



Congregation Ahavat Shalom

The ACHDUS
NEWSLETTER
www.ahavatshalomteaneck.com

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Parshat Vaetchanan

Volume: 17, Issue: 3 | August 16-17, 2019

Av 15-16

Rabbi Yehuda Halpert

Assistant Rabbi David Schlusberg

Shabbat day: 82°, Partially Cloudy

Shabbat Times

Friday, August 16

Mincha/Maariv: 7:15 PM
Candle Lighting: 7:35 PM

Shabbat, August 17

Shacharit: 9:00 AM
Kriyat Shema: 9:34 AM
Mincha / Shalosh
Sendot: 7:25 PM
Shkiya: 7:52 PM
Maariv: 8:31 PM
Havdalah: 8:36 PM

Next Friday, August 23

Mincha/Maariv: 7:15 PM
Candle Lighting: 7:26 PM



Weather Report: Friday night: 71°, T-Storms

Welcome to **Tamar and Nati Friedman** who recently moved into the community
Nechama and Darren May who recently moved into the community
Tamar, Zach and Effie Burack who recently moved into the community
Ellie Chase who recently moved into the community
Estee Miller who recently moved into the community

FINAL WEEK: "Early Bird" Membership: Please be advised that enrollment is open for the Shul membership year of 2019-2020. We are offering early bird pricing starting at \$330 per household until the last week of August. As of August 25th, we will be collecting membership at \$360 a household.

Single member household rate is \$165. Kindly reach out to any member of the board should you have any questions. The link is available on the shul website.

Rabbi Halpert's Availability

Rabbi Yehuda Halpert will be here: 8/17, 8/24.

He can be reached via email at RabbiYehudaHalpert@gmail.com, or phone at 201-836-3828. In the event of an emergency, Rabbi Halpert can also be reached at 212-909-6951.

Rabbi Schlusberg's Contact Info

Rabbi Schlusberg can be reached at (201) 543-9308 or daveschluss@gmail.com

IF YOU ARE NEW!

If you or anyone you know has recently moved into our community please send contact info to presidentahavatshalom@gmail.com

Chesed Committee

If you or anyone you know has moved in recently or knows somebody moving in, please let the board know! Check out ahavatshalomteaneck.com/movingin for more information.

THIS WEEK: Save the Date - Basketball Tournament! Join us for the Annual 3-on-3 Keter Torah/Ahavat Shalom Basketball Tournament on Saturday night, August 24, at 9:00pm at TABC, with all proceeds benefiting youth sports in Sderot. Players must be 16 or older to join a team, and at least one person from each team must be a member of Keter Torah or Ahavat Shalom. To sign up or for any questions, contact Aryeh Halpert at aryehhalpert@gmail.com or text 917-497-7934

Fertility Resources - A member of our shul has compiled a list of resources for those going through the fertility process. We are proud to announce that this is now live on the website!

Chesed and Education Opportunity - Our very own Dina Shaw, a Registered Nurse, has graciously offered to teach Lamaze classes for anyone who cannot afford childbirth classes. For information or assistance, reach out to Dina at (845) 826-5295 or dina5295@gmail.com.

Gemara Chabura - For those that do not know, there is a gemara shiur each week before davening starting at 8:30 AM. This weeks shiur will be led by Rabbi Schlusberg.

2018-2019 Member Ticker:

111 Member
Households!

President: Moshe Secemski **Vice Presidents:** Benji Berg | Henry Bernstein | Alex Daitch | Josh Katz **Secretary:** Yosef Chai Klein **Treasurer:** Tova Sonnenblick

Sisterhood: Rivi Landesman | Aliza Rosenberg **Gabbaim:** Steven Lowinger | Avidan Rothman | Dov Rossman | Meir Safrin

We welcome your input! Please send your newsletter announcements by Wednesday of each week to ensure they make it in!

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Tu b'Av: Chessed - A Divine Boomerang

This Shabbos represents the resiliency of the Jewish nation. Six days ago, we sat on the floor as mourners, engulfed by despondency and despair, and today enveloped in an atmosphere of optimism. The excitement comes not only from the *parsha* of *Vaeschanan* with its many basic *mitzvos* of *talmud Torah*, *tefillin*, *mezuzah*, and the *Aseres Hadibros*, as well as the prohibition against intermarriage. The optimism is not only from the *haftorah* where the *navi* Yeshaya promises us that as we were persecuted most severely, so will we be comforted. The additional optimism comes from today being *Tu b'Av*, the fifteenth day of the month of Av. The Talmud at the end of *Taanis* and *Bava Basra* (125a-125b) enumerates six phenomena that occurred on this day that make its significance and joy comparable to that of *Yom Kippur*.

The last factor contributing to the uniqueness of this day is that it marked the culmination of bringing the wood for the fire on the *mizbeach*. The Torah (*Vayikra* 6:6) legislates that there is to be an *aisch tamid* - a perpetual fire ablaze on the altar. The Talmud (*Yuma* 21b) informs us that in actuality there were three fires on the *mizbeach*: The largest one was to consume the meat sacrifices, the second largest fire was to provide the coals with which to light and offer the incense on the golden altar in the *heichal*, and the third one was to fulfill the Divine directive of having the perpetual fire that should not be extinguished.

There is a recurring metaphysical theme throughout many of the *mitzvos* according to the understanding of the *Sefer HaChinuch*. His basic thesis is that *chesed* to one's fellow man and giving to Hashem is in reality a boomerang and ultimately benefits the donor. Allow me to explain. Man, by his very nature, is limited both materialistically and spiritually. His actions are therefore limited as well. The concept of a *bracha* is to break through the limits of man's actions by giving and attributing a portion to Hashem, which then limitless just like its Master is, thereby allowing *bracha* to settle on its object and expand limitlessly. Thus, when the Jewish nation provides the *lechem hapanim* weekly, fulfilling, "on the Table shall you place show-bread before Me always" (*Shemos* 25:30), our giving and offering Him bread allows Him to bless our bread and sustenance (see *Chinuch*, *mitzvah* 97.) Interestingly, the *Chinuch* (*mitzvah* 132), explaining the significance of our kindling a fire on the altar even though in the time of the first *Beis HaMikdash* fire miraculously descended from Heaven, says that man is comprised of four elements: dust, water, wind, and fire. The wood cut between Nisan and Tu b'Av is dried by the intense heat of the sun, preventing the wood from becoming wormy and thus providing the best flammable material. Once the wood has been severed, it goes from *tzomeach* - that which grows, to *domeim* - a lifeless object, and as Hashem accepts this wood and allows it to fuel the *mizbeach*, He then takes our *domeim* - lifeless element, the dust within us, and lights our fire. As the burning fire on the altar is beautiful to see and practical, so too does He take our personal fire, our drive for life, and calibrates it. Too much fire in man will consume him, anger him constantly and will not allow him to interact patiently and harmoniously with others. Too little fire will leave man without principles, without determination, a wimp. Thus our *hiddur mitzvah* which is accomplished by finishing this *mitzvah* by Tu b'Av to ensure the highest quality wood, gains us His blessings in return.

There is a moving *Yalkut Shimoni* at the very end of *V'zos Habracha* that describes Moshe leaving the *mitzvah* of *bizuy Mitzrayim* (gathering the wealth of Egypt), and for three days and three nights searching for the bones of Yosef. Pharaoh's advisors told him that if he doesn't want the Israelites to leave he should hide the bones of Yosef since they pledged not to leave without his remains, and they will surely be loyal to their pledge! Exhausted, Moshe meets Serach the daughter of Asher. Seeing Moshe totally fatigued and inquiring why, she then takes him to the shores of the Nile, where Yosef had been buried deep in the waters in a heavy casket to ensure that the Jewish nation would not leave. The rest is history. Moshe prays and Hashem delivers, but only after Moshe extends his greatest effort in this project. The lesson is clear: we have to put in our maximum effort and He will respond in kind.

In the *Nachem* prayer we recited on Tisha b'Av we conclude, "for You, Hashem, consumed her, and with fire You will rebuild her." I'd like to suggest that since we, the Jewish nation, took the *Beis HaMikdash* for granted and did not bring our fire/enthusiasm to the *Beis Hamikdash*, it became a lifeless shell lacking the soul and fire of the Jewish people, and therefore it was consumed with natural fire. We pray that in the near future, in the merit of our studying and appreciating the *korban eitzim* (the wood donations) and our pining and longing to fulfill this *mitzvah* as well as all other *mitzvos* related to the *Beis HaMikdash*, this fire and enthusiasm will speedily cause the rebuilding of the third *Beis HaMikdash* in our days.

Rabbi Benjamin Yudin

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