

זכור אתיום השבת לקדשו.  
ששת ימים תעבד ועשית כלמלאכתך,  
יוום השביעי שבת לה'

# SHABBAT LASHEM

THE VOICE OF BNEI AKIVA UK

PARASHAT VAYAKHEL

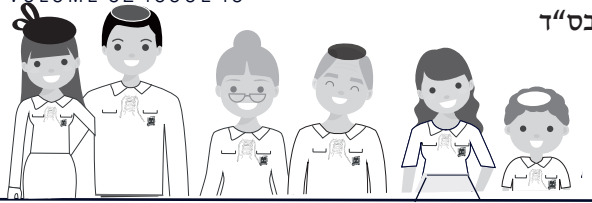
25<sup>TH</sup> ADAR I 5782

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VOLUME 32 ISSUE 18



בס"ד



## BUILDING A COMMUNITY

ZAC BENJAMIN  
SHEVET HASHCHAR

Vayakhel is the Torah's guidebook on how to build a community. It does so in a subtle way. The Torah uses a single verb, 'k-h-l,' to describe two very different activities. The first appears in last week's parasha at the beginning of the story of the Golden Calf:

וַיֵּרָא הָעָם כִּי־בָשַׁשׁ מֹשֶׁה לְרִדְתַּת מִן־הָהָר  
וַיִּקְהַל הָעָם עֲלֵ־אֶהָרֹן וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלָיו קוּם  
עֲשֵׂה־לָנוּ אֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר יִלְכוּ לִפְנֵינוּ כִּי־זָה  
מֹשֶׁה הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר הֶעֱלָנוּ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לֹא  
יִדְעָנוּ מַה־הִיָּה לּוֹ

When the people saw that Moshe was long delayed in coming down the mountain, they gathered (vayikahel) around Aharon and they said to him: Get up, make us gods to go before us. This man Moshe who brought us out of Egypt - we have no idea what has become of him. (Shemot 32:1)

The second time this verb is used is in the opening verse of this week's parasha:

וַיִּקְהַל מֹשֶׁה אֶת־כָּל־עֵדֹת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיֹּאמְרוּ  
אֲלֵהֶם אֵלֶּה הַדְּבָרִים אֲשֶׁר־צִוָּה ה' לַעֲשׂוֹת  
אִתְּכֶם

Moshe assembled (vayakhel) all the commu-

nity of Israel and said to them: these are the things the Lord has commanded you to do. (Shemot 35:1)

These sound similar. Both verbs could be translated as "gathered" or "assembled." However, there is a fundamental difference between them. The first gathering was leaderless; the second had a leader, Moshe. The first was a crowd and the second a community. In a crowd, individuals lose their individuality. A kind of collective mentality takes over, and people find themselves doing what they would never consider doing on their own.

We have seen many examples of positivity in community and teamwork; Bnei Akiva exemplifies this by taking individuals from a young age and building them up into a community. Another example is the building of the Mishkan. For the Mishkan to be built the whole of Bnei Yisrael helped to build it, whether it was bringing their own possessions, decorating, building, etc.

**ZAC WAS A CHANICH ON GIMMEL WINTER  
MACHANE 5782**

## SHABBAT TIMES

London	In 17:18 Out 18:26	Oxford	In 17:19 Out 18:30	Leeds	In 17:17 Out 18:31
Manchester	In 17:23 Out 18:34	Bristol	In 17:25 Out 18:36	Liverpool	In 17:24 Out 18:37
Cambridge	In 17:13 Out 18:24	Birmingham	In 17:21 Out 18:33	Jerusalem	In 16:58 Out 18:11

# CHINUCH WITH JOSH

## PARASHAT VAYAKHEL - AN INSIGHT INTO JEWISH CREATIVITY



In this week's parasha we get more details on the Mishkan and the creative process that took place in order to build it.

Author Elizabeth Gilbert, has some insights into the history of creativity and why it is

that now, most famous creative personalities are associated with pain and suffering. Singers like Jeff Buckley, composers like Beethoven, artists like Van Gough are examples of this.

She traces the origin of creativity back to ancient Rome and Greece. They used to believe that a spirit of creativity would rest upon the creative master, a bit like a creative house-elf that would live in the walls of the artist's studio. In Rome they called the spirit a "Damon" but in ancient Greece they would call it a "genius." No one could 'be a genius' you would simply 'have a genius.' This was a fantastic psychological construct to use for a creative master since if your work was really good, it wasn't entirely yours so your ego couldn't take full credit for it. And if your work was rubbish, you could simply blame it on the genius spirit!

Then the anthropocentric Renaissance Period came along and humans start believing that everything is about them - their work is their own. This is when people start being referred to as "geniuses" as opposed to "having a genius spirit." This is where creativity starts to stop being attributed to the spiritual world. According to Gilbert, this amount of pressure applied to the human psyche results in artists starting to become pained and losing their minds, so to speak, as their successes or their failures now define them.

What Elizabeth Gilbert suggests is that we revert back to our previous model of creativity and start attributing our creative processes to something from another realm. Poets like Ruth Stone and plenty of modern day jazz musicians do in fact describe their creative influences as coming from some indescribable part of their minds. Child prodigies describe the same thing.

Let us now examine Judaism's view on creativity. When Betzalel from the tribe of Yehuda is instructed to build the Mishkan, the Torah says that, "Hashem filled him with a spirit of G-d (Ruach Elokim) of Chachma, Binah and Da'at (wisdom understanding and inspiration)." The language is strange.

Rashi explains:

- 1) Chachma - wisdom - this is passive knowledge that he had learnt and memorised things from other people.
- 2) Binah - understanding - this refers to the fact that he was able to solve physical problems intellectually by himself.
- 3) Da'at - inspiration - this is the Ruach Hakodesh. Creative Divine inspiration.

With these three qualities Betzalel was able to build the Mishkan.

Rashi attributes creativity as coming from some divine source. In fact the "spirit of G-d" that Betzalel gets appears somewhere else in Chumash is very important.

"In the beginning, the spirit of G-d hovered over the face of the waters." The same spirit of G-d that inspired betzalel's artistic expression was the same spirit of G-d that was there in the beginning when Hashem created the world. Every time we are creative, we are becoming like G-d, we are mirroring G-d, just like water mirrors a reflection.

In fact the name "Betzalel" means, "in the shadow of G-d," because what he did with his life, his creative essence, was mirroring G-d's essence which is creativity.

In Judaism we don't attribute creativity to an elf living in the wall but we do attribute it to a higher source. So often when it comes to learning Torah, we focus on the passive (Chachma) and active (Binah) learning. But what about the creative learning? What about writing Divrei Torah for Shabbat Lashem! Expressing our creative essences through Torah is something we can do to truly be "betzal-el" in the image of G-d.

I'll finish off with a quote from Rav Kook. "I walk around with an overwhelming jealousy of the secular world. Why is it that creativity has almost completely ceased in the religious world? All given to the secular world?"

"True talents of artists emerge when they reach a state of consciousness that the spirit of G-d inspires their artistic expression. Rembrandt was one of them. They are then able to perceive the spiritual and physical nature of the universe."

*Josh is one of this year's Chinuch Workers. He is currently completing his MSc in Philosophy of Science at UCL whilst developing his superb video making skills on the side.*

# THE WEEK IN PICTURES



Chanichim enjoy their Motzei Shabbat Tochnit at Borehamwood Shabbat Ha'irgun!



The Shabbat Lashem editorial team prepares last week's issue to be sent out!

## 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 Vayakhel it discusses the development of good middot.**

*"Derech Eretz precedes Torah by 26 generations." (Vayikra Rabba 9:3)*

This midrash implies that before we received the Torah at Har Sinai there was something else – called Derech Eretz. Loosely it means 'ethical living.' The 613 mitzvot that we have spent the last 3 weeks of Sviva focusing on can only give us a moral framework within which to situate ourselves. But they don't give us everything. It's our responsibility to develop the ethical values and character traits that ensure the Torah can be followed in a meaningful way. If the mitzvot are the building blocks of Torah, Derech Eretz is the mortar that holds the bricks together.

The Gemara (Ta'anit 7a) tells us that Torah can be an elixir of life or a poison of death depending on how you learn it. Torah alone is not a guarantee of spiritual success. Torah and Derech Eretz on the other hand...

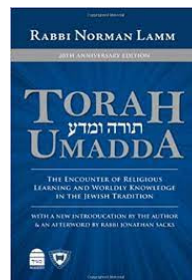
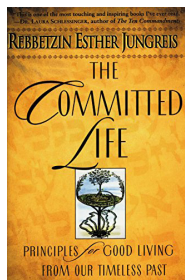
The Maharal of Prague in his commentary on Pirkei Avot (Derech Chaim) says that this is what Pirkei Avot is all about. The ethical lessons taught to us there by our sages are not necessarily "mitzvot in the Torah" but they are equally as important. The generation of the flood were still punished for ethical misconduct long before the Torah was given. This week, we're going to delve into the importance of working on ourselves, so the Torah we learn can do its job properly.

## CHINUCH WORKERS' TOP PICKS

Looking for some Shabbat afternoon reading? The Bnei Akiva Chinuch team recommend some of their favourite English Sefarim

Rebbeztin Esther Jungreis, *The Committed Life*

**Josh says:** Rebbeztin Esther Jungreis paints an inspiring picture of her life from her childhood in Hungary to her adult life founding "Hineini" in modern America. The stories are structured by theme - Shabbat, time, marriage, death, peace...etc. Definitely worth the read!



Rabbi Norman Lamm, *Torah Umadda*

**Dania says:** This is a must read for anyone looking to infuse their day to day life with a connection to Hashem, as well as gaining an insight into the world of Jewish philosophy in a high level yet accessible way.

# 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](http://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](mailto:chinuch@bauk.org)

- Are you a **female with experience leining Megillat Esther** or are an enthusiastic learner? We still have a few slots to fill for our **Women's Megillah reading** on Purim Morning! Contact [chinuch@bauk.org](mailto:chinuch@bauk.org) for more info!

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

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

- **Mazal Tov** to **Ronit Prais** (Shevet Avichai) on her engagement to **Yoni Spero!**

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

*Also happening in Manchester 03/03*

## LIMMUD MERCAZI

**SUNDAY 6TH MARCH** *London*

**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



*Also happening in London 06/03*

## LIMMUD MERCAZI

**THURSDAY 3RD MARCH** *Manchester*

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.

**7.45-8.45pm**      **8.00-9.00pm**

MALES: VINE STREET      FEMALES: THE BAYIT



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