



Congregation Ahavat Shalom

The ACHDUS
NEWSLETTER
www.ahavatshalomteaneck.com

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Parshat Bo

Volume: 17, Issue: 25 | February 3-4, 2017

Shevat 8, 5777

Rabbi Yehuda Halpert

Shabbat Times



Friday, February 3
Candle Lighting: 4:58 PM
Mincha/Maariv: 5:00 PM
Shabbat, February 4
Shacharit: 8:45 AM
Kriyat Shema: 9:37 AM
Mincha / Shalosh Seudot: 4:50 PM
Shkiya: 5:17 PM
Maariv: 5:54 PM
Shabbat Ends: 5:59 PM
Next Friday, February 10
Candle Lighting: 5:06 PM
Mincha/Maariv: 5:10 PM

- ❖ **Mazal Tov** to Sarah and Netanel (and Avi) Goldstein on the birth of a baby boy! The Shalom Zachor will take place this Friday at 7:30 PM in the TABC auxiliary lunchroom.
TABC does not allow alcohol near the building - Please do not bring any!
- ❖ **Welcome** to Rabbi Joshua Hess and Congregation Anshe Chesed of Linden, NJ! Rabbi Hess will be joining us a Scholar in Residence and will be speaking Shabbos morning.
- ❖ **Big, HOT kiddush** sponsored by Cong. Anshe Chesed!
- ❖ **Shaleshudis** is sponsored by Zahava and Jeremy Siegel in honor of Rabbi Olshin, Rabbi Schneider and all the Torat Shraga alumni joining us for Shaleshudis! All are invited to a special, large Ahavat Shalom & Torat Shraga alumni shaleshudis!

Weather Report

Friday night: Partly Cloudy, 33°

Shabbos day: Sunny, 34°/29°

Mystery Shabbos 2017 - Will you be a host or a guest? The Ahavat Shalom ~~Hunger Games~~ Mystery Shabbos will be happening NEXT SHABBOS! Make sure to sign up on the Shul's website or the Shul's weekly email! Last day to sign up is THIS TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 7!!

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.

Rabbi Halpert's Availability

Rabbi Yehuda Halpert will be here for Shabbos on: 2/4, 2/11, 2/25.

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.

Yeshivat Noam Youth Groups

Groups for children ages 2-3 are located in the room across the Shul from 9:30am - 10:45am. Morah Shira and Morah Melissa, two Yeshivat Noam teachers, will supervise. Toys and books will be provided by Yeshivat Noam. We ask parents to please send your child with a snack. Signup is on the website.

2016-2017 Membership - B'H 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 - "You miss 100% of the shots you don't take" 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.

The **Teaneck Friends of Mesivtha Tifereth Jerusalem** request the honor of your presence at a breakfast for the benefit of Mesivtha Tifereth Jerusalem, under the leadership of the Rosh Hayeshiva Hagaon Harav Dovid Feinstein, Sunday morning, February 5, 2017 - 9 Shevat at 9:00 a.m. Hagaon Harav Reuven Feinstein, Rosh Hayeshiva, Yeshiva of Staten Island will address the breakfast. The breakfast will be held at Congregation Bnai Yeshurun 641 West Englewood Avenue Teaneck, New Jersey.

Yeshivat Noam is pleased to invite the community to a new series in our weekly Tuesday morning shiur for adults, starting on February 14, at 9:30 am in the YN Middle School Beit Knesset. Renowned educator Dr. Scott Goldberg will deliver a five-week series of classes called "God, Tefila, and Generation Z: Educating Our Children for a Meaningful and Life-long Relationship with God." This shiur series is free of charge and is open to the entire community, so bring your friends! Brought to you by the Yeshivat Noam Parent Education Committee. For questions or more information, please email psp@yeshivatnoam.org

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

- ❑ February 10-11: Mystery Shabbos
- ❑ February 17-18: Celebration Kiddush
- ❑ February 24-25: Keneseth Beth Israel, Rabbi Asher, Richmond, VA

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.

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Take the Silver and the Gold - Please?

Rabbi Daniel Stein

In preparation for the impending exodus from Egypt, Hashem instructed Moshe, "Speak, please, into the ears of the people, and let them borrow, each man from his friend and each woman from her friend, silver and gold vessels" (Shemos 11:12). The Gemara (Berachos 9a) infers from the language of the passuk "speak please into the ears of the people", that Moshe was told to graciously and tactfully request of Bnei Yisrael that they borrow silver and gold vessels from the Egyptians, in order to fulfill Hashem's prophetic pledge to Avraham "and afterwards they shall emerge with great wealth" (Breishis 15, 14). The meforshim wonder, since most people are eager to receive money and wealth, why did Hashem feel it was necessary to cajole the Jewish people into taking the gold and the silver?

The Vilna Gaon explains that Hashem had initially intended to shower Bnei Yisrael with great wealth only at the conclusion of the process of the exodus, after the splitting of the Red Sea. The possessions of the drowned Egyptians would surface to the top of the water where they could be easily claimed by the Jewish people. However, Hashem was concerned lest Avraham and his descendants prematurely presume that the wealth was supposed to arrive at the beginning of the exodus, immediately upon leaving Mitzrayim. In order to avoid a possible mistaken impression and erroneous accusation, Hashem asked Moshe to encourage Bnei Yisrael to take the possessions of the Egyptians with them at the beginning of their journey. Therefore, it was necessary to say "please" because Hashem wasn't offering the Jewish people any additional wealth at this point, since they would have been able to effortlessly claim those very same items after the splitting of the Red Sea. Rather, Hashem asked the Jewish people to schlep the loot to the Red Sea themselves, in an attempt to prevent any confusion and misunderstanding.

Alternatively, perhaps Hashem chose to use the language of "please" in this context, in order to transform the message to take the vessels of silver and gold from a command to a request. That is because in general people have a visceral aversion to doing that which they are told, even when they are being instructed to take silver and gold. Therefore, Hashem had to graciously ask the Jewish people to take the silver and gold instead of commanding them to do so, in order to avoid provoking resistance from the Jewish people and potentially defaulting on His pact with Avraham Avinu.

This natural reflex to defy specific commands seems to have been the underlying motivation behind the costly mistake made by some Egyptians during the plague of hail. Prior to the plague of hail Moshe advised the Egyptians, "And now, send, gather in your livestock and all that you have in the field, for any man or beast that is found in the field and not brought into the house the hail shall fall on them, and they will die" (Shemos 9, 19). The Torah continues that while there were some Egyptians who brought their animals inside because they "feared the word of Hashem" and heeded the advice of Moshe, there were others who "did not pay attention to the word of Hashem" and left their animals and servants in the fields only to be killed by the hail. How could there have been Egyptians who were so reckless and shortsighted as to discount the specific instructions and warnings of Moshe? After all, Moshe had accurately predicted the previous six plagues which had devastated the Egyptian people, how then could anyone carelessly continue to ignore him?

This issue is compounded when we consider Rashi's deductive assertion (Shemos 9:10), that during the previous plague of pestilence which had already targeted and eliminated all of the animals in the fields, those very same Egyptians must have acted to protect their animals by bringing them indoors. If they sheltered their animals during the previous plague of pestilence because Moshe informed them that only the animals in the fields would be affected (Shemos 9, 3), why wouldn't they take similar precautions and measures before the plague of hail? Rav Moshe Wolfson (Emunas Itecha) explains that prior to the plague of pestilence Moshe simply informed the Egyptians of the potential fallout of the plague (Shemos 9:3) but did not order them directly to bring their animals indoors. However, prior to the plague of hail Moshe specifically instructed the Egyptians "gather in your livestock and all that you have in the field." Moshe's explicit command to bring the animals inside aroused within the Egyptians an instinctive adverse reaction to do exactly the opposite of that which Moshe advised them to do. This prompted the same Egyptians who previously safeguarded their animals during the plague of pestilence to now leave their animals outside despite the obvious looming peril of the hail.

We find a similar phenomenon in Parshas Shelach. The Jewish people initially declined to enter Eretz Yisrael without first sending miraglim-scouts to survey the land, despite the assurances and tacit disapproval of Moshe and Hashem. However, at the conclusion of the episode of the miraglim Bnei Yisrael seem to do a complete about-face. Now the people insist on entering Eretz Yisrael forthwith, as the passuk states, "We are ready to go up to the place...for we have sinned" (Bamidbar 14:40). They completely ignore the admonition of Moshe and Hashem "Do not go up for Hashem is not among you" (Bamidbar 14:42), culminating in a spectacular defeat at the hands of the people of Amalak and Canaan (Bamidbar 14:44-46). The agenda of Bnei Yisrael is confusing; at the beginning of the parsha they are hesitant to enter Eretz Yisrael and at the end of the parsha they are willing to sacrifice themselves fighting for it. The Alter of Kelm explains that Bnei Yisrael were primarily and consistently motivated by a desire to defy the orders of Moshe and Hashem. Therefore, they initially rebuffed Moshe's suggestion to enter Eretz Yisrael straight away while they subsequently disregarded his order to stand down.

For this reason, the Gemara (Kiddushin 31a) tells us that, ironically, one who performs a voluntary mitzvah receives less reward than one who performs an obligatory mitzvah. Rav Yaakov Emden contends that this is because even though one who volunteers to perform a mitzvah has gone beyond his basic obligations, the one who is commanded to perform a mitzvah has to overcome an additional yezter hara, namely the evil temptation and inclination to resist obeying orders. Therefore, one who performs an obligatory mitzvah receives reward not only for the basic mitzvah but also for displaying the resolve to adhere to Hashem's commands. The life of a Jew is replete with divine commands, instructions, and directives, and we should learn from the damaging and tragic mistakes of the Egyptians and the Mirgalim to embrace this predicament rather than recoiling from it. In our own lives, we should aspire to answer the charge of Hashem, not to seize Egyptian silver and gold, but the treasures of the Torah and the mitzvos which are infinitely more valuable, as the pasuk tells us, "The instruction of Your mouth is better for me than thousands of gold and silver" (Tehillim 119:72).



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