



Congregation Ahavat Shalom

The ACHDUS
NEWSLETTER
www.ahavatshalomteaneck.com

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Parshat Terumah

Volume: 18, Issue: 29 | February 16-17, 2018

Adar 2, 5778

Rabbi Yehuda Halpert

Shabbat Times



Friday, February 16	
Candle Lighting:	5:14 PM
Mincha/Maariv:	5:15 PM
Shabbat, February 17	
Shacharit:	9:00 AM
Kriyat Shema:	9:29 AM
Mincha / Shalosh Seudot:	5:00 PM
Shkiya:	5:33 PM
Maariv:	6:09 PM
Shabbat Ends:	6:14 PM
Next Friday, February 23	
Candle Lighting:	5:22 PM
Mincha/Maariv:	5:25 PM

Rabbi Halpert's Availability

Rabbi Yehuda Halpert will be here on:
2/16, 2/23.
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.



Weather Report: Friday night: 24°, Partly cloudy

Shabbat day: 37°, Mostly cloudy

DAVENING TIME CHANGE REMINDER! Beginning this week, Shabbat morning Shacharit will be changing to 9:00 AM. We look forward to seeing everyone in shul!

Mazal Tov! to Becca, Judah and Rayla Orlinsky on the birth of a baby boy! Shalom Zachor will IY"Y take place this Friday night from 8-10pm at the Orlinsky Home, [586 Sunderland Road, Teaneck NJ 07666](http://586.Sunderland.Road.Teaneck.NJ.07666). Bris will IY"Y take place Sunday, February 18th 2018 at Congregation Bnai Yeshurun at 8:00am.

Welcome to -Eliana & Yediyah Weiss, Lauren & Leor Kadoch and Jenny & David Schlusberg who all recently moved to the neighbourhood!

Tzeitchem L'Shalom -Russi, Jason and Jakey Shor who are moving to the Rinat side of Teaneck! Thank you for all you have done for the shul and community! Keep in touch and all the best!

Ahavat Shalom Shabbat Gemara Chabura - Ahavat Shalom's men's Gemara Chabura will continue on Shabbat morning at 8:30 AM in the shul led by Ian Mark. There is no required level of Gemara knowledge. For more information, please contact Ariel Kirshenbaum at akirshenbaum3@gmail.com.

Shabbat Zachor - Next week, Shabbat, February 24th, will be Shabbat Zachor. Rabbi Elchanan Lewis of Machon Pual will be joining us as a Scholar-in-Residence for Shabbat. We are looking for one more meal host, so please reach out to Rabbi Halpert or Ben Wine if you are interested.

Ahavat Shalom's Cholent Competition! Round Four will be after davening next Shabbat, February 24th. All community members are invited to attend the event (even if you missed Rounds 1, 2 and/or 3), taste test the cholents, and vote for your favourite! Who will join the Ferber's, Bernstein's, Baum's and Secemski's in the finals in March? May the best cholent win!

Mommy & Me - Coming soon, we will be opening up a Mommy & Me program at shul for all kids aged 0-2! As we hammer out the details, please reach out to Eliana Baum for more information!

Mishloach Manot are here! As we have done in the past, Ahavat Shalom will be coordinating our Mishloach Manot Program! Sign up now to send Mishloach Manot to your friends in the community! Each basket costs \$ 10. Once you order 10 baskets (\$100), you can send to as many additional families as you'd like at no additional cost! In other words, you can send to every shul member household for \$100! Sign-up link: [Mishloach Manot Program](http://Mishloach.Manot.Program)

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.

להלכה - Unfortunately, there is a local family afflicted with a terrible disease causing brain degeneration in their children. Because the treatment is still in the experimental stage, no insurance will cover it and it has to be paid by private funds. The family has created a gofundme page and is trying to raise 1.5 million dollars. Please check out the link and this important cause: <https://www.gofundme.com/savebennyandjosh>.

You're invited to -The Moriah School's 53rd Annual Dinner. Honoring: Abby & Scott Herschmann - Guests of Honor, Dana Septimus & Joseph Feldman - Young Leadership Award, Morah Nini Berger and Morah Shoshi Hason - Rabbi J. Shelley Applbaum Z'L Service Award. March 3rd 2018, 17 Adar 5778 at Metlife Stadium, 8PM. Register online at www.themoriahdinner.org

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

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.

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*Minimum loan amount \$300,000



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A Special Relationship

In *Parshas Mishpatim* the Torah presents a collection of various *halachos*. This in itself is noteworthy since we would imagine that after the dramatic description of *ma'amad Har Sinai* in *Parshas Yisro* the Torah would continue by discussing lofty principles, and yet the Torah seems to get "bogged down" with details. But what is even more puzzling is the fact that the *parsha* begins with the *halachos* of *eved ivri*, a Jewish slave. Why choose this topic as a starting point for the *parsha*?

The *halacha* is that if an *eved ivri* declares after six years of work that he loves his master and would like to remain his slave, then his ear is pierced and he works for the master until *yoveil*. Rashi (21:6) quotes the statement of Chazal (*Kiddushin* 22b), "Why is the ear pierced? The ear that heard on *Har Sinai*, 'For *Bnei Yisrael* are my slaves,' and he went and acquired another master for himself, let it be pierced."

If the slave's ear is pierced because he chose another master for himself, then why wait for six years until we pierce the ear? Why not pierce the ear when the person initially sells himself? After all, that is when he first acquires a new master. The *Sefer HaMiknah* (*Kiddushin* 22b) explains that someone who sells himself because he is unable to earn a livelihood is not held accountable for his actions. Since he sold himself under financial duress he is not viewed as one who chose to acquire a new master. But if after six years he refuses to start out again on his own, and instead he declares that he prefers to remain a slave to his master, then he is considered to have chosen a master for himself and he is punished for his decision. Why is the *eved ivri* criticized for wanting to remain with his master? The fact is the life of an *eved ivri* is not overly burdensome. He may not be forced to do any hard labor (*Vayikra*, 25:43). His master must give him time off to perform *mitzvos*. Even his food, drink and bedding must be equal to that of his master (*Kiddushin* 22a). Chazal go so far as to say, "Whoever acquires a slave has acquired a master for himself (*ibid.*)" In such circumstances, it probably is easier for the slave to observe *mitzvos*. Why does the Torah fault the *eved* for wanting to continue such an arrangement?

Perhaps the answer is that the longer the *eved* stays with his master, the less he feels dependent on *Hakadosh Boruch Hu*. With all his needs provided for him, he is comfortable and at ease with his situation. He does not feel the need to reach out to *Hakadosh Boruch Hu* for his livelihood. So even if he does continue to observe *mitzvos* as a slave, by staying with his master he will be missing that yearning for heavenly assistance that is so essential to a Jewish soul.

A Torah way of life is not just about *mitzvah* observance; it is about having a relationship with *Hakadosh Boruch Hu* and feeling dependent on Him. Chazal comment, "Why were our forefathers barren? Because *Hakadosh Boruch Hu* desires the *tefillos* of *tzadikim*" (*Yevamos* 64a.) Rav Elyahu Dessler explains that Hashem certainly does not need the *tefillos* of *tzaddikim*. Rather, he places *tzadikim* in challenging situations for their own benefit so that they will call out to Him in *tefilla* and develop a closer connection to Him (see *Michtav M'Eliyahu*, vol. 4 p. 63). Similarly, the Gemara says (*Pesachim* 118a), "Providing sustenance for a person is as difficult as the splitting of the sea." The Rashbam explains that although, in reality, it is not difficult for Hashem to provide for each individual, He makes it seem challenging to earn a living so that people will reach out to Him in *tefilla* and ask for mercy.

Having all of one's needs provided for him is not always a blessing. Sometimes it might even be a curse. The Chiddushei HaRim (cited in *Pardes Yosef, Bereishis*) understands that this was the curse that Hashem gave the snake after he caused the sin of the *eitz hada'as*. Hashem tells the snake, "And you shall eat dust (of the earth) all the days of your life. (*Bereishis*, 3:14)" This seems like a blessing because dust is always readily available for the snake. But the Chiddushei HaRim explains that in fact this is the greatest curse. Hashem provided the snake's food up front not because He wanted to make it easier for the snake, but because He did not want to have any ongoing relationship with him. And there is no greater curse than losing one's connection with *Hakadosh Boruch Hu*.

This can explain why the Torah criticizes the *eved ivri* for wanting to remain with his master after six years. The Torah understands that sometimes a person might feel the need to sell himself to ease his financial burdens. But that is not an appropriate long term solution because the slave's continued dependence on his master could undermine his relationship with *Hakadosh Boruch Hu*, and that is something the Torah is not willing to risk. The lesson of the *eved ivri* is an appropriate sequel to *Parshas Yisro* because it highlights the deeper meaning of *kabbolas haTorah*. When *Klal Yisrael* received the Torah, they were not simply accepting to scrupulously observe all of the *mitzvos* of the Torah. They were agreeing to enter into a new relationship with *Hakadosh Boruch Hu*, one that should not be taken for granted or traded for financial independence.

By: Rabbi Eliakim Koenigsberg

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