



Congregation Ahavat Shalom

The ACHDUS NEWSLETTER
www.ahavatshalomteaneck.com

Davening: TABC, 1600 Queen Anne Rd.
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Parshat Metzora
Shabbat HaGadol

Volume: 19, Issue: 37 | April 12-13, 2019

Nissan 8

Rabbi Yehuda Halpert

Assistant Rabbi David Schlusberg

Shabbat day: 61°, Partially Cloudy

Shabbat Times



Friday, April 12	
Candle Lighting:	7:14 PM
Mincha/Maariv:	7:15 PM
Shabbat, April 13	
Shacharit:	9:00 AM
Kriyat Shema:	9:38 AM
Mincha (No Shul SS)	6:55 PM
Shkiya:	7:33 PM
Maariv:	8:11 PM
Havdalah:	8:16 PM
Next Friday, April 19	
Mincha/Maariv:	NO SHUL
Candle Lighting:	7:22 PM

Weather Report: Friday night 58°, Rain

Mazal Tov to Aviva, Benjy and Gavriel Lebowitz on the birth of a baby boy! The shalom zachor will take place this Friday night at 9:00 PM at 385 Warwick Avenue in Teaneck!

Tzeitchem L'/Shalom to Leora, Spence, Ayelet and Yakira Weitzen who are moving to Englewood! Thank you for all you have done for our community!

Shabbat HaGadol Drasha Schedule:

Immediately after davening (Rabbi Halpert): *How Many Haggadahs Should You Have at the Seder Table? A New Perspective on the Principle of וְכָל הַמְרֵבָה...הִרִי זֶה מְשׁוּבָח*

6:10 PM (Rabbi Schlusberg): *A Night of Questions in a World Filled With Questions*

7:10 PM (Rabbi Halpert): *Spiritual Lessons from the "Slave's Bible" and "Daru" (Rav Nachman's Slave)*

Rabbi Halpert's Availability

Rabbi Yehuda Halpert will be here: 4/13, 5/4.
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.

*** Please note that there will be a small kiddush served after davening during the first Drasha. Men and women are invited to attend any and all Drashas!***

Mechirat Chametz - Just a reminder that the final opportunity for Mechirat Chametz through the shul will take place at the Schlusberg home, 72 Walraven Drive, Apt. 1B on Sunday morning from 9:00 - 10:00 AM.

Pesach Reminder - There will be no minyanim held at shul over Pesach on Shabbat, Yom Tov or Chol HaMoed. Please plan accordingly and we wish you a Chag Kasher V'Sameach!

Rabbi Schlusberg's Contact Info

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

Yeshivat Noam Youth Groups

Groups for children ages 2-4 will be located in Room 3 from 9:45am - 11:00am. 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.

New Teaneck-Wide Minyan - This message is to announce a new community wide minyan that will meet once per month on Sunday mornings at 8:00am. The objective of this minyan, endorsed by all of the shuls below, is very simple if "revolutionary": to provide those interested an opportunity, just once per month, to daven at a slow enough pace to enable them to understand the meaning of all of the words. More specifically, the minyan will target a 60-minute, rather than 30-35 minute, shacharit for a regular Sunday morning davening. The minyan will only meet on "regular" Sundays, not Rosh Chodesh or fast days. (It will generally meet the first Sunday after every Rosh Chodesh). As a community-wide initiative, this minyan is expected to rotate among various community shuls. It is anticipated that the first one will be hosted at Bnai Yeshurun on Sunday, April 7, at 8am. We are all very busy the rest of the week and it may not be realistic to always understand everything we are saying when racing along to keep up with the understandably fast pace of davening. This minyan will be launched only if at least 25-30 people respond that they anticipate attending. Please email your interest to sundaykavanaminyan@gmail.com
Initial list of sponsoring shuls: Beth Aaron, Beth Abraham, Bnai Yeshurun, Congregation Ahavat Shalom, Keter Torah, Ohr HaTorah, Rinat Yisrael, Shaare Tefillah, Young Israel, Zichron Mordechai

Chesed 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.

Nitzanei Noam Summer program for 2-3 year olds - Nitzanei Noam, located in Bnai Yeshurun, Teaneck, is accepting applications for its 2-3 year old summer program. Experienced head counselor, fun junior counselors, outdoor climbing and play area, outdoor water play, dynamic daily programming and learning, music, yoga and more. Hours are 9:00am-3:00pm with early drop off and late pick up available. For more information visit www.yeshivatnoam.org or call Morah Joyce Buckman at 201-836-6871, or email her at jbuckman@yeshivatnoam.org.

Torah Opportunity - The Shviti seder limud at Congregation Beth Aaron held on Sunday mornings in the Beit Midrash, beginning at 9:00 a.m. A light breakfast will be served at 8:45 a.m. Each Sunday morning program typically will be independent from the previous and subsequent programs. For more information about the program, please contact Mordy Ungar, 201-741-3920, m_ungar2@yahoo.com.



Chag Kasher V'Sameach!

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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*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.





The Freedom to Choose

"If a man (*adam*) will have on his flesh...a *tzara'as* affliction...he shall be brought to Aaron the *Kohen* or to one of his sons the *Kohanim*" (*Tazria* 13:2.) Why does the Torah begin its discussion of the laws of *tzara'as* with the word *adam*? It should have used the more common word *ish*.

Chazal(*Arachin* 16a) identify seven different *aveiros* that can cause *tzara'as*, the most famous of which is *lashon hara*. Why does a person speak *lashon hara* if he knows that it is forbidden? Sometimes he simply loses control. Before he realizes, the words just tumble out of his mouth. Perhaps that is why the Torah begins its discussion of *tzara'as* with the term *adam* because *adamis* often used in contrast to *beheimah* (animal), as in "*Adam u'beheimah toshiya, Hashem - Hashem, You save man and animal*" (*Tehillim* 36:7.) When a person speaks *lashon hara*, he acts instinctively and impulsively like an animal. By not exercising control over himself, he loses his special quality of *adam* and lowers himself to the level of *beheimah*. The Torah uses the term *adam* to indicate that to be cured of *tzara'as*, a person must act like an *adam* once again, to make the right choices in his actions and his speech.

The importance of acting like an *adam* and making the right choices in life is the very first message Hashem gives to *Klal Yisrael* in *Mitzrayim*. "*Hachodesh hazeh lachem rosh chodoshim, rishon hu lachem l'chadshei hashana - this month (of Nissan) is for you the first of all months, the first of all the months of the year*" (*Shemos* 12:2.) The *Seforno* explains that Hashem was saying, "From now on the months will be yours, to do with them as you choose. This is the first of all the months of the year because in this month you begin your *bechirah* (free will) existence." Hashem was telling *Klal Yisrael*, "Now that you are no longer slaves, you are not beholden to anyone. You have the free will to choose your direction in life! Use your freedom properly, to elevate yourself, not to satisfy every whim and desire of your heart."

This is what *Chazal* meant when they said, "*Ein lecha ben chorin ela mi she'oseik b'Torah, v'chol mi she'oseik b'Torah mis'aleh - a person is not truly free unless he engages in Torah study, and whoever engages in Torah study becomes elevated*" (*Avos* 6:2.) One who pursues his Torah study with dedication, and whose life is shaped and guided by a Torah perspective, is a true *ben chorin* because he understands that the ultimate purpose of freedom is to elevate himself through the choices that he makes.

While non-Jews can certainly elevate themselves by fulfilling the seven *mitzvos* of the *bnei Noach*, only *Klal Yisrael* have the ability to achieve the highest level of freedom by engaging in *talmud* Torah and observing all 613 *mitzvos*. Perhaps this is why only *Klal Yisrael* are subject to the rules of *tumas tzara'as* (*Negaim* 3:1, 12:1). The *Tosafos Yom Tov* (*ibid*) and the *Ohr Hachayim* (*Tazria* 13:2) explain this *halacha* based on the statement of *Reb Shimon* that only *Klal Yisrael* are referred to as *adam* in the context of *tumas ohel*. "*Atem kruyim adam - only you are called adam*" (*Bava Metzia* 114b.) Since the Torah also uses the term *adam* regarding *tumas tzara'as*, that *halacha* as well must be limited to *Klal Yisrael*.

This does not mean that non-Jews are never called *adam*. The fact is the *Mishna* (*Avos* 3:14) declares "*Chaviv adam she'nivra b'tzelem - man is beloved because he was created in the image of G-d*." The *Tosafos Yom Tov* and the *Tiferes Yisrael* both explain that even non-Jews are called *adam* in this context because they also have *mitzvos*. But *Klal Yisrael* have an elevated status of *adam* because they have a larger group of *mitzvos* to fulfill, and consequently they have the potential to rise to an even higher spiritual level.

Yet that privilege does not come without responsibility. If a Jew chooses to develop his *neshama*, to perfect his *middos*, to dedicate his life to *talmud* Torah and spiritual pursuits, he can rise to the highest levels. But if he fails to live up to his spiritual potential, and he allows his physical side to dictate his actions and his speech, then he falls to an even lower level than a non-Jew, and he is subject to the laws of *tumas tzara'as*.

The *yom tov* of *Pesach*, *zman cheiruseinu*, is a time to rediscover the essence of true freedom. When we liberate our *neshamos* from their physical limitations, and we allow them to express themselves through *mitzvos* and *ma'asim tovim*, we infuse our lives with meaning and purpose, and we become truly worthy of being called *adam* in the fullest sense of the word.

Rabbi Eliakim Koenigsberg

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