

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

SHABBAT LASHEM

THE VOICE OF BNEI AKIVA UK

PARASHAT KEDOSHIM

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בס"ד



BEING HOLY MAYA KLEINBERG SHEVET DOROT

Parashat Kedoshim starts with the idea that we should be holy. What exactly does this mean? Rashi explains that the term "holy" implies self-restraint. There are many temptations in life. To be holy means to have the ability to control one's immediate impulses.

The Ramban also highlights that this self-restraint may sometimes take a person to a point beyond the simple letter of the law. One can keep all the halachot of kashrut and still be a glutton. One can drink only kosher wine and still be a drunkard. He calls such a person a naval bireshut haTorah, meaning one who is coarse, crude, self-indulgent, but who justifies their conduct by claiming that they are a strict observer of the law. Likewise, the Ramban is concerned to refute the idea that you can be an observant Jew and at the same time arrogant, insensitive, tactless, prone to anger or pride. Both believe that such people profoundly fail to understand the nature of Judaism.

A good example of this is with the exchange of the birthright. One way of understanding that story is that Esav was ready to sell his birthright, the most precious thing in his life, for a plate of food. Some might feel sympathy for someone who is a slave to their senses. They might say that after all, this is our human situation. Nonetheless, many people would expect a person to aspire to be master of their own being: in control.

Much of the parasha is devoted to giving guidelines about this kind of self-mastery, in a number of dif-

ferent areas of life. Central to this is the theme of personal relationships. The keynote to these is the famous teaching, "love your neighbour as yourself." Rabbi Akiva said that this is the great principle of the Torah. It relates to all other aspects of Jewish thought. The parasha also instructs us not to take revenge, nor even to bear a grudge. This certainly requires self-control: in our actions, our words and even our thoughts.

This is further reinforced through ideas of charity in that, "you shall not pick your vineyard bare, or gather the fallen fruit of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and the stranger." This depicts the fundamental links between the concept of being a good person, through giving and generosity, and the trait of self-control (through not picking off every last fruit from the trees). Therefore there is a sense of the response to this command of "loving your neighbour" through the personal choices we make in developing our own positive characteristics and attributes.

The command to be holy is Hashem's call to us to become a different sort of person from one who believes that the physical world is all that exists, that there is no authority beyond mere power. It is not easy to define what makes people holy, but it can be recognised in their demeanour, their way of relating to people, their gentleness, the gravitas that comes with their humility. In themselves they radiate a presence beyond themselves. The Ramban says that this is the challenge of those simple words at the beginning of the parasha. Holiness is not just what we do but also the kind of person we become.

**MAYA WAS A MADRICHA ON ALEPH WINTER
MACHANE 5782**

SHABBAT TIMES

London	In 20:16 Out 21:34	Oxford	In 20:19 Out 21:40	Leeds	In 20:28 Out 21:54
Manchester	In 20:32 Out 21:55	Bristol	In 20:23 Out 21:44	Liverpool	In 20:32 Out 21:58
Cambridge	In 20:15 Out 21:38	Birmingham	In 20:24 Out 21:47	Jerusalem	In 18:47 Out 20:03

Q&A WITH RABBANIT SARAH

Q: I OFTEN FIND IT DIFFICULT TO CONCENTRATE ON TEFILLAH. WHEN I REALLY NEED SOMETHING IT CAN BE EASIER, BUT ON A DAY-TO-DAY BASIS I FIND IT DIFFICULT TO CONNECT. DO YOU HAVE ANY ADVICE?



A: When my son was two years old he used to pick up a siddur (always upside down) and sway back and forth making sounds pretending to daven. Whilst it was very cute to watch this from a two year old, it made me think that quite often us adults do the exact same thing. We may be saying the correct words and even manage to hold the siddur the right way up but how often do we mumble through the words unaware of what we are saying and even more, of to whom we are directing them. What you describe in your question is incredibly common. In times of need, stress and despair we often easily turn to Hashem, but the commandment to daven (according to most Poskim) is far more frequent than that. How can we infuse meaning and emotion into our regular davening?

This week I want to focus on a prior question before we talk about davening itself - who are we davening to? Just as one wouldn't enter an important interview without knowing with whom the conversation was taking place, prayer should be no different. Luckily we don't have to delve into philosophy books to deal with this question; the tefillot themselves contain the answer.

Adon Olam is the piyyut we sing at the end of a Shabbat morning service, but it actually appears near the very beginning of the Siddur – to be said before we begin Shacharit every weekday. For me this helps set the scene for Tefillah and truly understand the significance of our relationship with Hashem. The piyyut is split into two halves- the first focuses on the omnipotence of G-d and His eternal nature:

אֲדוֹן עוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר מִלְדָּ, בְּטָרְם כֹּל יִצִּיר נִבְרָא
וְהוּא הִיָּה וְהוּא הוּא, וְהוּא יִהְיֶה...

Master of the universe Who reigned before any creature was created...

He was and He is and He will always be.

But the description of the majestic and perhaps more distant nature of Hashem is then juxtaposed with the second half which focuses on the personal connection we have with Him:

הוּא קְלִי וְחִי גּוֹאֲלִי, וְצוּר חֻבְלֵי בַעַת צָרָה
He is my G-d, my redeemer, my rock in times of trouble.

When I focus on these words properly they never fail to move me. The very same G-d who created the world and everything there is in it cares about me as an individual and grants me an audience with Him on a daily basis.

Before we begin to pray, Adon Olam helps us to look at the bigger picture of who we are and where G-d fits into our lives. As Rabbi Sacks zt"l so eloquently expands on this theme:

In prayer we speak to a presence vaster than the unfathomable universe, yet closer to us than we are to ourselves: the G-d beyond, who is also the voice within.

If we can truly internalise this message then it can have a transformative effect on our tefillot.

Prayer should be an immersive experience rather than a passive one. When the Anshei Knesset HaGedolah composed our prayers, they imbued within them depth and eternal relevance, which we unfortunately miss when we mumble through them mindlessly. By putting in the work to understand what we say and who we are saying it to, hopefully we can make the experience of tefillah that much more meaningful.

DO YOU HAVE A QUESTION FOR RABBANIT SARAH? SEND IT IN TO RABBANIT@BAUK.ORG

SNAPSHOT FROM THE CHOVERET

The Choveret is the educational handbook that Bnei Akiva UK madrichim use to create their activities and discussions in Sviva each week. This week, it looks at the spiritual significance to the State of Israel.

Beyond there simply being holiness to the land (which pretty much everyone across the Orthodox Jewish spectrum believes), Religious Zionism consists of the belief that the state of Israel is spiritually significant. Whilst part of this is “reishit tzmichat geulateinu,” (which we will return to later) that’s not all of it. Religious Zionists believe that although the State was founded on largely secular grounds and foundations, it has the potential to flourish into a society where Judaism and Religious values are lived and experienced.

What this means is that Religious Zionism is not just about uniting the People of Israel in the Land of Israel, but also that the Jewish State should be one that is based on Torah and Halachic values which seep into people’s lives. A central component of this is the actual learning of Torah.



One of the most powerful contemporary Torah learning initiatives is the concept of Yeshivot and Midrashot. Many young people from all over the world at the age of 18 decide to spend a year or more learning Torah in Israel. This can take many forms, but the general idea is to grow spiritually through textual study.

Hesder Yeshivot are programmes where young men spend some time in Yeshiva and some time in the IDF, for a total of 5 years. They exemplify Religious Zionist values, allowing men to learn Torah on a very high level whilst also contributing to the safety and security of Medinat Yisrael.

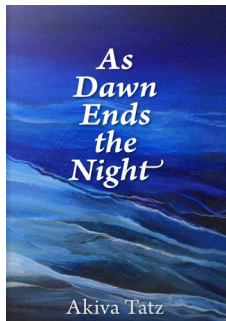
So we’ve seen a few examples of amazing Torah learning opportunities in Eretz Yisrael. With Torat Yisrael becoming increasingly accessible and mainstream, these really are exciting times to be living in!

CHINUCH WORKERS’ TOP PICKS

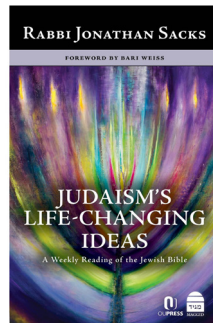
Looking for some Shabbat afternoon reading? The Bnei Akiva Chinuch team recommend some of their favourite English Sefarim.

Rabbi Akiva Tatz, *As Dawn Ends the Night*

Josh says: This amazing book by Rabbi Tatz presents the Torah’s spiritual outlook on history. It examines the fading of divine revelation over history and points to the dawning of “a new kind of light.” I thoroughly enjoyed reading it - it taught me a lot about how to relate to being in exile and what spiritual living means in galut vs geula.



Rabbi Jonathan Sacks zt”l, *Judaism’s Life-Changing Ideas*



Dania says: For anyone who frequents the Chinuch circuit, whether as a Madrich/a, informal educator or Cheder teacher, it’s always a good idea to have a Dvar Torah or two up your sleeve at any given time. This book provides ideas on the weekly parasha that are intellectual yet accessible and

contemporary yet deeply inspiring, ensuring that you’ll always have something to share with any age group!

WHAT'S GOING ON?

- **Lishmah** is now open to **all Bogrot and Sixth-Formers!** Don't miss this amazing **Torah learning opportunity!** Sign up: tinyurl.com/Lishmah-BA

- Calling all male Bogrim! Join **Rav Joel** for a **Va'ad** on Tuesday evenings at 10:15!

- **London Student Bet Midrash** is taking place weekly on **Thursday evenings** for high school and university students. For more info about London or Birmingham SBM email chinuch@bauk.org

- **Mazal tov** to **Daniella Wieder** (Shevet Ne'eman, Svivot and Hadracha Worker 5781) and **Boruch Mordechai Michaels** on their **engagement!**

- **Mazal tov** to **Lindy and Sean Melnick** (Chair of Trustees) on the **marriage** of his daughter **Taryn** to **Louis Lederman!**

- Keep an eye out for **exciting Bnei Akiva updates** for all ages!

- Be sure to like our **Facebook page (Bnei Akiva UK)** and follow our **Instagram (bneiaktivauk)** to get regular updates with what is going on in the Tnuva.

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

This week's edition of Shabbat Lashem is sponsored by Waffle Me Up



The Senior Rabbi's Office
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16-24 YEAR OLDS ARE INVITED TO

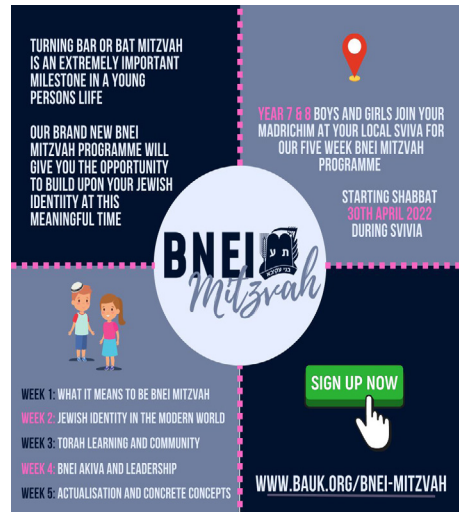
MENTAL HEALTH & HALAKHA

W. RABBI YONI ROSENWEIG

SUNDAY 19TH JUNE
6.30PM - 8PM
NW LONDON LOCATION

Pizza and Shi'ur followed by Q&A

What is the relationship between mental health and halakha and how do we deal with it? Why haven't Jewish books dealt with mental health until now? Join us for this unique opportunity to meet and learn from the leading expert on mental health and halakha.



TURNING BAR OR BAT MITZVAH IS AN EXTREMELY IMPORTANT MILESTONE IN A YOUNG PERSONS LIFE

OUR BRAND NEW BNEI MITZVAH PROGRAMME WILL GIVE YOU THE OPPORTUNITY TO BUILD UPON YOUR JEWISH IDENTITY AT THIS MEANINGFUL TIME

YEAR 7 & 8 BOYS AND GIRLS JOIN YOUR MADRICHIM AT YOUR LOCAL SVIVA FOR OUR FIVE WEEK BNEI MITZVAH PROGRAMME

STARTING SHABBAT 30TH APRIL 2022 DURING SVIVIA

BNEI Mitzvah

WEEK 1: WHAT IT MEANS TO BE BNEI MITZVAH
WEEK 2: JEWISH IDENTITY IN THE MODERN WORLD
WEEK 3: TORAH LEARNING AND COMMUNITY
WEEK 4: BNEI AKIVA AND LEADERSHIP
WEEK 5: ACTUALISATION AND CONCRETE CONCEPTS

SIGN UP NOW

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IF YOU COME TO SHUL TO WAFFLE, WHERE WILL YOU GO TO PRAY?

Waffle Me Up
wafflehalakhaeidough

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