

Coming Up...

Full details of all our events are available on our Facebook page, or call the Bayit on 0208 209 1319 to speak to one of the team.

- Summer Machane is coming! 29th July – 12th August. Brochures and applications are now out. For more information, contact yehuda@bauk.org.
- Tafkid applications for Summer Machane are out now! Visit our website, bauk.org to apply!
- If you are in years 10-12, come to iHistory – an interactive and exciting new programme to expand your knowledge of Israel's history – every Thursday at 18:30 at the London Bayit. Contact yehuda@bauk.org for more information
- Applications for our Aliyah Pilot Trip (14th – 21st June) are coming in. Apply ASAP! For details, contact Rav Ari at rav@bauk.org

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ושבתה הארץ Shabbat Lashem 'שבת לה

Tzav, Shabbat Hagadol

Korbanot and Tefillah: It's the Thought that Counts

Max Sherrard

In this week's parasha, we read about the how's, what's and when's of Korbanot - sacrifices. Korbanot were the key way in which the Jewish people worshipped Hashem at the time of the Temple. It is estimated by the Rambam that roughly 100 of the 613 mitzvot concern Korbanot. However, we read in the corresponding Haftara (which we do not read this year, in favour of the Haftara for Shabbat Hagadol) that Jeremiah had prophesied that Hashem no longer wanted the Jewish people's Korbanot, in his days. This is a clear conflict of ideas within the Tanach. First we are asked to sacrifice animals and great detail is given to the description and explanation of the process, and later we are told to no longer fulfil the previous commandment.

The reason for the somewhat contradictory argument is to teach us that our intentions always matter. The Jewish people were able to fulfil the mitzvah without any positive thinking or changing of the heart as shown in Hosea 14:1-2, Joel 2:13, Micah 6:6-8. Even though the details and accurate following of customs are important, we see that without the correct intentions, we are not able to fulfil the mitzvah wholly.

The second response is that sacrifices were losing meaning and becoming impersonal.

'Be not grieved, my son. There is another equally meritorious way of gaining ritual atonement, even though the Temple is destroyed. We can still gain ritual atonement through deeds of loving-kindness. For it is written "Loving-kindness I desire, not sacrifice." (Hosea 6:6) [Midrash Avot D'Rabbi Nathan 4:5].

Prayer, and more so personal prayer, was a way in which we could meaningfully get closer to Hashem. During Temple times, people were unable to connect with the Korbanot as the Kohanim would pray for the people. Now the people could pray for themselves, leading to a more meaningful experience. To paraphrase Spider-Man 'with great power comes great responsibility... and with great responsibility comes great meaning'[the last bit was me].

Intention matters and a Mitzvah without total conviction and clarity of thought is not a fulfilled Mitzvah. Of course we must follow the Halacha stringently, But when acting without a turn of heart or moral resolve, we are faced with an incomplete or empty Mitzvah.

Max Sherrard is in Shevet Hagevurah and was a Madrich on H course Machane 5775

Celebrating a simcha? A special birthday coming up? Include Bnei Akiva in your celebration by sponsoring Shabbat Lashem! For details email shabbat@bauk.org

Editor's Corner

Shalom!

Shabbat Shalom to over 100 of our chaverim in Mill Hill, who are having their Shabbat Halgun!

Our Hachshara participants in Israel are enjoying a stimulating pre-Pesach educational seminar and are looking forward to an incredible Pesach together!

London, Leeds and Birmingham Limmud continue to thrive, with over 80 people per week coming together to learn Torah across the country!

Shabbat Shalom!

THIS WEEK'S SHABBAT TIMES

	🕒	🕒
London	18:11	19:14
Manchester	18:19	19:26
Birmingham	18:14	19:25
Cambridge	18:07	19:18
Leeds	18:12	19:24
Liverpool	18:19	19:32
Jerusalem	18:15	19:32

To receive Shabbat Lashem by email every Friday, or for sponsorship details, send an email to shabbat@bauk.org



THE COMMUNITY IS INVITED
TO JOIN BNEI AKIVA FOR THE ANNUAL

Yom Hazikaron Commemoration and Yom Ha'atzmaut Celebration

IN THE PRESENCE OF CHIEF RABBI EPHRAIM MIRVIS,
A SENIOR ISRAELI DIGNITARY AND OTHER COMMUNAL LEADERS

SERVICE LED BY CHAZZAN JONNY TURGEL

Wednesday 22 April 2015
3 Iyar 5775

Finchley Synagogue
Kinloss Gardens, London N3 3DU


Doors open 6:30 pm Service begins 7:00 pm

Followed by music, food and dancing for Bnei Akiva members
and a cocktail reception in aid of Bachad – Friends of Bnei Akiva


For tickets to the reception or more information
please email events@bachad.org



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Insight and Inspiration on the Parasha

Rav Ari Faust, Rabbinical Shaliach

The Challenge of Chametz

Over the holiday of Pesach we are not to own any *chametz* – leaven (Shemot 12:19, 13:7). In addition, we are meant to dispose of all *chametz* in our possession by midday on Erev Pesach (12:15). In order to ensure we fulfil our obligation when it comes to these *mitzvot* we embark on a gruelling process of cleaning, searching, selling and burning our *chametz* in the days and weeks leading up to the holiday. But is all this toil really necessary?

In addition to all these acts there is one last step we take in the extermination of our *chametz*, *Bitul Chametz* – the declaration of nullification of the leaven. This is performed by reciting the nullification text (traditionally in Aramaic and the spoken language) after the search and repeated after the burning of *chametz*. Opinions vary regarding the function of *Bitul Chametz* (Talmud Pesachim 4b): According to Tosfaot, we declare our *chametz* to be *hefker* – ownerless – thus circumventing the prohibition against owning *chametz*. According to Rashi though, we are actually nullifying the *chametz*, resolving that it will be considered insignificant in our eyes as the dust of the earth. (Practically, we incorporate both opinions in the text we recite.) Many medieval codifiers suggest that this is the main requirement in the quest to absolving ourselves of *chametz*, and the search-and-destroy are mere precautionary measures (Tur Orach Chayim 431). This means that all we must do in order to avoid the prohibition of owning *chametz* on Pesach is to resolve in our hearts that our *chametz* is insignificant to us “as the dust of the earth”.

This notion is truly bizarre: It implies that we could be surrounded by our own delicious breads, cakes and other scrumptious leaven products, and still not violate the prohibition against owning *chametz* just by believing it all to be dust. Moreover, immediately upon the termination of Pesach we could enjoy all these products! How can this possibly be? How can our perception have any effect on the clear reality that we own leaven products?! (I stress that this is all theoretical, as practically we do not rely solely on the nullification. The Rabbis have added many safeguards and extensions to ensure we are not in possession of *chametz* on Pesach, and one should observe all the steps established by the Rabbis in the Talmud which are the accepted norm today.)

An additional question: consuming *Chametz* on Pesach is considered more severe than eating any other food we are not meant to eat; it is the only food prohibition that is not only against eating but also against possessing and the only prohibited food whose violation is punishable by *karet*. If *chametz* is indeed so evil, why are we permitted to enjoy it all year round?

By understanding the message of *chametz* we can appreciate the explanation of both these questions. *Chametz* represents a way of relating to the physical world: Leaven products are made of the same ingredients as Matzah only have been given time to rise, therefore they become inflated, embellished and over-emphasized. Matzah is the basic, *chametz* is the excess. Thus, *chametz* represents over-indulgence in the physical pleasures of the world by not sustaining oneself merely on the bare necessities needed to survive. Judaism has a unique approach that teaches we are not only allowed to enjoy the pleasures of the world, but we are meant to do so; we are encouraged to enjoy the physical pleasures beyond the minimal requirements to sustain ourselves as this can enhance our relationship to Hashem. This is taught very potently by in the Talmud Yerushalmi (Kiddushin 4:12):

“Rabbi Chizkiya said in the name of Rav, ‘Man is destined to be held accounted for and judged on all that his eyes saw and he didn’t eat.’”

The challenge of living such a lifestyle is to keep ourselves in check, making sure we don’t confuse our wants with our needs – the *chametz* for the Matzah – and become addicted to our luxuries and pleasures. It is as such – by enjoying the excess pleasures of this world without being addicted to them – that we can appreciate a healthy relationship with the world, one which enhances our relationship with Hashem.

The exercise of *bitul chametz* – and indeed the prohibition against *chametz* on Pesach – serves as a reminder to us that all the pleasures of the world are not significant within themselves; objectively they are no more than the “dust of the earth”. For a week we rid ourselves of the excess, thus ensuring we do not become addicted to it. It is as such we can maintain a healthy relationship with the physical world and all its pleasures, and thus truly be free.

Rav Ari Faust is in Shevet Yechiam, and is Shaliach for Bnei Akiva and the Jewish Agency for Israel



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All the Land that You See

Looking at and learning about every corner of our Land

Ashkelon

Rafi Dover

Ashkelon is a large town in South-West Israel, 13 kilometres north of the border with the Gaza Strip. It has a population of approximately 120,000.

An interesting point to note about Ashkelon is that the first time it was ever settled by Jews in large numbers was in 1948, when an abandoned Arab village, called al-Majdal was populated by new immigrants to the fledgling State of Israel.

Before this, it was a port of varying significance throughout history, starting as a centre for meat processing during the Neolithic period, before becoming a Philistine powerhouse during Biblical times, even being mentioned in the books of Zechariah and Yirmiyah, both times as a place where G-d's fury against the nations that have wronged Israel will be meted out.

Ashkelon was also a key battleground during the Crusades; as a result of its important location near to the Egyptian border, in 1191 Saladin saw fit to destroy the city. To prevent the Crusaders building up a strategic base close to Egypt, but the Christians rebuilt and it remained an important town in the Crusader states until it was recaptured by the Egyptians in 1247. It stayed in Egyptian, and then Ottoman hands, eventually being renamed al-Majdal, until 1948.

The word shallot comes from the Latin *alium ascalonium* - literally Ashkelon onion.

Rafi Dover is in Shevet Hagevurah and was a Madrich on Haroeh Machane 5774