

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

# SHABBAT LASHEM

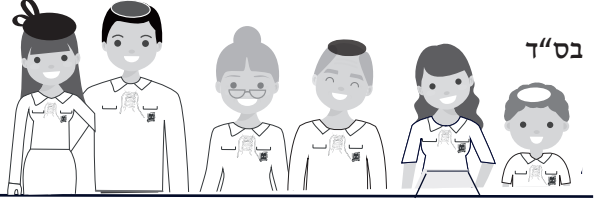
THE VOICE OF BNEI AKIVA UK

PARASHAT TOLDOT

2<sup>ND</sup> KISLEV 5782

5<sup>TH</sup> & 6<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2021

VOLUME 32 ISSUE 6



## AUTHENTIC COMMUNICATION

MATTY FISHER  
SHEVET HINEINI

After 20 years of not being able to conceive, Yitzchak and Rivka are blessed with twins. As they come out of the womb, Yaakov emerges clinging to the heel of Esav. It is said that there were many differences between the two, including their relationships with their parents. The Torah teaches that Yitzchak loved Esav whilst Rivka loved Yaakov. Why did Yitzchak love Esav? It says in this week's parasha:

וַיֹּאֲהֵב יִצְחָק אֶת־עֵשָׂו כִּי־צִד בָּפוּי וְרִבְקָה אֹהֶבֶת  
אֶת־יַעֲקֹב:

(בראשית כה, כח)

*Yitzchak loved Esav because he had a taste for game; but Rivka loved Yaakov.*

(Bereishit 25:28)

This could have many meanings as to why Yitzchak loved Esav. If we were to take it literally, the verse suggests that Yitzchak loved Esav's taste in food. One would find it hard to believe that this is the reason behind Yitzchak's love. The Zohar suggests that no one in the world honoured their father as Esav honoured Yitzchak. Surely, there must be more than just taste in food involved in the creating the loving father-son relationship?

Rashi explains that the phrase referring to Yitzchak, "who had a taste for wild game," actually refers to Esav and should be read, "there was hunting in his mouth." This suggests that Esav structured his conversations

with his father in a way that would result in his father perceiving him as more spiritual than he was. Yitzchak's priority was his spirituality, and his perception of Esav being deeply engaged with his spirituality would have meant a lot to him. Is it right for someone to put on a different persona just to look better in their father's eyes?

This leads to two strikingly different blessings for Yaakov and Esav. Whilst we are under the impression that Yitzchak loved Esav more, the divine spirit led him to giving Yaakov a more meaningful prayer. Yitzchak's blessing to Yaakov states, "and may G-d give you of the dew of the heavens and of the fatness of the earth." When he blesses Esav, the blessing says, "behold, of the fatness of the earth shall be your dwelling and of the dew of the heavens from above."

Esav's blessing does not mention the name of G-d. Yaakov was told through this blessing how the results of his own personal efforts are all a gift from G-d. This teaches us that G-d sees everything we do and helps us. Another difference between the blessings is that in Yaakov's blessing, "the dew of the heavens," precedes the blessing of, "the fatness of the earth," whereas in Esav's the phrases are flipped. Yaakov's descendants are therefore promised his faith but for Esav this concept is almost extinct. This teaches the importance of being yourself and not putting on a different persona just to make others happy. Esav did just that, and he ended up not getting the blessing he would have wanted. Always do what you think is right, don't do something just to satisfy others.

**MATTY WAS SCAN OF MILL HILL SVIVA  
5781**

## SHABBAT TIMES

London In 16:11 Out 17:18

Manchester In 16:23 Out 17:22

Cambridge In 16:04 Out 17:15

Oxford

Bristol

Birmingham

In 16:11 Out 17:22

In 16:18 Out 17:27

In 16:12 Out 17:23

Leeds

Liverpool

Jerusalem

In 16:06 Out 17:19

In 16:13 Out 17:26

In 16:11 Out 17:24

# Q&A WITH RABBANIT SARAH

**Q: I ONLY HAVE A LIMITED TIME TO LEARN TORAH EVERY WEEK. WHAT SHOULD I PRIORITISE?**



**A:** Great question! The first thing I would say is that by asking the question you're already on the right track. Chazal teach us that one of the questions a person is asked after they die is

**קבעת עתים לתורה?**

*Did you dedicate time to learning Torah?*

So before deciding what to learn, it's important to make the commitment (as you already have) to learn.

Now on to your question – what to prioritise?

Anyone who has walked into a library of Jewish texts, perused a course catalogue from a Sem/ Yeshiva or had a look at what is available to learn on Sefaria can quite rightly become overwhelmed by the sheer vastness of what there is on offer. We are incredibly lucky to live in a time when so much is available, and in so many ways more accessible, to so many. And yet, the paradoxical consequence of this is that someone who wants to learn may be baffled at where to start. Indeed, even with all the time in the world one might feel that they are hardly making a dent in the infinite amount of material out there.

We would do well however to remember the words of Pirkei Avot:

**לא עליך המלאכה לגמור ולא אתה בן חורין ליבטל נמנה**

*It is not upon you to finish the work, but neither are you free to desist from it*

There are many things that spring to mind as important topics to focus on. Perhaps you could focus on the area of middot and the way we treat others. The Torah begins by teaching us this very lesson with the stories of the Avot, in what Chazal called "Sefer Hayashar" – the book of the upright.

Another thought might be to focus on practical halacha - the innumerable laws that govern every aspect of our lives. Surely dedicating a few moments to the proper practice of these would be beneficial?

Ultimately, whether you choose either of these or something else, I would add that it is important

to learn something that not only develops your knowledge of a topic, but also one that you connect to and enjoy learning. Limmud Torah is far more than just an academic pursuit. For all Torah learning, one of the most fundamental questions is, "what impact is this having on me?"

Am I learning just to tick it off a to-do list? Or am I letting the Torah I learn affect me?

Rav Dessler explains that the Torah can be compared to both fire and water:

**מים-שהם מטהרים באופן חיצוני**

**ולאש שהיא מתיכה ומשנה את הכלי לגמרי**

*Water - as it has the potential to purify externally and to fire which melts and changes the vessel completely.*

Says Rav Dessler, true Limmud Torah must not be limited to that which has only an external and sometimes superficial impact on a person, but rather it should,

**מוכזת ומחדשת את כל פנימיותו**

*Refine and renew internally, leading them to come closer to Hashem and strengthening them in the mitzvot.*

The Gemara in Bava Metzia (85b) shows us the drastic consequences that can occur when this internalisation does not take place. When discussing why the Bet Hamikdash was destroyed, the Gemara says that this was because the Jews had forsaken the Torah. Rav

Yehuda explains that this refers to the failure to say Birkat Hatorah, the blessings before Torah learning. Rashi explains that they were showing that Torah learning wasn't important to them, that it wasn't an intrinsic part of their life, rather something external.

By only going through the motions, learning but not internalising the Torah, the ultimate destruction which distanced Bnei Yisrael from Hashem's presence took place. In our Torah learning we can try to rectify this, help to come closer to Hashem by not only learning but applying His Torah. Whatever you ultimately decide to learn, the main thing is to let that Torah become a part of you and have a genuine impact.

**IT IS IMPORTANT TO LEARN SOMETHING THAT NOT ONLY DEVELOPS YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF A TOPIC, BUT ALSO ONE THAT YOU CONNECT TO AND ENJOY LEARNING.**

**DO YOU HAVE A QUESTION FOR RABBANIT SARAH? SEND IT IN TO RABBANIT@BAUK.ORG.**

# MEET THE NIVCHARIM

**SOPHIE HARRIS** | NIVCHERET HANHALLAH



Hi, I'm Sophie Harris and I'm so excited to be a Nivcheret this year. I live in Finchley and went to Hasmo. I became involved with Bnei Akiva for the first time on my gap year through Midreshet Harova and Torani and have been loving it ever since - proving it's never too late to start! This year I am studying English Literature at Kings College London. I can be found swapping my novels by day for sefarim at night, or else zoom calling the Mazkirut in my spare time.

Becoming a Rosh of Kinloss Sviva and taking 'Winternet' Machane online was a great challenge and spin on joining the movement, and I gained so many amazing experiences. I am excited to swap computer screens for in-person events as we open up this year to amazing programs, social events and learning opportunities. I'm looking forward to making sure that everyone feels welcome and comfortable at Bnei Akiva, and to ensure that individual voices are heard.

## SNAPSHOT FROM THE CHOVERET

**The Choveret is the educational handbook that Bnei Akiva UK madrichim use to create their activities and discussions in Sviva each week. For Parashat Toldot, it looks at the meaning behind Tefilla.**

The English word to 'pray' comes from the Greek word meaning 'to beg' - stemming from the incorrect belief that 'prayer' is about begging to G-d and if we ask Him really nicely and grovel, He might 'change His mind' as we will have 'appeased' Him. This essentially is a rather pagan concept, viewing Hashem as a human-like Being who can be easily bribed.

However, the Hebrew word for 'prayer' - 'Tefilla' comes from the word 'hitpalet', meaning to 'meditate' or 'inwardly reflect.' This brings in the idea that we are nourishing our souls when we pray. More than anything else we are affecting ourselves. We can't affect what G-d does with His global plans that are beyond our comprehension. But when we pray, we have a positive effect on our character, even if we don't notice it. It is this improvement that builds our worthiness to merit what we pray for. We are not changing Hashem's mind - we are changing ourselves!



## THE WEEK IN PICTURES



Year 13 students and their parents took part in the Hachshara 'meet and greet' where they got the chance to speak to representatives from the different BA gap year programs



Rav Joel gave one of the shiurim to participants at the Lishmah Bogrot learning program



Tzevet members from multiple London Svivot completed a First-Aid training course

# WHAT'S GOING ON?

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

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

- **Student Bet Midrash** is taking place weekly on **Thursday evenings** for high school and university students. For more info email [chinuch@bauk.org](mailto:chinuch@bauk.org)

- **KADIMA is back** by popular demand! Open to all in **Years 7-10**, join us for a riveting **5-part course** infused with **fun, friends and inspiration!!** For more information contact Adi at [svivot@bauk.org](mailto:svivot@bauk.org)

- Does your child attend **Sviva**? Please make sure to **fill in a medical form** for them: [www.bauk.org/-svivot-medical-form](http://www.bauk.org/-svivot-medical-form)

- 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 (bneiakivauk)** to get regular updates with what is going on in the Tnuva.

- Visit [bauk.org/feedback](http://bauk.org/feedback) for contact details for all Mazkirut members and to leave any general feedback!



**BNEI AKIVA** UNITED KINGDOM 

bringing Back  
**KADIMA!**

Open to all in Years 7-10

Kadima is a novel 5-part course fusing social-action, hadracha (leadership), Israel engagement and chinuch (education), all whilst having fun with your shevet!

**Sign up now!!!**  
[www.bauk.org/kadima](http://www.bauk.org/kadima)

For more info email: [svivot@bauk.org](mailto:svivot@bauk.org)

**TAKING PLACE IN MANCHESTER & LONDON**




**BNEI AKIVA** UNITED KINGDOM 

**Does your child attend sviva?**

PLEASE MAKE SURE TO FILL IN A MEDICAL FORM FOR THEM.

[www.bauk.org/-svivot-medical-form/](http://www.bauk.org/-svivot-medical-form/)

For more information about your local sviva, please contact Adi at [svivot@bauk.org](mailto:svivot@bauk.org)



 **LISHMAH IS BACK!!!**

7:30 PM  
**Open Bet Midrash**

8:30PM  
**Choice of Chaburot**

Netivot Shalom  
OR  
Masechet Succah Bekiut

Join us on Tuesday evenings at the London Bayit and become part of this dynamic Makom Torah for post-high school women!

Sign up at [tinyurl.com/Lishmah-BA](http://tinyurl.com/Lishmah-BA)  
Contact [chinuch@bauk.org](mailto:chinuch@bauk.org) for more info!

**BNEI AKIVA** UNITED KINGDOM 

**TO SPONSOR AN EDITION OF SHABBAT LASHEM OR FOR ANY QUERIES PLEASE CONTACT DANIA AT [CHINUCH@BAUK.ORG](mailto:CHINUCH@BAUK.ORG)**