

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

SHABBAT LASHEM

THE VOICE OF BNEI AKIVA UK

PARASHAT SHELACH

26TH SIVAN 5782

24TH & 25TH JUNE 2022

VOLUME 32 ISSUE 34



בס"ד



FEAR BASED DECISION MAKING

ANOUSHKA GOLDMAN
SHEVET AVICHAI

In this week's parasha, **שְׁלַח**, we read of the **מורגלים** (spies) who went to investigate Eretz Yisrael, prior to the ascent of the Israelites into the Land.

**וַיַּעֲלוּ וַיִּתְּרוּ אֶת־הָאָרֶץ מִמִּדְבַּר־צֹן עַד־רְחֹב
לְבַא חֲמַת**

They went up and scouted the land, from the wilderness of Zin to Rehob, at Lebo-hamath. (Bamidbar 13:21)

When they came back to the Israelite encampment in the desert wilderness, ten of the **מורגלים** spewed fake news, marred by their own prejudices and lack of **אֱמוּנָה** (faith) in Hashem.

When describing Eretz Yisrael, a pasuk that stands out to me is

אָרֶץ אֲכָלֶת יוֹשְׁבֵיהָ הִוא

A Land that devours its inhabitants. (Bamidbar 13:32)

From all that we know about Israel, what does this mean about the land, and can this really be true? When one reads this, it seems as though the land is something that is destructive and ruins living things, that perhaps it is somewhere that humans cannot thrive as it is a harsh place.

If we look at Rashi's commentary on this pasuk, he explains that the land 'devouring' people is actually referring to the fact that they were burying their dead. He explains that Hashem was busying the people of Canaan with funeral processions so that it would be easier for **בני ישראל** to survey the land. The fact that they couldn't see this for the good, and on top of that, came back using such negative language, tells us a lot about the wavelength that most of the **מורגלים** were on. They were looking at every scenario they came across through murky glasses, clouded by their own negative outlook.

We see another example of this when we look at how they saw the fruit found in the land. Rather than thinking about how luscious this land may be that fruit can grow so large, they were instead thinking of the people that were consuming the fruit and how strong this would make them and thus harder to overcome in battle.

This is ultimately what proves to be the reason that the Israelites are not ready to enter the land. They couldn't see Hashem openly performing miracles to guide them and were instead led by their own fears. We can see from this parasha the errors that can be made when we make decisions based on being afraid of the consequences rather than looking at the wider picture and doing what is right.

**ANOUSHKA WILL BE THE CAMPS AND SOCIAL ACTION
WORKER FOR 5783**

SHABBAT TIMES

London	In 21:06 Out 22:37	Oxford	In 21:09 Out 22:44	Leeds	In 21:23 Out 23:08
Manchester	In 21:27 Out 23:07	Bristol	In 21:13 Out 22:46	Liverpool	In 21:26 Out 23:09
Cambridge	In 21:06 Out 22:43	Birmingham	In 21:16 Out 22:54	Jerusalem	In 19:13 Out 20:31

PARASHAT SHELACH: A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF THE MITZVAH OF NESACHIM

Rav Joel Kenigsberg



Many times throughout Sefer Bamidbar we can be left puzzled by the order of the Torah's description of events. The connection between the narrative and the details of specific mitzvot

mentioned immediately thereafter isn't always abundantly clear at first glance. One such example occurs in this week's parasha, following the story of the *meraglim* (spies).

After the tragic report that left Bnei Yisrael doomed to 40 years of wandering in the desert, the Torah provides details of the mitzvah of *nesachim* – accompaniments of flour and wine to be brought with certain korbanot. We might have expected these details to be mentioned earlier on in Sefer Vayikra, along with the rest of the laws of korbanot. Additionally, what connection is there specifically between *nesachim* and the sin of the spies?

The Ramban points out that this mitzvah would only apply to korbanot brought after the entry into Eretz Yisrael and not during the years in the desert. After the incident of the spies and the ensuing punishment, Bnei Yisrael may have lost all hope. If they could sin and lose the opportunity to enter the land, perhaps subsequent generations would make the same mistake. Their downfall could have led them to believe that it was but the first of many, and that the Jewish people would never make it into the Land of Israel!

In order to counteract this thought comes the mitzvah of *nesachim*. The Torah is teaching that there is no need to despair. Now, at the very moment that this generation had lost their opportunity, they were given a mitzvah that could only be fulfilled in the land of Israel, to reinforce the fact that a time would come when they would certainly enter the land.

The Sfat Emet explains a deeper meaning behind the *nesachim*, in conjunction with another two mitzvot which appear afterwards in the parasha: challah and tzitzit. Some commentators suggest that the spies brought back a negative report because they were reluctant to move from the miraculous, exclusively spiritual existence in the desert to the natural, physical-based life awaiting them in Eretz Yisrael and all the hardship it was to entail.

In the desert, all of their needs were taken care of miraculously. Food was provided by the manna falling from Heaven, water was provided by a rock that travelled along with them and protection and shelter came in the form of the Ananei Hakavod, the clouds that surrounded the camp.

The three mitzvot given at this point parallel these three miracles. Challah, separating a piece of dough and giving it to the Kohen, takes eating and transforms it into a spiritual pursuit. The liquids of water and wine are poured onto the mizbeach in the form of *nesachim*, in order to sanctify drink. Finally, clothing, which provides us with protection on the most immediate level, becomes enhanced through the addition of tzitzit, a reminder of Hashem's constant presence.

These three mitzvot are meant to show that life in the absence of constant miracles need not be intrinsically mundane. On the contrary, the potential for kedusha is everywhere, and it is up to us to recognize Hashem's presence in all that we do.

Rav Joel Kenigsberg is the Rav Shaliach for Bnei Akiva UK. This is Rav Joel's last article for Shabbat Lashem, before he and his family return to Israel in the summer.

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, as part of our Moreshet Heritage Project, it looks at the history of Jews in Yemen.

The Teimani Jews are an ancient community. Several different legends purport to tell the tale of how they came to live there in the first place: one tradition suggests that Shlomo sent Jewish merchant marines to Yemen to prospect for gold and silver with which to adorn the Bet Hamikdash, another claims that Yemeni tribes converted to Judaism after the Queen of Sheba's visit to Shlomo. The Jews of Sana believe that their ancestors settled in Yemen forty-two years before the destruction of the Bayit Rishon, while some historians suggest they migrated there from Babylon. One legend states that when Ezra commanded the Jews to return to Jerusalem they disobeyed, whereupon he pronounced a ban upon them. As a result of this local tradition, it is said that no Jew of Yemen names their child Ezra.



Archaeological records referring to Judaism in Yemen exist dating back to the Himyarite Kingdom, established in Yemen in 110 BCE. According to local legends, the kingdom's aristocracy converted to Judaism in the 6th century CE – and a Christian missionary, Theophilus, who came to Yemen in the mid-fourth century, complained that he had found too many Jews! Jews became especially numerous and powerful in the southern part of Arabia, a rich and fertile land of incense and spices and a way station on the spice road. In the 6th century, a powerful Jewish tribal leader, Yusuf Asar Yatar, emerged. Not much is known about him, but some historical sources say that he was a militaristic leader who forced Christian villagers to convert to Judaism or be killed.

Following the advent of Islam, Yemen came under Islamic rule. In the early days the Jews were assured freedom of religion in exchange for payment of a tax that afforded them protection by the state as second-class citizens. In the 10th century, the Zaydi clan seized power and began persecuting Jews.

Jewish intellectuals in Yemen wrote in both Hebrew and Arabic and engaged in the same literary endeavours as the Muslim majority. 12th century documents from the Cairo Geniza (in Cambridge) describe a thriving Jewish community in Aden led by the prominent Bundar family.

MENTAL HEALTH AND HALACHA EVENT

On Sunday evening, Bogrim and Sixth-Formers were privileged to hear from Rabbi Yoni Rosensweig about the work that he does surrounding mental health and Halacha. He spoke about the importance of both living a halachic lifestyle and being mentally well, giving examples of the steps that can be taken to maximise both.



Mazkir, Sam Prais said, 'it is so important for young people to be educated about topics surrounding mental health and its relationship with Halacha. Thank you to Rabbi Rosensweig and The Habura for partnering with us for this event!'

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 the **final Va'ad of the year** with a **BBQ** on Tuesday evening at 8pm!

- **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

- Do you have a **parent or grandparent with an interesting life story** who you'd

like to interview for our **Moreshet archive?** Contact chinuch@bauk.org for more info!

- **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 (bneiakivauk) to get regular updates with what is going on in the Tnua.**

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

chinuch@bauk.org for more info!'."/>


Bnei Akiva invites all Bogrot returning from their gap years to join our Lishmah Bet Midrash Programme!

What? Open Bet Midrash followed by a choice of Chaburot, led by educators and peers

Where? 2 Hallswelle Rd

When? Every Tuesday evening 8-10pm

Come and be part of this dynamic Makom Torah!

BNEI AKIVA  Contact Dania at chinuch@bauk.org for more info!

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