

Shabbat Times

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London	20:37	21:53	Cambridge	20:36 22:04
Manchester	20:54	22:19	Leeds	19:35 22:14
Birmingham	20:45	22:15	Liverpool	20:54 22:26
Oxford	20:39	22:06	Jerusalem	18:56 20:14

Coming up...

- We invite all Bogrim to join us for Tikkun Leil Shavuot at Rav Ari and Chaya's for more information contact Rav Ari on Rav@bauk.org
- Summer Machane is on 3rd-16th August, email Akiva on camps@bauk.org for more information
- Join us at the London Bayit on Yom Yerushalaim for a special Shacharit service at 8:30 followed by breakfast for more info email israel@bauk.org

Shabbat Debate

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

Every 50th year the Jew's were told to not work the land after already not working the land in the 49th year. Hashem said not to worry about working the land, He will provide. To what extent should we work and to what extent should we have faith?

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.

Har Har – The Story of Two Mountain

Avi Son

This week's parshiot begin in a rather bizarre fashion, by mentioning Har Sinai. This is strange as, despite the fact that the revelation and giving of the Torah occurred there, the mountain itself is mentioned only a handful of times throughout the rest of the Tanach and barely at all in regular davening. Contrast this to the other important mountain in Jewish faith, Har Habayit – Temple Mount, which is constantly referred to throughout Nach and which we focus on intently in our tefillot, both through our words and the very direction of our prayer. The obvious question persists, why is their seemingly such a discrepancy between our attitudes to these two most holy mountains? The answer can teach us an important lesson about our faith, and perhaps more importantly, our role within it. At Har Sinai the Jewish people received their greatest gift, however their role was almost exclusively that of recipients. Conversely, at Har Habayit, more than any other place, the Jewish people were active participants worshipping Hashem, they weren't just receiving they were giving.

This teaches us a vital lesson about our purpose. We are meant to be givers and to actively contribute to the world around us. We know that as Jews we should reach a level of Ahavat Hashem – love for Hashem. Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis pointed out that within the word Ahava we have the word 'Hav' which in Aramaic means 'give'. Only through contributing and giving can we reach peak levels of Ahavat Hashem and become the best Jews we can be. This notion, of giving, is a consistent theme throughout this week's parshiot. Parshat Behar begins by detailing the laws regarding Shemittah, allowing the land to lie fallow in the seventh year, a prime example of 'giving'. Rather than just taking from the land, we give it a rest, moreover Rashi and Sforno explain that in doing this we also give ourselves to the service of Hashem for an entire year. This notion of giving is further seen in the parsha where the Torah expresses the need for a relative to 'redeem' a brother from a non-Jew. Sforno explains this applies no matter how degraded this person has become: thus the act of redemption isn't self-serving but rather a pure act of giving in order to save another. At the end of parshat Bechukotai this notion is clearly seen when the Torah talks about consecrating property for Hashem.

The message from these two prominent mountains in Judaism, and indeed the message that is perpetuated throughout Behar and Bechukotai is simple but vital. Judaism isn't a passive religion, we do not believe that we should simply receive and obey, rather we should be actively looking for ways in which we can give ourselves in order to achieve our goals and improve the world. We truly believe that the more we give, the more we will receive, the greater connection we will feel. We have to become involved and give to our communities, we have to give our time in order to learn more and do greater things, and we have to give and be active in ensuring that there is brotherhood and bond between all Jews. If we do these things we will truly begin to feel connected to our faith and feel and see the benefits around us, and return to that mountain, a fully rebuilt Har Habayit!

Avi Son is in Shevet Eitan and was a madrich on Aleph Summer 5776

SUMMER MACHANE 5777



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

NEW LOCATION!



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Yom Yerushalaim

There are few events in Jewish history which galvanised world Jewry more than the Six-Day War. There have been few events that unified Jews around the world in their concern for one another than the Six-Day War, and indeed it featured Israel's first of few National Unity governments. Yet, paradoxically, there have been few events that have divided the Jewish people more than the Six-Day War and its aftermath.

Throughout the first day of the war, despite Levi Eshkol's plea of King Hussein not to intervene, Jordanian attacks only intensified, and Jerusalem was bombarded by shelling from Jordanian posts. On the night between June 5-6 – forced into a small shelter after a mortar had been fired upon the Knesset lawn – Israeli cabinet ministers fiercely debated the battle strategy: Should they conquer the posts at the Rockefeller Museum and Augusta Victoria hospital and enter the Old City to the Kotel – which Jews were not able to access since 1948 – and the Temple Mount?

After returning to Old City, paratroopers from the 55th Brigade stood in awe at the Kotel. At the very moment some soldiers embraced the ancient and holy stones and cried tears of joy, others stood shoulder-to-shoulder with their comrades with a sense of disenfranchisement from the cause they had just fought for. Author Yossi Klein-Halevy was quite apt when he coined the war as six days that “reunited Jerusalem and divided a nation”.

According to our tradition, Jerusalem is the city that unifies. When Israel was apportioned in the days of Yehoshua, Jerusalem remained a city belonging to all people and was not allotted to a specific tribe (Yoma 12). The Talmud Yerushalmi comments (Chagiga 2:6):

“Rebbi Yehoshua ben Levi said, ‘It is the city that makes all of Israel friends.’”

But is this indeed so? This week, as we celebrate the jubilee of the reunification of Jerusalem and our return to its holy sites, the dispute and divide that have come as a consequence of the war are as intense as ever. Where does that leave us? Are we to celebrate or are we to mourn? Is Jerusalem the city that unifies or divides?

I believe this divide is a central catalyst in our developing history; that the discord is a key element in our nation's journey toward redemption. What is unity? Our world is one that includes diversity and variance. The great challenge is to see the oneness in the many; like a body which is a unified organism, while being comprised of so many different parts. We are different but not divided. Unified but not uniform.

We do not need to be the same to be together. We need not agree in order to love one-another. Unity is contingent on diversity, thus paradoxically the greater the disagreement, the greater expression of unity it can produce.

After 1948, we needed to survive the threats of external conflict – from our enemies who threatened our existence. Perhaps since 1967, our challenge has become to survive the threats of internal conflict. In my humble opinion, the latter conflict poses a far greater threat to our existence than the former.

The great question of our time in the aftermath of the Six-Day war is not about settlements, borders or occupation. The real question is whether or not we will succeed in raising our heads above all the divisions in order to achieve unity – to love despite the arguments and to be united *because* of the differences.

Nearly two-millennia ago, the Beit HaMikdash was destroyed because of baseless hatred (Yoma 9). Rav Kook daly notes (Orot HaKodesh vol. 3 page 324):

“If we have been destroyed, and the entire world was destroyed with us, due to baseless hatred, we will rebuild – and the world will be rebuilt through us – with baseless love.”

In June 1967 we were presented with many gifts, and indeed with many challenges. With all the challenges, there is so much to celebrate and thank Hashem for. But perhaps the greatest gift of all was that of argument – perhaps such that is unparalleled in all our history. May this argumentation become the platform for unparalleled love, and may Jerusalem become the source of unparalleled unity – that we see the rebuilding of all that has been destroyed in our world speedily and in our days.

The Week that Was...

- On Monday and Tuesday this week we successfully had our Israel Machane Parents Evening in London and Manchester. Any questions email Ollie@bauk.org
- On Thursday Rav Ari and some of the Mazkirut went up to Oxford for our Tishmar event, singing, tisching and eating delicious cholent and kugel.

Hashem's Hand in History

Adam Finn

I was once told a joke about the 'G-d powered car' sold by Jewish dealers. To accelerate, the driver proclaims 'Baruch Hashem' and to break, he says 'Shcoyach'. One such driver was motoring around the countryside until his hand slipped, veering the car off the road, hurtling down a steep cliff towards a lake. Desperate not to fall into the lake the driver screams 'shcoyach', but the car is moving too fast to stop. In one last attempt to prevent himself plummeting into the lake, the driver shouts 'shcoyach, shcoyach, SHCOYACH!!!' and finally, the car halts inches away from the edge. Relieved, the driver instinctively sighs the thanksgiving phrase 'Baruch Hashem' - prompting the car to lurch forwards into the lake after all!

This old joke highlights the trait of instinctively involving G-d in daily life. The Gemara (Arachin 16b) describes how minor negative incidents in our lives should be seen as an 'affliction' from God, indicating his involvement with us. This can be compared to our parasha that discusses reward and punishment. Bechukotai starts by promising a peaceful existence for Am Yisrael if we keep the Mitzvot and then presents the Tochecha, “Rebuke” of horrific collective punishments if we don't. A simple look at the sources shows that God is heavily involved with the Jewish people both personally and collectively. Within both the individualistic and nationalistic fields, we should aim to recognise Gods hashgacha - intervention.

In his book, "Halachik Man", Rav Joseph Ber Solevetchik describes his idea of the ideal Jew; someone who looks at their daily life through the prism of Halacha. In every situation he encounters, the thought process used should instantly be one of Halachik and Torah analysis. Just as we look for G-d's involvement in our lives, we make the active effort to involve Him, by living according to His will.

Moving this idea from the personal to the national, we should remember that the progression of Am Yisrael as a nation has G-d at its centre. The days at this time of the year - Yom Ha'atzmaut, Yom Yerushalayim and Shavuot - show that Hashem moulds our people's history, and how we in turn take decisive action to realise His will.