

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

SHABBAT LASHEM

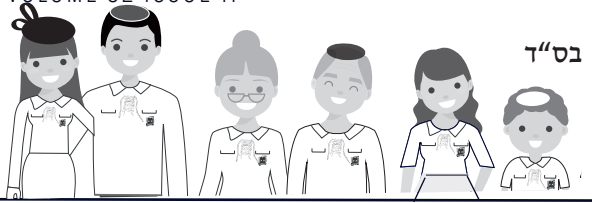
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PARASHAT VAYIGASH

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SHEPHERDS IN GOSHEN

CHAIM STANTON
SHEVET OROT

We start off the beginning of Vayigash with Yosef revealing his identity to his brothers. The brothers go back to Israel to get Yisrael, their father, to bring to Yosef. After being reunited Yosef takes some of the brothers to be introduced to Paroh.

Before he does so he coaches them saying:

וְהִיאָה כִּי יִקְרָא לְכֶם פְּרִיעָה וְאָמַר מַה מְעוֹשֵׂיכֶם:
וְאָמַרְתֶּם אֲנָשִׁי מִקְנֵה הָיוּ עַבְדֵיךָ מִנְעוּרֵינוּ וְעַד-עֵתָה גַם
אֲנַחְנוּ גַם-אֲבֹתֵינוּ בְעֵבוֹר תִּשְׁבוּ בְאֶרֶץ גֹּשֶׁן כִּי-תוֹעֲבָב
מוֹצְרִים כַּלְיֵרֶה צֶאֱן:

So when Paroh summons you and asks, "What is your occupation? You shall answer, 'Your servants have been breeders of livestock from the start until now, both we and our fathers'—so that you may stay in the region of Goshen. For all shepherds are abhorrent to Egyptians. (Bereishit 46:33 - 4)

This begs some questions. Why is Yosef so eager to coach the brothers into going into the land of Goshen? Why does he want them to become shepherds instead of wealthy ministers (seeing as they would have had plenty of protexia)?

As for our first question Midrash Hagadol suggests 3 answers.

- (1) He wanted the Jews to live separately so they would not assimilate.
- (2) Goshen was a suitable place for shepherding.
- (3) Goshen was theirs.

Yosef was concerned that Pharaoh would consider his brothers as intelligent as he was and think of them as intelligent assets to Egypt so would try to split them up. Yosef feared that this would lead to them assimilating. In addition shepherds were seen as despicable by the Egyptians. Which would presumably make it harder for them

to assimilate into Egyptian society.

It was suitable. Seeing as it was in the Nile Delta it would have provided good pasture grounds for their flocks. It was their property.

As per the Pirkei D'Rabbi Eliezer, the Jews were given the Land of Goshen when Paroh gave gifts to Sarai in Lech Lecha. When Paroh realises that Sarai was Avram's sister he gave her many gifts, which the descendants of Sarai would have still owned.

We do however know that Jews owned pieces of land within Goshen at one point because of the pasuk in Lech Lecha that says.

וַיֵּשֶׁב יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם בְּאֶרֶץ גֹּשֶׁן וַיֵּאָחֲזוּ בָהּ וַיַּרְבוּ וַיִּרְבּוּ
קְנָאֵד:

And Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt in the land of Goshen, and they acquired property in it, and they were prolific and multiplied greatly.

Now let's address the second question about why they became shepherds.

Earlier on in the parasha (46:3) we are told that the Israelites will become a great nation. It is worth noting that many of our Jewish leaders from Tanach were shepherds. Avraham, Yitzchak, Moshe, Yaakov, Rachel and David Hamelech.

Rav Kook mentions in Orot Hakodesh, "One must have extended solitude and hitbodedut (self-reflective prayer), examining ideas, deepening thoughts, and expanding the mind, until finally the soul will truly reveal itself, unveiling some of the splendor of its brilliant inner light."

Perhaps that was what developed our leaders. It is interesting to note that within Israeli society this type of practice has had a resurgence as the geula nears. Perhaps we are getting closer to our pre-codified tefillah times.

CHAIM WAS A MADRICH ON BET BASE MACHANE 5781

SHABBAT TIMES

London	In 15:36 Out 16:50	Oxford	In 15:36 Out 16:54	Leeds	In 15:27 Out 16:48
Manchester	In 15:34 Out 16:52	Bristol	In 15:43 Out 17:00	Liverpool	In 15:35 Out 16:55
Cambridge	In 15:29 Out 16:47	Birmingham	In 15:35 Out 16:54	Glasgow	In 15:25 Out 16:51
Alton	In 15:32 Out 16:52	Cardiff	In 15:45 Out 17:02	Jerusalem	In 16:00 Out 17:16

PSYCHOLOGY AND TORAH WITH ELAD ESHEL

THE OLD AND THE NEW



Parashat Vayigash represents a watershed moment in the Bereishit story. In this parasha we read of the descent of the family of Yaakov to Egypt, and the departure from the Land of Canaan. We, the reader, can already see the

coming slavery and hardship. Sefer Shemot is on the horizon. The transition is not merely geographic, but also gets to the heart of the narrative in the Torah which is going to progress, as we see the beginnings of the transition between Yaakov's family to a nation - to Bnei Yisrael.

Yaakov is the Av that manages to straddle this divide. He is a forefather, significant as an individual, but at the same time he is the beginning of the nation. All his children remain in the fold, whilst he continues in the way of his fathers and mothers. This is why he is our namesake, why we are named "Bnei Yisrael." He was promised the land of Canaan, and yet now we see him depart the land, never to return in his lifetime.

Yaakov presents as an interesting character for another reason. As opposed to all other figures in Tanach who are given a new name (Avraham, Sarah, Yehoshua), Yaakov, even though he has received a new name, that being Yisrael, is still referred to just as often by his old name. Why is this so? Moreover, it is difficult to draw a distinction between when he is called Yaakov and when Yisrael. This is heightened in several instances where the name is switched within a couple of pesukim, or even within the same pasuk itself. For example, in Perek 37 the first pasuk reads, 'now Yaakov was settled in the land where his father had sojourned,' but in passuk 3 we find, 'now Israel loved Yosef best of all his sons.' Later in Chapter 42 Yaakov sends his sons to purchase food for the family in Canaan, and yet, 'Bnei Yisrael came to purchase rations...' just a few pesukim later. These are but a few examples of this phenomenon.

So what is going on? Let us take a closer look at each of the names. The name Yisrael is given as a reflection of future processes yet to occur: "For you have struggled (sarita) with the Divine and with men and prevailed," "nations shall descend from you" (Ber. 35:11), as well as constantly reminding us of Bnei Yisrael. Whereas Yaakov refers to his previous identity, before maturing

and having a family: "...holding on to the heel (eikev) of Esav," "he has deceived (vaye'akveini) me twice." Yaakov is a character that links between two worlds, bridging the gap between Avraham and Yitzchak and 'Bnei Yisrael.' So the choice of name used in each instance connects to each of these aspects of his character - Yaakov being drawn back to the past, to the way things were, and Yisrael driving towards the future and the progression of destiny of the nation.

Looking back at the examples above, we can now understand the 'flip-flopping:' Yaakov settles the land of his father, whilst Yisrael favouring Yosef, elevating him above his brothers, is directed at the future leadership of the family. Yaakov acts to maintain the family's presence in Canaan - but the brothers enter Egypt, initiating the family's descent later on, are described as Bnei Yisrael.

The identity struggles of Yaakov teach us that part of life is straddling the divide between past and present. When do we cling to what is familiar, what is known? To what extent are we loyal to tradition, family and history? When is it time to chart a new path, to engage with the new reality as it forms - to create and innovate? When do we let go of the past to make way for the future, and when does that risk cutting us off from who we are, from what we are, and from everything that has shaped us, and has been important to us up until this point?

Yaakov's successful navigation of these dilemmas, through intertwining between past and future enlightens us to the secret of a healthy life. Our goal is to create a smooth transition, as much as possible between our history and our future, and this is on several levels. First, as an individual. Second as a family, connecting between generations. Thirdly, connecting to history and people. These are three of the key factors that make up our identity, and to be able to link between the roots that they provide, the source of our cultural substructure, and the traditions of our home, to our current existence in a meaningful way, and to pass those elements on to the next generation - that is the key to the identity of Bnei Yisrael.

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.

THE WEEK IN PICTURES



Madrichim and Chanichim enjoy lighting the Chanukiah at Edward Sviva



Parents, Madrichim and Chanichim had a great time at the Salford Sviva Family Friday Night. The Bayit was decorated with posters for the occasion!



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 Vayigash, it looks at learning Torah in order to teach it.

“The one who learns in order to teach will be enabled both to learn and to teach. But the one who learns in order to practice will be enabled to learn, to teach, to observe, and to practice.” (Pirkei Avot 4:6)

According to the Rambam, teaching is fundamental to the Mitzvah of learning Torah (although others disagree). This is because when you have to teach someone else you are forced to clarify the material for yourself first. This is basically what mad meetings are all about! Only after we’ve immersed ourselves in and fully understood the Chomer can we possibly attempt to pass it on to our Chanichim, (we should be learning and growing just as much as they will be!).

If one were just to learn and not teach, the chain would stop there. That individual might know a massive amount of Torah, but if they don’t pass it on to the next generation it will be taken to the grave with them and lost to the rest of the world.

Remember that song by Scouting for Girls called Elvis isn’t dead? Now we all know that Elvis IS dead, but their reasoning for him still being alive is “cos I heard him on the radio.” The same thing applies for Torah. It may have given to us thousands of years ago, but it lives through us and our study of it.

But it goes further than this. To really teach Torah we have to be an example to the Chanichim and LIVE (or “practice,” in the words of Pirkei Avot) Torah. It’s up to us, at Sviva, to help create the next link in the 3,000-year-old chain of tradition (...not much has changed but they live under water...). We have to show them our enthusiasm for Torah and Mitzvot, or else all we are doing is passing on 3000-year-old bits of irrelevant information.

QUESTIONS ON THE PARASHA

- 1) How did Yosef reveal himself to his brothers?
- 2) How does Paroh react to Yosef’s brothers coming to Egypt?
- 3) What present does Yosef give to Binyamin?
- 4) According to Rashi, who was Leah’s 33rd offspring?

Send in your answers to Chinuch@bauk.org for a chance to be featured in future issues of Shabbat Lashem!

WHAT'S GOING ON?

- **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

- BA is running **Lunch and Learns** in **JFS, Yavneh College, Immanuel College** and **Hasmonean** (both sites)! To find out more contact Josh at chinuch@bauk.org

- **Mazal tov** to **Oscar Koslover** (Shevet Eitan) and **Esther Leah Cohen** on their engagement!

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

- **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

- 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 Tnua.

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

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Wednesday 12:55-1:55pm
Sign Up Now!
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