15:48 Out: 17:07	Birmingham	In: 15:55 Out: 17:14	Jerusalem	In: 16:16 Out: 17:33

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

RAV JOEL KENIGSBERG | RAV SHALIACH



אלה שמות בני ישראל

"These are the names of the children of Israel."

Throughout the books of Chumash names are significant. A name represents an individual's

essence. It carries meaning. Often a name contains a description of a person's positive qualities, or the qualities which one's parents would hope to see come to fruition in that individual. But what are we to make of the negative names which appear in scripture?

Amongst the 12 tribes who came to Egypt, the children of Levi seem to have been given less than complimentary names. The youngest son was called Merari – from the root mar meaning bitter.

Another son was called Kehat – slightly harder to translate, but reminiscent of the phrase with which we answer the wicked son in the Haggadah – הקהה את שיניו – to blunt his teeth.

And the eldest was Gershon – coming from the root ger meaning a stranger or a foreigner.

Why are the messages of foreignness, bitterness and the inflicting of pain the ideas that Levi chose to immortalize in the names of his children?

An answer can be gleaned from the Tiferet Yehonatan, the commentary of Rav Yehonatan Eybschutz on the Chumash. Rav Eybschutz quotes the midrash that says that the tribe of Levi did not actually undergo slavery in Egypt. They were given an exemption from the backbreaking labour to which the other tribes were subjected. How did they earn this special status?

Rav Eybschutz suggests that Paroh gave the tribe of Levi an exemption because his astrologers had advised him that the future redeemer of the Jews would come from this tribe. In order to prevent this from happening, Paroh came up with a cunning plan - the tribe

of Levi wouldn't be slaves so that the future leader from amongst their ranks wouldn't care. He thought that if someone hadn't been enslaved in the first place then they would have no interest in rebelling against Paroh. He thought that someone who hadn't been affected personally wouldn't care for the suffering of others.

Of course we know that Paroh was wrong. One of the things that made Moshe Rabbeinu such a great leader was that he was able to recognize and share in the suffering of others although he himself could have been better off. He could quite easily have stayed in the palace but the Torah tells us that he did precisely the opposite – ויצא אל אחיו וירא בסבלותם.

Based on this explanation we can understand too why Levi chose the names that he did. The Shelah HaKadosh writes that he saw prophetically that his descendants would not be slaves like their brothers. But although they would be better off physically he wanted to ensure that they would always see themselves as one people. He gave them names that would force them to think twice. Gershon, Kehat and Merari – would force them to remember that things were bitter, that their brothers were strangers and that they were suffering. Those names would force them to remember that they too had a responsibility to try and relieve the suffering of others. They would make them remember that they were all in the same boat.

The contrast between Paroh and Moshe could not have been greater. Paroh was a tyrant who could only think and act for his own benefit. Moshe became a leader precisely because he cared for others. Let us always strive to emulate his example.

FOLLOW RAV JOEL ON FACEBOOK (RAV SHALIACH PAGE) AND ON TWITTER (@JOEL KENIGSBERG)

ISRAEL UPDATE: KIVUN 5781

TALI HURWITZ | SHEVET OROT



On Kivun so far this year we've done a massive range of things. We started out the year with two weeks on kibbutz Tirat Tzvi as lots of people had to quarantine, getting to know each other in the 50 degree heat. Then

we moved into our flats in Jerusalem where we spent the chagim during lockdown. After the lockdown period we did two weeks of agricultural volunteering, one with Hashomer Chadash going to different moshavim and farms that needed volunteers, and the other in Kfar Etzion, an agricultural village in the Gush, helping in the farms there. Then we spent a week doing Sar-el, which I loved, volunteering in army bases where we got to meet interesting people and learn more about the Israeli Army. After Sar-el we had an internship period of six weeks, mine was in The Israel Museum with one of the senior art curators and I got to experience behind the scenes work in the museum and learn more about art history. During our internships, we spent Wednesdays at Machon, learning about the Israel-Palestine conflict, as well as general Israeli politics, and going on tours of places such as Jerusalem and Jaffa learning about culture and history.



Last week, we arrived kibbutz Ein Hanatziv where we will be working for another month. Kivun participants work in the lul (hen houses), the refet (with the cows), in landscaping and in the fields. Currently I'm working in the lul, which is an interesting experience to say the least.

My time on Kivun so far has been amazing. I've loved experiencing and trying so many new things I wouldn't be able to in England, I never would have believed you last year if you told me I would be spending a week dragging buckets of soil around a field or working with chickens! I've definitely learnt a lot since I arrived here about living with other people (which is really just the importance of communication), responsibility and independence which you definitely do feel even though you're part of a group. Also I've really enjoyed the range of learning we get to do, listening to speakers, shiurim and in Machon. Coming on Kivun has meant I've met such amazing people, even though corona has reduced that number, and made friends for life. I'm so grateful to be spending this year in Israel, despite all the lockdowns and corona restrictions our programming has always continued and adjusted to the constantly changing restrictions and cancellations. I'm having the best year with such a great group of people, doing new and exciting things, and learning so much, I couldn't ask to be doing anything better.



TALI IS A PARTICIPANT ON KIVUN 5781.

WHAT'S GOING ON?

- Applications are open for **Summer Machane 5781!** Join us from **2nd-15th August** and enjoy a fantastic Bnei Akiva experience full of fun, friends and Ruach! Sign up today at bauk.org/camps or email camps@bauk.org for more information.

- **Svivot are continuing!** Look out for updates and virtual events from your local sviva or visit www.bauk.org/svivot.

- **WE NEED YOUR HELP!** Coronavirus has hit Bnei Akiva hard, costing us over £150,000. Our Mazkirut, Bogrim and Madrichim have been working tirelessly to put on a range of fantastic programming for our youth, from Machane Aviv in the Spring, to a celebration of Israel like no other on Yom Ha'atzmaut, a packed summer of programming for over 400 children, and Winter Machane. Please support our **Yad Achim Campaign**. Visit bauk.org/yad-achim for more information and to donate.

- Bnei Akiva friends of all ages around the world; on **17 January** you are invited to our **1st ever virtual Mifgash Olami**, celebrating our achievements as a movement, and planning our future. There will be live music, inspirational talks in various languages, interactive activities, exciting competitions and incredible prizes. One movement, one ideology, one family! Sign Up for the Mifgash Olami TODAY! <https://www.worldbneiakiva.org/mifgash-olami>

- Keep an eye out for **daily exciting virtual events** for all ages! **Stay Safe > Stay Inspired > Stay BA**

- Each week we will be releasing a **scavenger hunt and challenges** to complete with the whole family! The winners will be announced each Friday on our social media!

- Be sure to like our **Facebook page (Bnei Akiva UK)** and follow our **Instagram (bneiakivauk)** to stay informed of our online content!

- To receive weekly copies of **Shabbat Lashem**, sign up for our mailing list at bauk.org/contact.

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

SHABBAT SHALOM!!!

BNEI AKIVA 

Stay Safe > Stay Inspired > Stay BA

Looking for fun things to do over the next few weeks?
.....> **BA has got you covered!** <.....

Starting on Sunday, keep your eyes peeled for a variety of exciting Tochnit, Chugim and activities for the whole family!

Sunday 10th January

11am - 12pm
Open Zoom Room
It's the return of the Drop In Zoom Room! Come along at any point in the hour to say hello and see some smiles!

8pm - 9pm
Shvet Schmooze
Year 8 & Year 9
Join your year group for an evening filled with fun with your Madrichim from Winter Machane!

SCAVENGER HUNT
TAKE A PHOTO OF...

- 1) Selfie with a dog
- 2) Something that reminds you of Israel
- 3) Pose with a post box
- 4) On top of a wall
- 5) A pretty view
- 6) Do exactly what a sign says
- 7) Shadow art
- 8) A road name beginning with L

Points will be given for each photo and extra points for creativity! Please send us your submissions by messaging us on Facebook or Instagram!
Winners announced each Friday!

BNEI AKIVA 

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