





Davening: TABC, 1600 Queen Anne Rd. Mailing: PO Box 595, Teaneck, NJ 07666-0595

## Parshat Vayechi

#### Shabbat Times Friday, December 29 Candla Lighting

| Candle Lighting:       | 4:18 PM   |
|------------------------|-----------|
| Mincha/Maariv:         | 4:20 PM   |
| Shabbat, December 30   |           |
| Shacharit:             | 8:45 AM   |
| Kriyat Shema:          | 9:39 AM   |
| Mincha / Shalosh       | 4:10 PM   |
| Seudot:                | 4. IV F M |
| Shkiya:                | 4:37 PM   |
| Maariv:                | 5:17 PM   |
| Shabbat Ends:          | 5:22 PM   |
| Next Friday, January 5 |           |
| Candle Lighting:       | 4:24 PM   |
| Mincha/Maariv:         | 4:25 PM   |
|                        |           |

1.10 DM

#### Rabbi Halpert's Availability

Rabbi Yehuda Halpert will be here on: 12/30

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

Groups for children ages 2-4 will be located in Room 3 from 9:30am - 10:45am. 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.

#### Chesed Committee

If you or anyone you know has moved in recently or knows somebody moving in, let Moty Raven or Yael Stromer know! Check out

ahavatshalomteaneck.com/movingin for more information.



### Volume: 18, Issue: 22 | December 29-30, 2017

Teves 12, 5778 **Rabbi Yehuda Halpert** 

Weather Report: Friday night: 15, Clear & cold (Brrrr...)

Shabbat day: 26°, Cloudy skies - stay warm!

Mazel Tov to our very own Ezra Halpert who is celebrating his Bar Mitzvah this Shabbatt Ezra has been a strong presence in our minyan each week over the last few years, and we are looking forward to celebrating this occasion. The whole community is invited to a kiddush following davening. Please see the flyer attached to the email blast for more information!

Mazel Tov to Pamela, Shua, Lea and Maya Joseph on the birth of a baby boy! Shalom Zachor will take place this Friday night at 7:30 PM at the Joseph home, 1117 Allessandrini Ave, New Milford, NJ. The whole community is invited!

Welcome to the Board As of this week, the Board has voted and will be welcoming the addition of Benjy Lebowitz and Adam Ehrenreich to the team of Gabbaim. Thank you for taking on this important role.

Ahavat Shalom Shabbat Gemara Chabura - Beginning this Shabbat, Ahavat Shalom will be having a men's Gemara Chabura every Shabbat morning at 8:15 AM in the shulled by Ian Mark. There is no required level of Gemara knowledge. For more information, please contact Ariel Kirshenbaum at akirshenbaum3@gmail.com.

New Releases in 2018 - Move over family photos on the fridge! Ahavat Shalom's calendar has arrived! Shul members, please refer to the email previously sent out regarding when and where to pick up your copies!

**ReMembership Your Dues** ... The new membership year began on September 1st. To join our growing community, the cost is \$165/person and \$330/household. Kiddushim for the year can be sponsored for an additional \$15/person or \$30/household. NEW THIS YEAR, Welcome Baskets for all new community members can be sponsored for the whole year for just \$10!

Chesed Opportunity - Deena and Henry Bernstein are looking for volunteers to help bring PackIts to the city every Thursday morning. Additionally, PackIts can be sponsored for \$10 each.

Congregation Bnai Yeshurun's - presents a new shiur series for women taught by Rabbi Ari Zahtz: "Bilvavi Mishkan Evneh - Developing our Spiritual Personalities". Tuesday mornings, at 10:15 am in the CBY Beis Medresh All women are invited to join and learn!

Lecture Series - Rabbi Larry Rothwachs will offer a lecture series, "Perspectives on Jewish Parenting in an Ever Changing World," on Tuesday evenings at 8:30 p.m., at Congregation Beth Aaron. The series is free and open to the public. This week's event will take place on January 2: "The Times They Are A-Changin": Jewish Parenting in the 21st Century.

NechamaComfort presents "SHOPPING FOR A CAUSE': You are invited to an evening of food , friends, fun and finds. This event will take place on Tuesday, January 2, 2018 at Medici Shoes and More, 15 North Dean St., Englewood, NJ. Come by,anytime between 5-9 PM. Shop for shoes, cloths , hats, jewelry and more. A percentage of your purchase will be donated to NechamaComfort. For more information, visit nechamacomfort.com or email nechamacomfort@gmail.com.

Save the date - January 7th at 4:30 PM" Addy & Uno" - a local performance of this Broadway, family musical currently appearing at The Children's Theater, that teaches empathy, inclusion, and kindness, through this play about friendship and disability. Sponsored by The Friendship Circle and Ben Porat Yosef. All proceeds to go to The Friendship Circle. \$10/ticket, \$180/sponsor. Taking place at Ben Porat Yosef (E. 243 Frisch Ct., Paramus, NJ). For a flyer and to order tickets: Bcfriendship.com/concert For information contact: zeesy@bcfriendship.com.

#### **Congregation Ahavat Shalom Board Members 2017-2018**

President: Ben Wine Vice Presidents: Alex Daitch | Ariel Kirshenbaum | Moty Raven | Evan Rottenstreich Secretary: Eli Baum Treasurer: Yonatan Isser Sisterhood: Melissa Kirshenbaum | Sam Locke Gabbaim: Dani Weinberger | Steven Lowinger | Benjy Lebowitz | Adam Ehrenreich

We welcome your input! Please send your newsletter announcements by Wednesday.

 $\underline{board} @ teaneckapartments.com \mid \underline{president} @ teaneckapartments.com \mid \underline{rabbiyehudahalpert} @ gmail.com \mid \underline{rabbiyehudahalpert} @ gmailbert @ gm$ 





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Parshat Vayechi

Volume: 18, Issue: 22 | December 29-30, 2017

Teves 12, 5778 Rabbi Yehuda Halpert

# Blessings: the Common and the Unique

Several notable points surface upon reading Ya'akov *Avinu*'s blessings to Ephraim and Menashe. Firstly, Ya'akov initially requests of Yosef, "take them to me and I shall bless <u>them</u>" (48:9), but later the verse states, "And he blessed <u>Yosef</u> and he said... The angel ... shall bless the <u>youths</u>" (*ibid.* 15-16). Following that, the Torah records another blessing, "And he blessed <u>them</u> saying, 'With <u>you</u> (*becha* in the singular) shall Israel bless, "May G-d make you like Ephraim and Menashe"..." (*ibid.* 20). The Torah seemingly alternates between the blessings being directed toward Yosef and their being directed toward his children. Furthermore, it is noteworthy that the first blessing does not mention Yosef's children by name whereas the second one does.

The commentaries present different approaches resolving one or more of the above anomalies. *Ramban* explains that the first blessing was a blessing to Yosef since the greatest blessing a father could receive is a blessing for his children. He similarly explains the usage of the singular "*becha*" in the second blessing: Ya'akov was telling Yosef, "The Jewish people will use <u>your</u>descendants as paradigms for their blessings". *Ohr HaChaim* and *Seforno* explain that Ya'akov at first separately bestowed a blessing upon Yosef the content of which is not described and then proceeded to bless Yosef's sons, Ephraim and Menashe. Alternatively, Ya'akov first bestowed the <u>power</u> of blessing - which had been given to Ya'akov from his father Yitzchak who, in turn, received it from his father Avraham - upon his beloved son Yosef, and then Ya'akov proceeded to bless his grandchildren.

Abarbanel, in explanation of the need for two blessings, comments that the first blessing was for both children equally. He notes that there are three different types of blessings: for spiritual success, for physical success and for protection from harm. Ya'akov *Avinu* blessed his grandchildren together with all of these in the first blessing. (See there for the detailed explanation.) The second one highlighted their names indicating each one's uniqueness. Rashi notes that different types of leaders emerged from each tribe. *Netziv* (see also Rav S. R. Hirsch) stresses the fact that Ephraim excelled in spiritual matters; Menashe excelled in the worldly qualities of leadership and court conduct.>[1] A blessing is designed to augment the qualities and talents with which one was already endowed. The blessing used by the Jewish people thus wishes upon the person being blessed that he excel in the particular quality that is already present within him. Based on this concept, he explains the cryptic statement of *Targum Yonasan (Yerushalmi*) that this blessing would be used at a *bris milah*.[2] It is at that early stage in the child's life when his qualities are not yet known that the dual blessing of being like Ephraim (excelling in the spiritual) and (or) like Menashe (excelling in the physical) is appropriate.

*Mikdash Mordechai* (quoted in *Talelei Oros*) offers an alternative explanation why the sons of Yosef are uniquely chosen to be the models of blessing. They were the first brothers in Biblical history known not to be envious of or quarrelsome with each other even after their grandfather placed the younger Ephraim before the elder Menashe. His comment is especially meaningful in light of the *Netziv*'s comment that they were quite different from each other, a fact that oftentimes, unfortunately, leads to enmity and strife. Fathers bless their sons that they should excel in their unique qualities but also admire and respect the unique qualities of others.

In closing, a comment by *Be'er Yoseif* by Rav Yosef Tzvi Salant is most worthy of mention. Yosef, as the viceroy of Egypt, had unlimited resources to rear his two sons to excel, each with their own unique talents: Menashe as an officer in the palace and Ephraim as a devoted student of his grandfather Ya'akov. How could a "*pashute Yid*" with limited resources have hopes that his children will excel? For this reason, Ya'akov *Avinu* used the singular "*becha*" introducing the second blessing referring to Yosef himself. In effect, he was saying that the Jewish people will learn from Yosef's miraculous rise to success both spiritually and physically after being sold as a slave, accused of crimes by his master's wife and imprisoned for twelve years! With Hashem's blessings and providence, nothing is impossible. May we all merit blessings from above and respect each other's unique qualities thus emulating the unity of Ephraim and Menashe.

By: Rabbi Yakov Haber

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