

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

SHABBAT LASHEM

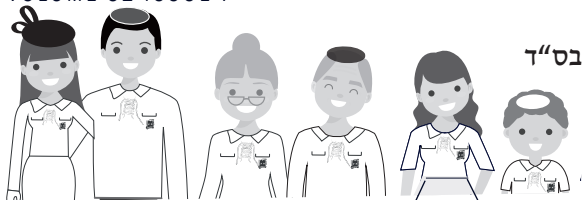
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בס"ד



ACQUIRING TORAH

ILAN WRESCHNER
SHEVET TZION

וַיְהִי לָהֶם וְהָיָה שְׁלָם מִצַּב אֲרָצָה
וְרָאִשׁוּ מִגִּיעַ הַשְּׁמַיְמָה וְהָיָה
מִלְאֲכֵי אֱלֹקִים עֲלֵיהֶם וַיֵּרְדִים בּוֹ:
וְהָיָה ה' נָצַב עֲלָיו וַיֹּאמֶר אֲנִי ה' אֱלֹקֵי אַבְרָהָם אָבִיד
וְאַלְקֵי יִצְחָק הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אֲתָה שׁוֹב עָלֶיהָ לְךָ אֶתְנַנֶּה
וְלִירְדָּךְ:

And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven, and behold the angels of G-d ascending and descending on it. And, behold, Hashem stood above it, and said, I am the Lord, G-d of Abraham your father, and the G-d of Yitzchak, the land on which you lie, to you will I give it, and to your seed.

(Bereishit 28:12,13)

The Midrash learns from the plurality of 'מלאכי' - 'angels' in this pasuk, that there were four angels. This is from a concept that plural conjugations of words can only mean either 'two' or 'many' unless otherwise specified. In this case we are taking it to mean two and there were both angels ascending and descending giving a total of four.

The Aruch LaNer teaches us the significance of these four angels. The gematria of 'סלם' - 'ladder' is 130 and, similarly, the gematria of 'סיני' - 'Sinai' is 130. He compares Yaakov's ladder to Har Sinai as just as Hashem stood over Bnei Yisrael at Har Sinai during Matan Torah, so too He was standing over the ladder at this time. The four angels represent the four attributes we must develop to acquire the Torah. They are: Emunah (belief the Torah is from the Creator, and that we're obligated to fulfil it), Ratzon (desire to fulfil the mitzvot), Ma'aseh (actually doing mitzvot) and Havanah (putting in time to learn the laws and reasons behind mitzvot).

The Aruch LaNer explains that Ma'aseh and Havanah are the manifestation of Na'aseh ve'Nishma. We mustn't lose focus and forget that the primary aspect

is the 'Na'aseh'. We must follow the halachot without questioning them. However, the 'Nishma' is listening to Hashem's words and analysing them. It is important to put effort into one's understanding of the commandments. Action first, understanding second, but second nonetheless.

The symbolism of the angels goes further. Just like we said two angels were ascending and two descending, two of these steps to acquiring the Torah are 'ascending' (going up from us to Hashem) and two descending (coming down from Hashem to us). The two ascending traits are Emunah and Ratzon. As the Gemara in Brachot (daf 33b) says, **כל בידי שמים**, *all is in the hands of Hashem, except for fear of Hashem*. Therefore, Emunah must come from us and rise to heaven.

Similarly, Hashem can't help us have the Ratzon to do the mitzvot as Ratzon is built into having free will. The two descending traits, therefore, are Ma'aseh and Havanah. Ma'aseh comes down to us from Hashem as He controls the yetzer hara. The Gemara in Succah, (daf 52b), states that without Hashem's help we would have no chance of defeating the yetzer hara's influence. Therefore, without Hashem we would struggle to fulfil the ma'asot properly. Mishlei 2:6 says, 'for Hashem grants wisdom, from His lips come knowledge and understanding.' This shows how Havanah also comes from above and is a descending trait. Moreover, we daven in the Amidah three times a day for Hashem to bestow us with Havanah in the paragraph of **אֲתָה חוֹנֵן**.

After the angels ascended and descended, pasuk 13 begins, 'and behold! Hashem was standing above it.' The Midrash tells us not to understand 'above it' to mean above the ladder, rather it means above Yaakov himself. So, what's the symbolism behind this? If you work hard and complete the four steps represented by the angels ascending and descending, you will warrant to have Hashem stand over you and deliver His Torah, just like Yaakov did.

**ILAN WAS A MADRICH ON SEENAI
WINTERNET MACHANE 5781**

SHABBAT TIMES

London In 16:00 Out 17:08

Manchester In 16:01 Out 17:12

Cambridge In 15:53 Out 17:06

Oxford

Bristol

Birmingham

In 16:00 Out 17:12

In 16:07 Out 17:18

In 16:00 Out 17:13

Leeds

Glasgow

Jerusalem

In 15:54 Out 17:09

In 15:56 Out 17:14

In 16:01 Out 17:15

PSYCHOLOGY AND TORAH WITH ELAD ESHEL

GROWING UP DOESN'T HAVE TO BE THIS HARD



The meeting between Yaakov and Rachel is dramatic, filled with emotion, and even a little shocking – he effortlessly removes the boulder covering the well, kisses her, and then burst into tears.

As the story continues, the drama does not let up – Yaakov is seemingly welcomed into the house of Lavan, Rachel's father. Yet, we see that he is tricked and deceived at every turn. Most surprising of all – Yaakov seems totally unperturbed by Lavan's treatment of him. Even when Lavan coaxes him into working for him, does not pay him a fair wage, and even after swapping his bride for another woman(!), Yaakov merely accepts his fate, and carries along in his attachment to Lavan and his clan. How can we understand these behaviours of Yaakov?

In his writings about adolescent development, Carl Jung, a foremost thinker in the psychodynamic school of psychology, and himself a close student of Freud, wrote extensively about a process he termed 'Individuation'. Later expanded upon by his students, this term describes the natural process of adolescents forming a personal identity by distancing themselves – physically, ideologically and otherwise – from their parents and communities. As a result of this, however, and especially if this separation occurs suddenly or unwillingly, the individual can feel bereft of support, alone and drifting in the world without identity or a clear path forward. This can result in an overwhelming desire to create new connections and to find a new community to belong to.

Unfortunately, whilst in the midst of the individuation process, before having formed a solid identity and true independence, rash decisions can be made as to which new community to attach to. In this way, even when experiencing maltreatment, exploitation, or even abuse, the urge to belong is so overpowering that all other considerations are left by the wayside and ignored.

Returning to an earlier period in the life of Yaakov (in last week's parasha), we can see that he undergoes a sudden severing of bonds with his family and community, in which he had been so deeply enmeshed. The first descriptions of him (especially in comparison with Esav) depict a timid recluse (**איש תם יושב**) (**אוהלים**), dependant on others to act (See 27:6-8 and 27:42-28:7), and even a bit of a 'mummy's boy' (**ורבקה יעקב את יעקב**). (**אוהבת את יעקב**). But everything changes after Esav finds out the blessings have been given to Yaakov.

Yaakov, forced to flee, now finds himself thrust out into the world, after little preparation and with no resources. Yaakov is left penniless and wandering to a foreign land (see Rashi 29:11), encouraged only by The Almighty's promise of protection and safe return to the Promised Land (28:13-15).

Let us now return to the questions with which we began. Yaakov, still profoundly shaken from his sudden separation from his mother and his home, yearns to find a new community in which to belong. And so, upon seeing Rachel, the first family member he has seen since his departure, he is simply overcome with emotion. He runs up to her and embraces her – and then immediately breaks down in tears.

He is then welcomed into the house of Lavan, who is described no less than 3 times in relation to Rivka, Yaakov's mother, in the space of 1 single pasuk (29:10). Yaakov has finally found his new family, a new community to fill the gaping hole left after his departure. It is no surprise then, that Yaakov again and again ignores the abuses by Lavan, his father-in-law and uncle, against him. It will take him until the end of the parasha – many years, wives and children later – until his identity and independence comes to fruition and he takes a stand against his maltreatment.

Individuation is a critical process that we all must undergo. But one can also choose to take a measured approach, avoid cutting off ties and burning bridges – behaviour that leads to desperation, which in turn leads to the rash formation of unhealthy relationships. Rather, by voluntarily setting off on our own, gradually but steadily, we can discover who we are – on our own terms.

Lastly, many of us find ourselves in the opposite role, the role of the parent or family member who must decide how to react to the teenage rebellion. We hold in our hands the fate of their individuation experience. So let us take Hashem's promise to Yaakov, just as he set out on his journey, as our guide:

"Remember, I am with you: I will protect you wherever you go and will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you."

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

MEET THE NIVCHARIM

DANIEL ROSS | NIVCHAR HANHALLAH



Hiya, I'm Daniel, one of the Nivcharim for this year. I'm from Woodside Park, London, and went to JFS before learning in Yeshivat Hakotel and participating in Hachsharat Torani. I'm currently in my second year studying European Politics at King's College London. I was very involved in Woodside Park Sviva, and have been a Chanich and Madrich on various Machanot, as well as having the honour of being Chinuch Worker 5781.

This year I'm particularly focused on helping Adi and the rest of the Mazkirut ensure our Svivot are as good as they can possibly be, as well as making sure that as a Tnuva, Bnei Akiva is warm and welcoming.

In my spare time, I can be found drinking coffee, making WhatsApp stickers, obsessing over Rav Rimon's Sefarim, and occasionally at Powerleague.

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 Vayeitzei, it looks at Yaakov's challenge in exile.

Yaakov Avinu spends the entire duration of Parashat Vayeitzei outside of Eretz Yisrael. He works for Lavan for 20 years, becomes very rich, marries Lavan's daughters Leah and Rachel, and has eleven sons and one daughter. When he returns to Eretz Yisrael he makes the following reflection (Bereshit 32:5):

עַם לְבוֹן גִּרְתִּי וְאָחַר עַד עֵתָהּ

I have sojourned with Lavan and I have survived until now

Rashi comments that Yaakov's use of the word גִּרְתִּי is an allusion to the 613, מִצְוֹת Mitzvot, which he managed to keep in spite of the constant challenges placed in his way by living for two decades in the house of Lavan.

In the sense that the actions of our Avot are a sign for future generations, Yaakov's time spent with Lavan could be viewed as the blueprint for the Jew in exile. Throughout our history we have found ourselves in many places where our hosts have not always made us feel welcome, and thus observance of Mitzvot has become even more difficult than normal.

THE WEEK IN PICTURES



Northern Shaliach, Elad Eshel, gives a Chabura to students at Leeds SBM



Representatives of Bnei Akiva UK speak to year 13 students at the Yeshiva and Sem Fair

WHAT'S GOING ON?

- Calling all Bogrot in London! **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

- Calling all male Bogrim in London! Join **Rav Joel** for a **weekly 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, Birmingham or Leeds SBM email chinuch@bauk.org

- **Whitefield Sviva** is starting this week! Mazal Tov to new **Roshim Talia Chinn and Mia Dardick!**

- Join the Northern Shlichim, **Lani and Elad Eshel** for a **Musical Havdallah** at the Manchester Bayit this Motzei Shabbat at 5:20pm, followed by **soup and snacks!**

- Hatzlacha to **Edgware Sviva** for their **Family Friday Night** this week!

- **KADIMA is back** by popular demand in Manchester and London! 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

- Does your child attend **Sviva**? Please make sure to **fill in a medical form** for them: 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 for contact details for all Mazkirut members and to leave any



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For more info email: svivot@bauk.org

TAKING PLACE IN MANCHESTER LONDON



LISHMAH IS BACK!!!

7:30 PM
Open Bet Midrash

8:30 PM
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
Contact chinuch@bauk.org for more info!

BNEI AKIVA 

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