



תנועת בני אקיבא
BNEI AKIVA UK

SMILING FOR SUMMER MACHANE!

29TH JULY - 12TH AUGUST

BROCHURES OUT NOW!!

CONTACT YEHUDA@BAUK.ORG FOR MORE INFO

Mystery Melacha

Kobi Weiner
Kobi Weiner is in Shevet Ne'eman and is Sgan of Finchley Bnei Akiva

There are 39 activities that we are not allowed to do on Shabbat. These are called "Melachot" or "Acts of work". Can you guess which Melacha this riddle is about? Log onto the Bnei Akiva Youtube channel after Shabbat to see if you're right!

This sacred prohibition is basic intuition. To find the definition, my friend, is your mission



To make yourself a shelter, more than any other, is the bread and butter of this Melacha

If on Machane you went, and on Shabbat put up your tent, it would be Shabbat badly spent. What a waste of this event!



Finally I'll say, we ask thrice per day, Jerusalem we pray, for this action to happen soon (today?!)

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תנועת בני אקיבא
BNEI AKIVA UK

ושבתה הארץ Shabbat Lashem 'שבת לה

אחרי קדושים – Acharei Kedoshim

The Power of Rabbi Akiva

Datya Kanterovitz

In this weeks' double parasha, we read the famous verse:

"Love your neighbor as you would love yourself" (Vayikra 19:18)

This pasuk is famously associated with Rabbi Akiva, who called it "a great principle of the Torah" (Nedarim 9:4).

At this time of year we observe Sefirat HaOmer, and mourn the passing of Rabbi Akiva's 24 000 students. One opinion is that the students died because they did not keep this very mitzvah. Therefore, how can this mitzvah be attributed to Rabbi Akiva? Imagine how this reflected on him; if the head of a Yeshiva today lost almost all of his students, would he start again? Most would just give up.

However, in Yevamos 62b it states,

"When R' Akiva's students died and the world was desolate, he got up... and started again"

This illustrates Rabbi Akiva's resilience. This attribute of Rabbi Akiva is reflected throughout the Talmud especially in Makkot 24a: several Tanaaim were walking near the decimated site of the Holy of Holies and saw a fox on it. They all began to cry, except Rabbi Akiva who began to laugh, saying that if a prophecy of destruction came true then the prophecy of redemption would. Rabbi Akiva always saw the positive.

Still, why during part of the Omer do we mourn the death of these students till today? The answer is that we mourn today for the massive amount of Torah that was lost. These people were Rabbi Akiva's students. Imagine the amount of Torah they knew. Now envisage all that is gone, all that we do not know today.

Nevertheless, we must remember that even within darkness there is always light. We start again following national setbacks. This lesson is especially poignant in the past two weeks. We started with Yom Hashoah - remembering the darkness of the Holocaust, and we move onto Yom Hazikaron, looking at the light emerging and end with Yom Ha'atzmaut, where we are starting a state again after yearning for two thousand years.

Datya Kanterovitz is in Shevet Lehava and was on Hachsharat Torani in Midreshet Harova

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!

Our madrichim from Salford spent last Shabbat in Liverpool, participating in the annual "Shabbat Across the Mersey" Shabbaton, providing educational activities, ruach and Divrei Torah to the community!

Bnei Akiva celebrated Yom Ha'atzmaut in style, hosting inspiring services in London and Manchester, running activities in seven schools and a BBQ for bogrim. Check out our photos and videos from Yom Ha'atzmaut on Facebook and Youtube.

Shabbat Shalom!

THIS WEEK'S SHABBAT TIMES

		☾
London	20:09	21:19
Manchester	20:23	21:39
Birmingham	20:15	21:35
Cambridge	20:07	21:27
Leeds	19:30	21:36
Liverpool	20:23	21:45
Jerusalem	18:39	19:58

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



Insight and Inspiration on the Parasha

Rav Ari Faust, Rabbinical Shaliach

Evolution... Controversial?!

In 1859, Charles Darwin published "On the Origin of Species" which outlined his theory of evolution. While there had been evolution theories dating back to antiquity, Darwin's theory propelled evolution to being the mainstream belief regarding the origin of life.

Needless to say, the theory of evolution rocked the theological foundations of Judaism, which believes steadfastly in the creation of the world as described in the first two chapters of the Torah. Rabbi Moshe Feinstein, for example, rules unequivocally that not only is Darwin's theory of evolution to be considered heresy, but it is even forbidden to use a textbook which includes mention of it (IG" M YD 3:73).

Rabbi Avraham Yitzchak Kook took a revolutionary approach towards the theory of evolution, and just a few decades after the release of the "Origin of Species" wrote that evolution "is true to the secrets of the Kabbalah; more so than any other philosophical theory" (Orot Hakodesh vol. 2 pg. 555). Furthermore, Rav Kook suggests that:

"Evolution – which suggests the principal of development and increment – has always been the source of optimism in the world. For how can one despair when we see that all existence is evolving and improving?"

This understanding fits within a more far-reaching *weltanschauung* espoused by Rav Kook regarding the purpose of creation (pg. 548):

"The purpose of existence ... as it is revealed to us, is a great plan for an eternal ascent and increment, that if there were not a reality of 'the small' and of 'lacking' there could only be greatness and completion but not growth; there could never be a consistent drive for increased blessing."

Our world is the realization of Hashem's will that there is growth and improvement; we are here in order to embody the property of perfection that is not absolute, but rather a dynamic. Thus, according to Rav Kook, our world is an eternal evolutionary journey of imperfection striving to reach perfection. Our world is, so to speak, so imperfect because that provides the most perfect scenario for us to be able to grow, ascend and improve.

This is a very profound idea which bears a remarkable lesson regarding our interaction with reality: We are not meant to reap the benefits of the physical world, rather we are meant to create them. We will only truly be able to enjoy life when we are involved in the process of improving it. The imperfections we see in the world are the perfect opportunities for us to truly be happy and enjoy life by being participants in its dynamic perfection.

In the first of this week's double-*parasha*, we are told (Vayikra 18:3):

"After the doings of the land of Egypt, wherein you dwelt ... and after the doings of the land of Canaan, where I bring you, shall you not do ..."

Rashi extrapolates that by singling out Egypt and Canaan, the Torah wants to teach that these are the most despicable of all cultures and the most terrible of all civilisations. It is fascinating that the destiny of Am Yisrael is so deeply intertwined with the most despicable and corrupt of all lands and cultures – Egypt and Canaan. We are forged as a nation in Egypt, and we are destined to receive Canaan as inheritance. It is also interesting that throughout the Torah, the Land of Israel is only known as the Land of Canaan.

Perhaps the lesson to be learned is that we do not inherit the Land of Israel – a utopian oasis of physical beauty, or a beacon of spiritual light – but the Land of Canaan; and we must, through our own intervention, reveal its full potential and transform it into the utopia it is foreordained to be. The Land of Israel is praised as being a land "flowing with milk and honey", both of which are not enjoyed instantly, but rather only after undergoing a toilsome process. Our nation is set against the backdrop of the most immoral and corrupt cultures because it is our eternal charge not to be Godly, but to *become* it.

Rav Kook (Olat Ra'aya, vol. 2 pg. 6) teaches that while there is much to improve in our nation, this does not deny that our essence is anything but truly good and holy. While we look at the State of Israel and frown at all that it is not (yet), we mustn't forget to take a step back and marvel at its very existence – not to mention its incredible achievements in only a few decades. With this perspective of bewilderment and celebration, we can resolve to continue guiding its evolution – and with it that of the whole world – forward to the final and complete redemption.

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

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.

- On Yom Yerushalayim, Sunday 17th May, Bnei Akiva is a partner in events at Alei Tzion shul for bogrim, and Borehamwood & Elstree United shul and Mizrachi UK for chanichim and madrichim. We look forward to seeing you there!
- We are part of Mizrachi UK's special Yom Yerushalayim concert with Jewish music star Yonatan Razel on Sunday 17th May! Contact one of the team on 02082091319 for more information
- We are proud to be holding an Aliyah Pilot Trip on 14th-21st June 2015 for Bogrim. For full information, contact Rav Ari at rav@bauk.org

Olim Profile – Catching up with our Bogrim who have made Aliyah

Baruch Baigel



What was your involvement in BAUK?

I was a madrich at Edgware Yeshurun sviva for many years, and was Rosh Machane (my favourites were Alef Chalutzim and H-Course). I served as Chinuch Worker in 2005.

What inspired you to make Aliyah?

I had to find a country where people could pronounce my name and Israel seemed the obvious choice!

Rav Kook spoke of Aliyah as more than just an ascent; for him it was also part of Teshuva - Return. My great grandfather and namesake Rav Baruch Azulay was born into a well-established Yeushalmi family in the early 1900s. In the 1920s he left what was then the British Mandate of Palestine to make a living as a Rabbi in the UK. Whilst he lived and worked in the UK, his heart remained in the east, in Jerusalem. Although I never met him, I have always felt a natural affinity to my great grandfather. For me, making Aliyah was coming home, returning to my roots (well it was a choice between Dublin and Jerusalem, and the options for kosher food were better in Jerusalem).

I am constantly moved by the ongoing miracle that is the State of Israel. I am moved when I see my kids playing in the streets of Jerusalem, fulfilling the dreams of Zecharia Hanavi. I am moved when I look out of the window at work at a built up city of Tel Aviv, a bustling metropolis and home to some of the world's leading companies, where one hundred years ago there was just sand. I am moved when I go to a the local voting booth in Netanya on election day, queueing with fellow Olim from Russia, Ethiopia, France, the US, South America, to exercise my democratic right to vote for a sovereign Jewish government, something my ancestors in 19th Century Jerusalem could only have dreamed of doing. I am moved when my fully bi-lingual son interrupts a conversation I was trying to have with an Israeli neighbour saying "Daddy, it's about time you learnt how to speak Hebrew".

What are you doing in Israel nowadays?

I work as an international lawyer at Asserson Law Offices, Israel's largest English law firm. My work involves representing Israeli clients, very often world leaders in their respective fields, in front of international tribunals. Assersons offers a new way to make Aliyah – continuing to practise English law at the highest level from our offices in Tel Aviv.

Do you have one piece of advice for those of us in Bnei Akiva UK?

When Mashiach comes, the price of ElAl tickets will go through the roof – come early to avoid the rush. Remember that two year plans soon become five year plans which soon become retirement plans. We are waiting to welcome you.

Baruch Baigel is in Shevet Hatkuma and made Aliyah in 5768