

SHABBAT LASHEM

THE VOICE OF
BNEI AKIVA UK
THE MOST WIDELY
DISTRIBUTED YOUTH TORAH
PERIODICAL IN THE UK



PARASHAT NASSO | ISSUE 28

Rebecca Posner | Bogeret Dvar Torah

ACHIEVEMENT OVER STATUS

The start of this week's parasha carries on from the end of Bamidbar, where we have a list of the Levimim's responsibilities. The responsibilities are distributed according to the Levite families: Kehat, Gershon and Merari. Here we see the familiar occurrence of one of the younger brothers going first; though Gershon is the firstborn, it is Kehat who is mentioned before the others. The Abarbanel says that this is due to Kehat having more important responsibilities, namely carrying and guarding the Aron, the vessels found in the Kodesh of the Mishkan, and the burnt offering altar. He also comments that this is because they were honoured for their connection with Moshe and Aharon, who are from the family of Kehat and thus receive the higher responsibilities and honour. The Kli Yakar however sees this differently, saying that Hashem did not want the firstborn to have the most important roles, as this could imply that spiritual attainment is due to birth status and not due to personal effort and achievement.

One way of categorising such efforts in spiritual growth is by whether someone chooses to focus on both staying away from negative actions and also embracing positive actions, rather than to do just one of these or to do neither. These three types are exemplified by the three Levite families: "Kehat" can be seen to mean "to gather", as these are the people who gather all their actions together and figure out how to improve them all. "Gershon" is linked to the word meaning "to expel", as these types of people focus on at least distancing themselves from negative actions, such as working on keeping the negative mitzvot.

"Merari" is derived from the word for "bitter", as these types of people are constantly avoiding dealing with their wrongdoings, an approach which eventually leads to a bitter view of oneself and the world. This is the order in which the responsibilities of the Levite families are listed.

We can choose how we go about our lives: Do we strive to better ourselves in all aspects? Do we at least try to improve where we can? Or do we not bother at all? There are many Jews who feel comfortable where they are in their religious observance, and they may very well be saying all the right brachot and eating all the right foods, giving the impression to other people that they are 'frum'; but are they being careful with their words? Do we, for example, know to look out for people in the community who may be feeling sidelined because they don't know the 'right' crowds? Do we go into university with all our friends already, establish ourselves in the JSocs without bothering to make sure that Jews from small communities, or who have previously not had a chance to be involved with other Jews, have a space too and are welcomed appropriately? Being ovdei Hashem means always striving to improve ourselves, our relationship with Hashem and with other people, no matter how many Shwekey songs they listen to. Being ovdei Hashem also means recognising the Godliness in every Jew, no matter what stage they are at, and certainly not looking down on them because they do not have as much knowledge as you. Their efforts and achievements may very well be greater than yours.

*Adapted from a shiur by
Rav Milston of Midreshet Harova.*

London In: 20:46 Out: 22:03 | Manchester In: 21:00 Out: 22:09 | Leeds In: 20:59 Out: 22:08
Oxford In: 20:47 Out: 21:56 | Cambridge In: 20:45 Out: 21:54 | Bristol In: 20:51 Out: 22:00
Birmingham In: 20:53 Out: 22:03 | Jerusalem In: 18:55 Out: 20:26

Holiness Begins at Home

Rav Aharon Herskovitz | Rav Shaliach

Parshat Nasso continues a process begun at the end of Sefer Shemot, that of the sanctification of the camp of Bnei Yisrael. Whereas Sefer Shemot and Sefer VaYikra dealt more with the holiness of the mishkan that stood at the centre of the camp, the beginning parshiyot of Sefer BaMidbar focus on the sanctification of the camp as a whole (as an extension of the mishkan at its centre).

There is a series of five commands in Nasso that seem to drive this home. The first (BaMidbar 5:1-4) is the command to send out from the camp all of those who are impure, including those with tzara'at and who have become impure through contact with dead bodies. The reason for this is that the entire camp is now becoming a place in which the Divine Presence will rest. This is an idea that comes up in other places in the Torah, such as the command that we act in certain ways when going out to war, "for Hashem your God is walking in the midst of your camp (Devarim 23:15)."

The second (5:5-10) is a the concept of me'ilah, the use of holy items for profane purposes: if we are to maintain the holiness we must treat holiness in a certain way.

The third parsha (5:11-31) is the command of the isha sotah, the woman who was unfaithful (here too her acts are described as me'ilah). Rabbi Yitzchak Twersky explains that part of the idea behind the sin of the isha sotah and the process of attempting to ascertain what happened is that the holiness in the camp is not only in the mishkan, nor in the camp as a whole, but in each and every household in Bnei Yisrael.

Afterwards (6:1-21), we read of the nazir, who chooses to take an oath that requires

him or her to refrain from consuming wine products, getting haircuts and coming into contact with the dead. Chazal understood the nazir's step as being a response to witnessing the spectacle of the sotah (Berachot 63a): "Rebbe says: Why is the parsha of nazir juxtaposed to the parsha of sotah? To tell you that whomever sees the sotah in her degraded state will distance themselves from wine." In addition to this connection between the two, the nazir has many parallels to the laws of a kohen as well (refraining from wine, contact with the dead and more). The spreading of holiness to the entire camp enables the opportunity for others in Bnei Yisrael to achieve a status similar to that of kohanim.

Lastly, we end this series (6:22-27) with birkat kohanim, the blessing with which the kohanim must bless Bnei Yisrael. The goal of this blessing is expressed at the end: "And they shall place My Name upon Bnei Yisrael and I will bless them." The blessing "works" by drawing Hashem's Presence on to Bnei Yisrael.

The messages of these commands are extremely important: holiness needs to exist not only in the mishkan, in the national religious and spiritual focal point, but must extend as well to the rest of the camp and to each and every individual household. We must remember that our "everyday" lives and interactions within our home are also supposed to be infused with holiness. Additionally, as opposed to the original process of the spreading of holiness, where the holiness begins in the mishkan, and then extends from there to the rest of the camp, it is possible that the way we will merit having Hashem return to our midst is by first sanctifying the camp. When we can bring holiness to our individual homes and to the public sphere, then He will return to us "Return to Me and I will return to you (Malachi 3:7)."

"Our "everyday" lives and interactions within our home are also supposed to be infused with holiness...When we can bring holiness to our individual homes and to the public sphere, then He will return to us "Return to Me and I will return to you (Malachi 3:7)."

Dvar Halacha: Weekly Question

Have a question? Please email rav@bauk.org or call/message Rav Aharon at 07976642135.

QUESTION FROM HANNAH ON BNEI AKIVA'S Q&A HALACHA WITH RAV AHARON WHATSAPP GROUP: Would removing silverware from a dishwasher and putting the different items away in their proper compartments be considered borer (sifting the bad from the good, one of the forbidden melachot on Shabbat)?

ANSWER: In general, poskim consider a mixture of cutlery to be a mixture for which borer would be relevant (although Rav Ovadya

Yosef does not, as the pieces of cutlery are large and recognisable). Poskim (Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach, Rav Melamed and others) advise that if there is clean cutlery you'd like to put away, you may dry each piece individually and then put it in its proper place: this would not be considered borer, as the original separation is for the purpose of drying, not separating.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO BE ADDED TO A Q&A WHATSAPP GROUP WITH RAV AHARON PLEASE EMAIL ELI@BAUK.ORG.

SUMMER MACHANE

Sign up now before it's too late!
1st - 14th August 2018

 ALEPH | YEAR 6 | South Yorkshire | £790

 ALEPH CHALUTZI | YEAR 7 | South Yorkshire | £790

 BET BASE | YEAR 8 | Avila, Spain | £850

 BET CHALUTZI | YEAR 9 | Switzerland | £950

 GIMMEL | YEAR 10 | Avila, Spain | £990

SIGN UP CLOSES MONDAY 4TH JUNE 2018!

TO APPLY: www.bauk.org/machane-apply
More details: Hannah Reuben | 02082091319 ext2
camps@bauk.org



תנועת בני עקיבא
BNEI AKIVA UK

Community Updates



On the 17th May Bogrim in Israel held a 'BAUK Across the Generations' event, in honour of Israel 70, with 5 generations of BAUK discussing Aliyah, Zionism and Bnei Akiva. We were privileged to hear from Asher & Edna Cailinggold, Max Kopstein (head of Thaxted farm) & Hanni Wanderer; also Sarah Moser (Bogeret active in the 90s), Gideon Bratt, Adam Shasha and 9 Hachshara chanichim from Torani and Kivun.

It was a really great evening and the chanichim really appreciated it. They loved some of the stories of BA in the 50s and it was inspiring to hear what BA meant to people of all generations (Tom Goulde, Abby Album and Daniel Sacks spoke particularly beautifully about this). Thank you to all involved!

This past week for Shavuot BNEI AKIVA BOGRIM ran a Tikkun Leil in Edgware. Over



40 Bogrim attended and gave shiurim on a variety of topics including: "Ruth, Naomi and the Power of Names - Rabbanit Shira", "Light Unto the Nations: Giving Charity to Non-Jews - Nivcheret Hanhalla Mia Gray", "Keep Smiling and Accept the Torah (How Simcha Gets You Torah) - Daniel Glass" and "The Four Homes of Moshe Rabbeinu - Adam Boxer".

On the 13th June the Rav and Rabbanit Shaliach will be hosting an Israeli Wine and Cheese tasting night, in partnership with the Jewish Agency. Come and join us as we are led by Orit Grinboim-Liron, a professionally trained wine connoisseur, on a magical evening by tasting four Israeli wines, accompanied by cheese, snacks and a light sushi dinner. This event is open to all Bogrim. Please contact rav@bauk.org to reserve your place!

Roshim Profiles



Over the next few weeks we're going to be profiling some of our amazing Sviva Roshim. They all do such brilliant work and we thought you would like to get to know them a bit! This week we hear from LOUISA STAGNI CO-ROSH BNEI AKIVA SOUTH HAMPSTEAD with SAM BRAY:

"Hi, my name is Louisa Stagni and I am Co-Rosh of South Hampstead Bnei Akiva. I've been involved in my Sviva since I was old enough to attend as well as going to summer machanot. This summer I was lucky enough to be a madricha on Aleph Machane which was an amazing experience. I'm currently studying for my A Levels and recently we've started giving the Sganim an increased role in the running of Sviva to help ensure they have a successful start of Sviva next year.

For me Bnei Akiva will always be the way I spent my summers, spending time in

the middle of nowhere in Wales, making friends and developing my grounding and understanding of Religious Zionism. My hopes for my Sviva is that it continues to grow year on year. This year we have struggled to get Sviva back on track after a year off we've come back and gone from strength to strength which I hope continues. One of the challenges this year have been based around our Shul being in temporary accommodation as well as maintaining a varied programme in Sviva.

For the Tnua as a whole I hope that Bnei Akiva continues to grow into an inclusive, all embracing movement of young Jews coming together to celebrate our faith as well as learning about Israel and learning how to criticise and celebrate Israel."

MAKE SURE TO CHECK OUT NEXT WEEK'S SHABBAT LASHEM FOR OUR NEXT PROFILE!