



Tiferet

ת פ א ר ת



TIFERET UPDATES

This Week in Tiferet

Last Shabbat, we had two very special Shabbatonim in Tiferet. Our Shana Alef students traveled to Yerushalayim to spend a very special Shabbat in **the Old City**. In addition to the unique ruach of the Old City, we were privileged to hear from noted speakers **Rabbi David Aaron, Rabbi Motty Berger and Mrs Sarah Yocheved Riegler**. A huge highlight of the Shabbat was the Friday night walking tour of the hidden treasures of the Old City, led by **Rabbi Barnea Selevan**. It was an uplifting and meaningful Shabbat for all of the students and teachers who accompanied them. Meanwhile, back in *continued on pg. 2*

תורת תפארת

New Moon, New Perspective **Rabbi Michael Bramson (rabbibramson@gmail.com)** **Parashat Bo**

I remember seeing a sign that read "The best gift you can give your child is time". Time is such a precious commodity. It can be used for the most wonderful of things yet it can be wasted and used in a most negative fashion.

Why does Hashem give Rosh Chodesh as the first mitzvah to all of Bnei Yisrael? I would like to suggest two ideas that I have learned in the past.

The first idea is that Bnei Yisrael need a calendar to show that they are now in control of their own time. After living a life of slavery, Bnei Yisrael have no concept of having their own time. They have no idea what it means to be free and to make decisions as to what to do with their day

Hashem in his infinite wisdom and kindness gives the Jewish people a hint to what they can do to make sure of this newly found freedom. Make your "free" time into something positive and holy. Use Rosh Chodesh to set up holidays as a means to get close to Hashem. Use the calendar to know when Shabbat is which gives us another opportunity to develop our relationship with Hashem and with our family.

Freedom does not mean that there are no guidelines nor boundaries. I am constantly explaining to my students that America is the "land of the free" yet it does not mean there are no rules and limits that govern what can and can not be done. Freedom without limits would result in anarchy. As a rebbe of mine once explained, if you have string and let it run loose it has no values but if you tie it tightly onto a violin it can make beautiful music.

This is Israel's first lesson as a nation. You are free to do what you want, but freedom without guidelines and direction leads to a meaningless life. Here is Rosh Chodesh, here is a calendar. Set up your time in a way that produces meaning and holiness.

Another aspect of Rosh Chodesh is an idea that I saw from Rav Moshe Tendler. Shabbat is an automatic holy day. Once a week Shabbat comes whether we observe it or not. Not so by Rosh Chodesh and all the chagim. It is up to the rabbis / beit din to establish when Rosh Chodesh is and to set up all the chagim. If the rabbis decide not to do so, we are left with no holidays. What incredible power is left at the feet of human beings! This is indeed the system that Hashem has in place for us. Humans are very much part of the mesorah.



*Vaad at
Mrs
Stefansky's
House!*



This Week in Tiferet (continued)

Ramat Beit Shemesh, our alumnae and teachers came together for our third annual Shabbaton. Students from the past four years of Tiferet enjoyed meals together with their teachers, a shiur with Rav Natanel Lebowitz and a late-night panel on bringing spirituality into our day-to-day lives. We are so happy to have over forty alumnae come back to visit Tiferet during this winter vacation to get a spiritual "recharge." We hope to have you all as part of our Tiferet family for years to come!

MAZAL TOV!

Mazal Tov to Debra Weinstein (5769) on her engagement to Yitzi Feman! May they be zochim to build a bayit ne'eman b'Yisrael!

Mazal Tov to Tzipporah Landsman (5768, 5769) on her marriage to Avi Koslowsky! May they be zochim to build a bayit ne'eman b'Yisrael together!

To be Stubborn or Not To Be Stubborn... Leora Moskowitz (5773)

In this week's parasha, we see the last of the ten makot. פרעה has been through so much already and he is still not giving up, even after he hears what else is coming. He was so stubborn that he didn't even care that one of the machot involved killing people, מכת בכורות, the killing of the first born. It is horrible that one could be so committed and stubborn that he would put others in danger just so he would not look weak.

Even though פרעה used it for bad, we can see that being stubborn isn't always a bad thing. משה and אהרון didn't give up, even when told that פרעה wouldn't listen to anything they had to say. Hashem, as well, calls the Jews stubborn people.

In the next few years we Tiferet students are going to be going to college and into a world where people aren't always going to agree with what we believe in. During these times, being stubborn will sometimes come in handy. We, as members of the Jewish people, have the responsibility to stand up for ourselves and not give in to what others tell us. Sometimes being stubborn is the only way to survive and then it is certainly positive.

Even though his behavior was negative, we also learn this from פרעה. As I said before, he was so stubborn that he put people lives on the line. In Pirkei Avot א משנה א פרק ד: it says איזהו חכם הלומד מכל אדם - who is wise, a person who learns from anyone.

As we know Tu Bishvat is coming up soon and we are in the middle of the winter when everything is dead and not growing, but the almond tree does. We should learn from the almond tree to stick up for ourselves even when others are against us. Don't worry about what others say - be who you are and be proud!

Thank you Rabbi Mayer for all your help!