

In memory of all those brutally murdered in the war on Israel,
including the fallen soldiers of the IDF

בס"ד

8 FEBRUARY 2025 | 10 SHEVAT 5785

VOLUME 38 | #20

DAF HASHAVUA

בְּשַׁלַּח | BESHALACH

SHABBAT ENDS:

London 5.51pm
Birmingham 5.56pm
Bournemouth 6.03pm
Cardiff 6.07pm
Dublin 6.12pm
Edinburgh 5.56pm
Glasgow 6.02pm
Hull 5.53pm
Leeds 5.52pm
Liverpool 6.03pm
Manchester 5.58pm
Nottingham 5.57pm
Sheffield 5.58pm
Southend 5.47pm
Southport 6.04pm
Jerusalem 5.58pm

Shabbat Shira

Tu Bishvat is on Thursday



*"Moshe stretched out his hand
over the sea, and God moved
the sea with a strong east wind
all night, and He turned the sea
to dry land and the water split"
(Shemot 14:21)*

**בְּשַׁלַּח
BESHALACH**

4th Sidra in:
**שְׁמוֹת
SHEMOT**

By Numbers:
**116 VERSES
1,681 WORDS
6,423 LETTERS**

Headlines:
**CROSSING OF AND
THE SONG AT
THE SEA**

BESHALACH:
Artscroll p.366
Hertz p.265
Soncino p.407

HAFTARAH:
Artscroll p.1152
Hertz p.281
Soncino p.434

Sidra Summary

1ST ALIYA (KOHEN) – SHEMOT 13:17-14:8

After Pharaoh sends the Israelites out of Egypt, God does not lead them on a straight path through the land of the Pelishtim (Philistines) towards Cana'an (later Israel), but rather towards the Sea of Reeds. Moshe (Moses) is carrying Yosef's (Joseph) bones, as Yosef had requested before his death (see Bereishit 50:25). A pillar of cloud guides the Israelites by day, and a pillar of fire lights up their journey at night. God tells Moshe to turn back in the direction of Egypt. God hardens the heart of Pharaoh, who pursues the Israelites with his armed chariots.

2ND ALIYA (LEVI) – 14:9-14

The Egyptians catch up with the Israelites, who are encamped by the Sea. Seeing the approaching army, the people cry out in prayer, and also ask Moshe why they left Egypt only to die in the desert. Moshe tells them not to fear; they will experience God's salvation.

3RD ALIYA (SHLISHI) – 14:15-25

Moshe raises his staff; an easterly wind blows and the Sea splits. The Israelites walk through the dry channel, the water providing a wall on either side of them. The Egyptians enter the Sea but struggle to move forward. *Point to Consider: Why did God move the sea with a "strong easterly wind"? (14:21)*

4TH ALIYA (REVI) – 14:26-15:26

Moshe raises his staff; the Sea closes on the Egyptians, drowning them. The Israelites see the drowned Egyptians on the seashore. Together with Moshe, they sing the Song at the Sea (*Shirat HaYam*) which celebrates God's miraculous salvation. The nation travels on, experiencing three days in the desert without water. They come to a place called Marah, where the water is too bitter to drink.

They complain to Moshe, who is shown a tree by God. Moshe throws the tree into the water, thus sweetening it.

5TH ALIYA (CHAMISHI) – 15:27-16:10

The Israelites arrive in the Sin Desert and complain to Moshe that they are hungry. God tells Moshe that he will send down a daily portion of 'bread' from the heavens. Moshe tells the people they will also get meat in the evening.

6TH ALIYA (SHISHI) – 16:11-36

The heavenly bread – called '*man'* (manna) – falls between two layers of dew (Rashi). Each household gets a daily portion sufficient for its members. Moshe tells them not to leave any over until the next day. Some people ignore this warning; their manna becomes infested. A double portion falls on Friday. Moshe tells them to use the excess for Shabbat and not to go out to collect any manna on Shabbat. Again, some ignore this instruction. Moshe tells Aharon to preserve some manna in a container, as a reminder to future generations.

7TH ALIYA (SHEVI) – 17:1-16

The Israelites travel to Refidim, but again do not find water. God tells Moshe to strike a rock with his staff; water emerges from the rock. Amalek attacks the Israelites at Refidim. Yehoshua (Joshua) leads the battle against them, whilst Moshe, Aharon and Chur (Moshe's nephew) ascend a nearby hill. Whenever Moshe raises his arms, Israel overcomes Amalek. Aharon and Chur support Moshe's tired arms. Yehoshua is victorious.

HAFTARAH

Devorah was a prophetess and a judge. The haftarah, from the Book of Judges, includes the song that Devorah sang to celebrate the defeat of the evil Ca'anianite general, Sisera. This defeat was facilitated by the bravery of Yael, who attacked and killed Sisera with a tent peg.



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Rising Above Our Nature



**RABBI BARRY
LERER**

Central
Synagogue

"Moshe stretched out his hand over the sea... and the sea split" (Shemot 14:21)

In Psalm 114, we read a description of how the sea parted: "The sea saw and fled". The Rabbis ask, "What did the sea see to make it flee?" and they answer, "It saw the bones of Yosef (Joseph)", which the Children of Israel carried with them from Egypt on their journey to the Promised Land.

What was it about the bones of Yosef specifically which would make the sea part?

Perhaps we can suggest that the greatness of Yosef's life is that he acted against his nature. We can point at how he resisted the temptation of Potiphar's wife, going against his natural impulse when she tried over and over again to seduce him.

But there is an even greater example.

After Yosef had been reunited with his brothers in Egypt, he forgave them for their past actions against him. Not only did Yosef forgive them genuinely and wholeheartedly and not take revenge on them for what they did to him, but there is a fascinating

Midrash which takes it further. It tells us that during the seventeen years that Yosef's father, Yaakov (Jacob), was living with him in Egypt, Yosef avoided ever being alone with his beloved father!

Even after 22 years of separation and wanting to catch up on lost time, Yosef prevented himself from being alone with his father. Why? The reason was simply to prevent a situation where Yaakov would ask Yosef how it was that he, after being reportedly killed by wild beasts

many years earlier, ended up as Viceroy of Egypt! If Yaakov would have asked him about that, Yosef would have had to reveal his brothers' bad behavior. He was determined to avoid this conversation at all costs.

These are genuine examples of going against one's nature. When the sea 'saw' this wonderful character trait of Yosef, it decided that, if Yosef could act against his nature, it too should be able to act against its nature and it therefore parted, allowing the Children of Israel to go through and escape the pursuing Egyptian army.

There is a timeless lesson for us, that when we are put in a challenging situation and we rise above our natural tendencies (for example, not taking revenge on someone who slighted us or embarrassed us) we gain so much, maybe even the power to split seas!

**When the sea 'saw'
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able to act against
its nature and it
therefore parted...**



In loving memory of Harav Yisrael ben Eliyahu z"l

Together We Rise: US Women's Shabbat



**DANIELLA
NEIFELD**

Community
Participation Manager

In this week's parasha, we witness several fascinating events, including the miraculous splitting of the sea and the war with Amalek. Besides these, the receiving of quails in the desert and Miriam's song stand out. These two events reappear in Parashat Beha'alotecha but in a very different context. In our parasha, the quails are a gift, and Miriam's song is a joyous hymn. However, in Beha'alotecha, the quails become a punishment for complaints, and Miriam is punished for speaking *Lashon Harah*. How did Parashat Beha'alotecha become a 'gone wrong' version of Parashat Beshalach?

The answer lies in the names. 'Beshalach' comes from '*shalach*,' meaning 'sent out.' When we were sent out of Egypt, it was like a red-carpet event, with God as our ultimate guide. The journey was so extraordinary that Miriam sang praises, and we received quails and manna. However, as time passed, we were expected to become more independent and achieve a higher level of spirituality on our own. This is where '*aliyah*,' meaning 'rising up' (the root of Beha'alotecha), comes into play. We were given the chance to elevate ourselves and build a relationship with God, which proved to be challenging.

Rabbi Akiva Tatz beautifully explains the Beshalach-Beha'alotecha conflict. He says that God initially provides spirituality on a silver platter to show us what we can achieve. Then He takes it away so that we can strive to attain it ourselves. When this happens, we might feel abandoned and confused, but we should remember that the spirituality we experienced before is attainable, and we must work to reach it again.

Netivot Shalom (Rabbi Sholom Noach Berezovsky, 1911-2000) describes this spiritual roller coaster as a daily occurrence, symbolised by the transition from day to night. During the day, God's kindness is evident, and we serve Him with love – like the experience in Beshalach. At night, His kindness is less obvious, and we must rely on faith, serving Him with reverence – like the experience in Beha'alotecha.

We are currently living in times of darkness, and yet, Jewish women have risen up to spread light.

Since October 7, Jewish women have shown remarkable strength and faith, much like Miriam did in her time. Though the Exodus from Egypt was miraculous, Miriam's song was not spontaneous. She had planned for this moment for years, even during enslavement. She stood guard over her baby brother Moshe (Moses) when he was placed into the River Nile, and when the Jewish people were freed, Miriam had instruments ready, always believing this day

would come. In response to the dark times in which we are living, in Israel and the UK, numerous initiatives have been launched to support communities, provide aid and foster unity. These efforts include support groups, psychological assistance and networks to help those affected by recent events. UK missions have been organised to volunteer in Israel. Those unable to go have bought goods to support soldiers and victims. Challah bakes, musical *Tefillot*, vigils for hostages and yellow ribbons have been held and displayed across the UK.

Even in the darkest times, Jewish women have shown their faith and strength. Their actions reflect the enduring spirit of Jewish women, who continue to demonstrate their unwavering resilience in the face of adversity. Their actions are a modern-day echo of Miriam's leadership and faith, inspiring us all to rise to the challenges we face and to serve with both love and reverence, no matter the circumstances.



In memory of Harav Yitzchak Yoel ben Shlomo Halevi z"l

Tu Bishvat and Environmental Responsibility



**HANNAH
GERSON**

Social Responsibility
Manager, US Chesed

The concept of *le'dor va'dor*—from generation to generation—is central to Judaism. It highlights the importance of passing down traditions while equipping future generations with tools, values and responsibilities.

Tu Bishvat, the 15th of Shevat, is the Jewish New Year for Trees, marking the start of the agricultural cycle in Israel. Traditionally, it involves eating fruits, especially those from Israel like figs, dates and pomegranates. Modern observances include planting trees and promoting environmental awareness, reflecting Jewish values of nature stewardship.

This theme of preserving nature for future generations can be seen in the well-known Talmudic story of *Choni Hamegadela*, Choni the Circle Maker. One day, Choni saw a man planting a carob tree. Curious, Choni asked, “How long will it take for this tree to bear fruit?” The man replied, “Seventy years.” Choni was puzzled and asked, “Do you expect to live long enough to eat its fruit?” The man answered, “I found a world with carob trees because my ancestors planted them for me. Likewise, I plant for my children and grandchildren.”

Tu Bishvat offers a chance to teach younger generations about environmental responsibility, strengthening their connection to

the earth and inspiring them to view sustainability as a key aspect of Jewish life.

The Torah's linguistic nuances invite deeper analysis, emphasising humanity's bond with the environment. For instance, the Hebrew word for man, *adam*, shares its root with *adama*, the word for earth, highlighting a fundamental Jewish principle: the earth is not a resource to exploit but a Divine trust placed in our care. Protecting the earth is both a spiritual duty and a practical imperative.

In today's world, environmental challenges like climate change, deforestation and pollution require urgent action. Although the scale of these issues can seem daunting, Jewish teachings encourage us to focus on small, meaningful actions that collectively make a significant impact.

‘Dorot’, the environmental initiative of the United Synagogue, underscores the importance of leading by example. By integrating simple eco-friendly practices into daily life—such as recycling, repurposing and reducing waste—we can model sustainable living for the next generation. These actions align with the Jewish principle of *ba'al tashchit*, the prohibition against unnecessary destruction, which reminds us to use resources wisely and sparingly.

Tu Bishvat's traditions provide practical responses to environmental challenges. Planting trees, for instance, symbolises hope and renewal while offering tangible

benefits like improving air quality and reducing carbon dioxide. The festival also encourages reflecting on daily habits and adopting sustainable practices, such as reducing disposables, reusing materials, and transitioning to greener energy and transportation options.

As we celebrate Tu Bishvat, ‘Dorot’ reminds us of the principle of *Olam Chesed Yibaneh*, the world is built on kindness. By taking responsibility for the earth, we can leave a legacy of hope, renewal and harmony with nature for our children and grandchildren. Small but impactful actions—rooted in Jewish values—can honour our role as stewards of creation and help secure a greener future for generations to come.



Jewish artists you want to (re)discover

BY: **TATIANA VON BEELEN**

Senior Graphic Designer and Brand Lead
at the United Synagogue



NATHAN ALTMAN

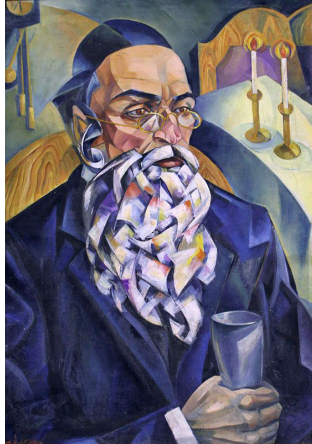
1889 – 1970
Vinnytsia, Russian Empire – Leningrad, USSR

Nathan Altman was born in 1889 in Vinnytsia, Ukraine. His father, Isai, a small trader, died when Nathan was just four. Soon after, his grandfather also passed away. Nathan's mother left him to be raised by his grandmother and emigrated to the United States to escape hardship and anti-Jewish pogroms.

Despite extreme poverty, Nathan completed his education at a cheder and at a state school. A talented artist from a young age, he later reflected: "I endowed animals and objects with human feelings... Sitting under the table, I would draw with chalk on the floor, and received paper and pencils only much later."

In 1902, he moved to Odessa for art school, embracing Impressionism, but feeling that the academic style was not for him. Returning to Vinnytsia, he painted portraits to fund study in Europe. In Paris, he lived in "La Ruche" (the beehive), a Montparnasse dormitory for struggling artists like Chagall, Soutine and Lipchitz. Chagall famously remarked, "In the Hive, you either froze to death or became famous."

Jewish culture and themes were important to Altman's art. He co-founded "The Jewish Society for the Encouragement of the Plastic Arts," creating a platform for Jewish artists. His series of biblical illustrations, such as *King David*, reflected his deep engagement with Jewish identity and tradition, blending modernist aesthetics with spiritual themes.



Shabbat Eve, c.1910.
Courtesy of Wikipedia.org

His costumes and set designs for performances at the Jewish Theatre explored folklore and contemporary issues within the Jewish community.

Altman's film work, such as his contributions to *Jewish Happiness*, a movie based on Sholom Aleichem's novels, reflected the struggles and resilience of Jewish life, drawing on symbolic imagery and vibrant motifs rooted in Jewish art and culture.

Moving back to Russia, Altman quickly captured the attention of the Silver Age bohemia with his charm and talent. During this period, he created one of his most famous works, the portrait of the renowned poet, Anna Akhmatova. This portrait combines cubist forms, colour



Jewish Mourning, 1911.
Courtesy of Wikipedia.org

contrasts and angular lines, breaking conventions to convey Akhmatova's mood and character with striking intensity and skill. After the October Revolution of 1917, the Bolsheviks sought visionary artists, and the 28-year-old Altman emerged as one of their key figures. His talents extended to book design, theatre and cinema, including collaborations with legendary directors such as Solomon Mikhoels, the artistic director of the Moscow State Jewish Theatre.

Despite international acclaim, his career was stifled by Stalinist restrictions in the 1930s. Forced to abandon painting, he turned to design, focusing on stamps, books and illustration.

Altman's innovative blending of modernism with Jewish themes left a profound impact, preserving the vibrancy of Jewish culture within his avant-garde legacy.

Nathan Altman passed away in Leningrad on 12 December 1970.

THE TRIBE WEEKLY

PARASHAT BESHALACH

7-8 FEBRUARY | 10 SHEVAT

Beshalach and Tu Bishvat



MIRI SUGARMAN

Youth Director at South Hampstead Synagogue

The highlight of this week's parasha is when *Bnei Yisrael* (the Israelites) walk across the *Yam Suf*, the Reed Sea. The Torah tells us that they walked through on dry land and the *Midrash* adds that there were fruit trees growing out of the walls of water with fruit for the children to eat! How can this be and what does it teach us?

This coming week, we will celebrate Tu Bishvat, the birthday of the trees. Although it will take quite some time for the trees here in the UK to bloom, we know that in Israel the almond trees are beginning to grow leaves and flowers. It seems funny to celebrate the birthday of

the natural world when we look outside and it's frozen and the trees are bare, but Tu Bishvat can be a reminder to have hope and faith in God. When we are deep in the middle of winter and it seems like there is no way the trees will grow, we have a day to celebrate them and look forward to when they will begin to flower again.

This is also the lesson to learn from Parashat Beshalach and the fruit trees growing out of the walls of the Reed Sea. *Bnei Yisrael* have taken a huge leap of faith, almost literally, in following Moshe (Moses) out of Egypt and trusting in God to look after them in the desert. As they approach the Reed Sea, they become scared and doubtful, and cry out to Moshe: "What have you done to us, taking us out of Egypt!" But Moshe answers them: "Do not be afraid", because God will protect you and provide for you!

And we see that when *Bnei Yisrael* trust in God and head into the sea, they are not only protected from the Egyptians, but also provided for with miraculous fruit (and later in the parasha, manna). So, when we celebrate Tu Bishvat this year, let's remember how God provided trees for us when we left Egypt to comfort us and how that shows that He will always protect and provide for us.

Shabbat Shalom!

Parasha Wordsearch

Find these words in the grid. The words can go in any direction and can share letters as they cross over each other.

O	I	P	S	P	L	C	O	B	E	O	N
C	Z	D	A	K	T	U	D	N	A	L	W
B	H	K	P	R	E	P	C	V	E	F	U
I	C	R	S	E	A	O	Y	Y	W	X	S
I	M	O	S	H	E	S	P	G	R	O	P
V	R	C	T	M	M	H	H	F	E	C	W
M	B	K	R	K	R	G	M	A	N	N	A
H	J	K	J	O	H	K	P	E	U	O	T
E	N	C	E	J	I	B	A	I	O	K	E
T	V	A	M	A	L	E	K	S	N	J	R
A	W	Z	N	H	C	J	N	U	K	N	I
V	I	V	P	O	P	R	B	G	N	O	S

- MANNA
- EGYPT
- SEA
- LAND
- WATER
- MOSHE
- AMALEK
- SONG
- PARASHA
- ROCK



TRIBE SCRIBE