



# Congregation Ahavat Shalom

The ACHDUS  
NEWSLETTER  
www.ahavatshalomteaneck.com

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Parshat Shmini

Volume: 18, Issue: 37 | April 13-14, 2018

Nissan 29

Rabbi Yehuda Halpert

## Shabbat Times



Friday, April 13	
Mincha/Maariv:	7:00 PM
Candle Lighting:	7:15 PM
Shabbat, April 14	
Shacharit:	9:00 AM
Kriyat Shema:	9:38 AM
Mincha / Shalosh Seudot:	7:00 PM
Shkiya:	7:34 PM
Maariv:	8:12 PM
Shabbat Ends:	8:17 PM
Next Friday, April 20	
Mincha/Maariv:	7:00 PM
Candle Lighting:	7:23 PM

**Weather Report:** Friday night: 58°, Partly cloudy

Shabbat day: 76°, Get outside N'joy the weather!

**Mazel Tov** - Esther, Yonatan and Yaakov Isser on the birth of a baby boy, Daniel Ezra!

**Ahavat Shalom Shabbat Gemara Chabura** - Ahavat Shalom's men's Gemara Chabura will continue on Shabbat morning at 8:30 AM in the shul. Special guest leader this week: Steven Lowinger! There is no required level of Gemara knowledge. For more information, please contact Ariel Kirshenbaum at [akirshenbaum3@gmail.com](mailto:akirshenbaum3@gmail.com).

**Parent & Me** - Kids 0-2 (too young for groups). The program will take place in Room 6 from 10:00 A.M. until the end of davening. Come sing songs, play with toys and schmooze with other parents. Please provide your own snacks and be sensitive to nut allergies. Hope to see you there! (Moms and Dads welcome!)

**Ahavat Shalom Sisterhood** - is actively recruiting members to join their ranks! Please reach out to the Board if you are interested in volunteering for the Sisterhood, or any of our other committees - Fundraising, Chesed or Religious!

**Voter Registration** - This year, the Voter Registration Deadline is Tuesday, April 17th for the May 8th Teaneck Municipal elections. It is imperative that all member of our community are registered to vote and come out to the polls. You can register to vote by completing: <http://www.co.bergen.nj.us/DocumentCenter/View/1224>. If you are new to the community or just turned 18, please be sure to register by Tuesday, April 17th. If you know someone who hasn't registered (especially if they're currently out-of-town at college, at yeshiva, in Israel, etc...), please be sure to remind them to register. Showing up to vote is crucially important. Voter rolls are public record and participation is noted. Legislators see who votes -- they know who cares about the decisions they make and will listen more closely to those who vote in the elections. Our elected leaders need to hear our voices. If you don't vote, we won't be heard.

**Save the Date:** TEACH NJS Annual Legislative Breakfast - Sunday, April 15, 2018 at the Teaneck Marriott at Glenpointe from 9:00am-11:00 a.m. Teach NJS is honored to host dedicated members of the community including representatives of our schools and synagogues along with top state government officials to advocate together for safer, stronger, and more sustainable schools. Kindly RSVP at <https://teachadvocacy.org/newjersey/breakfast/> or please contact Renee Klyman at [KlymanR@ou.org](mailto:KlymanR@ou.org) or 201-836-3943 or Josh Caplan at [caplanj@ou.org](mailto:caplanj@ou.org).

**Pre-Yom Ha'atzma'ut** - Congregation Bnai Yeshurun, in conjunction with Religious Zionists of America and World Mizrahi, presents Pre-Yom Haatzmaut Program: Celebrating 70 Years of the State of Israel - Sunday, April 15, 2018, 641 West Englewood Avenue, Teaneck. 9:30 am: Rabbi Yosef Carmel "The Spiritual Evolution of the State of Israel in the Last 70 Years" (Sponsored by Frances Flug & Reuben Koolyk in memory of Rachel bat Avraham), 10:00 am: Rabbi Doron Perez "Israel at 70: A Greater Miracle than Yeziat Mitzrayim", 10:30 am: Rabbi Aharon Adler "The Sequential Order of Kibbutz Galuyot".

**Yom Ha'Zikaron** - Tuesday, April 17th at 8 PM Community-Wide Yom Hazikaron Commemoration Ceremony to honor Israel's fallen soldiers and victims of terror. Featured speakers: Naftali Gross, IDF medic, paratrooper, and veteran of "Operation Protective Edge"; and Matan Dansker, IDF Golani Brigade commander, veteran of "Operation Protective Edge". Program will be in both Hebrew and English - at Ben Porat Yosef, E. 243 Frisch Ct., Paramus.

**Holocaust Education** - Rabbi Hanoah Teller to Speak on Behalf of the Northern New Jersey Holocaust Memorial & Education Center on Tuesday, April 17, 2018. Rabbi Teller will discuss "The Holy Responsibility of Remembrance" based on his latest book "Heroic Children - Untold Stories of the Unconquerable". The event will take place at Congregation Rinat Yisrael, 389 West Englewood Ave in Teaneck, beginning at 7:30 PM. For information or to buy tickets, visit [www.njholocaustmemorial.org](http://www.njholocaustmemorial.org)

**Yom Ha'atzma'ut** - There will be a Community Wide Yom Haatzmaut celebration at The Jewish Center on April 18, 2018 at 7:15pm. It will feature a Shuk Yisraeli in the Jewish Center's Social Hall, comprising of food, booths and shira betzibur. The program will be suitable for adults as well as children Middle School and up. Younger children are invited to join with their parents in a program at Rinat Yisrael on Sunday, April 15, 2018 featuring a game program devoted to Eretz Yisrael.

**Suburban Torah Shabbaton** - You drank our wine, now it's time to drink the Kool-Aid! Experience Livingston for Shabbat at our Discover Suburban Torah Shabbaton! April 27-28, 2018. Sign up at [www.suburbantorah.org/Sha](http://www.suburbantorah.org/Sha)  
**Congregation Ahavat Shalom Board Members 2017-2018**

**President:** Ben Wine **Vice Presidents:** Alex Daitech | Ariel Kirshenbaum | Yosef Chai Klein | 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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## Rabbi Halpert's Availability

Rabbi Yehuda Halpert will not be here this week 4/14.

He can be reached via email at [RabbiYehudaHalpert@gmail.com](mailto: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 9:45am - 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.

## Chesed Committee

If you or anyone you know has moved in recently or knows somebody moving in, let Yosef Chai Klein or Yael Wine know! Check out [ahavatshalomteaneck.com/movingin](http://ahavatshalomteaneck.com/movingin) for more information.



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## MORTGAGE ADVANTAGE PROGRAM



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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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Guide to the Piscatorially Perplexed

Among the laws of kosher species outlined in *parashas Shemini*, those pertaining to fish are unique. Both kosher beef and fowl require kosher slaughter (Rambam *Hilchos Shechita* 1:1), their blood is prohibited (*Hilchos Ma'achalos Asuros* 6:1), and both are subject to the prohibition of *eiver min hachai*, forbidding the consumption of the flesh severed from a live animal (*ibid.* 5:1). Domestic cattle is additionally subject to the prohibition of *cheilev*, forbidden fat, (*ibid.* 7:1), and all kosher animals must have the *gid hanashe* removed (*ibid.* 8:1). In stark contrast, fish are subject to none of these restrictions; in the language of the Talmud (*Kerisos* 21a-b), "*kulo heter* - it is entirely permitted". Contrary to a minority view in the *Rishonim* which maintains that "*asifa*" - taking the fish out of the water alive is required as a parallel to *shechita* (see *Magid Mishne* to *Hilchos Shechita* 1:3 quoting Rav Sa'adia Gaon), the accepted view is that fish require no ritual act at all to permit their consumption; even if removed dead from the water, they are still permissible (Rambam *ibid.*). What lesson can be learned from these unique *halachos*?

The mystery deepens when we consider these other facts concerning creatures of the sea. According to the Talmud (*Sanhedrin* 108a cited by Rashi to *Noach* 7:22), the fish did not perish during the Great Flood in the days of Noah. For this reason, there was no reason to take them onto the *teiva* to be saved (Ramban *ibid.* 23). Whereas the commentaries note that the Torah generally prohibits us from consuming animals and fowl which are *to'efim* - those which prey on other creatures<sup>[1]</sup>, no such restriction exists concerning fish. As long as a given sea creature has fins and scales, it is rendered kosher. Indeed, many popular kosher fish (e.g. flounder and bass) eat other fish. The popular tuna fish is a voracious carnivore devouring hundreds of other fish daily.

Before Adam and Chava sinned by partaking of the fruit of *Eitz HaDa'as Tov v'Ra*, they were only permitted to eat vegetation, not animals (*Bereishis* 1:29). The same was true concerning the Divinely implanted nature of animals - they would only eat vegetation (*ibid.* 30). After the *Mabul*, Noah and his descendants were permitted to eat animals (*Noach* 9:3). Even though the Torah does not specifically state that animal nature also changed, it clearly did as well.<sup>[2]</sup> However, as noted by *Oznayim LaTorah* (*Bereishis* 1:29), the absence of a statement concerning the permitted diet of sea creatures implies that many fish were always carnivorous both before and after the *Mabul*. All of these differences certainly require analysis.

Perhaps we can suggest an approach giving one insight into the mystery of the denizens of the sea. With only occasional manifestations of its existence, sea life occurs hidden from the human senses. The seemingly lifeless waters of the ocean, lakes and rivers hide the lively activity of its millions of inhabitants (see Rav S.R. Hirsch to *VaYeichi* 48:16). Furthermore, all of their residents highly depend on the aquatic environment for survival, most of them utilizing water for the very breath of life. The life-sustaining quality which the waters of the seas provide its inhabitants is only noticeable when one cares to take notice - to study its depths.

In the famous analogy of the fox and the fish given by R' Akiva (*Berachos* 61b), water represents the life-giving and life-sustaining nourishment of Torah. This ultimate truth that our connection to our Creator as manifested through the Torah is what really gives us life rather than a series of biological processes requires diligent study and reflection; it is not immediately manifest unless one thinks deeply about the world and its true nature, just as a student of the sea must reflect on its nature which is not immediately apparent. Mankind, living in a world of confusion and hiddenness - a world in which a different narrative of existence seemingly and tantalizingly presents itself, a narrative in which the purely physical reigns supreme, a narrative of "survival of the fittest" of "eat or be eaten", a narrative indicating that the mighty and the wealthy have ultimate power - is called upon to "reveal the mask", to realize that O-L-A-M is rooted in the word *heleim*, hiddenness. The individual is challenged to look beneath the surface of the "sea" of the world, deeper into the true Reality of Existence, that the complex web of animal life, the rules of nature, economic success and failure, marriage, family, careers, goals, aspirations and their fulfillment are all only tools with which to achieve the ultimate goal - cleaving to G-d via His Torah. Therefore the world in which we live is a world where careful restrictions and boundaries must be legislated by the Creator to train humanity in general, and more specifically the Jewish people as the teachers of mankind, that the world has a Creator and Legislator. Only He determines how the world is to be utilized and for what purpose. Therefore, initially, Man was only permitted to partake of part of the word, its vegetation. Even later when the consumption of animals was permitted, this consumption is informed by many complex *halachos* - *shechita*, *eiver min hachai*, *dam*, *cheilev*, *gid hanashe*, and more. The world of the sea, by contrast, representing in a sense a truer reality, a world in which dependency on the water and its analogy to Torah is more manifest, is a world not requiring all the restrictions to highlight man's limited control. Hence, fish are "*kulo heter*".

We should not be surprised then that *talmidei chachamim* in the analogy of the Zohar (*Shemini* 42a) are compared to fish, recognizing as they do this true Reality. The Midrash (*Bereishis Rabba* 97) comments, "Even though fish live and grow in the water, when a drop of rain falls, they receive it with great thirst as if they never tasted water before. So too, the people of Israel grow in the waters of Torah, but when they hear a new Torah insight, they receive it with zest!" The Zohar (*ibid.*) even uses the analogy of one fish swallowing another to illustrate one *talmid chacham* being "victorious" over another - who has not mastered Torah properly and yet rules in matters of Torah law incorrectly - by proving the latter's view to be incorrect.

This fundamental truth of the purpose of the world was immutable even though the sinners of the generation of the *Mabul* refused to lead their lives by its implications. Hence, the fish, representing this deep, unchanging truth were not destroyed. Similarly, the fish never needed the directive to initially limit their diet to vegetation only.

Perhaps based on this approach we can suggest an insight into the kosher signs of fish. The scales represent armor or defenses similar to a coat of mail which is called, "*kaskasim*" (*Shmuel* 1 17:5), and the fins represent mobility or functionality. *Chazal* teach us, "*kol sheyeish lo kaskeses, yeish lo s'napir*" (*Nidda* 6:9 quoted in *Chulin* 66b) but not the opposite. All scaled fish have fins, but not all finned fish have scales. Perhaps the message is that only one with armor, protecting the precious truth of the Reality of the world can function properly in the world. This is notwithstanding the fact that there are many who seemingly function in the world deluding themselves into thinking that they are living Reality - *v'yeish sheyeish lo s'napir v'ein lo kaskeses*, some have fins but no scales; they operate in the world without the necessary protection and correct outlook.

*Shabbos kodesh* represents *mei'ein Olam HaBa*, a time in the week when we reconnect to the true dimension, to the World of Eternity, of communion with Hashem toward which this world is directed. The whole week is infused with its holiness and draws from its reservoirs. Perhaps for this reason there is an ancient custom to eat fish on Shabbos - *basar v'dagim v'chol matamim* (see *Mishna Berurah* 242:2 and *Beur Halacha ibid.* s.v. "zeicher"). May we all merit to absorb the message of the sea, of constantly sanctifying all aspects of the world to connect to our Ultimate Source.

[1] Even though the Torah, when stating the kosher signs, does not make this point explicitly, the commentaries suggest this idea. See [The Kashrus Laws and Ta'amei HaMitzvot](#).

[2] See commentaries to Isaiah (11:6-7), Rambam *Hilchos Melachim* (12:1), Ra'avad and commentaries there, and Ramban to *Noach* (9:5) and *Bechukosai* (26:6).

By: Rabbi Yakov Haber

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