



Congregation Ahavat Shalom

The ACHDUS NEWSLETTER
www.ahavatshalomteaneck.com

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Parshat Beshalach

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Shevat 19

Rabbi Yehuda Halpert

Shabbat Times

Friday, January 18	
Candle Lighting:	4:38 PM
Mincha/Maariv:	4:40 PM
Shabbat, January 19	
Shacharit:	9:00 AM
Kriyat Shema:	9:42 AM
Mincha /Shalosh	
Seudot:	4:25 PM
Shkiya:	4:57 PM
Maariv:	5:36 PM
Havdalah:	5:41 PM
Next Friday, January 25	
Candle Lighting:	4:47 PM
Mincha/Maariv:	4:50 PM



Weather Report: Friday night: 26°, Partly cloudy

Shabbat day: 33°, Snow showers

Welcome to Talya & Avi Kramer, and Adira and David Freilich who all recently moved into the community!

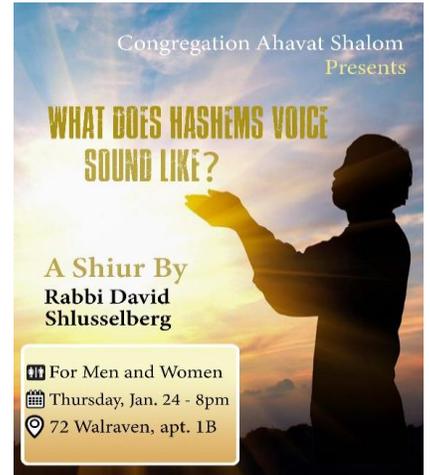
DISTRIBUTED: 2019 Ahavat Shalom Calendar - Move over family photos on the fridge! The 2019 Ahavat Shalom is out to all member households! If you did not receive your copy, please contact your Vice President!

COMING UP - Cookbook Club: Soup - In continuation of it's monthly meet-up the Sisterhood's Cookbook Club will be meeting on Monday Evening, January 21st at Vaknin Residence where they will feature delectable soups. This will be **CoEd event** - allowing all to taste the soups, exchange recipes and spend time together. Please reach out to Yael Wine or Deena Bernstein for more info.

Shiur Event - Famous for his Friday Night shiurim in our Shul, (between Kabbalat Shabbat and Maariv,) Rabbi David Shlisselberg will be giving a shiur on Thursday, January 24th at 8:00 PM at his home, 72 Walraven, Apt. 1B. The topic will be "What Does Hashem's Voice Sound Like?" All men and women are welcome and encouraged to attend!

Shop for a Cause! Wuko Gals is currently running a promo exclusively for the Ahavat Shalom community that allows you take 10% off your order as well as they will donate 10% of your order to the Shul. Use promo code "AHAVATSHALOM" when checking out @ www.wukogals.com!

Trivia Night & Speed Dating - There will be a singles' trivia night and speed dating event on February 9, 2019 at the Young Israel of the West Side from 8:00 - 11:00 PM. Register before February 3 at www.teanecktrivia.eventbrite.com. Admission is \$36 or \$25 if you sign up before January 27! For more information, contact teaneckshabbaton@gmail.com



Rabbi Halpert's Availability

Rabbi Yehuda Halpert will be here: 2:2. He can be reached via email at RabbiYehudaHalpert@gmail.com, 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 be no Yeshivat Noam groups this week. Have a wonderful Shabbat!

Chessed Committee

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



Torah Opportunity: The topic for this week's Shviti seder limud at Congregation Beth Aaron is "The Greatest of the Grape: What Type of Beverage May Be Used for Kiddush? Part 2" The program is held on Sunday mornings in the Beit Midrash, following the 8:00 a.m. minyan. A light breakfast is served at 8:45 a.m. For more information, please contact Mordy Ungar, 201-741-3920, m_ungar@yahoo.com.

A Taste of Hope - Bonei Olam, an organization dedicated to helping families struggling with fertility issues, is hosting a free event for men and women, featuring Naomi Nachman and her famous Chopped Competition! The event will take place on Motzei Shabbat, February 23, 2019 at 8:30 PM at Keter Torah! No RSVP required!

HAPPY YESHIVA BREAK EVERYONE!

Congregation Ahavat Shalom Board Members 2018-2019

President: Ben Wine **Vice Presidents:** Eliana Baum | Henry Bernstein | Eli Fenyes | Shira Russell-Giller **Secretary:** Yosef Chai Klein **Treasurer:** Yishai Kadry

Sisterhood: Deena Bernstein | Yael Wine **Gabbaim:** Eli Baum | Stephan Gilbert | Steven Lowinger | Avi Sonnenblick

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

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MORTGAGE ADVANTAGE PROGRAM

Jordan Kadry
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*Minimum loan amount \$300,000
Loan must be originated with Jordan Kadry. Must be a member of Ahavat Shalom at time of application. Offer expires June 1, 2018.

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Synchronization of the Natural Order With the Divine Will

This *parsha* has the unique distinction of being the organic beginning of the Torah. Rashi, in the famous opening lines to his *peirush* on *Chumash*, quotes the *midrash* which asks, "shouldn't the Torah have started with the portion of 'hachodesh hazeh lochem', which is the first *mitzvah* that Israel was commanded? Why does the *Chumash* start with *Bereishis*? [The answer is] ...so that if the nations of the world will accuse Israel of being thieves by dint of having conquered the Land [of Israel] from the seven nations, they will reply that the entire world is G-d's; He created it and gave it to whom was fit in His eyes. He gave it to them by dint of His will, and by dint of His will took it from them and gave it to us."

This Rashi certainly can't mean that this will convince the nations of the world of anything. It hasn't for the last millennia, and by all accounts does not seem to be doing so now. Additionally, starting the Torah with *hachodesh hazeh lochem* seems odd. If we are meant to start the Torah with the world of *mitzvos*, then surely it is *mattan Torah* that we should start with. The Rambam (*Peirush Hamishnayos*) famously states that the validity of any *mitzvah* starts with the Sinaitic revelation. Any *mitzvah* given before [i.e. *millah* or *gid hanasha*] is still in effect only because it was repeated at Sinai. Why, then, would it be proper to start the Torah at our *parsha*?

To understand the fundamental difference between *Bereishis* and "*hachodesh hazeh lochem*", we will need to examine the fundamental contexts of "universe": natural/determined, versus "willed"/ choice. On the one hand we can posit that the most basic structure of our universe is "law and order", which fits so well with our experience of the immutable natural laws. In this context Hashem appeared and commanded particular deeds to be performed, and prohibited particular activities.

On the other hand, one may posit a supernatural context, wherein everything is the "will of G-d" and the natural order as such is but a temporary - albeit long-lived - particular "will of Hashem".

If we are to ask what is the most basic unit of our universe, we may well answer: time. It is the most unbending and unyielding of the four dimensions [Einstein aside.]

Thus *Bereishis* begins with time: In the beginning. The core unit of time is a day. There was night and daytime, forming "one day." This is the natural world, and time is immutable. "What was before" is irrelevant, and from the point of *Bereishis* on, day is a fixed unit of time. The holy day which comes out of this arrangement is *Shabbos*, which is characterized as "*k'vi'uh v'kaymi* - fixed and immutable."

But there is another unit of time called *chodesh*. This is an inherently fluctuating unit, as it has no direct correlation with "days"; any given month can be longer or shorter. But more importantly, its *halachic* status is given to change. The length of the month and its position in the year are set by humans. Humans act not only as observers of the passage of months, but we actually can add or subtract a month, as per our need.

Thus in the first model, time is fixed and man is the variable; in the second model man is fixed, i.e. *atem*, and time is variable. The nations of the world have seven *mitzvos*, corresponding to the seven days of creation. Their world's framing context is a fixed natural order within which G-d is omnipotent. The additional *mitzvos* that we have are not simply more of the same, but rather are a function of a different contextualization of our existence. *Chazal* teach us that the six hundred and thirteen *mitzvos* represent the elements of the human body. It is the Torah of man, rather than the Torah of the world.

It would therefore not be adequate to begin the Torah at *mattan Torah*. We must start with redefining the universe itself, such that man is the at the core and is the central point of reference of existence, and time is his obedient servant. The corresponding alternative to *Bereishis* is *hachodesh hazeh lochem*, not the *Aseres Hadibros*. And, indeed, the Torah's real Genesis is *hachodesh hazeh*.

Hashem did not want to leave creation distributed between two frameworks, one centered on temporality and one anthropocentric, which did not interface with each other. Such a bifurcation would run counter to Hashem's unity. Translating this to the world of ethics, this would mean that a system in the universe in which Hashem was ethical according to a Torah viewpoint but seemingly unjust from the perspective of a [Divinely imbued] universal morality is unacceptable. Rather, Hashem engineered a universe in which the various articulations of His will all point in the same direction, and according to which *Eretz Yisroel* is understandably and justly ours from both perspectives - the perspective of *hachodesh* and the perspective of *Bereishis*.

The remarkable unity between the framework centered on time and the anthropocentric framework was not put into place to convince the nations of the world of the validity of our claim to *Eretz Yisroel*. Rather it was created to teach us that Torah is true both from our particularistic morality and according to its reflection in universal morality as well.

Mishpetei hashem Emmes, Tzadku Yachdav!

Rabbi Ahron Lopiansky

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