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כי תבאו אלהארץ אשר אני נתן לכם
ושבתה הארץ שבת לה'

SHABBAT LASHEM

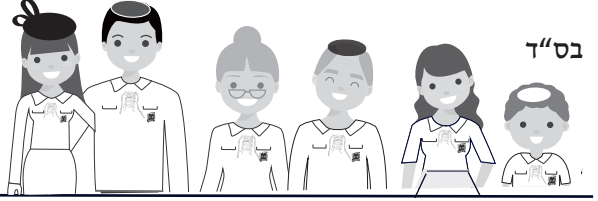
THE VOICE OF BNEI AKIVA UK

PARASHAT NITZAVIM

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REFLECTING ON OUR RELATIONSHIPS

RAFI DAVIS
SHEVET OROT

At this point in *Sefer Devarim*, Moshe Rabbeinu's monologue is in full flow, having already spanned 7 *parashiyot*. It is this very fact which makes the opening *pasuk* of our *parasha* quite puzzling:

“אַתֶּם נִצְבִים הַיּוֹם בְּלִפְנֵי ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם:”

“You are all standing today, all of you, before Hashem your God”

The question seems to jump out at us: why is it relevant, at this point, for Moshe Rabbeinu to mention that they are gathered before Hashem? He's been speaking for ages already!

Clearly this point was also troubling Rashi, as he explains that Moshe was gathering them to re-enter them into the berit. This is very nice, but we have already been bound into our eternal covenant with *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* at Har Sinai and also in the plains of Moav, as we are informed in last week's *parasha*.

Fortunately, Rav Soloveitchik tackles this point. He states that a Jew has two degrees of sanctity, stemming from separate covenants between Hashem and Am Yisrael. Really, the covenant at Har Sinai and the covenant in the plains of Moav, before entering the land, are counted as one, which served to sanctify Yisrael and for this *kedushah* to be inherited by each subsequent generation. Meanwhile, the covenant in our *parasha* applies to every single Jew in history, even those not yet born, as we are informed five *pesukim* into the *parasha*. Therefore, from this *brit*, we received an independent *kedushah* of every individual in each generation, so we all have a dual connection to Hashem: as an individual, and as a link in the chain of the *mesora*, from our ancestors.

Rav Efreim Goldberg says that this reminder, that we each have a unique connection to Hashem in addition to our national relationship, requires us to reflect for ourselves: Who am I and what am I about? What are my talents and what are my faults? But most of all: What am I meant to contribute, what difference should I be making to the world? The *parasha* opening in this manner also serves as a timely reminder right before *Rosh Hashana* that we need to consider how our individual relationship with Hashem is holding up - do we give it enough attention? This personal covenant underscores that we have a commitment to a personal relationship to Hashem, alongside our national covenant with Hashem together with all our ancestors and our community.

The Or Hachaim suggests that Moshe was zeroing in on a particular point with this new covenant. The last *pasuk* of this *perek* states that an added dimension of public *aveirot* is that we shirk our responsibility to uphold the Torah and enact justice. From this we see that this new *brit* serves to ensure responsibility between Jews for *mitzva* performance; we can't just be looking out for ourselves, but must also look out for each other. Although the degree to which we bear this responsibility depends on our communal role, it provides another pertinent reminder building up to Rosh Hashanah. When doing *teshuvah*, we spend plenty of time reflecting on when we made mistakes, but in truth, we should also consider the times when we had the ability to stop others making mistakes but failed to do so. Our *Yiddeshkeit* thrives when we have each other's backs and this is why the process of *teshuvah* is undertaken so publicly, joining together for huge *selichot* and packed *shuls* for the *Yamim Nora'im*, because our interdependency is the source of our strength.

As we head into this Shabbat and Rosh Hashanah, we can reflect upon this third covenant, both in our individual relationship with Hashem but also in our responsibilities to those around us. Shabbat shalom and *shana tova!*

RAFI WAS A MADRICH ON GIMMEL MACHANE 5782

London In 18:42 Out 19:41
Manchester In 18:53 Out 19:55
Cambridge In 18:43 Out 19:44
Brighton In 18:44 Out 19:44

Oxford In 18:49 Out 19:49
Bristol In 18:54 Out 19:54
Birmingham In 18:51 Out 19:53
Nottingham In 18:48 Out 19:50

Leeds In 18:50 Out 19:53
Liverpool In 18:56 Out 19:58
Thaxted In 18:42 Out 19:43
Jerusalem In 17:59 Out 19:10

SHALIACH'S CORNER: TESHUVA WITH RAV AVICHAJ PART TWO



After learning last week how *teshuva* is “out of this world” when it comes to understanding its concept through logic or justice, this week I want to address a major downside we sometimes have

concerning doing *teshuva*.

If both the wise ones (*chakhamim*) and the prophets (*nevi'im*) can't understand the principal of *teshuva*, then how can we hope to get even close to it? And if we can't get close to understanding *teshuva*, it must be way out of our reach to actually perform it in a successful way. That can be a very disappointing state of mind to be in approaching *yamim nora'im*.

But the truth is that doing *teshuva* is probably the easiest thing to do compared to the rest of the mitzvot in the Torah, as shown by this week's *parasha*, *Nitzavim*, that is always read close to *Rosh HaShana*.

In our *parasha*, the Torah says the following (Devarim 30:11-14):

כִּי הַמִּצְוָה הַזֹּאת אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי מְצַוְךָ הַיּוֹם לֹא-
נִפְלְאוֹת הוּא מִמֶּנּוּ וְלֹא רְחוֹקָה הוּא:
לֹא בַשָּׁמַיִם הוּא לְאֹמֹר מִי יַעֲלֶה לָנוּ הַשָּׁמַיִמָּה (12)
וְיִקְחָה לָנוּ וְיִשְׁמַעֵנוּ אֶתְּךָ וְנַעֲשֶׂה:
וְלֹא-מֵעֵבֶר לַיָּם הוּא לְאֹמֹר מִי יַעֲבֹר לָנוּ אֵל- (13)
עֵבֶר הַיָּם וְיִקְחָה לָנוּ וְיִשְׁמַעֵנוּ אֶתְּךָ וְנַעֲשֶׂה:
כִּי-קָרוֹב אֲלֶיךָ הַדָּבָר מְאֹד בְּפִיךָ וּבְלִבְּךָ (14)
:לַעֲשׂוֹת

(11) Surely, this instruction which I enjoin upon you this day is not too baffling for you, nor is it beyond reach.

(12) It is not in the heavens, that you should say, “Who among us can go up to the heavens and get it for us and impart it to us, that we may observe it?”

(13) Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, “Who among us can cross to the other side of the sea and get it for us and impart it to us, that we may observe it?”

(14) No, the thing is very close to you, in your mouth and in your heart, to observe it.

Ramban makes it very clear that the “instruction”,

the “mitzva”, to which *pasuk* 11 is referring is *teshuva*. Apparently, *teshuva* is very close and reachable for all of us; such an easy thing!

And the Midrash (*Eiruvim* 55a) that Rashi brings takes this to the extreme. If *teshuva* was in the heavens, we would be required to climb as high as needed in order to reach it, no matter how hard it is. But now that the Torah said, “It is not in the heavens”, *Chazal* understand that the Torah is informing us there is no expectation or need for us to work hard in order to do *teshuva*, as it is so close and easy to achieve.

How easy is it to do *Teshuva*?

Let's examine one *halakha* to get to the principle: The *Gemara* (*Kiddushin* 49b) describes a man that

gives *Kiddushin* to (i.e., betrothes) a woman on condition, meaning only if the condition is true or fulfilled, will the *kiddushin* count.

What is the law when a man says the *kiddushin* will take effect “only if I'm a *tzaddik* (righteous man)”? Says the *Gemara* that even if the man was the biggest *rasha* in the world the *kiddushin* count - why? Because he might have pondered *teshuva* in his mind.

Practically, we don't actually know if he did *teshuva* or not, so we rule that the *kiddushin* are considered a doubt. But we can learn from this an amazing principle: *teshuva* is the easiest thing! All you need to do is think, and according to *Chazal* you are a *tzaddik gamur* (completely righteous person) - amazing!

When the torah says that *teshuva* is not high in the heavens it is literally true! We all have the potential to be *tzaddikim gemurim* right away.

Is there any better way to enter the start of a new year?

RAV AVICHAJ GOODMAN IS IN SHEVET NETZACH AND IS THE NEW RAV SHALIACH OF BNEI AKIVA. TO CONTACT THE RAV, EMAIL RAV@BAUK.ORG.

MEET THE MAZKIRUT

ANOUSHKA GOLDMAN | CAMPS AND SOCIAL ACTION WORKER



Hi, I'm Anoushka, the new camps and social action worker! I've been involved in Bnei Akiva since I first attended Salford Sviva, soon to be followed by many a machane and now I get to plan machane and I'm so excited to get stuck in to some new projects for Bnei Akiva. I have so many exciting and innovative ideas for winter machane and I'm so excited to receive all your Tallis applications and from you all! I'm here to channel the tnuva and serve, so if anyone wants to get in touch with any ideas, be it pre-camp, machane or even a social action project, I'd love to make them a reality. Get in touch!

CONTACT ANOUSHKA AT CAMPS@BAUK.ORG



TORAH FROM AROUND THE WORLD

HAKHAM BEN-ZION MEIR HAI OUZIEL | NAHALA 24TH ELUL

It's back to Letiště Václava Havla Praha [PRG] for us, and onto another plane headed for Ben-Gurion [TLV]. This time it's just one train until we're in Tel-Aviv and Yaffo, the first Rabbinic appointment of Hakham Ben-Zion Meir Hai Ouziel.

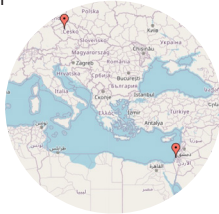
Hakham Ben-Zion Meir Hai Ouziel was the first *Rishon LeZion* (Sepharadi Chief Rabbi) of the State of Israel. He was born in Jerusalem in 1880 and grew up speaking both Arabic and Ladino. He was appointed *Hakham Bashi* (Chief Rabbi under the Ottoman Empire) of Yaffo, where he worked with Rav Kook, until he was exiled to Syria for helping persecuted Jews escape to the land of Israel. Upon his return a short while later he was elected as head of Mizrahi in Israel, going on to represent them in the Amsterdam conference. He was appointed to the position of *Rishon LeZion* in 1939, a position which he held until his death in 1953.

Hakham Ouziel published many works in his lifetime, most famously *Mishp'tei Uzziel*, nine volumes of halachic responsa, with many innovative rulings that were progressive for their time. Some of these included: permitting carrying out autopsies solely for medical students to learn, even on Jewish bodies; permitting electing women to public office; and attempting to introduce a clause in the marriage formula that would enable a court to annul a marriage if a woman was an *aguna*.

Hakham Ouziel is also known for his universalist worldview. He uses a pasuk from this week's parasha as a fundamental injunction for the social interaction and cooperation of all humanity. The Torah says:

וּבְחַרְתָּ בְּחַיִּים לְמַעַן תַּחֲיֶה אִתָּהּ וּוְרָעָד

'And you shall choose life; in order that you and your descendants shall live (Devarim 30:19).'



The idea of 'choosing life' (yes, the Torah got there before Trainspotting) according to Hakham Ouziel, shows that this life is not to be viewed as just a means to

an end, but rather that this world is an end in and of itself. What does it mean that this will result in 'you and your descendants living?' By viewing this world as inherently valuable, we continue life as a species, and contribute to a viable society. 'All existence is one body, comprised of many different components all joined together, creating the entire world. From this, many smaller worlds branch out... a person can only be complete when functioning as part of the wider world [from which he or she came].'

EDITOR'S CORNER

Here at Shabbat Lashem, we make a conscious effort to ensure that our publications are free of spelling errors, inconsistencies and syntactic clumsiness. However, we can never guarantee that our products are 100% mistake-free. With that in mind, we apologise for the fault in the headline last week; those responsible have been sacked. All future edishuns of Shab-

We apologise again for the fault in the spelling. Those responsible for sacking the people who have just been sacked, have been sacked.



WHAT'S GOING ON?

- Bnei Akiva were privileged to attend a special **reunion and tree planting ceremony at Thaxted Farm!** Thaxted was the site of a BA/Bachad **Hachshara** farm from 1944-1962 and helped prepare young Jewish refugees for aliyah (picture below).

- This past Sunday, Bnei Akiva joined Bushey United Synagogue at their **volunteers fair!**

- **Winter Machane** applicataions are now open! To sign up and for more information, visit **bauk.org/camps**.

- **Winter Machane tafkidim** applications are now open! For junior tafkidim, visit bauk.org/junior-tafkid, for senior tafkidim, visit bauk.org/senior-tafkid

- Join Bnei Akiva for a **sicha** and **selichot** every night at the London Bayit!

- **SBM** is returning to **Birmingham!** Featuring an evening of learning followed by selichot on Thursday 29th September.

- Bnei Akiva will be running services over **Yamim Noraim** at the Manchester Bayit, as well as **Yom Kippur** at the London Bayit.

- Shabbat shout-out to the **National Sviva Shabbaton** happening this weekend in Manchester! Over 100 madrichim-in-training from around the UK have gathered at the Manchester Bayit for a Shabbat of learning how to best impact the chanichim at Sviva.

- A **cocktail evening for Manchester and Leeds Bnei Akiva parents** will be taking place on 29th October! See poster below for more details.



PREPARE FOR YAMIM NORAIM WITH

BNEI AKIVA SELICHOT

@ THE LONDON BAYIT
BEGINNING SUNDAY 18TH
SEPTEMBER UNTIL YOM KIPPUR

MA'ARIV: 9:45PM
FOLLOWED BY SICHA
SELICHOT: AFTER 10:00PM

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN GIVING A SICHA OR LEADING SELICHOT, PLEASE CONTACT BEN AT CHINUCH@BAUK.ORG



ROSH HASHANA

DAY 1 - 26TH-27TH SEPT
Mincha 6:50pm - Speaker - Maariv 7:30pm
Shacharit 9:10am
Shofar & Mussaf 11:00am

DAY 2 - 27TH-28TH SEPT
Mincha 6:45pm - Speaker - Maariv 7:45pm
Shacharit 9:10am
Shofar & Mussaf 11:00am
Mincha 6:00pm - Speaker

YOM KIPPUR

FAST STARTS 6:23PM
Kol Nidre 6:30pm - Speaker 6:50pm -
followed by Tisch
Shacharit 9:15am - Yizkor 12:00pm -
Musaf 12:15pm

INTERVAL
Mincha 4:30pm
Sermon 6:00pm
Neilah 6:15pm
FAST ENDS 7:25PM

@ Northern Bayit

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