

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.

- 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
- Shabbat UK is on 23rd-24th October... Take the opportunity to be part of this amazing event, support communities and represent Bnei Akiva! To find out more or get involved, speak to Rav Ari, or email rav@bauk.org

FROM AKKO TO EIN GEDI TO TEL AVIV... ISRAEL MACHANE 5775!



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Shabbat Lashem 'ושבתה הארץ שבת לה' עקב Ekev

Torah v'Avodah – Where It All Started

Dani Jacobson

This week's parsha includes the text of the second paragraph of the Shema, part of which reads:

"It will be that if you hearken to My commandments that I command you today ... then I shall provide rain for your Land in its proper time ... that you may gather in your grain, your wine, and your oil." (Devarim 11:13-14).

This verse is discussed in the Gemara (Brachot 35b), where Rabbi Yishmael and Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai debate why Bnei Yisrael should be gathering grain at all. Rabbi Yishmael says that this verse means that Jews should combine the study of Torah with a worldly occupation. Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai questions whether this is possible: "if a man ploughs in the ploughing season, sows in the sowing season, reaps in the reaping season ... (you get the idea) ... then what is to become of the Torah?!" Abaye comments on the matter that many have followed Rabbi Yishmael's advice and it has worked well, whereas others have followed Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai and been unsuccessful.

Bnei Akiva's central value is that of 'Torah v'Avodah' – combining the Torah with our daily lives. The foundation of this principle, which we hold up as so important, can be found in this very parsha! Ultimately, Torah and mitzvot are the means of connecting with Hashem in the way that He prescribed. Nevertheless, since Hashem created the whole world, we should strive to see the Godliness in everything around us, and involve ourselves in His world. As well connecting through Jewish texts and rituals, we should strive to see Hashem's hand in everything, such as nature or history, and play our part in these. As my Rosh Midrasha in Midreshet HaRova, Rav Milston wrote:

"Of course, it is sometimes necessary to withdraw from certain elements of this world ... We must stop and realign our perspective; plug into Truth ... But if we approach all our studies with the Almighty in mind, all of our studies become kodesh. There can be no such thing as secular studies for a truly believing Jew".

Dani Jacobson is in Shevet Na'aleh and is a Madrich on Bet Chalutz Machane 5775

Editor's Corner

Shalom!

Shabbat shalom to everyone in Wales and Holland on Summer Machane! We are having an amazing time, with trips and incredible tochniot and are learning loads!

Our Madrichim on Kaytana are having a great experience, helping in an absorption centre in Bnei Brak.

Our Hachshara participants from Shevet Eitan fly to Israel very soon. Nesia tova, we can't wait to see what you achieve!

Shabbat Shalom!

THIS WEEK'S SHABBAT TIMES

	🕒	🕒
London	20:24	21:31
Manchester	20:39	21:52
Birmingham	20:31	21:49
Cambridge	20:22	21:39
Leeds	19:30	21:48
Liverpool	20:39	22:59
Caerwys	20:39	21:59
Arcen	20:55	22:11
Jerusalem	18:55	20:10

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Insight and Inspiration on the Parasha

Rav Ari Faust, Rabbinical Shaliach

Seeing Clearly, Seeing Ourselves

In the 1973 Yom Kippur War, Israel was taken totally by surprise by her attackers, and thus the troops were in total disarray on the battlefield. Within hours there was no distinctive “front line” because the Syrians had advanced upon the Israeli forces so quickly. Israel was greatly outnumbered, fighting Syria on the Golan Heights (at one point there were eleven Syrian tanks for every Israeli one!), but remained indefatigable, since they understood that they were the last obstacle between the Syrian army and the Jewish women and children back home.

At one point, a tank ran out of munition and began pulling back from the line of fire. Lt. General Avigdor Khalani rebuked this tank over the radio, saying that, “Any pullback will be a sign of defeat which will entice the Syrians on. Anyone out of munition will continue to drive back and forth to kick up dust, so they think we’re still in it. If you run out of gas, turn your turret so they think you can still shoot.” Amazingly, Kahalani declared a sure suicide upon himself and his soldiers.

Back at base camp, a truck driver heard this communiqué. He immediately jumped into a fuel truck and drove-out to the battlefield where he proceeded to fill up the tanks as they fought. In a strange way, the survival of the State of Israel is attributable to an anonymous truck driver who drove his fuel tanks to the front lines of the Yom Kippur War.

Heroes sometimes come from unexpected places. In our *parasha*, Moshe continues his parting address to Am Yisrael just a few weeks before he dies. He teaches (Devarim 10:12):

“And now, Israel, what does Hashem your God require of you, just to fear Hashem, your God...”

We have explained before that רִאָּת ה', loosely translated as “fear of God”, is similar to the Hebrew word רָאָה – to see – and actually means to be aware of Hashem’s presence. The Talmud (Megilla 25a) asks the question which beckons from Moshe’s phrasing: *Is רִאָּת ה' such a simple matter that Moshe can suggest we “just” need to do this?* This is comparable to me requesting a “small” favour from my friend and then asking him to lend me one million pounds! The Talmud’s response is even more puzzling:

“Yes. For Moshe it is a simple matter.”

I can appreciate that Moshe had managed to attain an acute awareness of Hashem. But the פסוק says that Hashem asks of me to have רִאָּת ה'; how, then does this answer the original question?!

Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi, in the book “Tanya” (ch. 42) explains that there is a little bit of Moshe in each and every one of us. If we can tune in to the Moshe within, then seeing Hashem is indeed easily within our reach.

What does this mean? Who was Moshe and what *really* made him so great? Moshe grew up far from Jewish tradition in Paroh’s palace. Even after killing the Egyptian taskmaster and escaping Egypt, he continues to identify himself as an Egyptian (Shemot 2:19). For at least forty years Moshe remained indifferent to the Hebrew slavery in Egypt, while he lived in Midian. Finally, when Hashem appears to Moshe at the burning bush, he argues with God that he is not the appropriate redeemer. His main argument that “They shall not believe in me ... They shall say ‘Hashem didn’t appear to you’”. Rabbi Naftali Tzvi Berlin comments that Moshe was worried that he didn’t come from the appropriate background to be accepted at the Jewish leader, and the champion of their spiritual freedom. He didn’t have any special lineage and grew up far from the Jewish community and Jewish tradition. He was an assimilated Egyptian living in Midian – who was he to lead the redemption?

In the end, of course, Moshe went and ended up changing the history of mankind forever. From Moshe we learn not to belittle ourselves; we learn to always believe in our ability to attain greatness. What happened yesterday is history; our past decisions need not dictate our future. Greatness is not the inheritance of people born into it, but rather that of people who are committed to perfecting the here-and-now at any given moment.

There is a bit of Moshe in each and every one of us that says that we can achieve רִאָּת ה' and literally see Hashem in our lives. It is that Moshe-like property within that encourages us to overcome our disappointment and to believe instead in the bright future we can create together.

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



Tiveria

Gidon Schwartz

Tiveria is an ancient city on the western shore of the Kinneret Lake which is best known for the boat trips people take there on Israel Machane every year. However, there is actually far more to this historic city that led to it be considered one of Judaism’s four holy cities (along with Yerushalayim, Chevron and Tzfat).

During the Bar Kochva revolt just after the destruction of the Second Beit Hamikdash, the Jews were expelled from Yerushalayim to the city of Tiveria. Together with its neighbour, Tzippori, it became the Jewish cultural centre of the world.

After Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai (who lived in a cave in the area with his son for 8 years) cleansed the area from its tumma (impurity) caused by the Roman spa in the city, the Sanhedrin (High Court) relocated there and in 2004 excavations discovered a structure that was probably the seat of the Sanhedrin! Much of the Mishna was written and compiled in the area as well as the Talmud Yerushalmi. Tiveria has been one of the epicentres of Judaism for almost a thousand years, and is also of significance to Christians.

The city experienced a great flood in November 1934, which killed many people and damaged vast amounts of property, which shaped the landscape until today.

The city of Tiveria became almost entirely Jewish in 1948. Many Sephardi and Mizrahi Jews settled in the city, following the Jewish exodus from Arab countries in late 1940s and the early 1950s. Over time, government housing was built to accommodate much of the new population, like in many other development towns. The ancient cemetery of Tiveria and its old shuls also attract many Jewish tourists during the chagim. Plans are underway to expand the city with a new neighbourhood, Kiryat Sanz, built on a slope on the western side of the Kinneret and catering exclusively to Chareidim.

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