



Congregation Ahavat Shalom

The ACHDUS
NEWSLETTER
www.ahavatshalomteaneck.com

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Parshat Behar

Volume: 19, Issue: 43 | May 24-25, 2019

Iyar 19-20

Rabbi Yehuda Halpert

Assistant Rabbi David Schlusberg

Shabbat day: 73rd, Partly Cloudy

Shabbat Times

Friday, May 24	
Mincha/Maariv:	7:15 PM
Candle Lighting:	7:57 PM
Shabbat, May 25	
Shacharit:	9:00 AM
Kriyat Shema:	9:12 AM
Mincha /Shalosh Seudot:	7:50 PM
Shkiya:	8:16 PM
Maariv:	8:59 PM
Havdalah:	9:04 PM
Next Friday, May 31	
Mincha/Maariv:	7:15 PM
Candle Lighting:	8:03 PM



Weather Report: Friday night 56[°], Partly Cloudy

Welcome to Aviva and Leor Leben, and Tova and Gavriel Bram who recently moved into the community!

UPDATE: CAS Community Security Campaign - The board is truly moved and is appreciative for all those that took place to come forward and assist with this urgent campaign. Baruch Hashem, **we have raised more than the initial goal thanks to all the awesome people who generously gave.** As of now we have raise \$ 15,352.00 - meeting the initial goal at 153%! Thanks to all those that came forward in our time of need. Please feel free to continue donating as every penny will go towards our community's security.

NEXT WEEK: Erev Shavuot Mystery Shabbat - Join the Ahavat Shalom Community for an Erev Shavuot Mystery Shabbat on June 8th! Sign up to be a host or a guest - our committee will match our hosts with guests to meet new neighbors and have a great time. Sign up closes June 1st @ Midnight. Priority will be given to members. The link is:
<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe4oKzPb9em07v-aRVJjxeiEV2mOkElvcoqiYChz2xDyG69AQ/viewform>

Seudat Shlishit Topic: "The Halachot of Erasing Hashem's Name From a Computer Screen." - The shiur will be given by Rabbi David Schlusberg. As always, Seudat Shlishit is open to both women and men in the community.

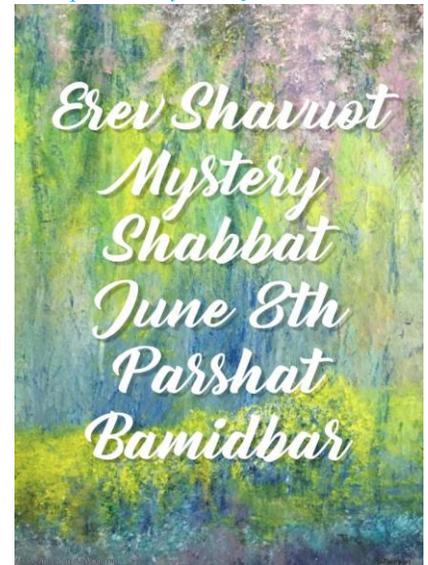
Newsletter Advertising Space - Congregation Ahavat Shalom will once again be auctioning off the advertising space in our weekly newsletter, the Achdus Newsletter, for the 12 month period from June 1, 2019 - May 31, 2020. The deadline to submit your bid is May 31, 2019. If you have any questions, please reach out to the Board.

Amud Yomi - Finding time during the day to learn can be an extremely difficult task, especially for those in the workforce. Without a chavrusa to motivate you to show up, it can be difficult to commit to setting aside time. While the worldwide Daf Yomi program has had incredible success in this endeavor, many of us might still find difficulty keeping up and drop it altogether. For anyone that is interested, amudyomi.com is on a schedule to complete Shas in 15 years (Daf Yomi - shas in 7.5 years; 1 amud - 0.5 daf; Amud Yomi - shas in 15 years; math is fun!). This is a great opportunity to incorporate learning into your daily life! If you have any interest in doing this alongside like-minded individuals within our community, please reach out to Ami Kirschner for more details. He can be reached via email: amikirschner@gmail.com or on his cell: (347) 233-1180.

Origami Workshop - Just in time for Shavuot, come join Yaacov Metzger as he continues his free Origami workshop series with "Tulips in a Flowerpot." You will have two chances to catch this workshop at Congregation Beth Aaron. It will take place on Memorial Day, Monday, May 27, at 10:00 a.m. Both adults and children are welcome; children aged 8 or under require parental participation. Register at www.bethaaron.org/event/TulipOrigami.

Torah Opportunity: The topic for this week's Shivti seder limud at Congregation Beth Aaron is "Halachic Issues in Commerce and the Marketplace, Part 2." Rabbi Sason Gabay will lead the shiur and the chabura before the shiur. The program is 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 information about the program, contact Mordy Ungar, 201-741-3920, m_ungar@yahoo.com.

Torah Opportunity: The Beit Midrash of Teaneck (BMT), located at Heichal Hatorah, 70 Sterling Pl, provides an interactive Talmud Torah learning experience for men who are retired or have flexible schedules on Monday and Wednesday mornings between 9:15 a.m. and 12:45 p.m. On Wednesday the 29th, seder begins at 9:15 am; at 10:00 a.m., Rabbi Ronen Dvash (Heichal HaTorah) will give a shiur on Gemara Brachot; at 11:00 a.m., Mrs. Rivka Kahan (Principal, Maayanot High School for Girls) will give a shiur on "Timeless Messages of Gan Eden"; at 12:00, Rabbi Hayyim Angel (Yeshiva University) will give a shiur on Sefer Yirmiyahu, Chapter 36.



Rabbi Halpert's Availability

Rabbi Yehuda Halpert will be here: 6/1. 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

Yeshivat Noam Youth Groups

There will be no Yeshivat Noam groups this week. Have a wonderful Shabbat!

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.



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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Making Sefira Count

It is certainly not uncommon for Jews to count. Long ago, Moshe was asked to count and measure every item that was dedicated to the *mishkan*, and as a result we have a significant Torah portion recording Moshe's accounting. The verb for counting in that context is "to count and to assign", **סָפַר**. The Torah says that every new sheep must pass under or through some obstacle, and thus we are taught that the sheep must be accurately counted in order for the flock to be tithed appropriately. Bilam wonders who could count our people and our accomplishments, " **מִי יִסְפֹּר**". Every phrase carries a hint, no doubt, unique to its circumstance.

This week's *parsha* asks *Klal Yisrael* to count years to the *yovel*, and this week we find ourselves half way through counting our days from *Pesach* to *Shavuot*. Here the Torah chose to use the word " **סָפַר**". What is the specific meaning of the count when it is recorded as **סָפַרְתֶּם לָכֶם**?

It is often suggested that analyzing the context of the first use of a word in *chumash* will help interpret the word with precision and nuance. This was presented to me as a position of the **Gr"** but it stands as a reasonable hypothesis even if its pedigree is not so authoritative. The first time that we see the word **סָפַר** is when Avrohom was invited by Hashem to fathom the numbers of his future, "Count - **וְסָפַרְתָּ** the stars, if you can count - **וְלִסְפֹּר** them" (*Breishis* 15:5). This verb's final appearance in *Breishis* documents Yosef's success in gathering so much grain for *Mitzrayim*, "that he stopped counting - **וְלִסְפֹּר** because it was beyond a count -) (*Breishis* 49:41). The only other time that **סָפַר** mentioned in *Breishis* is as a noun in Yaakov's passionate and fearful criticism of Shimon and Levi. Yaakov feels endangered by their destruction of *Shechem* and says "I am but a few men - **וְלִסְפֹּר** and they will gather against me and destroy my family" (*Breishis* 35:30.) In other words, my army is not worthy of being reckoned.

It follows that the word **סָפַר** refers to something that in fact defies counting. Thus the mitzvah of **סְפִירָה** asks us to identify each day as it begins and state our discomfort and unwillingness to limit its measure by assigning it a number. Moreover, the ongoing marking of time begs us to fully recognize that time can earn value beyond any available assessment. Perhaps we are being trained to appreciate that one of the greatest gifts of freedom, managing our hours and evaluating our days, can have immeasurable value once it/they are filled with Hashem's will, guidance and discipline.

I was thrilled to find that Rav Yaakov Tzvi Mecklenberg, whose sensitivity to the tone of the text fills his *sefer* "*Haksav VeHakabolo*" with profound and creative commentary, comes to a similar conclusion, albeit from alternative proof texts. Pointing to the similar language that *Sefiras Haomers* shares with the women's mandate to count seven clean days in preparation for *tevilah*, he reminds us that the preparation for going to the *mikvah* requires a focus on the substance of those days rather than simply announcing their numeral. Closing his analysis (*Vayikra* 23:15) Rav Mecklenberg cautions, "Conduct yourselves, while counting the seven weeks, not to focus on the amount [of time pre se] rather focus on the quality of every moment of this period, not to waste it with practices that diminish the supreme reach of the human spirit".

Furthermore, the "*Haksav Vehakabolo*" sees this message in the phrase " **וְסָפַרְתֶּם לָכֶם**" and interprets it to teach that this *mitzvah* can be so rewarding for our growth.

Finally, a *medrash* quoted by *rishonim* identifies the moment that earned us the *mitzvah* of counting *sefira*. Apparently, immediately upon leaving *Mitzrayim* our impatient forbearers addressed Hashem in a not so pleasant fashion and demanded, "Where is the Torah that you promised to us?" to which they heard the heavenly voice respond, "You still need to wait 50 days". Without delay and with increasing impatience and enthusiasm, we began to count. Hashem, it would seem, wants us to strive to recapture the bated breath of the very first count.

True, it may be well beyond our grasp and that is why it is called "*sefira*" and not "*minyana*" or "*pikudas*", but if the count could in some small measure reconnect us to the day-by-day excitement of a people counting down to Sinai, we will have successfully communicated the privilege of our purpose as Jews.

Rabbi Yaakov Neuburger

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