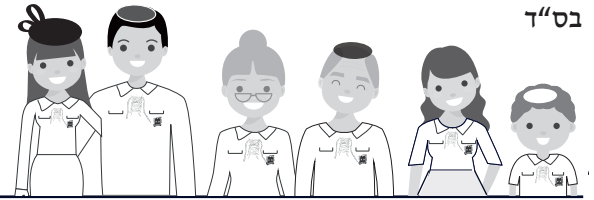


זכור את יום השבת לקדשו.
ששת ימים תעבד ועשית כל מלאכתך,
ויום השביעי שבת לה'

SHABBAT LASHEM

THE VOICE OF BNEI AKIVA UK

PARASHAT RE'EH
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MAKE TODAY A BLESSING ILAN WRESCHNER SHEVET TZION

ראה אנכי נתן לפניכם היום ברכה וקללה: את הברכה אשר תשמעו אל מצות ה' אלקיכם אשר אנכי מצוה אתכם היום: והקללה אם לא תשמעו אל מצות ה' אלקיכם וסרתם מן הדרך אשר אנכי מצוה אתכם היום ללכת אחרי אלקים אחרים אשר לא ידעתם:

"See, I present before you today a blessing and a curse: the blessing, that you obey the commandments of Hashem your God that I command you this day; and the curse, if you do not obey the commandments of Hashem your God, but turn away from the path that I command you this day and follow other gods, whom you have not known. (Devarim 11:26-28)

Here we are given an ultimatum, choose good or choose evil. One of the fundamental pillars of the Jewish faith is that we believe we have free will. Another is that we believe we will be rewarded or punished for our actions. These two beliefs are based on this pasuk. The Sforno asks, why isn't there a middle option? Why can't we have neither blessing nor curse? The answer is because being average is a non-Jewish concept. The Sforno believed that settling for the middle ground in life was the trait of the Nations of the World who approached life half-heartedly without seeking true meaning. However, for a Jew, we must always strive for the highest heights.

Rebbe Chanoch from Alexander has an interesting way of reading the first pasuk. Instead of reading it as, "See, I present before you today a blessing and a curse", he reorders the words to "See, I present before you the blessing and curse of today". Meaning, 'today' can either be a blessing or a curse. For the righteous, 'today' is a blessing. They approach life with an attitude of עשיו, אימתי לא עשיו, "if not now, when?" (Pirkei Avot 1:14). The importance of 'today'

fills the lives of the righteous with purpose and causes them to accomplish more than would otherwise be possible. However, for the wicked, overestimating the importance of 'today' is their downfall. They focus on the here and now and forget that there is an after-life still to come. They focus on the fleeting pleasures of this world and forget to prepare for the eternal gratification that is the world to come.

If we look closely at the pasuk, it appears that Moshe is telling the people that the blessing itself is "that you obey the commandments". Furthermore, the curse is "if you do not obey the commandments" - as opposed to the blessing being the reward and the curse being the punishment. This fits nicely with the Mishna in Pirkei Avot, 4:2, שמצוה גוררת מצוה ועבירה גוררת עבירה, a mitzvah causes a mitzvah, an averah (sin) causes an averah, the reward for a mitzvah is a mitzvah, the punishment for an averah is an averah'. The curse of not listening to the commandments is the fact that you did an averah. This leaves you distant from Hashem and liable to be punished. The curse isn't the punishment itself, it's us choosing to distance ourselves from Hashem. By contrast, the blessing isn't the reward for the mitzvot, it's the fact that by doing mitzvot many more mitzvot will come our way leaving us with a close relationship with Hashem. An example of this is one who frequently says yes to mitzvah opportunities will find that they become publicly known as a 'mitzvah doer' and shouldn't be surprised to see many more opportunities come their way. But if you always so no, people will simply stop asking.

Hashem has bestowed upon us free will, constantly. We can't switch it off. This means that every second we are choosing between blessing and curse. We are choosing between the 'today' of the righteous or the 'today' of the wicked. We are choosing between striving for greatness or settling for the middle-ground. May we all make the right choice and choose greatness.

ILAN WAS A MADRICH ON GIMMEL/ISRAEL MACHANE 5780.

London	In: 20:09 Out: 21:19	Oxford	In: 20:11 Out: 21:25	Leeds	In: 20:18 Out: 21:36
Manchester	In: 20:20 Out: 21:37	Bristol	In: 20:15 Out: 21:29	Liverpool	In: 20:23 Out: 21:40
Cambridge	In: 20:07 Out: 21:21	Birmingham	In: 20:16 Out: 21:31	Jerusalem	In: 18:48 Out: 20:01

Q&A WITH RAV JOEL

RAV JOEL KENIGSBURG | RAV SHALIACH



Question: After having missed Torah reading for so many weeks when shul was closed, should we be reading extra parshiyot on Shabbat to make up for the ones we missed?

Answer (continued): Last week we looked at the source of this Halacha of ‘making up’ missed parshiyot in the Or Zarua and quoted in the Rema. We saw how this could be viewed either as similar to ‘Tefillat Tashlumin’ whereby one has the opportunity (and obligation) to make up a missed tefilla, or could be viewed independently as part of the obligation to read the entire Torah publicly each year.

Furthermore, we saw that this entire halacha is subject to a dispute amongst the Rishonim and Achronim where many hold that it would not apply if a) more than one parasha was required to be made up (or if a double parasha was to be read as that week’s parasha) or b) parshiyot from a previous book of Chumash needed to be made up as well.

Poskim have pointed to several other mitigating factors in our current situation as well:

1) Commenting on the Rema’s ruling that parshiyot should be added in if they were previously missed, the Mishna Berurah (135:5) comments that this would apply in the case of an argument etc. where the Torah reading did not take place. This is based on the Sha’arei Ephrayim who writes that the requirement to make up missed parshiyot would only apply when the tzibbur got together but for some reason neglected to read from the Torah. However, if there had been no tzibbur that convened for tefilla, then it would not be required.

2) In the responsa Shvut Ya’akov, the

question appears about a shul that did not have a minyan every week – whether they would be required to read the parasha according to the usual order or whether they should resume from the last place they had read previously. He answers that they should follow the usual order, as the requirement to complete extra parshiyot would only apply in an exceptional case where the Torah reading had been missed once. If, however, the shul was closed on a regular basis, completing extra parshiyot each time would render the usual order of parshiyot hashavua meaningless. Similarly, when it is possible that shuls may be reopening and closing again, one could follow the same logic.

Other Poskim mention how since the Torah reading is an obligation of the community rather than the individual, if the majority or even some of those attending shul had publicly heard the previous Torah readings elsewhere then there would be no requirement for the rest of the tzibbur to read them again.

In summary, there are a variety of factors allowing for leniency regarding the additional Torah reading of missed parshiyot. Although some Poskim have argued that making up those parshiyot would be a requirement, many have argued that this is not necessary. Some (such as Rav Yosef Tzvi Rimon and Rav Hershel Schachter) have ruled that while there is no obligation, a community that wishes to make up those parshiyot may do so. Others (such as Rav Asher Weiss) have argued further that it is preferable not to make up those parshiyot at all.

Shabbat Shalom!

IF YOU HAVE ANY HALACHIC QUESTIONS PLEASE FEEL FREE TO CONTACT RAV JOEL AT RAV@BAUK.ORG. FOLLOW RAV JOEL ON FACEBOOK (RAV SHALIACH PAGE) AND ON TWITTER (@JOEL KENIGSBURG).

A TASTE FROM THE ARCHIVES: RE'EH 5772

THE KINDNESS OF A BIRD

This week's parasha explains which animals, birds and fish we are and are not allowed to eat. Judaism preaches a message of 'you are what you eat', and therefore, with this in mind, the animals which we are permitted to eat have characteristics which we might wish to emulate. Conversely, those which we are forbidden from eating possess characteristics and traits that we should not wish to emulate.

One of the animals mentioned in this week's Torah portion is the chasidah, the stork. The word chasidah comes from the Hebrew word chesed, meaning kindness. What is special about the chasidah that she merits this name? The Gemara teaches us that she is given this name because she is "benevolent to her kind". One might assume therefore that this animal would be kosher, as kindness is most certainly a trait we wish to possess. However, the chasidah is not kosher, so why is this so?

The Kotzker Rebbe explains that the problem lies within her benevolence to her own kind. What about others who are not her own kind? Having just returned from machane, this is most certainly a message we can understand and relate to. For every single person on machane, it's easy to be nice, friendly and helpful to those close to us. As chanichim, making sure your friends are feeling happy and involved comes naturally, but including those we are not so friendly with can be more of a challenge. The same can

be said for madrichim. When a member of your tzevet who is your friend is struggling and could do with a hand, you don't hesitate to help them out. However, when they are someone you are less close to, you may find excuses as to why you can't give them your time and support.

Beyond Machane, there is an important lesson to be learned here. Whilst showing kindness to your 'nearest and dearest' is commendable, it is clearly not enough, hence why the chasidah is not a kosher bird. To show true kindness

is to extend it to those who are more removed from us and this is definitely something we can and should all strive to do!

**THE PROBLEM
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KIND?**

THIS DVAR TORAH WAS WRITTEN BY EVE MINSKY (SHEVET ACHIYA) AND WAS FIRST PUBLISHED IN SHABBAT LASHEM VOLUME 18, ISSUE 43 ON 18TH AUGUST 2012. EVE WAS THE CHINUCH WORKER FOR 5772.

WE ARE CURRENTLY DIGITISING OUR HISTORICAL RECORDS AND CHINUCH MATERIALS. IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN SPONSORING OUR ARCHIVE PLEASE CONTACT ADAM AT OPERATIONS@BAUK.ORG.

WHAT'S GOING ON?

- Join us on Zoom and Facebook Live this Friday (14th August) for **Kabbalat Shabbat** from 7pm and Motzei Shabbat for **Havdalla** from 9.45pm lead by the madrichim and shlichim of Bnei Akiva!

- **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.

- Our final week of **Summer Machane 5780** is over! Kol Hakavod

to all of our amazing madrichim, sganim and roshim for all of their hard work and dedication, as well as for adapting brilliantly to new situations. With graffiti workshops, volunteering, ruach, barbeques, tochniot, kvutzot, tiyulim, and more, we're so proud of what has been achieved this summer!

- We are launching a **chesed initiative** planned by madrichim and chanichim who volunteered at GIFT this week: **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.

- Applications are now open for **Sviva 5781!** If you would like to be involved as a **Madrich, Sgan or Rosh** please fill out the application form at: bauk.org/sviva-registration-form. Don't miss your opportunity to shape the movement!

- Mazal tov to **Eitan Kropp** (Shevet Eitan) and **Yael Simon** (Shevet Lehava) on their engagement!

- 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 subtlety of language does Moshe use when referring to the curses described on Har Eval? (**See Rabbeinu Bachya on 11:28**)

2. Why is there an apparent contradiction in the command to sanctify the firstborn males among the cattle and flock? (**See Rashi on 15:19**)

SHABBAT SHALOM!!!

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