

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

SHABBAT LASHEM

THE VOICE OF BNEI AKIVA UK

PARASHAT VAYEISHEV

26TH KISLEV 5781

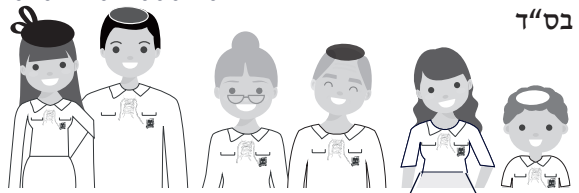
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**BNEI
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UNITED KINGDOM



בס"ד



This week's edition of Shabbat Lashem is dedicated to the theme of Human Rights in light of World Human Rights Day on Thursday.



THE IMPORTANCE OF BROTHERHOOD

RINA SHAYA
SHEVET MORASHA

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was declared by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948. The first of its 30 articles says, "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood".

Why specifically is "brotherhood" the chosen ideal? What exactly is it about brotherhood that we should aspire towards as a society?

So far, the parshiot of Bereishit have regaled us with story after story of failed brotherly relationships. Firstly, Hevel kills Kayin, Yishmael is deemed too dangerous an influence and is separated from Yitzchak, and Ya'akov has to escape Eisav after their relationship degrades as well.

"Brotherhood" continues to be a difficult subject in this week's Parsha, as feelings of jealousy towards Yosef culminate in the other brothers conspiring to kill him.

In perek 37 passuk 17, Yosef, seemingly unaware of his brothers' animosity, travels to find them. He is directed by a man who says ינסעו מזה: "they have journeyed from here", which Rashi expounds as meaning

they have journeyed away from the ideals of brotherhood. The Siftei Chachamim further explains Rashi's commentary. Saying that the brothers had "journeyed from here" was entirely superfluous to the man's directions. All Yosef wanted to know was where they were now. The use of מזה - "from this" - rather than "from here", shows that they had left the notion of brotherhood behind. This was a veiled warning for Yosef to avoid the dangers that lay ahead of him in a place where there was no brotherhood.

After Yosef's disastrous meeting with his brothers the Parsha spirals into a chaotic story of a broken family and a struggling society. There is slavery, inequality before the law, lack of access to justice, arbitrary detention and unfair trials. In fact, almost every declaration of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is infringed upon in some way in this week's Parsha.

This makes a profound statement about the fundamental importance of brotherhood. It is only when brotherhood exists at the family level that it can be amplified throughout society as a whole. Where there is a departure from brotherhood, as in this week's Parsha, we are doomed to an eventual loss of all the other tenets of a fair and just society. But by basing all our actions and relationships on a foundation of brotherhood we can build a world in which the fundamental needs of every human, for freedom, dignity and equality are met.

RINA WAS A MADRICHAN ON BET-BASE/BET-CHALUTZI MACHANE 5780.

London In: 15:36 Out: 16:50

Manchester In: 15:34 Out: 16:52

Cambridge In: 15:28 Out: 16:47

Oxford In: 15:36 Out: 16:54

Bristol In: 15:43 Out: 17:00

Birmingham In: 15:35 Out: 16:54

Leeds In: 15:26 Out: 16:48

Liverpool In: 15:34 Out: 16:55

Jerusalem In: 16:00 Out: 17:16

THE POWER OF AN INDIVIDUAL

RAV JOEL KENIGSBURG | RAV SHALIACH



וַיִּשְׁמַע רְאוּבֵן וַיִּצְלְהוּ מִיָּדָם
וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא נִכְנֹו נַפְשׁ: וַיֹּאמֶר
אֱלֹהִים רְאוּבֵן אֶל־תִּשְׁפְּכוּדָם
הַשְּׁלִיכוּ אֹתוֹ אֶל־הַבּוֹר הַזֶּה
אֲשֶׁר בַּמִּדְבָּר וַיֵּד אֶל־תִּשְׁלַחְרֹבוֹ
לְמַעַן הִצִּיל אֹתוֹ מִיָּדָם לְהַשְׁיִבוֹ
אֶל־אָבִיו:

"But when Reuven heard it, he tried to save him from them. He said, "Let us not take his life." And Reuven went on, "Shed no blood! Cast him into that pit out in the wilderness, but do not touch him yourselves"—intending to save him from them and restore him to his father. (Bereishit 37:21-22)

The episode of Yosef and his brothers is one of the most challenging and difficult to digest in all of sefer Bereishit. After the intense rivalry and competition between siblings in previous generations, the children of Yaakov seem to be no different as they ostensibly embark on a quest to kill their brother Yosef.

Much ink has been spilled to try and understand the brothers' rationale for their actions. According to many, their guiding motivation was far loftier than meets the eye. This is a complex story which cannot be fully grasped by a superficial reading. Nonetheless the verses make plain that they had conspired to kill Yosef and it was down to the actions of one person – Reuven – which saved his life. Ultimately things did not go according to Reuven's plan either. He had hoped he would be able to return Yosef to his father, but when he returned to the pit to rescue him he found that he was no longer there (having been sold into slavery).

The Midrash (Rut Rabbah 5:6) makes a remarkable statement about this episode:

שְׂאֵלוֹ הִיא רְאוּבֵן וַיִּדַע שֶׁהַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא מְכַתֵּיב עָלָיו
(בראשית לז, כא): וַיִּשְׁמַע רְאוּבֵן וַיִּצְלְהוּ מִיָּדָם, בְּכַתְּמוֹ
הִיא מוֹלִיכוֹ אֶצֶל אָבִיו.

"Now if Reuven had known that the Holy One, blessed be He would write about him "And Reuven heard it, and delivered him out of their hand (Genesis 37:21)" on his shoulder he would have brought him to his father."

Had Reuven known that all his actions were being recorded in the Torah – he would have done more. He would not have sufficed with merely convincing the brothers not to kill Yosef there and then, rather he would have picked him up and escorted him back to safety.

But what is the lesson of the Midrash? Is it teaching us that Reuven was an honour seeker? Is it teaching us that he would have done more in order to have good things written about him? Is it teaching us to seek glory and fame or expand our social media presence?

Clearly the idea goes much deeper than that. The emphasis behind "knowing that Hashem would write about him" lies not in the fact that other people would read and hear and learn of his actions – it lies in the fact that his actions made a difference, that they were worthy of being written down. Who else would be made aware of them is irrelevant. What is relevant is the fact that he underestimated his power to make a change. He underestimated the power of one individual to transform the life of another and to transform the course of history. He misunderstood that the actions he took (or failed to take) in that moment would have a longlasting impact far greater than he could imagine.

This is a mistake that so many of us can fall prey to so often. What we do really matters. How we act carries an impact far beyond ourselves. This week as we mark Human Rights Day let us remember the words attributed to Edmund Burke: "All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing". Wherever we find ourselves, let us remember that we can do something to fight for what is right, and to make the world around us that much brighter.

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

WHY JUDAISM DOESN'T FOCUS ON HUMAN RIGHTS

JOSH DANIEL | SHEVET AVICHAJ



An activity was run for madrichim last winter pre-camp in which they focused on “Maslow’s pyramid of needs” – a five tier model of human need in which needs in the lower tiers must be satisfied before moving

on to those higher up. Have a look through them and think about the following questions. Why do we use the word “needs” when referring to it? Could you also call it a “pyramid of rights”? Which of them do you have a responsibility to provide to those around you?

Over the next two weeks, we are witness to Yosef’s journey from teenager to prisoner to ruler. With each stage of his ascent comes more power to affect change in the world. The pairs of dreams we encounter along the way can act as bookmarks of sorts, of Yosef’s spiritual journey:

- 1) The dreams he tells to his brothers at the beginning (sheaves of corn, stars...etc)
- 2) The dreams the butcher and butler tell him.
- 3) The dreams Pharaoh tells him.

We can notice a pattern. In the first set, Yosef simply tells over the dreams to his brothers, without any interpretation. In the second set of dreams, when he is a prison officer, he offers interpretation. In the third set, not only does he interpret the dreams for Pharaoh but he suggests acting based on them and advises Pharaoh on how to prepare for the famine heading his way.

We can take this a step further. “*Recalling the dreams that he had dreamed about them, Joseph said to them, You are spies!*” (Bereishit 42:9). What is the connection between Yosef remembering his dreams and calling his brothers spies? Ramban answers that Yosef is recalling that in his original dreams, there were 11 stars and 11 sheaves of corn – but here there were only 10 brothers! Binyamin was all the way back in Canaan. So Yosef deliberately accuses them of being spies in order to get them to bring Binyamin to him and the meaning of his original dreams comes to fruition. Yosef is now not just a teller, interpreter and adviser of dreams but he is a fulfiller of them.

Yosef realises that destiny is not something that will passively come to fruition without him doing something about it. This point is emphasised in the way Hashem’s names appear throughout the story – with each set of “dream incidents”



Yosef mentions Hashem’s name with increasing frequency. At the end of this week’s parsha he emphasises to the butcher and the baker that “interpretation is in the hands of God.” Yosef sees God’s pre-determination of destiny as no contradiction towards his responsibility towards reality.

In Worldmask, Rabbi Tatz points out that “modern society is largely concerned with rights. In contrast the Torah never mentions rights, only obligations!” The truth is that rights don’t exist by themselves – every person’s right is another’s obligation. My human right to live is your obligation not to kill me. Thus the only difference is which we choose to focus on. Focusing on rights (or “needs”) focuses on what is owed to me. On the other hand, obligations focus on what I can do for others. Yes, chanchim all have a right to safety, love and actualisation of potential on camp – but the system will only work if madrichim realise their obligation to provide that.

As Yosef moves up the pyramid over the next two weeks from having to think about his survival to his own self actualisation – he realises that him having something automatically means an obligation to ensure others have that thing. He is able to ensure the survival of an entire country and the spiritual self-actualisation of his entire family. Our religion believes in the destiny of the world being perfected AND the responsibility to perfect the world.

As the Yosef story reaches its pinnacle this year, chanchim will be starting a Winter Camp like no other. So as Yosef moves up the pyramid over the next two weeks, let’s move up it with him. Not in terms of rights, but in terms of obligations. What can we be doing to ensure the survival, safety, belongingness, esteem and finally the spiritual self-actualisation of every chanch and eventually, the world around us?

JOSH WAS A MADRICH ON SUMMER MACHANE 5780 AND IS A NIVCAHR 5781.

WHAT'S GOING ON?

- **We are excited to bring you exciting virtual activities over Lockdown.** Keep an eye out for details on the Bnei Akiva social media pages.

- **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. Over the last nine months our Mazkirut and Bogrim 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, an now Winter Machane. Please support our **Yad Achim Campaign.** Visit bauk.org/yad-achim for more information and to donate.

- Applications are open for **Winter Machane 5781!** Join us from **21st-27th December** and enjoy a fantastic Bnei Akiva experience full of fun, friends and Ruach! **NEW THIS YEAR: Machane Seenai for Year 11!** Sign up today at bauk.org/camps or email camps@bauk.org for more information.

- Our **Kadima programme** is up and running! **Year 3-4 will delve into the stories of Tanach** in an experiential way through fun, games and tochniot! **Year 5-6 will engage with Israel** in an enjoyable, interactive and experiential way

surrounded (at a distance) by their friends! **Year 7-8 will enhance their Bar and Bat Mitzvah years with a community engagement theme!** **Year 9 will connect with Israel,** learning about the country's history, significance and culture! Sign up at bauk.org/kadima!

- Join us for an exciting Chanukkah themed **family learning programme this Motzei Shabbat 12th December at 6:30pm.** There's even a raffle for all those who attend! Sign up here for the Zoom link and to be entered into the draw <https://www.bauk.org/chanukkah-learning/>.

- **Mazal Tov to Josh Daniel and Sarah Murgraff** (Shevet Avichai) on their **engagement!**

- 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!!!

Winter Machane DAY CAMPS!
21st - 27th December

BRAND NEW BNEI AKIVA EXPERIENCE
KADIMA
WEEKENDS OF 7/11, 5/12, 23/1, 20/2, 20/3
FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO SIGN UP PLEASE VISIT WWW.BAUK.ORG/KADIMA

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Horim V'Yeladim
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Special Guided Learning for Years 7+

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6:30pm Motzei Shabbat 12th December

Barnet - Borehamwood - Brondesbury Park - Bushey - Cheadle - Chigwell - Edgware - Golders Green - Hale - Hendon - Kinloss - Leeds - Mill Hill - Muswell Hill - Radlett - Salford - South Hampstead - Woodside Park

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