

DAF HASHAVUA

בהעלתך | BEHA'ALOTECHA

SHABBAT ENDS:

London: 10.18pm
 Birmingham: 10.32pm
 Bournemouth: 10.26pm
 Cardiff: 10.38pm
 Dublin: 10.57pm
 Edinburgh: 11.17pm
 Glasgow: 11.25pm
 Hull: 10.50pm
 Leeds: 10.43pm
 Liverpool: 10.55pm
 Manchester: 10.49pm
 Nottingham: 10.44pm
 Sheffield: 10.50pm
 Southend: 10.13pm
 Southport: 11.00pm
 Jerusalem: 8.25pm

"Speak to Aharon and say to him: When you kindle the lamps..."

(Bemidbar 8:2)



SIDRA BREAKDOWN

בְּהַעֲלֹתֶךָ BEHA'ALOTECHA

3rd Sidra in:

בְּמִדְבָּר BEMIDBAR

By Numbers:

136 VERSES
1,840 WORDS
7,055 LETTERS

Headlines:
**JOURNEYS IN
THE DESERT**

BEHA'ALOTECHA:

Artscroll p.774
Hertz p.605
Koren Sacks p.923
Soncino p.838

HAFTARAH:

Artscroll p.1182
Hertz p.620
Koren Sacks p.1563
Soncino p.857

SIDRA SUMMARY

1ST ALIYA (KOHEN) – BEMIDBAR 8:1-14

God tells Moshe (Moses) to instruct Aharon (Aaron), the *Kohen Gadol* (High Priest), to light the Menorah every day in the *Mishkan* (Tabernacle). God tells Moshe to appoint the Levi'im to their service in the *Mishkan*. This involves bringing two animal offerings, the people placing their hands upon the heads of the Levi'im and each Levi being physically lifted in the air and waved by Moshe and Aharon.

2ND ALIYA (LEVI) – 8:15-26

The tribe of Levi is to take over the role that had been designated for the firstborn, who were sanctified on the night of the Exodus from Egypt, when the Egyptian firstborn were slain and the Israelite firstborn survived.

Point to Consider: *Why were the firstborn dismissed from their role? (see Rashi to 8:17)*

3RD ALIYA (SHLISHI) – 9:1-14

In the second year after the Exodus, on 14 Nisan, God commands the people to bring their Pesach offerings. There are people who are ritually impure, having recently come into contact with a dead person. Unable to bring an offering, they come to Moshe and Aharon and express their desire not to miss out. God tells Moshe that they can have a second chance, a month later, on what becomes known as *Pesach Sheni* ('the second Pesach').

4TH ALIYA (REVI'I) – 9:15-10:10

A cloud covers the *Mishkan* by day, with a fiery appearance at night. The Israelites remain encamped until the cloud lifts, which is the signal to journey on. The duration of time during which the cloud covers the *Mishkan* varies. God tells Moshe to make two silver trumpets to summon the people before travelling in the desert. The trumpets are also to be blown when the nation is at war, in order to evoke Divine mercy, as well as to accompany communal offerings on Shabbat and festival days.

5TH ALIYA (CHAMISHI) – 10:11-34

In the second year after the Exodus, on 20 Iyar, the cloud lifts and the nation journeys from the Sinai desert to the Paran desert. The Torah describes the order of the tribes' journeying and the different stages of dismantling and erecting the *Mishkan*. Moshe asks his father-in-law Yitro, referred to here as Chovav, to join the nation on their journey.

6TH ALIYA (SHISHI) – 10:35-11:29

When the *Aran* (Ark) would start its miraculous journey in front of the nation, Moshe would appeal to God to scatter His enemies. The people complain. God sends a fatal fire against them, until Moshe pleads for mercy on their behalf. The 'rabble' then complain about the manna, which does not taste as good as the food in Egypt. God is angered. Moshe says he is helpless to deal with the nation's complaints. God tells him to appoint 70 elders to assist in leading the nation. God tells Moshe that, in response to their complaints, the nation will be given meat for a whole month, until they are sick of it. The 70 elders are appointed and are given prophetic powers.

Point to Consider: *Why are there inverted letter 'nuns' placed before and after the first verse of this Aliyah? (see Rashi to 10:35)*

7TH ALIYA (SHEVI'I) – 11:30-12:16

A wind blows quails into the camp. The people gather the quails and start eating them, but God sends 'a mighty blow' against the people for their original complaints. Miriam and Aharon speak negatively about Moshe. God rebukes them and Miriam develops a *tzara'at* skin affliction. Moshe prays for her recovery. Miriam is quarantined outside the camp for seven days, during which the people do not journey.

HAFTARAH (ZECHARIA 2:14-4:7)

The prophet Zecharia relates a vision in which an angel visits Yehoshua the *Kohen Gadol* and chastises him, as symbolised by Yehoshua's soiled garments. The angel also shows Zecharia a Menorah and two olives trees to provide oil for lighting it, indicating that the Second Temple will not be built by use of force, but by God's spirit.



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United Synagogue Daf Hashavua

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WHEN OTHERS SUCCEED

BY: **RABBI DANIEL STURGES**

St Albans United Synagogue

There is a striking moment towards the end of this week's *parasha*.

Two men, Eldad and Meidad, suddenly begin to prophesy in the camp, away from Moshe (Moses), away from the elders. A young man witnessing this seems to be alarmed and runs to Moshe to report it. Yehoshua (Joshua), Moshe's student for many years, perceiving this as a threat to Moshe's leadership and a slight to his honour, says, "My lord Moshe, stop them!" (*Bemidbar* 11:28).

Moshe responds with remarkable generosity: "Are you jealous for my sake? I wish that all God's people were prophets and that God would put His spirit upon each of them!" (v.29).

Moshe understands something profound about leadership, something that many leaders miss. Leadership can be about power, or it can be about something else entirely.

Rabbi Sacks zt"l captures this distinction beautifully. "Power works by division... the more you share, the less you have."¹ If leadership is about holding onto power, then others become a threat, and their success needs to be thwarted.

But there is another way of leading. Not through power,

but through influence. And influence, writes Rabbi Sacks, "works by multiplication... the more you share, the more you have."

This is the leadership of Moshe. He wants what is best for the people. He wants every individual to have a meaningful relationship with God, to thrive in their spiritual lives. He recognises that his success as a leader is not just in the strength of the nation, but in the success of every individual within it.

That is why Moshe is not jealous. He does not see the prophecy of Eldad and Meidad as a threat; he sees it as a gift. There are now two more enlightened people who can work alongside him in shaping this people into a "kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (*Shemot* 19:6).

There is an additional, personal element to this. How we view the successes of others impacts our own sense of wellbeing. It is a well-known psychological phenomenon that when we compare ourselves to others, when we measure our own worth in terms of the achievements of others, our own wellbeing is compromised. Recent studies² have confirmed that our wellbeing is shaped less by how successful we

“ Power works by division... the more you share, the less you have. Influence works by multiplication... the more you share, the more you have.”¹

– Rabbi Sacks zt"l

are in absolute terms, and more by how we compare our achievements to those of the people around us. When we view others' success with jealousy, or as a threat, it is our own happiness that suffers.

Moshe is entirely free of that mindset. He hears that others are prophesying and is delighted. He is not comparing; he is building.

When people around us succeed – friends, family, colleagues – when they grow and achieve, perhaps even in areas where we would have liked to succeed, how do we respond? How do we feel? Do we feel that we are in some way diminished? Or do we recognise that something positive has been added to the world we live in?

A world in which more people grow, achieve and flourish is a better world for all of us.

¹ *Covenant & Conversation, Power or Influence? Beha'alotecha* 5774

² Eg. P.Kraft and B.Kraft, *The Income–Happiness Nexus: Social Comparison and Wellbeing*, *Frontiers in Psychology*, 2023.



THE COMMENTATORS: THE CHIZKUNI

BY: **SHIRA JACKSON**
US Education



Name: Rabbi Chizkiyah ben Manoach
Known as: The Chizkuni
When: 13th Century
When: Northern France
Writings: Commentary on Chumash



The Chizkuni lived in a world marked by Crusader violence, forced disputations, and intensifying Christian pressure on Jewish life.

His exegetical style reflects that world. The Chizkuni writes with brevity and clarity, committed to the straightforward meaning of the text. He draws heavily on the northern French school – Rashi, Rashbam, Bechor Shor, Ibn Ezra - often synthesising their insights without naming them. Living in a time when Jewish life was precarious and tradition under scrutiny, he emphasises loyalty, moral integrity, and the dignity of mitzvah observance. His commentary is not philosophical or polemical; it is a steady, faithful voice that seeks to preserve the reliability of Torah in an unreliable world.

Very little is known about his personal life, but some are of the opinion that his father was Manoah of Béziers and, on the basis of a section in the rhymed introduction to the Chizkuni's work, conjecture that Manoah was tortured at a time of religious persecution. His commentary was prompted by his wish to memorialise his father.

In *Beha'alotecha*, Miriam and Aharon speak about Moshe's separation from his wife, and Miriam - who herself is a prophetess - assumes that Moshe's prophetic status is

comparable to her own. "Has God spoken only to Moshe? Hasn't He spoken to us as well?" (*Bemidbar* 12:2). She is not attacking Moshe maliciously; she is equating herself and Aharon with him. The Chizkuni reads her words as a misunderstanding of Moshe's unique role. Miriam imagines prophecy as a shared category, a spectrum on which she and Moshe stand at different points but within the same frame. God's response (*Bemidbar* 12:7) - "*In all My household, he is faithful*" - is meant to correct that assumption. Moshe is not simply another prophet with a higher "wattage"; he is categorically different.

It is here that the Chizkuni offers a striking expansion: "*It is known to all that he (Moshe) saw of the Divine Presence what no other prophet ever saw, for he was the father of the prophets.*"

This is the heart of the Chizkuni's reading. Moshe is not merely the greatest prophet; he is the origin, the prototype, the *father* of all prophetic experience. And what defines that fatherhood is not only unparalleled vision but unparalleled *faithfulness*. He guards the Divine word with absolute integrity. The Chizkuni then brings a quote from *Mishlei* Proverbs (11:13) "*Ne'eman ruach mechaseh davar*" - "a faithful spirit conceals a matter" - to show that

“ Moshe is not merely the greatest prophet; he is the origin, the prototype, the *father* of all prophetic experience.

Moshe's greatness lies not in what he says, but in what he does not say.

This emphasis on Moshe as "father of prophets" is not incidental. It is the Chizkuni's interpretive fingerprint - and perhaps also his personal, emotional one. His own father, according to tradition, lost his right hand *al kiddush Hashem*, refusing to betray Jewish practice even under threat. He had a father whose loyalty to Torah cost him physically, a father whose faithfulness was visible on his body. When the Chizkuni describes Moshe as the "father of prophets," defined by unwavering loyalty, he is not only interpreting a verse; he is showcasing a model of spiritual fatherhood he knew intimately.

Moshe becomes, in the Chizkuni's view, the archetype of a father whose faithfulness to Torah shapes generations - just as his own father's unwavering loyalty to God shaped him.



THE JEWS OF LONDON: AN EAST END PILGRIMAGE? - PART 1

BY: **BEN VOS**

Head of Community Development

In 2019, Rabbi Yoni Birnbaum and I created a Jewish history walking tour of London. [The Jews of London](#) can be completed in person or online. Seven years later, the decision we made to concentrate on the East End seems to me inevitable. But should it be just a start?

Memory Lane

'Jewish London' walking tours routinely centre on the eastern sliver of the City, opening up to the East End from Aldgate. Nearby is the riverside iron gate by the Tower through which, in 1290, our distant ancestors fled. On the same slimy spot, their descendants disembarked into Victorian London, where toil and vulnerability awaited them.

This place had to be our focus. My immediate definition of 'Jewish London' was rooted in immigration and its Cockney aftermath. But why did I concentrate on what was essentially a stepping stone to better things? Nobody has been sacked from a sweatshop for not working through Shabbat for a long time. Yet still we peer up at the Huguenot lofts and jerry-built tenements, imagining the struggles of our forefathers. Meanwhile, middle-class synagogues from a generation later, such as the eclectic and attractive Southwest London shul by Wandsworth Common, are hardly known.

My aspiration now is to follow

the Jews outwards. From the 1650s, Richmond and Highgate were home to contractors, who supplied Oliver Cromwell and the first Duke of Marlborough. Highbury in the 1880s was packed with merchants and manufacturers. In the 1930s, there was Dollis Hill (whose congregants built an ultra-modernist synagogue), Willesden and Kilburn, and scores of shopfronts which bore the names of Jews who, in many families, were the first graduates of Regent Street Polytechnic, or the first freeholders. When I first worked on the walking tour though, I did not consider these people.

"It's hard to be a Jew", but is it still?

In this week's *sidra*, *Beha'alotecha*, the people of Israel take their first journey through the Wilderness, protected by God Himself. Yet "the people were as murmurers, speaking evil in the ears of God." Under God's protection, literally guided by a divine cloud, the Israelites carped about the lack of meat.

For all our contemporary freedoms, it can be tempting to look back wistfully. Life was harder, but perhaps also simpler. In the *sidra*, the Israelites wax nostalgic about the leeks and garlic of Egypt, forgetting the monstrous regime which provided the vegetable ration. Similarly, the continued

“ Like *heimishe* cuisine, our East End history is a 'safe space' in which to take cosy refuge from the complex lives we have today.

prominence in our community *even now* of boiled gefilte fish, calf's foot jelly and other Ashkenazi delicacies might – might! – best be explained by nostalgia...

Like *heimishe* cuisine, our East End history is a 'safe space' in which to take cosy refuge from the complex lives we have today. Why tour gentrified Wandsworth, when inherited memories of mis-sold tickets and name-changes (sometimes even true), make for better stories? Perhaps like our ancestors in the Wilderness, we are unsettled by freedom. Maybe comfort is found in memories of when our choices were more limited. As a people, it is still not easy even to count our blessings without a '*peh peh peh*' afterwards.

It is a good instinct not to trust too much in princes (Psalm 146), property prices or permanence. But at some point I hope to bring agency and power into our story. Dollis Hill Synagogue should be remembered!

Find out more at:
www.thejewsoflondon.com



SEFER YIRMIYAHU (JEREMIAH) – PART 5

THE RELUCTANT PROPHET

BY: **PNINA SAVERY**
Ma'ayan and US Educator

Unfortunately, the national movement of *teshuva* (spiritual return) led by King Yoshiyahu is not completely successful. Yirmiyahu describes a Jerusalem full of idolatry: “children gather wood, the fathers build fires, and the women knead dough in order to make cakes to offer the queen of heaven” (*Yirmiyahu* 7:17). Everyone takes part in the sin of paganism: men, women and children.

Yirmiyahu also rebukes the leaders for not giving the people proper religious instruction. He states: “from the least to the greatest, all are greedy for gain; from prophet to priest, all practice deceit” (8:10). We might argue that the idolatry stems from ignorance rather than obstinance. However, there is no mistaking the explicit statement “they pour libations to foreign gods **in order to provoke Me**” (7:18).

The *Midrash* shares one creative way the people hid their idolatry from the King’s inspectors. They would split an idol into two and place each half on two different doors. This way, when the door was open it did not look like there were any idols in the house. However, as the inspectors left, they would close the door, reattaching the

idol together inside the house (*Eicha Rabba* 1:18).

Yirmiyahu’s despair becomes so great that he wishes he could escape his prophetic task. “If only I had a place of lodging in the desert, that I could leave my people and abandon them, for they are all lecherous, a treacherous band” (9:1). Despite this reluctance, he cannot abandon the task. His love for the people burns strongly and he continues to call them “**my** people”.

As the reader, we feel great sympathy for him. It seems as if he has been tasked with a doomed mission. Indeed, with the benefit of hindsight, we know that, ultimately, he will fail: the people’s repentance will not be sufficient to escape the complete destruction of Jerusalem. Yirmiyahu himself will be made to live through the *Churban* (destruction of the Temple) that he works so hard to prevent.

It is now that Yirmiyahu comes up against major opposition. Sick and tired of hearing his prophecies of doom, the people “devise a plan” against him: “let us go and slander him, and we will not have to listen to his words anymore” (18:18). Later,

“ **Children gather wood, the fathers build fires, and the women knead dough in order to make cakes to offer the queen of heaven”** (*Yirmiyahu* 7:17).

Yirmiyahu explicitly states that they are planning to kill him (18:23). In response, God states that He will bring strict judgement upon those conspiring against His prophet (11:21-23).

King Yoshiyahu, known as a righteous king who tries very hard to reform the people, dies unexpectedly in battle against the Egyptians in Megiddo.¹ Yirmiyahu does not refer explicitly to the loss of the king, despite his originally high hopes for him. Perhaps this is because Yirmiyahu no longer felt those high hopes. He had realised the limitations of even a righteous king to influence the people. Once a true beacon of hope, Yirmiyahu has changed the orientation of his visions, focusing on rebuke and destruction.

¹ This was discussed in our article on *Sefer Melachim Bet*, chapter 23. It is described in more detail in *Divrei HaYamim Bet*, chapter 35.

THE TRIBE WEEKLY

PARASHAT BEHA'ALOTECHA

5-6 JUNE | 21 SIVAN

THE MEANING OF THE MANNA



BY: **TAMARA COLEMAN**

Tribe madricha

This week's *parasha* is *Beha'alotcha*. It focuses on the lighting of the Menorah in the *Mishkan* (Tabernacle), the bringing of the *Korban Pesach* (Passover offering) in the desert, and a difficult period of complaints from the Jewish people.

After years of traveling in the desert on their way to the Land of Israel, the people began to feel frustrated. Although God provided

them with manna every day, they grew tired of it. They complained that in Egypt they had meat and fish, and now they felt they were lacking. Even though they had been freed from slavery, they looked back at Egypt with a sense of longing because at least the food felt familiar and secure.

This reaction showed that their faith was being tested. They had built the *Mishkan*, were bringing *korbanot* (offerings), and were trying to follow the Torah, yet they still had not reached the Promised Land. It is hard to wait for something important, especially when the journey feels long and uncertain.

Moshe (Moses) felt overwhelmed by the people's complaints. He was leading them according to God's command, doing everything he could. When he felt unable to handle the situation alone, he turned to God for help.

There is an important lesson here for us. Sometimes we become frustrated when things do not happen as quickly as we want. We may not understand why challenges occur. *Beha'alotcha* reminds us that even during difficult moments, we must try to strengthen our trust in God and remember that He is guiding us toward something greater.

Manna Mindset

STEP 1: "I'M SICK OF MANNA!"

Think of one thing you complain about or get bored of in your life.

STEP 2: "HIDDEN BLESSING"

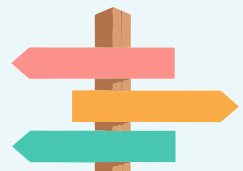
Now think of:

- One good thing about that situation.
- One way it might actually be helping you grow.

FINAL STEP:

Now finish this sentence!

"Maybe this is my 'desert', but it's leading me to ..."





THE TRIBE SCRIBE

BEHA'ALOTECHA: PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT!

THIS WEEK WE READ ABOUT **AHARON** (AARON) LIGHTING THE **MENORAH**. DOESN'T SOUND DRAMATIC... RIGHT? WELL, GET THIS - HE DID IT EVERY SINGLE DAY FOR ALMOST 40 YEARS!



THAT'S LIKE BRUSHING YOUR TEETH TWICE A DAY FROM NURSERY ALL THE WAY TO BECOMING AN ADULT, WITH NO SKIPS!

THE REAL WOW ISN'T JUST WHAT HE DID - IT WAS THAT HE KEPT DOING IT THE SAME WAY, EVERY DAY; EVEN WHEN IT FELT ORDINARY. NOW THAT'S GREATNESS!



IN HIS BOOK "**OUTLIERS**", **MALCOLM GLADWELL** EXPLAINS THAT PEOPLE BECOME REALLY GREAT AT DOING SOMETHING BY PRACTISING FOR ABOUT 10,000 HOURS.



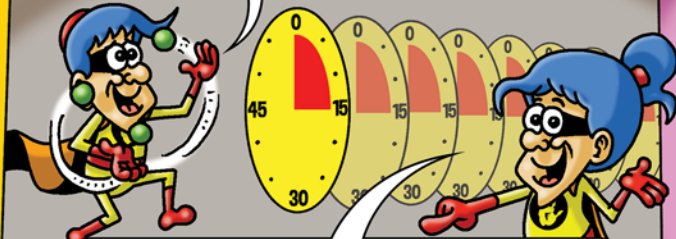
10,000 HOURS? THAT'S FOREVER!

THINK OF IT LIKE BUILDING A MASSIVE LEGO CASTLE. ONE BRICK FEELS TINY... BUT KEEP ADDING BRICKS EVERY DAY AND SUDDENLY - **WOW!**



AHARON'S SECRET IS THE SAME IDEA: YOU DON'T NEED TO BE AMAZING ON DAY ONE - YOU JUST NEED TO KEEP SHOWING UP!

EVEN 15 MINUTES A DAY: DRAWING, SPELLING, FOOTBALL TRICKS, YOU NAME IT - CAN TURN INTO HUNDREDS OF HOURS OVER TIME. AND THAT'S HOW SMALL EFFORTS GROW INTO BIG SKILLS.



MISSING SOMETHING ONCE ISN'T THE END, BUT THE GOAL IS TO BUILD A HABIT, SO STRONG, THAT IT FEELS STRANGE NOT TO DO IT. JUST LIKE **AHARON** KEPT GOING FOR ALMOST 40 YEARS.

GREATNESS ISN'T ONE BIG MOMENT. IT'S SMALL STEPS, DONE AGAIN AND AGAIN!



Page Editor: Rabbi Nicky Goldmeier Writer: Shira Chalk Cartoonist: Paul Solomon

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