

זכור את יום השבת לקדשו.
ששת ימים תעבד ועשית כל-מלאכתך,
ויום השביעי שבת לה'

SHABBAT LASHEM

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בס"ד



RESPONSIBILITY FOR KLAL YISRAEL

JACOB SEITLER
SHEVET MORASHA

We are told in Ki Tavo of a covenant between us and G-d. The passuk (Devarim 27:9) says "Be attentive and hear, Israel [Shema Yisrael]. This day you have become a nation of the L-rd your G-d". When reading this passuk a few things seem strange:

1. The phrase of 'Shema Yisrael' appears in this passuk, which reminds of us Parashat Vaetchanan where the portion of Shema is written. What is the relationship between the Shema Yisrael here and the Shema that we say every day?
2. Why does this covenant occur between G-d and the Bnei Yisrael - surely we have already entered a covenant with G-d at Har Sinai?
3. Both in this passuk and the next one it is emphasised that it must be "this day". Why is it so important to emphasise the fact that it was on that day?

Rav Solovechik in one of his essays answers these questions, giving a deeper insight into the covenant found in Ki Tavo. In trying to understand the language of Shema Yisrael, he explains that the Shema that we say everyday is addressed to the individual, in contrast the Shema in our Parsha is for the collective. This emphasises the need for Jews to take responsibility not just for themselves but also care about the collective, the idea of *arevut*.

In answer to our first question, he explains that the two covenants were needed at two dif

ferent stages of the Bnei Yisrael's development as a nation. At Har Sinai the covenant was made for that generation, but did not refer to future nations, the covenant in Ki Tavo was a covenant made not just for the generation who heard it from Moshe but also applied to future generations, including us today. We can see that the covenant here is not just focused on a single generation but, fitting with the theme of *arevut*, has a broader impact to all generations.

Rashi, in answer to our third question, says "the commandments should be as new to you as if you had received them today". Again we see the importance for this covenant not just to be something in the past but something we experience even today, connecting the generation about the enter Israel to our generation, emphasising the goal of *arevut*.

Arevut on a simple level commands us to see ourselves not only as an individual going through life but also as part of Klal Yisrael. *Arevut* reminds us that we are not just part of our community but also part of the Jewish community. It does not mean that we are all the same, but that we can recognise our differences, allowing us to use our strengths to build an ideal society.

Point To Ponder:

In what aspects of your life do you feel *arevut*?

JACOB WAS A PARTICIPANT ON TORANI 5780.

London	In: 19:24 Out: 20:29	Oxford	In: 19:26 Out: 20:34	Leeds	In: 19:30 Out: 22:41
Manchester	In: 19:35 Out: 20:43	Bristol	In: 19:30 Out: 20:39	Liverpool	In: 19:35 Out: 20:45
Cambridge	In: 19:21 Out: 20:30	Birmingham	In: 19:29 Out: 20:39	Jerusalem	In: 18:23 Out: 19:35

THE CONSTANT RELATIVITY OF TORAH

RAV JOEL KENIGSBURG | RAV SHALIACH



It's a frightening list to read. The "Tochecha" – the list of nearly 100 curses that could befall the Jewish people – is always read before Rosh Hashana. As the Gemara states (Megillah 31a)

this is a symbolic way of ushering out the old year and leaving behind whatever curses may have come with it.

The Torah describes how if the Jewish people fall foul of their commitment to Torah and the covenant with Hashem they face the threat of famine, disease, war and exile. But there is a verse amongst the potential punishments which seems out of place:

וְהִפְיֵצְךָ ה' בְּכָל הָעַמִּים מִקְצֵה הָאָרֶץ וְעַד קְצֵה הָאָרֶץ וְנִבְדַּדְתָּ
שָׁם אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים אֲשֶׁר לֹא יָדַעְתָּ אֹתָהּ וְאֲבֹתֶיךָ עָץ וְאֲבָן

"The LORD will scatter you among all the peoples from one end of the earth to the other, and there you shall serve other gods, wood and stone, whom neither you nor your ancestors have experienced." (Devarim 28:64)

The commentators take pains to explain why the above passuk is found as part of a section detailing not the sins which may lead to these punishments, but the curses themselves. Surely the fact that the people would worship idols is an injustice of which they were guilty, rather than an outcome of their actions? Due to this difficulty, Rashi reinterprets the verse (based on the Targum Onkelos) to mean not that Bnei Yisrael will worship idols, but that they will be subdued to other nations who worship them, amongst whom they will have been scattered. But the Abarbanel, who lived through the Spanish Inquisition, understands the verse far more literally, and he says that it refers to forced conversion. The curse over here is that Jews would be forced to serve idols even though they despised the thought and knew it in their hearts to be untrue.

What is striking about the Abarbanel's interpretation is the deep correspondence he finds between the words of the parsha and

the events of his day. Forced conversion was part and parcel of the society in which he lived. Thankfully times have moved on, but a powerful lesson that we can take from this commentary is to identify the relevance and centrality of the Torah's message to all times. Perhaps of all the parshiyot, a section detailing unspeakable curses is one of the easiest about which to say "it doesn't speak to me". But the Abarbanel, together with all of our commentators and Sages throughout the ages, understood that the Torah's words relate to us directly here and now, centuries after being written.

Elsewhere in the parsha we are told

הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ מְצַוְךָ לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת הַחֻקִּים הָאֵלֶּה
"The LORD your God commands you this day to observe these laws" (Devarim 26:16). Rashi, quoting the Midrash Tanchuma, explains this to be teaching that every day Torah should be new in our eyes – בכל יום יהיו בעיניך כחדשים. The message borne out is that we should remain

WE SHOULD REMAIN AS ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT KEEPING THE TORAH AS THE DAY WE RECEIVED IT. IT ALWAYS NEEDS TO BE EXCITING AND FRESH.

as enthusiastic about keeping Torah as the first day we received it. It always needs to be exciting and fresh. But perhaps a more basic message here is that it always needs to be relevant. We need to feel as if the Torah was

given today because it guides our lives in this generation, just as much as it did in the days of the desert. Whether it was the agricultural society of old or the high-tech world of today, the Torah is there in every nook and cranny, relevant to our lives, addressing the anxieties of the age. The challenge remains to translate and apply it – but the principles are always there.

Shabbat Shalom!

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ASHIRA LASHEM

REBECCA POSNER | SHEVET NA'ALEH

וְהִבִּיאֹתֵימָם אֶל-הַר קֹדֶשׁי, וְשִׂמְחֵתֵימָם בְּבֵית תַּפְלֹתַי--

עוֹלֹתֵיהֶם וְזִבְחֵיהֶם לְרִצּוֹן, עַל-מִזְבְּחִי: כִּי בֵיתִי, בֵּית-תַּפְלָה יִקְרָא לְכָל-הָעַמִּים

"I will bring them to My sacred mount and let them rejoice in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and sacrifices Shall be welcome on My altar; For My House shall be called A house of prayer for all nations." (Yishayahu 56:7)

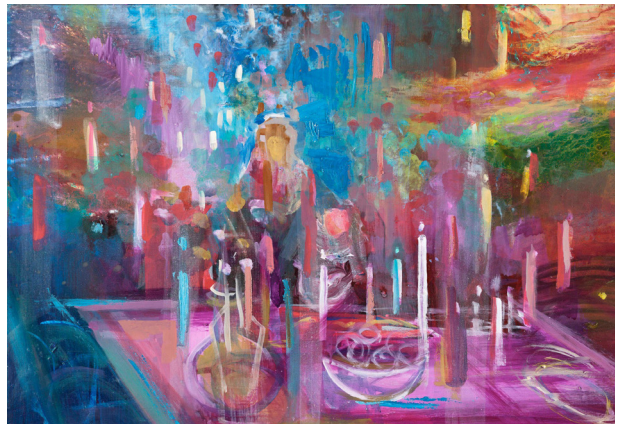
A tisch song that is perhaps more known with the post-gap year bogrim, Vahaviotim is a beautiful excerpt from Yishayahu. Rashi explains the verse "for all nations" means not just Israel but also the converted. These explanations have often struck a nerve with me: if converts are to be treated like any other Jew, why the need to single them out?

In this section of Yeshayahu, Hashem reassures the barren that despite their lack of children to carry their name forward, they will still be remembered with "yad Vashem" (Yishayahu 56:5) – a monument and a name – so long as they keep Shabbat. The converts are promised to be brought to worship Hashem together with the rest of Israel if they keep Shabbat, despite their 'lack' of Jewish ancestry.

Perhaps we have to realise that as enlightened as we think we are, our prejudices are never far behind. Family is a big part of Jewry and understandably so. However, we have to remember that we don't all have the same extended Jewish families, and that is why all the more so we should act as each other's extended families, providing an extra hand whenever we can. Without regular shul services and meal invitations, some may have been feeling all the more disconnected recently. Especially now that we are well into the month of Elul, having left the tragedy of Tisha B'Av behind, we should be moving forwards in treating each other with respect, to reverse any wrongdoings in time for the new year, and as a tikkun (repair) for previous generations who may not have been so scrupulous in this.

The promise of accepting all the people stems from the condition of them keeping Shabbat, seen in the pasukim preceding this one. The centrality of Shabbat is emphasised as the main mitzvah bein adam l'Makom (between man and the Omnipresent) to ensure our inclusion in the Jewish chain. Rabbeinu Bachya says that Shabbat is equated with all other commandments combined, as it affirms our belief in Hashem having created the world. Further, Shabbat 119 states that Shabbat desecration is what led to Jerusalem in turn being desecrated. Perhaps something to focus on when we next gather for a tisch-till-two session (bimhera beyamenu): Shabbat is a central day and we should use it to connect with all our fellow Jews.

REBECCA WAS SGANIT ON ALEPH WINTER 5778.



'Shabbat Candle Lighting' - Yoram Raanan

WHAT'S GOING ON?

- We have **reopened applications** for the tafkid of **Israel and Sixth Form Worker 5781** (2020-21)! An incredible chance to help shape the future of the tnuva. Job description available at tinyurl.com/JD-Israel-5781. To receive an application form and with any questions, please email mazkir@bauk.org. All applications will be treated in the strictest confidence.

- We are holding **Slichot services** at the London Bayit. Sign up at tinyurl.com/slichot-at-the-bayit

- **WE NEED YOUR HELP!** Coronavirus has hit Bnei Akiva hard, costing us over £150,000. Over the last six months our Mazkirut and Bogrim have been working tirelessly to put on a range of fantastic programming for our youth, from Machane Aviv in the Spring, to a celebration of Israel like no other on Yom Ha'atzmaut, and now a packed summer of programming for over 400 children. Please support our **Yad Achim Campaign**. Visit bauk.org/yad-achim for more information and to donate.

- Applications are open for **Winter Machane 5781!** Join us at an exciting new site from **21st-28th December** and enjoy a fantastic Bnei Akiva residential full of fun, friends and Ruach! NEW THIS YEAR: **Machane Seenai for Year 11!** Sign up today at bauk.org/camps or email camps@bauk.org for more information.

- Look out for **Inspiration-Elul**, a series of short daily videos containing thoughts from bogrim in the lead-up to the Yamim Noraim. Available on Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp.

- We have launched a **chesed initiative** planned by

madrichim and chanichim who volunteered at GIFT during machane: **donate your old football shirts, shorts and boots** to those who can't afford them! Drop off any donations (clean and in good condition) at the London Bayit.

- Mazal tov to **Daniel Lederman** (Shevet Ne'eman) and **Avigail Simmons-Rosten** on the occasion of their wedding!

-Mazal tov to **Adi Dinowitz** and **Uriel Abeles** (Shevet Avichai) on the occasion of their wedding!

- Mazal tov to **Dena Schwartz** (Shevet Hagevurah) and **DJ Newman** on the occasion of their wedding!

- Be sure to like our **Facebook page (Bnei Akiva UK)** and follow our **Instagram (bneiakivauk)** to stay informed of our online content!

- To receive weekly copies of **Shabbat Lashem**, sign up for our mailing list at bauk.org/contact.

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

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

1. What do we need to do in order to be "blessed in the city and blessed in the field?" (See **Daat Zkeinim on 29:3**)

2. What is the true tragedy for Bnei Yisrael when Hashem's anger is aroused? (See **Chatam Sofer on 28:47**)

3. What is the unique financial blessing of Eretz Yisrael? (See **Haamek Davar on 28:8**)

SHABBAT SHALOM!!!



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INSPIRATIONAL

SLICHOT AT THE BAYIT

Elevate your build-up to Rosh Hashannah and
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SLICHOT | 10:00 PM
12TH - 26TH SEPTEMBER

Weather permitting, we will be outdoors. Make sure to
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Sign up at <https://tinyurl.com/slichot-at-the-bayit>



Winter Machane 5781

21st - 28th December 2020
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