



Congregation Ahavat Shalom

The ACHDUS
NEWSLETTER
www.ahavatshalomteaneck.com

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Parshat Shemot
Shabbat Mevarchim

Volume: 17, Issue: 23 | January 20-21, 2017

Teves 23, 5777
Rabbi Yehuda Halpert

Shabbat Times



Friday, January 20
Candle Lighting: 4:41 PM
Mincha/Maariv: 4:45 PM
Shabbat, January 21
Shacharit: 8:45 AM
Kriyat Shema: 9:42 AM
Mincha / Shalosh Seudot: 4:30 PM
Shkiya: 5:00 PM
Maariv: 5:39 PM
Shabbat Ends: 5:44 PM
Next Friday, January 27
Candle Lighting: 4:49 PM
Mincha/Maariv: 4:50 PM

Weather Report

Friday night: Light Rain/Fog, 40°

Shabbos day: Partly Cloudy, 54°/45°

Celebration Kiddush - Thank you to all of our sponsors for January's Celebration Kiddush! We hope everyone enjoyed! We are planning a Celebration Kiddush each month so, if you want to sponsor (even a bissel), please reach out to the board!

Men's Shiur - This Wednesday night, January 25th, by Rav Sobolofsky. Topic and location TBD. If you would like to host, reach out to the board.

Ski/Snowboarding Trip - Stop hybernating, stop watching Netflix all day and join Ahavat Shalom's first ever ski/snowboard trip on Sunday 1/29 or 2/5! Carpool coordination and group rates available based on number of responses. To register and let us know you plan to join us, see <http://www.ahavatshalomteaneck.com/skitrip2017> for more info.

Mystery Shabbos 2017 - Will be happening on February 11th! Look out for the Mystery Shabbos Signup - coming out this week!

Rabbi Halpert's Availability

Rabbi Yehuda Halpert will be here for Shabbos on: 1/28, 2/4.

He can be reached via email at rabbihalpert@verizon.net, or phone in the evenings at 201-836-3828. In the event of an emergency, Rabbi Halpert can also be reached at 212-909-6951.

Membership Directory - Ahavat Shalom will be putting together a Membership Directory over the next few weeks! More information to come. Feel free to reach out to the Board with any questions or concerns.

2016-2017 Membership - Membership for the 2016-2017 year is **still** open. If you paid for Membership but do not receive emails (and would like to receive them), reach out to the Board for more information.
www.ahavatshalomteaneck.com/membership.html

Basketball Leagues - The shul is looking to coordinate Basketball games during the week (Men's games and/or Women's games). If you would be interested, please reach out to Yoni Kushner and/or the Sisterhood.

Yeshivat Noam Youth Groups

There are no groups this week (or next week).

Welcoming Committee

If you or anyone you know has moved in recently, let us know! Check out ahavatshalomteaneck.com/movingin for more information.

Upcoming Events

January 27-28: Ohr HaTorah, Rabbi Sobolovsky, Bergenfield, NJ
February 3-4: Cong. Anshe Chesed, Rabbi Hess, Linden, NJ
February 10-11: Mystery Shabbos
February 17-18: Celebration Kiddush

Welcome to Ahavat Shalom

Households: 87
(Adults: 171, Kids: 51)

Congregation Ahavat Shalom Board Members 2016-2017

President: Jason Shor **Vice Presidents:** Jason Bloom | Alex Daitch | Moty Raven | Binny Steinig **Secretary:** Liron Gamzeh **Treasurer:** Jason Felder
Sisterhood: Sarit Anstandig | Tali Wigod **Gabbaim:** Sam Lightstone | Ezra Blain | Shua Joseph | Dani Weinberger

We welcome your input! Please send your newsletter announcements by Wednesday.

board@teaneckapartments.com | president@teaneckapartments.com | rabbihalpert@verizon.net



Esther Shayowitz
SALES ASSOCIATE

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Preserving the Jewish People During Exile

Rabbi Zvi Sobolofsky

The years that the Jewish People lived in Egypt posed a dual threat to their existence. Slavery and affliction threatened their physical well-being, while the exposure to an alien culture endangered their spiritual stature. It was miraculous that notwithstanding centuries in a land full of idolatry and immorality, the sparks of holiness from their forefathers could be rekindled, enabling them to receive the Torah upon leaving Egypt. What was the secret of the spiritual survival of our ancestors? What lesson can we derive for ourselves as we also are exposed to forces that are often antithetical to the values of our forefathers?

Before the family of Yaakov arrives in Egypt, we realize that there are great challenges ahead. Hashem appears to Yaakov and both reassures him not to fear going down to Egypt and promises him that he will become a great nation and eventually will leave Egypt. From these two assurances we can infer what was concerning Yaakov. A great nation has a dual meaning; it can refer to a quantitative greatness and also to a qualitative one. Chazal explain the passuk in Parshas Ki Savo, which describes the Jewish People as a great nation, to mean that they were a distinct nation that did not lose its identity. Yaakov was fearful of his descendants assimilating into Egyptian society. Hashem promises that this will not occur. Hashem also promises him that the Jewish People will not remain in Egypt forever to address Yaakov's second fear, namely lest this exile never end.

Upon receiving these assurances that his descendants will remain distinct and they will ultimately return to Eretz Yisrael, Yaakov begins to make plans to enable these promises to be fulfilled. In Parshas Vayigash the Torah interrupts the story of Yaakov's trip down to Egypt by his delineating the names of his descendants. Following this the Torah records the sending of Yehuda to lead the way to the land of Goshen, and only afterwards does Yaakov arrive in Egypt. The names of his children and grandchildren are not merely a list of his descendants; Chazal emphasize that the Jewish People maintained their distinction by not changing their names. This was Yaakov's first condition before he would allow his family to enter Egypt. His sending of Yehuda as a guide is interpreted by Chazal as not only a physical guide, but also as a spiritual one. Yehuda must establish a place of study to enable the family of Yaakov to constantly draw inspiration from. This would enable them to maintain their distinction as a great nation in the midst of an alien culture. It was also critical for his descendants to be aware that their sojourning in Egypt would only be temporary. To accomplish this, Chazal teach us that Yaakov insisted on bringing cedar trees, whose wood would eventually be used to construct the Mishkan centuries later, to Egypt. These trees would serve as a reminder that eventually redemption would arrive. The dream of a Mishkan at some time in the future would enable his family to survive both the physical and spiritual exile.

The Jewish names, the study of Torah as a guide, and the anticipation of redemption that had been put in place many generations before would continue to protect the descendants of Yaakov throughout the years of exile. These three mechanisms of survival are alluded to in Parshas Shemos. Just as the names of Yaakov's family are enumerated upon his descent to Egypt in Parshas Vayigash, they are repeated in the beginning of Parshas Shemos. It is the names, which highlight the distinctiveness of the Jewish People, which set the stage for the years of exile that are described in the beginning of the parsha. The Jewish People will only remain a great nation in a qualitative sense if they remain distinct from those surrounding them.

Moshe is instructed by Hashem many years later to gather the elders of the Jewish People and inform them that Hashem will soon redeem them. Chazal comment that the elders of the nation refers to the spiritual leaders who maintained this role throughout the years in Egypt. Chazal see this as an affirmation of the centrality of Torah leadership that enabled the Jewish People to be nourished spiritually despite the foreign influences around them.

Moshe is told by Hashem to announce the coming redemption with the phrase "I have remembered you." These words were known to the Jewish People as the words that would herald their redemption. They were transmitted as such from generation to generation. Not only was this actual phrase transmitted but the dream that there would someday be an end to their exile was a message that was preserved for many generations.

Yaakov's plan upon entering Egypt had been implemented successfully for two hundred and ten years. The Jewish People preserved their names and their spiritual guides. The dream of redemption was kept alive. It was only because of the foresight of Yaakov that this dream could emerge as a reality. As we eagerly await the final redemption, we must remain a great nation in a qualitative sense, preserving our uniqueness. We can only do so by turning to the Torah as our guide and strengthening the Torah institutions in our midst to help us maintain our goal of being a great nation. Notwithstanding the length of our present exile, the anticipation of its end must remain strong in our hearts. As Hashem eventually redeemed His great nation from Egypt, may we merit His redemption in our day.



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