

WHAT'S GOING ON?

- **Summer Machane** applications are still open for **Ari** and **Aleph Chalutz**. To apply, please go to bauk.org/camps. For more information, please email Rafi H at camps@bauk.org

- We were lucky to have **Dr Yael Ziegler** give the keynote address at Student Bet Midrash last week! We would like to thank her for the amazing words of wisdom she shared with us!

- On that note... **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

- **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!

- This past Sunday saw the **Hachnasat Sefer Torah** for the new Sefer Torah that has been written in honour of our 80th birthday!! It was an incredible day with an address from the Chief Rabbi, singing and dancing through the streets, and a BBQ at the London Bayit!! Thank you so much to everyone who came and to those who donated! It was an amazing start to the life of a Sefer Torah that will be used by thousands of Chaverim for years to come!!



- Sunday also saw the launch of **Torat HaBayit: The Journal of Bnei Akiva 5779!** The theme for this year is **Ideology - 80 years on: A study of the challenges facing our ideology in the modern day.** It can be found online at bauk.org/education or if you would like a hard copy, email Eli at chinuch@bauk.org.

- Join us for **Tikkun Leil Shavuot** on **1st night Shavuot, Motzei Shabbat 8th June**, at the **Herskovitz home in London** and at the **Manchester Bayit!** Go to any of our social media channels to see the schedule for both!

- Be sure to like our **Facebook page (Bnei Akiva)** and follow our **Instagram (bneiakivauk)** to get regular updates with what is going on in the Tnuah!!

- Visit bauk.org/feedback for contact details for all Mazkirut members and to leave any general feedback!!

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

1. In pasuk 3:39 the Torah states that the total number of Levi'im was 22,000. But the actual number was 22,300. Why does the Torah seem to ignore 300 Levi'im? (**See Rashi**)
2. What is the significance of firstborn males of the Jewish People being redeemed for five shekalim? (**See Rashi on 3:47**)

SHABBAT SHALOM & CHAG SAMEACH!!!

	Shabbat in:	Shavuot 1 in:	Shavuot 2 in:	Out:		Shabbat in:	Shavuot 1 in:	Shavuot 2 in:	Out:
London	20:58	22:28	22:29	22:30	Birmingham	21:08	22:45	22:46	22:47
Manchester	21:15	22:57	22:58	22:59	Leeds	21:14	22:58	22:59	23:01
Cambridge	20:58	22:34	22:35	22:36	Liverpool	21:18	22:59	23:00	23:02
Oxford	21:01	22:35	22:36	22:37	Jerusalem	19:07	20:26	n/a	20:26

זכור אתיום השבת לקדשו.
ששת ימים תעבד ועשית כלמלאכתך,
ויום השביעי שבת לה'

SHABBAT LASHEM

THE VOICE OF BNEI AKIVA UK

PARASHAT BAMIDBAR
5TH SIVAN 5779
7TH & 8TH JUNE 2019
OMER DAY 49
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THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CENSUS GEMMA DENBY SHEVET TZION

At the beginning of Parashat Bamidbar, God tells Moshe to carry out a census of all the people (across all the tribes apart from the tribe of Levi) who can be part of the army, which means all men between the ages of twenty and sixty. Each of the twelve tribes had a leader - a Nassi - who helped Moses count. The reason that the tribe of Levi was counted separately was because it consisted of males aged one month and older. The question that one might ask is, why was it necessary to count little babies? Especially as they can't do any avodah in the Bet Hamikdash. One possible reason for this could be to teach us that it is never too early to educate a child, **from the moment a child** is born to the day that the individual passes on into the next world that individual is affected by their environment and they very much count in terms of being crucial members of our people.

This is why the Sefer Bamidbar is also known as the 'Book of Numbers'. What is the significance of the counting and why does it take place at the beginning of Bamidbar? This is the third census of the Jewish people in the year, was one not sufficient enough? On the one hand, Rashi (Bamidbar 1:1) says that counting in the Torah symbolises the love God has for Bnei Yisrael - "Because they are dear to Him, God counts them often". God counted Bnei Yisrael when they were about to leave Egypt. He counted them after the sin of the Golden Calf to establish how many were left. And here, at the beginning of Bamidbar, He was about to cause His presence to rest on them (with the inauguration of the sanctuary), He counted them again.

The Torah uses the phrase "se'u et rosh"- "lift the head" (ibid. 1:2), to describe counting. There are many words in Biblical Hebrew that mean "to count" so why does the Torah use this unusual expression?

One of the most beautiful expressions of the value of life can be found in the Mishna (Sanhedrin 4:5). "He who saves one life... is as if he saves an entire universe. He who destroys a life... is as if he destroys an entire uni-

verse." This was said almost 2,000 years ago by Chazal. According to Rambam, every single person should see themselves as if their individual acts can change the world. Chazal said that every verse in the Torah can be interpreted in so many ways. Despite the fact that we are a large nation, Judaism doesn't allow us to lose our unique individuality in the mass of the nation. We all have different attributes, different ways of thinking and it is only God who can be part of each and every single one of us, even in a massive crowd, God still relates to us as individuals. This is what "lift the heads" means. God explains to Moshe the danger of counting a nation, individuals might feel insignificant as if they are just nothing. Therefore, God tells Moshe to lift their heads, showing the individuals that they matter. We each have individual qualities that we can bring to the world that are unique and are part of us. Lifting someone's head is a gesture of the love we have for them.

A Jewish leader must respect individuals, regardless on the size of the group you must always show that you value every single person and that every single individual has a contribution that only they can bring to the world.

Hachshara is giving me and will continue to provide me with opportunities that are enhancing my skills in order so that I can be the best leader possible. **This summer I will be changing roles from being a Chanicha to be a Madricha on Machane.** What better time for me to be a leader than after I have experienced a year of being prepared for adulthood, experiencing leadership first-hand and therefore adopting leadership skills that will make me prepared for my future in the wider community.

For me, leadership isn't just about being willing to take control and having the motivation and drive to provide, it is also about having an intrinsic drive to do what is best for the students, both as a whole and as individuals. Despite the fact that leading this group will in no way be the same in terms of quantity as it would be leading the Jewish people, but just like Moshe communicated the value he had for everyone by "lifting their heads", I too will aim to "lift the heads of the individuals on Machane, showing them all that they count as individuals.

GEMMA IS ON HACHSHARAT TORANI AT MIDRESHET HAROVA

SHAVUOT 5779: IYOV VS RUT - APPROACHING CHALLENGES



RAV AHARON HERSKOVITZ | RAV SHALIACH

"And it was in the days when the judges ruled..." (Rut 1:1) Rabbi Elazar said, "Iyov lived in the days when the judges ruled..." (Bava Batra 15b)

The book of Iyov discusses the difficult trials and tribulations experienced by Iyov, a wealthy and righteous non-Jew, who begins to experience a series of challenging life-changing events (the death of his children, the loss of his wealth, deteriorating physical health and pain) after the Satan claims that his righteousness stems only from the fact that Hashem has blessed him and were He to be less giving, Iyov would respond by cursing Hashem.

As the book of Iyov has no specific date, various rabbis debated when the events took place. Rabbi Elazar's opinion indicates not only that it took place during the **time period of the Judges** (after entering the Land of Israel but before kings had been appointed), but is also very reminiscent of the beginning of Megillat Rut, which begins with the context of "And it was in the days when the judges ruled."

There are many parallels between the two stories and the two characters of Naomi and Iyov. Both of them start out well off and with families and lose both their children and belongings. Both of them complain about the fate they've been handed, using language that expresses bitterness. Iyov says "As God lives, He has taken away my justice; and the Almighty has **embittered** my soul" (Iyov 27:2). When Naomi returns to Beit Lechem, she tells her former acquaintances: "Do not call me Naomi, call me Mara, for the Almighty has caused me great **embitterment** (*heimar*)." (Rut 1:20). Both of them run into former friends who don't recognise them, acting shocked due to the difficult changes that they have experienced (Iyov 2:12, Rut 1:19).

Together with these difficulties, both stories seem to end on a similarly happy note. At the end of Iyov's story, Hashem returns his wealth, and he

is blessed with seven sons and three daughters, and his "later years are more blessed than his earlier ones" (Iyov 42:12). At the end of Rut, Naomi's acquaintances refer to Rut as "better than seven sons" (Rut 4:14), and the birth of Rut's son is viewed as if a son has been born to Naomi (ibid. 4:16), who lost both of her sons at the beginning of the story (ibid. 1:5).

Despite these similarities, the books have **fundamentally different viewpoints on how one deals with difficulty**. Iyov's story is centred on his and his friends' attempts at **understanding the reason** for his difficulty: how can it be that a just God has allowed such tragedy to occur? Iyov's final words are recanting his claims against Hashem, stating that "I spoke without understanding, of things beyond me, which I did not know" (Iyov 42:3). It is an acceptance that fundamentally we are incapable of understanding.

The story of Rut has a very different response to a tragedy. Instead of aiming to achieve cognitive understanding, the book is replete with examples of doing and receiving acts of *chesed*. For example, Rut and her sister-in-law stay with Naomi after their husbands pass away; both Naomi and Boaz praise her for this act of *chesed* (Rut 1:8; 2:11). Boaz ensures that his relative (Naomi) and her daughter-in-law have food to eat, causing Naomi to praise him and bless him to Hashem "for not abandoning his *chesed* to the living and the deceased" (ibid. 2:20). Naomi in turn also tries to ensure that she does *chesed* for Rut, trying to aid her in finding a new home (ibid. 3:1), acting as a wise *shadchanit* (matchmaker) par excellence.

The aim to understand why challenges occur is important, as it can help grow as we aim to better ourselves. But if we focus merely on that, we may end up getting stuck, ruminating on our difficulties. The response of the characters of Megillat Rut shows us an alternative path: that when we are beset by difficulties, we should aim to help those around us who are struggling. May both of these paths enrich the way we deal with challenges.

**"WHEN BESET WITH
DIFFICULTIES, WE
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DVAR HALACHA - WEEKLY QUESTION WITH RAV AHARON

Summary of the Halachot of Shavuot Post-Shabbat

(based on the *pesakim* of Rav Yosef Zvi Rimon)

1. One should prepare a long-lasting candle before Shabbat that they will be able to use to light candles after Yom Tov begins (and for lighting candles the second day).
2. **Seuda Shlishit on Shabbat:** It is preferable to eat this before the time of *mincha ketana* (approximately 17:49 in London) to ensure that one does not begin Yom Tov while already full. If this is not possible, Seuda Shlishit should be more limited than usual.
3. **Sleeping on Shabbat:** In general, one should not **say** that they are sleeping on Shabbat so that they'll be able to do more on Motzei Shabbat, as this shows that they are resting on Shabbat for the days of the week (Mishna Berura 290 sk 4); but where it is for the sake of a mitzvah (such as learning on Shavuot), one may even state their goal explicitly (Az Nidberu 4:46).
4. **Preparing on Shabbat for Chag:** It is forbidden to prepare for Yom Tov on Shabbat. For this reason, one may not set their table for Chag while it is still Shabbat and certainly should not heat up food for Yom Tov. However, **acts that are beneficial for Shabbat itself may be performed**. For this reason, one may clean and organise if the goal is also to make the house nicer on Shabbat. Additionally, one may remove food from the freezer if done so far enough in advance that it would be possible to eat it on Shabbat.
5. **From what point may one prepare for Chag?** Any acts forbidden on Shabbat on a Torah-level (such as lighting candles, adjusting the stove etc.) may only be performed after the time printed as candle lighting. Acts that are forbidden rabbinically, such as washing dishes, setting the table, heating up dry food etc.) may be done 18 minutes after sunset.

Before doing any preparation, one must say ברוך המבדיל בין קודש לקודש (**this must be said before candle lighting!**)

6. **Can one begin Chag earlier?** Even though some would allow accepting Chag earlier in general (depending on the specific holiday; a more detailed discussion is not possible here), it is **not possible** to do so in the current situation for a number of reasons:
 - It is not proper to extend Chag at the expense of Shabbat (though there may be room to do so in extenuating circumstances).
 - On Shavuot specifically (even when not preceded by Shabbat), the custom is to wait until *zeit hakochavim* to **daven Maariv** in order to fulfill the concept of the days of sefira being forty nine **whole days** (*temimot*; Mishna Berura 494 sk 1, based on the Taz's understanding of the opinion of the Shelah).
 - On Shavuot, *kiddush* contains *havdalah* as well, and although the Shulchan Aruch (OC 293:3) allows one in an extenuating circumstance to make *havdalah* on Shabbat, practically we do not allow this, as it appears questionable to others, as *melacha* is still forbidden (Mishna Berura 293 sk 9).
 - Additionally, since part of the *kiddush/havdalah* service includes use of a candle, one may erroneously light this candle, or light Yom Tov candles (even though it is still Shabbat).
7. **Kiddush of first night Chag this year** includes five berachot, said in the order of יקנה"ז:
 - יין - בורא פרי הגפן
 - קידוש - אשר בחר בנו
 - נר - בורא מאורי האש
 - הבדלה - המבדיל בין קודש לחול... ברוך אתה ה' המבדיל בין קודש לקודש
 - זמן - שהיינו

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