

Shabbat Times

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London	21:02	22:22	Cambridge	21:00 22:37
Manchester	21:20	22:54	Leeds	19:55 22:47
Birmingham	21:10	22:47	Liverpool	20:54 23:02
Oxford	21:03	22:38	Jerusalem	18:56 20:14

Coming up...

- On Tuesday, 13th June we are hosting a Leil Iyun, Religious Zionism, starting with special guest speaker Miraim Peretz followed by a bogrim lead panel on what Religious Zionism means to you. For more information contact Dena on dena@bauk.org

- Summer Machane is on 3rd-16th August, email Akiva on camps@bauk.org for more information

Shabbat Debate

Every week we will be writing weekly debates to discuss over Shabbat. The debates will then be continued on facebook, after Shabbat.

The Temple Institute in Jerusalem exists to build all the objects for the Beit Hamikdash, should we be preparing for the rebuilding of the Beit Hamikdash in this way?

SHABBAT

פרשת בהר - בחקתי

PARASHAT BEHAR-
BECHUKOTAI



תנועת בני אקיווה
BNEI AKIVA UK

LASHEM

שבת לה'

The most widely distributed weekly Torah periodical written by our youth in the United Kingdom.

Crisis of Leadership

Ollie Collins

Moshe is often noted as the greatest leader in Jewish history. We have much to learn from his qualities. This Parasha, however, highlights what seems to be one of his weakest moments. In the face of the complaints of the Jewish people, Moshe is seen to give up on his mission and even asks Hashem to kill him where he stands. Not only is this uncharacteristic of Moshe who has dealt very differently with this in the past, but it seems even more strange that he is not as reactive as a result of being quite accustomed to this situation. To make the question even stronger, he appears to be less and less capable of dealing with adversity throughout Sefer Bamidbar.

Rav Alex Israel highlights a reason for Moshe's concerns. He comments that there is still a perceived negativity among the nation, albeit that Moshe has now been the leader of Am Yisrael for 40 years taking them through miraculous events with the help of Hashem. If after all of these miracles the Jewish people can keep complaining and halt the journey to Israel just for meat, then are these people ever going to learn or is this simply an act of futility?

Rabbi Sacks takes a slightly different approach that many can learn from concerning leadership in general. He refers to Prof. Ronald Heifetz's concepts of technical and adaptive challenges. The difference between the two is that a technical challenge is one where you have a problem and someone else has the solution while an adaptive challenge is one where you yourself are also part of the problem and need to change yourself to solve the issue.

These ideas can be applied to the world of leadership. The world of Sefer Shemot is all about Technical Leadership. Moshe is given a step by step guide as he works with Hashem to take the Jews out of Egypt with plagues and miracles and quick solutions such as lifting his staff over the sea or hitting a rock for water. The world of Sefer Bamidbar, however, is one of Adaptive Leadership. They have fulfilled the technical challenges of leaving Egypt and making the covenant with Hashem at Sinai. Now they are on their journey to Israel. The challenge is now about getting the people themselves to change and exercise responsibility. When the people are seen to not step up to this challenge and are instead complaining, this is a much deeper issue now and this leaves Moshe that much more devastated. They seemingly haven't changed at all and are still speaking like they were before the revelation at Sinai, before they created a sanctuary to Hashem.

It's here that the Torah teaches us about just how challenging adaptive leadership can truly be. As a movement, our chaverim are all going through a process of building themselves and our madrichim, Sganim, Roshim have the responsibility of being their adaptive leaders. We are provided with words of encouragement as adaptive leaders when Hashem speaks to the adaptive leader of the Jewish people, Yehoshua, at the beginning of Sefer Yehoshua: "Be strong and courageous, for you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their ancestors to give them." Despite the many challenges along the way; despite the fact that there may be points where you feel like you've failed or you want to give up, if you push forward and keep looking for solutions, you will succeed in the end.

Ollie Collins is in Shevet Hagevurah and is Israel Worker 5777

SUMMER MACHANE 5777



3 August - 16 August
Year 6, 7, 8 in North Wales
Year 9 in Holland
Year 10 in Spain

NEW LOCATION!



for more info contact akiva@bauk.org



Exemption from the IDF?

One of the large divides in contemporary Israeli society is regarding the *shivyon ba'netel* – mass exemptions from IDF service for people declaring they are fulltime Torah-students. A bit of background: Since its establishment in 1948, Israel has had a policy of mandatory conscription to the IDF. At the time, David Ben-Gurion enacted an exemption for 400 Torah-students and ever-since the Likud government of 1977 that number has increased indiscriminately. Recently, political parties have raised the banner of achieving equal conscription policies, and the government has even passed laws prescribing criminal detention on draft-dodgers, causing the fierce response of those who support the exemption. (It should be noted that there are exemptions from IDF service for other reasons, but these are nowhere near as wide a scale as Torah-study.)

It is not the intention of this article to examine the political aspects of this debate, but rather to explore the *halachic* basis to the discussion (as I humbly see it). The goal is to ask a basic question: Is there *halachic* legitimacy to exempt Jews from IDF service in favour of learning Torah? (I would like to stipulate that I am not giving *psak*, but rather examining the topic in principal.)

In our *parasha* we read of the appointment of the tribe of Levi to the temple service. This will serve as the basis for the IDF exemption for Torah-students (Bamidbar 8:24-25):

“This is that which pertains to the Levites: from twenty and five years old and upward they shall go in to serve in the army of the work of the tent of meeting; and from the age of fifty years they shall return from the army of service, and shall serve no more;”

The Torah refers to the Levites’ service as “army service”; why is this language chosen? The Rambam comments (Hil. Shemittah & Yovel 13:12-13):

“Why did the Levites not receive a portion in the inheritance of Eretz Yisrael and in the spoils of war like their brethren? Because they were set aside to serve God and minister to Him and to instruct people at large in His just paths and righteous judgments ... Therefore they were set apart from the ways of the world. They do not wage war like the remainder of the Jewish people...

Not only the tribe of Levi, but any one of the inhabitants of the world whose spirit generously motivates them and they understand with their wisdom to set themselves aside and stand before God to serve Him and minister to Him and to know God, proceeding justly as God made them, removing from their neck the yoke of the many reckonings which people seek, they are sanctified as holy of holies...”

Continued on next page....

The Week that Was...

- On Wednesday we went into Yavneh school to run our weekly lunch and learn session
- On Friday we went into Sinai Primary School to run a session to get them excited about summer machane!!

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It would seem that the Rambam understands the role of the Leviim to span beyond temple service, and beyond one specific “biological” tribe; the Leviim are responsible for the spirituality of the entire Nation, and anyone – from any tribe – who undertakes this sacred burden is considered a Levite in this regard. This is the main source for the exemption of Torah-students from the burden of IDF service. Torah-students are actually *in the army*; the army of Hashem!

But does this seemingly unambiguous source in fact justify the exemption from the burden of IDF service? The Mishnah (Sotah 7:8) states:

“In the wars commanded by the Torah all go forth, even a bridegroom from his chamber and a bride from her canopy.”

This law is codified by the Rambam (Hil. Melachim 5:1), who clarifies that wars to protect Jewish lives are included in this (as opposed to wars simply in order to expand Israel’s borders); and all are obligated in the defence of the State of Israel and its inhabitants. Indeed, the Chazon Ish stipulates that a *chatan* is to be taken from his chamber, or bride from her *chuppah* even if the war-effort is not dependent on their participation (it is beyond the scope of this article to relate to the question of conscription for women). In a war of defence, no one is exempt, and thus in our current situation, it would seem incumbent upon everyone to conscript to the IDF to fulfil this *mitzvah*, even a *chatan* from his chamber and a bride from her canopy – and all the more so the tribe of Levi.

“The study of Torah is compared to all [the Mitzvot]” (Mishnah Pe’ah 1:1). Indeed Torah-study is an utmost value. It would seem, however that Torah-study does not exempt a person from the defence of Israel. I would add that, to my mind, this applies equally to all Jews everywhere regardless of their nationality or residence.

May we merit the fulfilment of the prophecy (Yeshayahu 2:4): “They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more”.