



Tiferet

ת פ א ר ת



TIFERET HASHABBAT

This Week in Tiferet

It was both a sweet and bittersweet week here in Tiferet. We are thrilled to welcome back so many of our beloved alumnae who are choosing to spend their college vacations in Eretz Yisrael, visiting and learning in Tiferet. We are looking forward to our annual Alumnae Program and Shabbaton next Shabbat! However, we are sadly saying good-bye to our fourteen Shana Bet students this week. We have had an inspiring and enriching semester with them and we wish them tremendous hatzlacha as they continue on their pathways!

תורת תפארת

The Jewish Spring Rav Elie Mayer Parashat Bo

Yesterday we celebrated Rosh Chodesh Shvat. The month of Shvat brings back memories of my childhood in the Canadian winter singing about the almond trees blossoming. The song confused me as I looked outside and saw that the trees appeared dead and barren. I would likewise have the same confusion about Rosh Chodesh. We celebrate the new moon but on Rosh Chodesh you can't even see the moon.

On Rosh Chodesh, we may not be able to see the moon but we're acknowledging that it will wax and become a full moon. Am Yisrael is compared to the moon. Just as it wanes and disappears from view and then waxes, ultimately becoming a full moon, so too, at several times in the past 4000 years, through crusades, inquisitions, pogroms and concentration camps, Am Yisrael has appeared relegated to the dustbin of history only to shortly thereafter return to our previous strength. After the Holocaust, we were like a new moon, as if we were no longer there. However, we were primed to become a full moon again and return to our full strength as we have done multiple times in our history.

This is the message of Rosh Chodesh and I believe that it is also the message of Shvat. Besides a few buds on the almond tree, the other trees all look dead. However, we are celebrating the secret of the Jewish people. Even when we appear dead, we will blossom once again and realize our potential and bear fruit. This truth is evident from the news this week that almost 68 years after the liberation of Auschwitz and the annihilation of 6 million Jews, the Jewish population of the sovereign State of Israel has surpassed 6 million.

In Kabbalistic tradition, every month has a letter. The letter for Shvat is צ. Why? I heard from my Rebbe, Rav Mordechai Machlis, shlita, that it is connected to the prayer: זורע צדקות מצמיח ישועות. Hashem plants justice and sprouts our redemption. When you plant a seed, at first you don't see anything. It's as if it's not there. Then suddenly, a sapling grows from the ground eventually becoming a tree. We believe that Medinat Yisrael is ראשית צמיחת גאולתינו. However, some people look at Medinat Yisrael and only see its shortcomings. The message of Rosh Chodesh Shvat is that we need to see the potential and not just how the situation appears in the present.

In Parshat Bo, Bnei Yisrael receive our first mitzvah, the mitzvah of Rosh Chodesh. What is the significance of Rosh Chodesh being our first national commandment? Furthermore, what is the significance of this mitzvah being given while we were in Mitzrayim?

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*Challah-Baking
Vaad at
Mrs
Stefansky's
house*

Mazal Tov!

Mazal Tov to Tali Grosser (5768) on her marriage to Nafi Orlofsky! May they be zochim to build a bayit ne'eman B'Yisrael together!

Mazal Tov to Emily Strulowitz (5771) on her engagement to Joey Caplan! May they be zochim to build a bayit ne'eman b'Yisrael together!

תורת תפארת (המשך)

Perhaps the answer is that Am Yisrael had just spent 210 years in servitude. We saw ourselves as slaves, incapable and unworthy of becoming a ממלכת כהנים and the Chosen People. We were the lowest class of Egyptian society. G-d gave Rosh Chodesh to Bnei Yisrael to teach them not to look at the way they appeared, rather, to see their potential. Hashem was telling them to celebrate monthly the fact that the moon, despite being hidden from view, will be full so that we never lose sight of our potential greatness, despite setbacks and suffering.

Rav Shlomo Carlebach teaches that the problem with the generation of the flood was that since they weren't great and didn't believe in themselves, they gave up on everything. Rebbe Nachman of Breslov teaches that a person sins because he despairs and doesn't rejoice in his potential. One of the greatest spiritual dangers is to metaphorically look at the world and see trees that look dead and a moon that is no longer there. Many students lack confidence in their ability to achieve spiritual heights and withstand the many challenges. We need to look at our potential and see the greatness within.

In Yeshayahu 30:26, Yeshayahu prophesies that in Yemot haMashiach the light of the moon will equal the light of the sun. והיה אור הלבנה כאור ההמה. This is not to be taken literally, rather, it can be interpreted to be a prediction that one day soon, the light of Am Yisrael will no longer wane. There will be no more Holocausts, pogroms, wars or acts of terror. Then the Jewish People will shine at full strength and wane no more. May that day come very soon.

Chodesh Tov and Shabbat Shalom!

Full Moon

Britt Berlin (Tiferet 5774)

Parshat Bo is known for having the commandment of Rosh Chodesh in it. This Mitzvah was the first one that Bnei Yisrael got as free people. It was very important to them. But what makes the Mitzvah of Rosh Chodesh so special?

The Jewish calendar follows the lunar year cycle. But the calendar is not the only thing that we have in common with the moon. We also are similar ourselves to the moon. The moon slowly wanes away until the human eye can no longer see it. People think that the moon doesn't exist until it comes back bigger than before. We as the Jewish people work similarly to this. When things look like they are not going to turn out good and get destroyed we get right back up and return to triumph.

We say in Kiddush Levana that hopefully in the future the moon will be filled up with the light of the sun. Also it should be filled up with the light from the seven days of creation. When the right time comes, we will be able to strengthen the shining light of Israel.

The Sfat Emet adds that while we count our days based on the lunar calendar, most people count their days based on the solar calendar. This is a slight play on words. The secular nations of the world will only be in power when the sun shines on them like how it does in the middle of the day. When the sun goes down and it starts to get dark then they will be erased from the world's chronicles.

With this being mentioned we see that Bnei Yisrael are alive and okay when they are in a state of darkness, just like how the moon is able to shine in the darkness.