



CHOVERET CHINUCH #8 5784

“Hineni”



The Choveret Chinuch is a project of Bnei Akiva of the US and Canada's Chinuch department. For comments or questions, please reach out to Rav Avishai Berman at aberman@bneiakiva.org

Dear Madrichim,

For the next two weeks, we will be focusing on the lives of Rav Chaim Druckman and his wife, Dr. Sarah (who just passed away last week). They both worked side by side, devoting their lives to the values and beliefs of Bnei Akiva, teaching many along the way about the importance of Am Yisrael, Eretz Yisrael, and Torat Yisrael. In this Choveret, we will learn about their lives and the values they stood for, emphasizing the understanding of the word 'Hineni': I am here and willing to contribute where I am needed.

Shabbat Shalom,

Shani Becker

Week One

Sarah Epstein was born in Yerushalayim in 1933, into a scholarly and Zionist religious family. She served in the IDF in Bnei Akiva's Nachal Gar'in, after she had completing her schooling. It was during this service that she met her future husband, Chaim Druckman, in a unit that involved both military duty and a year of volunteer work. Following her army service, she worked as a Mazkira Artzit for Bnei Akiva in Tel Aviv.



Dr. Sarah and Rav Chaim Druckman married and settled in Moshav Shapira, where they raised nine children and eventually became grandparents and great-grandparents to over 200 descendants.

Last week, at the age of 90, Dr. Sarah Druckman passed away, leaving behind a legacy rooted in Bnei Akiva values, characterized by a blend of Torah and Avodah. Let's explore key moments in Dr. Sarah's life where she recognized opportunities to make a difference and responded with 'Hineni,' (I am here!) meaning, 'I'm ready to help and act as needed.'

'Hineni' Moments:

- **First women shiur with Rav Kook**

When Sarah Epstein and Chaim Druckman just started going out, they approached Chaim's Rabbi, Rav Tzvi Yehudah Kook, and asked him to teach them a shiur together. He taught them the sefer Orot Yisrael, written by his father, the famous Rav Avraham Yitzchak HaCohen Kook. Later on, when Chaim went on Shlichut, Sarah expressed her interest in continuing the shiur with Rav Kook. She invited another friend to join her, becoming the first woman to form a shiur for women with Rav Kook. This initial gathering eventually grew into a larger, weekly Torah class for women.



- **First religious female doctor**

In high school, Sarah decided to pursue a career in medicine with the goal of helping others. Initially considering a career as a nurse, she was persuaded by a friend to become a doctor. Although there weren't other religious females in her program of 80 medical students, she bravely became the first religious female student to study medicine at the Hebrew University. After she finished her studies, she and Rav Chaim, who



became the Rosh Yeshiva of a small, new yeshiva called Ohr Etzion, moved to the quiet, pastoral Merkaz Shapira, where they would spend the rest of their lives. There were few doctors or nurses in the area, and Sarah would wake up early each morning to see patients in five Yishuvim in the area. Often later in the day, sick people would come to her home to be looked after as well.

- **Hachnasat Orchim**

Dr. Sarah gained a reputation for generously welcoming diverse people into their home. She opened her doors to various groups, including those connected to Bnei Akiva, individuals seeking a deeper connection to Judaism, and anyone looking for a warm and welcoming environment. For her, it was a simple and natural belief that people in need of a place to stay should find refuge in her home.



Her children often remember her saying - “Not all Hachnasat Orchim is convenient for us, and that’s what makes this mitzvah so extraordinary. We embrace the idea of opening our home to all, regardless of the circumstances.”



Discussion Points:

- Think of a time in your life when you weren’t in the mood to do something. Did it ever happen that you heard the ‘Hineni’ call, and acted upon it despite the hardship? Do these Mitzvot have anything in common?
- What do you think were some challenges that Dr. Sarah had in her life?
- Have you ever been inspired by someone like Dr. Sarah, who was always ready to help? How did it make you feel, and did it influence your actions?



Ideas For Activities:

1. A Call Of Hineni
2. Crossing The River
3. Jump The Stick

1. A call of “Hineni”

Have the Chanichim stand in a circle. In the center of the circle, place the following cards. Each Chanich, on their turn, runs to the center, picks up a card, and reads it aloud. Any Chanich who wants to fulfill the task yells out ‘Hineni’. The first to yell it is the one who runs to do the task. Note - the Chanich reading

the card cannot call out. The Chanichim must read out the card according to their order in the pile. If no one calls out 'Hineni', then put it at the bottom of the pile. The activity is complete once the Chanichim finish all the task cards. (I recommend printing the cards before shabbat and bringing plastic cups, a few books and a tehillim book).

1. We need someone who can jump on one foot 50 times.
2. We need someone who can read three Prakim of Tehillim.
3. We need three Chanichim whose parents were also in Bnei Akiva, figure out what Shevet they were in and stand in chronological order.
4. We need someone who will build a pyramid from 20 plastic cups.
5. We need someone who will sing to us their favorite song.
6. We need two Chanichim who will find a soiled section in the Snif and clean it.
7. We need two Chanichim to do a hand wrestle.
8. We need a Chanich to tell a Madrich about a movie he saw recently and a message he gained from watching it.
9. We need someone who can balance a book on their head while walking from one end of the room to another without dropping it.
10. We need someone who can name ten different books they've read recently.
11. We need someone who can define and explain the meanings of ten Hebrew words related to Bnei Akiva.
12. We need someone who can sing all the words of 'Yad Achim'.
13. We need someone who can pat his head and rub his stomach at the same time.
14. We need someone who can say the ABC's backwards.
15. We need someone who can do a handstand.

2. Crossing the river - *This activity comes to show the Chanichim the importance of teamwork and collaboration. It shows that each person's contribution is vital for the success of the group, and sometimes it might require personal inconveniences for the benefit of the team, similar to the call of 'Hineni', not always convenient for the individual but working on it anyways to help others.*

Split the Chanichim into two groups. Each group stands on their chairs on one side of the room. The goal of this game is for each group to get from one side of the room to the other without stepping off their chairs. The first group to get to the other side is the winner.

3. Jump the Stick - *This Peula demonstrates that each individual, by their actions and responses to the call of 'Hineni,' can offer guidance and influence the paths of others. As we see in this game, the last Chanich, through their jump, influences the setup for the next round.*

Place three sticks in a line, with a foot's distance between each. Have the Chanichim stand in a line. Each Chanich needs to pass over the sticks without touching them. The last Chanich in the row jumps a big jump after the last stick, and that stick is then moved to the spot where they landed. If a Chanich touches the stick they are out.

Week Two

Rav Chaim Meir Druckman was born in 1932 in Poland. He had to leave because of World War II, moving to Israel when he was just 10. In Israel, he got involved with Bnei Akiva during his school days. Starting as a Chanich in the movement, he later became a Madrich. He then served in the army with Bnei Akiva's group, Nachal Garin, blending his military service with volunteer work. He was involved in the rebuilding of two religious kibbutzim, Kibbutz Tirat Zvi, and Kibbutz Sa'ad which were damaged in the War of Independence in 1948. He spent time learning at various Religious Zionist Yeshivot. After that, he went on Shlichut in the 1950's, becoming the Mazkir in the Artzi in the US.



When back in Israel, he married Sarah and spent the next five years learning at the famous yeshiva, Merkaz HaRav, where he became a close student of the Rosh Yeshiva, Rav Tzvi Yehudah HaCohen Kook. Rav Chaim served as Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshivat Ohr Etzion as well as head of the Center of Bnei Akiva Yeshivot. All these experiences led him to live a life where he combined learning Torah with meaningful work, Avodah. As he got older, he became a member of the Knesset, making a big impact on the country and Israeli society. He passed away over a year ago, on December 25th, 2022, at the age of 90, leaving a legacy that shows how important it is to combine learning Torah, helping others, and being a leader in Bnei Akiva values and beyond.

‘Hineni’ Moments:

- **Conversion in Israel**

In Israel, according to the Law of Return, anyone with Jewish parents can make aliyah, although some may not be considered Jewish according to Jewish law. There arose a significant need to assist people who came and wanted to be part of the Jewish community. When Rav Druckman joined the government of Israel, he was assigned to oversee Giyur, the conversion process for young adults. Over eight years, he helped convert more than 50,000 people!



- **Hesder yeshiva connecting army and learning**

Many religious young men were conflicted as they finished high school, torn between the importance of learning Torah and developing spiritually, and the obligation to join the IDF and contribute to Israeli society. Rav Druckman was heavily involved in creating an arrangement called ‘Yeshivat Hesder’, essentially allowing young men to combine both their learning and military service in a meaningful way. This arrangement is a five-year plan, with participants serving in the army for a year and four months, and dedicating the other three years and seven months to learning in Yeshiva. A committee was formed by the Hesder Yeshivot Union, turning this vision into reality, with almost 50 yeshivas now operating under this structure.



איגוד ישיבות ההסדר

- **Looking at the positive**

Rav Druckman had his life saved three times! Once as he ran away from the dangers of the Holocaust at the age of ten, the second time when he missed the boat coming to Israel (later learning that the same boat had sunk), and the third time when he was very close to a shooting incident in Israel. Rav Druckman looked at all these occurrences as a sign, seeing his survival as a message from Hashem that he must use his life to do good for Am Yisrael.



He famously said the line “אני חי כדי לעשות טוב לעם ישראל”, I live to do good for the Jewish people.

Rather than viewing his life as a hardship, Rav Druckman chose to see each time he was saved as an even greater reason to act and contribute good to the Jewish people.

In 2012, Rav Druckman received the Israel Prize for all his contributions to Israeli society.



Discussion Points:

- If you were in Rav Druckman's shoes and had faced such near-death experiences, how do you think it might influence your outlook on life and your responsibilities?
- How would you define the statement "doing good for Am Yisrael"?
- How do you think 'Yeshivat Hesder' contributes to the idea of unity within Israeli society?



Ideas For Activities:

1. Song and Discussion
2. The Taggers Are Coming

1. Song and discussion

Ask the Chanichim what the words 'Hineni', 'I am here' mean to them. After hearing different answers, give out to the Chanichim and read out the following song. Then ask the Chanichim - Does 'Hineni' have a different meaning to you now?

Hashem calls out to Abraham, and Abraham replies: "Hineni", "Here I am."

"Here I am" - for every mission, for every command, even the most difficult and noble on behalf of the highest power.

"Here I am" - for every command from God, even the most difficult and sublime.

"Here I am" - immediately and without hesitation. Unconditionally.

"Here I am" - giving all of me, without reservation.

"Here I am" - for the call of the King of the world.

(Rav Bar Shaul)

2. “The Taggers Are Coming”

This game connects to the Giyur processes Rav Druckman helped take part in, showing how each Chanich joins the Jewish community by the ‘tag’, the help of others to do so.

All the Chanichim stand on one side of the room, except for two who stand on the opposite side, designated as the taggers. The taggers announce, “The taggers are coming!” and start running towards the other Chanichim, attempting to tag as many as possible before reaching the opposite wall. The remaining Chanichim aim to get to the other side of the room without being tagged. Those who are tagged join the taggers, and together they say, “The taggers are coming!” while attempting to tag more Chanichim. The game concludes when only one person remains untagged, declaring them the winner.

It’s important to note that all Chanichim can only move forward, not backward. This activity is best suited for a large room or outdoor space.

- **A call of “Hineni”**

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We need someone who can define and explain the meanings of ten Hebrew words related to Bnei Akiva

We need someone who can sing all the words of ‘Yad Achim’

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• Song and discussion

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