



Congregation Ahavat Shalom

The ACHDUS
NEWSLETTER
www.ahavatshalomteaneck.com

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Parshat Mishpatim
Shabbat Mevarchim, Parshat Shekalim

Volume: 17, Issue: 28 | February 24-25, 2017

Shevat 29, 5777
Rabbi Yehuda Halpert

Shabbat Times



Friday, February 24	
Candle Lighting:	5:23 PM
Mincha/Maariv:	5:25 PM
Shabbat, February 25	
Shacharit:	8:45 AM
Kriyat Shema:	9:23 AM
Mincha / Shalosh Seudot:	5:15 PM
Shkiya:	5:42 PM
Maariv:	6:18 PM
Shabbat Ends:	6:23 PM
Next Friday, March 3	
Candle Lighting:	5:31 PM
Mincha/Maariv:	5:35 PM

- ❖ **Welcome** to Rabbi Dovid & Aliza Asher and the Keneseth Beth Israel of Richmond, VA! Rabbi Asher will be joining us as a Scholar-in-Residence this Shabbos and will be speaking Shabbos morning.
- ❖ Did someone say two sushi platters??? SUPER, HOT KIDDUSH sponsored by the Keneseth Beth Israel!
- ❖ On Friday night, join Aliza & Rabbi Asher at a dessert at Shoshana and Yoni Kushner's apartment (1380 Teaneck Rd Apt C)! Dessert starts at 8:15 PM!
- ❖ On Motzei Shabbos at 8:30 PM, for those interested in learning more about Richmond, join the Ashers at Bowler City in Hackensack for a Melave Malka and bowling, fully sponsored by Richmond's OU Recruitment Fair Committee!! Please reach out to the Ashers for more information.

Weather Report

Friday night: Partly Cloudy, 50° Shabbos day: Cloudy, 62°/40°

Celebration Kiddush - Thank you to all of our sponsors for February's Celebration Kiddush! We hope everyone enjoyed! Our next Celebration Kiddush will be on March 18th! If you want to sponsor (even a bisel), please reach out to the board!

PURIM 2017 | Mishloach Manot - Sign up now to send a Mishloach Manot to your friends in the community! You can select specific families that you would like to send to or to the entire shul! On Purim, each member will receive one Mishloach Manot from the shul with a list of all the people that contributed to their Mishloach Manot! Deadline to submit a FORM AND PAYMENT is March 7th at 11:59 PM. So sign up now! (<https://goo.gl/forms/6bjWh9l7zvlU4R4Y2> or <http://www.ahavatshalomteaneck.com/mishloach-manot-2017.html>).

PURIM 2017 | Morning Minyan & Megillah - Ahavat Shalom is looking to have a Shacharit minyan and **breakfast** on Purim morning at TABC!! There will be megillah, breakfast, costumes and mishloach manot! However, we need people who can lein! If you can lein, please reach out to the Gabbaim ASAP (If we don't find anyone, we will not be able to have a minyan on Purim morning.)

PURIM 2017 | Volunteers - Ahavat Shalom is looking for a few volunteers to help spread the Purim spirit and deliver Mishloach Manot. If you would like to get involved, please contact the Sisterhood.

Membership Directory - We are putting together an Ahavat Shalom Membership Directory (no one is getting deported). Similar to other shul directories, our directory will include each member's name, address, email address and phone number - and will be distributed to shul members only (no external clients or NSA). If you would like to exclude certain information, please go to our website and submit an Membership Directory Opt-Out form.

2016-2017 Membership - B'H membership for the 2016-2017 year is **still** open. Its never too late to do teshuva. 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

Rabbi Halpert's Availability

Rabbi Yehuda Halpert will be here for Shabbos on: 2/25, 3/11, 3/18. 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

There will not be any groups this Shabbos.

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 24-25: Keneseth Beth Israel, Rabbi Asher, Richmond, VA
- ❑ March 9, 11-12: Ta'anit Esther & Purim
- ❑ March 17-18: Celebration Kiddush

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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"Unloading" Hatred

Rabbi Yakov Haber

Midrash Tanchuma (1) introduces this week's parasha with the following teaching:

The verse states, "Mighty is the King who loves justice, You have firmly established fair laws, justice and charity of Jacob You have made" (Tehillim 99:4)... What does "You have firmly established fair laws" mean? R' Alexandri states, [as an analogy] two donkey-porters who hate each other [are traveling on the road]; one's donkey collapses under its load. The other one, passing by and seeing that it has collapsed as a result of its load, thinks to himself, "Doesn't it say in the Torah, 'When you see your enemy's donkey [collapsed under its load], you shall surely assist him (Mishpatim 23:5)?" What does he do? He reloads the donkey and escorts him. He then starts talking to him, "Remove a little here, elevate [it] here..." until they make peace with one another. His friend thinks to himself, "Didn't I think he was my enemy? Look how he had mercy on me when he saw me and my donkey in need!" As a result, they enter an inn, dine and drink together and become deep friends. This is what the verse teaches, "You have firmly established fair laws, justice and charity You have made".

This Midrash teaches how the mishpatim, besides being important in and of themselves, can also lead to tzedaka, charity, and kindness[2] as in the example where the simple act of fulfilling the mitzvos of p'rika (unloading) and te'ina (loading) can make sworn enemies into friends. On one level, this is an example of the famous dictum of Chazal in Pirkei Avos (4:2), "mitzvah goreres mitzvah - one mitzvah leads to another."

However, the logic of the helper donkey-driver seems difficult. If he is sensitive to the commandment of helping even his enemy load and unload, why is he not concerned about his initial violations of "Do not hate your brother in your heart" (Kedoshim 19:17) and "Do not bear a grudge [toward] members of your nation" (ibid. 18)? Ultimately, the verse itself, commanding the one who hates his fellow-Jew to help him, assumes exactly such a situation: that one is who is violating the prohibition of hatred is nonetheless charged to assist his enemy.[3]

A possible approach to resolve this difficulty is that the Torah informs us not to fall into the trap of snowballing sin, that of "aveira goreres aveira" (Avos ibid.). A teaching from the Vilna Gaon informs us that a heretic not only gets punished for his heresy but also for his not making b'rachos on food! Just because one is sinning in one area cannot and should not permit him to sin more. "Shall one who ate foul-smelling food eat more of it?!" (Shabbos 31b). A curious halacha highlights this point. One who climbs a tree on Shabbos unaware of the Rabbinic decree forbidding this act may climb down. However, one who climbs up knowing it is forbidden (b'mezid) may not climb down (Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim 336:1). The question is obvious: If he did not listen to the directives of halacha going up, he is not likely to listen going down either! But the halachic system assumes that sin is an aberration. Of course, any given sinner might not obey the Rabbinic directive to stay in the tree the whole Shabbos, but the halachic norm assumes that he will. Violating the halacha in one instance does not permit a subsequent violation. As such, the halacha deals with such situations as well, even if this ruling is not as practical as other halachos, at least to teach us this important lesson.

Another approach is that the assumption of the Midrash and ultimately the passuk is that it is more likely that a person would violate chovos hal'avavos (required emotions or thoughts) than chovos ha'eivarim (required actions). Prohibited thoughts and feelings are more difficult to refrain from than prohibited actions. Even the enemy who indeed is in violation of "lo tisna es achicha bilvav'cha", a sin of emotion, is reasonably expected to assist his enemy when he is in need, a mitzvah of action.

The Torah teaches us another message as well. How can the Torah prohibit thoughts and feelings? Aren't these automatic reactions that cannot be controlled? The Torah here provides for us one answer. Many sources point out that it is not the momentary feelings of hatred and distance that are naturally felt when one is harmed by another that the Torah prohibits; what is prohibited is to allow these feelings to settle in long term.[5] But how does one prevent these longer term feelings from settling in? And if they did, how does he rid himself of these feelings? Here, the Torah provides an effective solution. Act kindly, then you will think kindly. If you want to reconnect to an enemy, act kindly to him, something that is much easier to accomplish than directly removing the bad feelings. Once you do that, it is likely that this will lead, if not immediately, then at least over time, to a removal of the ill-will harbored.

This idea seems to be highlighted by the Gemara (Bava Metsia 32b) which tells us "ohev lifrok v'sonei lit'on, mitzvah b'sonei k'dei lachof es yitzo - if one is confronted with a conflict of helping a friend to unload his donkey or his enemy to load his donkey, the enemy takes precedence in order to subdue his evil inclination (meaning to help overcome his hatred)." This is true even though p'rika normally takes precedence over te'ina because of the tza'ar ba'alei chayim, alleviating the pain of the animal, involved.

This theme is also reminiscent of two central ideas presented by two Torah giants in different eras: Sefer HaChinuch and Rav Eliyahu Dessler. Seifer HaChinuch teaches countless times that "acharei hape'ulos nimshachim hal'avavos - after the actions follow the thoughts and feelings". Although the contexts in which he presents this idea generally relate to mitzvos bein 'adam laMakom the same principle can apply to mitzvos bein 'adam lachaveiro. Rav Dessler (Michtav Me'Eliyahu vol. 1) in his famous Kuntres HaChessed presents the approach that love is generated by acts of giving and is not necessarily caused by being a recipient of kindness. The very word ahava is related to the word hav which is Aramaic for "give". When one feels disconnected from someone, he should not wait for that person to approach him or to be kind to him. He should give to him first, and, over time, he will feel love toward him. Ultimately, that will solidify the relationship in both directions.[6]

Through the Torah's emphasis on mitzvos ma'asiyos, commandments of action, Hashem guides us toward the path of perfection in all aspects of the human personality: thought, feelings, speech and deed.

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