

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.
- We are excited to be bringing the unique Bnei Akiva atmosphere to communities in the coming Shabbatot, holding an uplifting seuda shlishit and learning with our bogrim. Mill Hill shul on 27th June. To find out more, contact rav@bauk.org
- Applications for key roles in svivot for 5776 are open online! To be part of the lifeblood of Bnei Akiva across the country, visit www.bauk.org
- The Bnei Akiva 5-A-Side Football Tournament is nearly here! 5th July at Powerleage, Mill Hill. To enter a team, or for more information, contact adam@bauk.org



Connect with Bnei Akiva, and download our app, at www.bauk.org

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תנועת בני עקיבא
BNEI AKIVA UK

ושבתה הארץ Shabbat Lashem 'שבת לה' Shelach שלה

The Costs of Conformity

Jake Berger

In the 1960s, social psychology pioneer Solomon Asch ran a series of studies that tested whether group pressure can change people's opinions, even if this would go against obvious facts. Participants in the experiments had to judge the length of a line after the line had been shown to a series of other people, all of who had selected the incorrect answer. Asch found that a considerable number of participants followed the majority, giving same answer as the other people in the group, despite it being clearly wrong.

However, was the first case study of conformity was much earlier in history? This week's parsha, Shlach, contains within it the story of the *Meraglim*. Twelve representatives from each of the tribes of Israel are sent by Moshe to scout the land for forty days in order to report back on the features of the Land and its inhabitants. Upon their return to Am Yisrael, ten of the twelve men (with the exception of Yehoshua and Calev) give an incredibly negative report about the land, culminating in the punishment of forty years of wandering in exile before being allowed to enter Eretz Yisrael – only after the death of every person who was in the generation of the *Meraglim* in the desert.

From our comfortable seats in shul, it's easy to criticise the ten spies. The spies influenced each other, and the nation, to doubt Hashem. Yet as Asch and contemporary psychology have shown, it's almost inevitable that we will succumb to external pressure and engage in behaviour that we might not otherwise do, despite the true facts being blindingly obvious. It is *really, really hard* to be a Yehoshua or a Calev – and this is probably why Hashem rewarded them so handsomely by being allowed to enter the Land. However difficult it may be, I think the story of the *Meraglim* contains a really powerful imperative to break with conformity and act with conviction in accordance with what we truly believe in, which we all would do well to bring into our lives a little more each day. After all, as Hillel said:

"אם אין אני לי, מי לי?" - "If I am not for myself, who is for me?"
(Mishnah, Avot 1:14)

Jake Berger is in Shevet Lehava and was a Madrich on Bet Chalutz Machane 5774

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!

Nesiah tovah to our 25 bogrim who are embarking on our flagship Aliyah Pilot Trip on Sunday! They will explore living, education and employment opportunities, and meet with bogrim who are already in Israel, contributing meaningfully to society. We are taking another step towards turning our ideology into reality!

We are excited for our community seudah shlishit with Borehamwood & Elstree shul this Shabbat! All are welcome!

We enjoyed running meals and activities in the London Bayit for Bnei Akiva chaverim from the Netherlands last Shabbat.

Shabbat Shalom!

THIS WEEK'S SHABBAT TIMES

	🕒	🕒
London	21:04	22:24
Manchester	21:22	22:56
Birmingham	21:12	22:50
Cambridge	21:02	20:39
Leeds	19:55	22:59
Liverpool	21:22	23:05
Jerusalem	19:09	20:28



Insight and Inspiration on the Parasha

Rav Ari Faust, Rabbinical Shaliach

Making Eretz Yisrael Our Reality

There is not a single Bnei Akiva weekend in which we do not chant the song reminding us to “phone up the Jewish Agency” because our “ideology is plain to see”. Aliya to Israel has been a core belief of Bnei Akiva’s since its inception. Indeed, for decades, *bogrim* of the movement have been inspired by this ideology and possessed with the pioneering spirit and have made Aliya, literally changing the face of Israel.

Our *parasha* features the antithesis of this ideal in the notorious story of the *chet ha’meraglim* – the Sin of the Spies: After Moshe sent twelve spies to Israel to scout out the land prior to Am Yisrael’s entry therein, the spies returned with a disheartening report which discouraged the nation from continuing on their journey. Only two of the spies – Calev ben Yefuneh and Yehoshua bin Nun – offered words of encouragement, declaring (Bamidbar 13:30) “We should go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it”. But their cries fell on deaf ears. The damage had been done, the spies had succeeded in convincing the people that they were “not able to go up” (v. 31) and the current generation were doomed to die out during forty years of wandering in the desert (a punishment for this sin).

Let us contemplate the goal of this spy mission (Bamidbar 30:1-2):

“And Hashem spoke to Moshe, saying: ‘Send men for yourself, that they may spy out the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel; of every tribe of their fathers shall you send a man, every one a prince among them.’”

Why was it necessary to send people to spy the land? In the same breath that the command comes to send spies, Hashem affirms that He is giving us the land; why are spies needed if the Land has been divinely promised to us? Moreover, surely if this were meant to be a successful espionage mission, it would be more effective to send fewer people, diminishing the chances of being noticed and caught; why then, is such a large group – and specifically one representative from every tribe – sent?

Perhaps this wasn’t meant to be a regular espionage mission. The goal was not to determine the most strategic way of entering the Land, nor the cities to target to conquer first; indeed, all this was communicated to Yehoshua by G-d at the time the people ultimately entered the Land forty years later. Perhaps the goal was to establish representatives to encourage the people in anticipation of their forthcoming “Aliya”. The spies would see the Land from north to south – see its infrastructure, terrain, natural resources and its beauty – and become motivated by the prospect of entering the Land. These “Aliya Ambassadors” would return to their respective tribes and enthuse the people about the Land who would in turn become motivated to make the vision of Am Yisrael living in Eretz Yisrael their own reality. There is an absolute, objective reality; the Land of Israel is the land “which I give unto the Children of Israel”. The reality of Jews living in Israel is Hashem’s reality. Jewish life directs us towards aligning our personal, subjective reality with Hashem’s absolute one. The goal of the *mergalim’s* mission was to inspire the people to align their reality with Hashem’s one – to see Eretz Yisrael as their own reality and thus be able to inherit it (see Shemot 6:8). Unfortunately, the *meraglim’s* mission failed.

This week, Bnei Akiva will be sending a delegation of nearly twenty-five *bogrim* to Israel for an Aliya Pilot Trip. For one week they will explore the Land – from north to south – learning about the practical aspects to Aliya, and will be introduced to many of the opportunities available to them upon their planned Aliya in the upcoming years.

In a complete reversal of the Sin of the Spies, we are sure that our *bogrim* will return as “Aliya Ambassadors” – enthused about Israel, inspired that Israel is a reality to be embraced and will ultimately be key figures in shaping Israel’s future and the future of Jewish History.

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

Machane Cadur Regel

A WEEK OF FUN FOR FOOTY FANS
YEARS 3-5

We are delighted to be teaming up with the amazing Super SoccerStars for Machane Cadur Regel!

Super Soccerstars is a fantastic organisation which aims to teach football skills through building teamwork and self-confidence in young children.

You’ll spend an amazing week with an organisation which is widely respected and even has celebrities sending their children to their clubs! You’ll be taught a wide range of football and team skills from professional coaches, as well as being taken care of by Bnei Akiva Madrichim! You have the chance to win medals, and maybe even be chosen as Bnei Akiva’s Junior Footballer of the Year!

If you love football, and want to be a part of Bnei Akiva Machane, then this is the place for you! Have the chance to be the next star in Jewish football with fantastic coaches!



Date: 3rd-7th August 2015

Venue: Mill Hill Powerleague

Price: £125



All the Land that You See

Looking at and learning about every corner of our Land

Tirat Zvi

Jordana Golding

Tirat Zvi is a kibbutz located south of Bet She’an (just above where the north of the Shomron meets the Jordanian border). It sits 220 metres below sea level and reaches heights of 54 degrees Celsius in the summer!

It was the first religious kibbutz in Israel and was founded on 30th June 1937 by Jews from Poland, Germany and Romania. It was named after Rabbi Zvi Hirsch Kalischer z”l, one of the founders of the Zionist Movement. Rav Kalischer lived from 1795 to 1894 in Prussia and dedicated much of his life and work to the resettling of Jews in Israel. The ‘Tira’, or ‘fort’ in English refers to the tower and floodlight that illuminated the surrounding areas to provide protection against attacks which were common between the years 1938 and 1948.

Tirat Zvi is famous for its meat processing factory and being the largest producer of dates in Israel. It also works alongside scientists from the Volcani Institute to develop methods of preserving palm fronds for six months in order to be able to harvest them in time for Sukkot. Given the kibbutz’s history, it is to no surprise that it’s a place frequently visited by the alumni of religious Zionist movements like Bnei Akiva and Lone Soldier programme Garin Tzabar Dati. I will please G-d be living on Tirat Zvi with Garin Tzabar during my three year army service and look forward to meeting other BA-niks when I arrive!

Jordana Golding is in Shevet Lehava and was on Hachsharat Torani in Midreshet Yeud in 5774