

דבר אל-בני ישראל, ואמרת אליהם,  
כי תבואו אל-הארץ, אשר אני נתן לכם  
ושבתה הארץ, שבת לה'

# SHABBAT LASHEM

THE VOICE OF BNEI AKIVA UK

PARASHAT YITRO

20<sup>TH</sup> SHEVAT 5779

25<sup>TH</sup> & 26<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2019



Please continue to daven for the refuah and strength of Yeshaya Noson ben Shira Gittel



## CONNECTING TO SHABBAT

JOE NYMAN  
SHEVET EITAN

Every Jew experiences difficulties in their life regarding keeping Shabbat. Whether it be

the actual halachot of Shabbat or connecting through spiritual means, in Parashat Yitro, we come across the first time in which the Jewish people are given the ten commandments. We are told in the 4th commandment, "remember the Shabbat day to sanctify it, six days you may work and perform all labour, but the seventh is a Shabbat to God" (Shemot 20:8-10).

Rav Avi Wiesenfeld, Rosh Yeshiva of Beis Dovid, explores this idea of having a connection to Shabbat by bringing a question from the Malbim who says, why do we have Shabbat when we were creating the world? The simple answer is that Hashem created the world in six days and then rested. We see that when defining a Jew as being "frum" usually the first question asked is if they keep Shabbat, and therefore Rav Wiesenfeld defines Shabbat as a source for Emunah.

Rav Pincus recalls Rav Wolbe zt'l saying that many Yeshiva students who daven and learn properly every day, find it difficult to have a meaningful Shabbat that they feel connected to, he said that they do not enjoy Shabbat to its fullest. Rav Pincus adds that Shabbat is seen to be our marriage with Hashem. In a marriage there are disagreements but this does not mean one has to split up because of this, the couple stays together because they love each other. A story from Rav Wiesenfeld can explain this concept. A non-Jew once walked into a Yeshiva and saw lots of the students in the study hall and could not understand why

all the Yeshiva students were arguing with each other. So he asked the cleaner, who was also a non-Jew, as to what is going on? So the cleaner replied, "I have been working here for 30 years and still do not understand but what I can say is that when they leave that hall, they never lay hands on each other."

This comparison with marriage and the Yeshiva study hall leads on to a more significant point that the connection with Hashem is there but we as Jewish people fall, we do negative commandments such as speaking badly about people, but Shabbat is the glue. This is because Shabbat is the chance for us to spend 25 hours with the creator of the world. However, says Rabbi Pincus, if we as Jewish people do not know what and why and how we are supposed to be keeping Shabbat, we will never fully appreciate its greatness. We will end up as confused as the man who stumbled into the yeshiva, experiencing Shabbat only as good food and rest and wake up for Havdalah and not fully appreciate its beauty. We have to learn how to understand it truly.

One can understand its greatness through the words of the Netivot Shalom, who said that like Avraham our forefather, who was inherently holy, so is Shabbat. We need to tap into this to understand our deeply rooted connection with Shabbat and that it sets us up to have Emunah in Hashem. As the Malbim writes, Hashem is the creator of the world and Shabbat is the day when we remember this and pass this message on to the next generation. If we do not tap into our roots as Jewish people and start learning and understand the reasons for keeping Shabbat and its ability for us to show our Emunah in Hashem, then how are we supposed to pass it on to the next generation.

**JOE WAS A MADRICH ON ISRAEL MACHANE  
5778**

London In: 16:19 Out: 17:29  
Manchester In: 16:20 Out: 17:30  
Cambridge In: 16:16 Out: 17:26

Oxford In: 16:23 Out: 17:32  
Bristol In: 16:29 Out: 17:39  
Birmingham In: 16:22 Out: 17:32

Leeds In: 16:16 Out: 17:26  
Liverpool In: 16:23 Out: 17:33  
Jerusalem In: 16:26 Out: 17:57

# SELF-REFLECTION IN THE MODERN DAY: "REAL" LIFE



RAV AHARON HERSKOVITZ | RAV SHALIACH

*This piece is the seventh in a series on self-reflection in the modern day, based on the book "Musar for Moderns" by Rav Elyakim Krumbein.*

Last week, we discussed the question of "normalcy", and whether the desired state a person should find themselves in is one of tension or inner peace.

I want to discuss a bit more about the idea of normalcy, and how it can sometimes be one that inhibits growth. I opened last week with the idea that we may sometimes feel that growth occurs only in certain stages of our lives; the rest of the time we are meant to be "normal" and not do too much to disrupt the status quo.

There is a quote from the Screwtape Letters that I'd like to share that has had a profound impact on my thoughts in this area:

*Never having been a human you don't realise how enslaved they are to the pressure of the ordinary. I once had a patient, a sound atheist, who used to read in the British Museum. One day, as he sat reading, I saw a train of thought in his mind beginning to go the wrong way. The Enemy, of course, was at his elbow in a moment. Before I knew where I was, I saw my twenty years' work beginning to totter...I struck instantly at the part of the man which I had best under my control and suggested that it was just about time he had some lunch...and by the time I had added "Much better come back after lunch and go into it with a fresh mind", he was already halfway to the door. Once he was in the street, the battle was won. I showed him a newsboy shouting the midday paper and a No. 73 bus going past, and before he reached the bottom of the steps I had got into him an unalterable conviction that, **whatever odd ideas might come into a man's head when he was shut up alone with his books, a healthy dose of "real life" (by which he meant the bus and the newsboy) was enough to show him that all "that sort of thing" just couldn't be true.***

The idea expressed in the above is that we have a tendency to adopt a false dichotomy:

**GROWTH WILL BE  
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to think that there is "real life" that consists of all sorts of regular, every day, mundane things that we encounter in our daily lives, and then there is "something else": ideas related to spirituality, religious growth, Torah, belief etc. Falling into this trap is especially risky for those who aim to lead a complex life composed of sometimes competing values. For example, if a Modern Orthodox Jew views his or her outlook on life as "aiming to connect to Torah and mitzvot, **but also** living in the modern world", then inevitably that sets up a life destined to be lived in two separate realms: the spiritual and the mundane. To justify focusing on mundane matters, they will be labelled "normal", "real" and the like. Once that tension exists, there will be times when one aims to grow and times when one wants to "be normal."

I want to propose that although normalcy is a value (as expanded upon in previous articles), we will be able to much better connect to a growth-oriented outlook if instead of setting up our value systems as a dichotomy, we view them as an attempt at reaching an integrated whole. In other words, instead of saying that "I aim to connect to Torah and mitzvot **but also** to live in the modern world," we can say "I aim to connect to Torah and mitzvot, and **as part of that** view my involvement in the modern world as a fulfilment of that."

Instead of setting up a life lived in two domains, this statement anchors us in the service of Hashem. What motivates us, what is foremost in our minds, is leading a life dedicated to that service. Involvement in the modern world has value and importance, but it must be done **as part of a certain framework** as a means to the overarching goal of service of Hashem, and not as a side mission to "just be normal." This aim to lead an integrated life does not deny that there will be conflicts between Torah observance and the modern world; indeed, they will inevitably come up quite frequently! But I do hope that it can lead to some more clarity regarding how such challenges must be faced: what is our starting point and to what do we strive.

**TO ASK ANY QUESTIONS PLEASE FEEL FREE TO  
EMAIL RAV AHARON AT RAV@BAUK.ORG**

# DVAR HALACHA - WEEKLY QUESTION WITH RAV AHARON



**Question:** What should a Kohen do if they are in shul and the gabbai declares that there is no Kohen and calls someone else for the first aliyah instead?

**Answer:** The Mishna in Gittin (59a-59b) has a list of halachot that were instituted מפני

דרכי שלום, to preserve peace. The first example the Mishna states is "A Kohen reads first, and after him a Levi, and after him a Yisrael, for Darkei Shalom." The Gemara there (59b) points out that this halacha, does not seem to be a Rabbinic institution, but rather should be a fulfillment of the Torah level commandment of "you shall sanctify him" (Vayikra 21:8). This pasuk demands that a Kohen is given the opportunity always to go first: to speak first, to make the first beracha, and to take the best portion first (this is the source for the common practice to ask a Kohen to lead a Zimun). Abaye explains that the Mishna's explanation is coming to say that even though **in general** a Kohen may forego his honour (for example, by wanting to give the kavod to his Rav or someone greater), in regards to the order of aliyot he may **not** do so, as this would lead to fighting. In other words, in a shul setting if the Kohen is given the possibility to forego his honour, inevitably people will fight about when he should or should not, and who should get the aliyah instead. A prescient warning regarding shul politics that is still relevant today!

What happens if there is a Kohen, but the person calling others up did not notice?

This question comes up both in this context, as well as in the situation that a Yisrael (or Levi) is called up and begins making the beracha, and

only then does a Kohen arrive at the shul. The Rishonim (Mahari Abuhav in the name of the Orchoy Chayim and Rif, Rashba) write that in such a situation the Kohen should go up if the actual Birchot HaTorah have not been said. In other words, if Barchu has been said, the Kohen should still go up; once the beracha has begun, he should not. This halacha is the same in a case when a Kohen is being called up for the second aliyah since it had not been noticed that the Levi was in shul. The Shulchan Aruch paskens both halachot (OC 135:6-7).

What if it will cause embarrassment?

Interestingly, it does not seem that embarrassment of the gabbai was brought up as an issue. There is a discussion of the matter relating to the person who was called up already: the Shulchan Aruch paskens (ibid.) that he should remain on the bima and get a later aliyah, with the reason being that we want to prevent him from being embarrassed (Magen Avraham and others).

Although there is value in not making a fuss over one's status, it would seem that one could in a fairly sensitive way point out their presence and Kohen/Levi status. It is not just their kavod, but a concern comes up in these issues regarding a possible פגם, a concern that one's status is being called into question. This concern would be an issue that would affect not only them but their family. It is true however that Rishonim mention that if people will assume that the gabbai made a mistake, there is less concern for this issue.

**Practically speaking:** If it is possible to let the gabbai know sensitively, one should do so (with the person who's been called up getting a subsequent aliyah). If the beracha itself has already begun, it would be best to let the gabbai know afterwards for future reference.

## A TASTE FROM ISRAEL



**MATTI RADIVAN**  
SHEVET NE'EMAN

After spending the first 18 years of my life growing up in Manchester, I have now made the jump over to Israel and have lived here now for the past 2 years - I spent the first

year and a half studying in Yeshivat Hakotel in Jerusalem, and now I am a tank driver in the Artillery Corps of the IDF.

Throughout Yeshiva, I learnt a tremendous amount, all thanks to my Rabbeim and chavrutot who always helped me stay on target to reach my potential, but it would be dishonest to say that my learning stopped with my enlisting. Albeit, regarding opening sefarim and reading

Torah, my amount per day has drastically reduced, however, I've learnt so much about Am Yisrael, Israeli culture and, of course, my spoken Hebrew has improved significantly.

One of my favourite moments from my service so far would have to be the ceremony at the end of training where we received our "warrior" badges. We were very fortunate to have our ceremony at the Kotel, and some of my Rabbeim and fellow talmidim from Yeshiva came down to celebrate with us. Not only that, but my adopted family also managed to make it, and it was truly a moment of unification between the three parts of myself - my home life, my religious life and my physical life. And all together we celebrated something integral to Judaism - defending Am Yisrael and Eretz Yisrael.

**MATTI WAS A MADRICH ON BET CHALUTZI MACHANE 5777**

# WHAT'S GOING ON?

- Summer Machane applications are NOW OPEN for Ari, Aleph, Aleph Chalutz, Bet Base, and Gimmel. For more information please email Rafi H at camps@bauk.org

- Student Bet Midrash continues every Thursday night at Kinloss! Come along for a great opportunity to hear amazing speakers, have some great food and learn with friends or madrichim! Please feel free to email Eli at chinuch@bauk.org for more details or if you have any questions

- Israel Machane applications are NOW OPEN. For more information or a brochure please contact Chana at israel@bauk.org

- Svivot are continuing all over the country. To get involved (or to even start a sviva) please email Rafi C at svivot@bauk.org

- 2019 marks the 80th birthday of BAUK!! Keep an eye out for events in your local community!

- SHEVET AVICHAH SHABBATON ON THE 22nd/23rd February! For more information please see the poster below!



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# FOOD FOR THOUGHT

1. What is the significance of the word ויחד [Yitro] rejoiced, being like the word חידודים, prickles? (See Or HaChaim and Rashi on 18:9)

2. Why did Hashem identify himself as "your God, Who has taken you out of the land of Egypt" as opposed to being the Creator of the Universe? (See Kuzari and R' Bachya on 20:2)

3. Why does it say כי נשתתים, for six days [Hashem made the heavens and the earth], as opposed to בששת ימים, in six days...? (See Or HaChaim on 20:11)

## SHABBAT SHALOM!!!

IN CELEBRATION OF BNEI AKIVA'S 80th BIRTHDAY

בן שמנים לגבורה  
 (Patrie Avichai 5:21)

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