



# Tiferet

ת פ א ר ת



## TIFERET HASHABBAT

### *This Week in Tiferet*

Our first semester ended this week with our Mid-Year Re-Evaluation Period, in which every single Shana Alef student met with the administration to discuss what they've accomplished until now, and what their goals are for the rest of the year. We were impressed and thrilled at the extent to which our students are growing and learning from Tiferet's unique program, and we are looking forward to a great second semester!

### תורת תפארת

#### **All We Are Saying Is Give Peace a Chance**

**Rabbi Michael Bramson**

**Parashat Mishpatim**

There is a story told by Rabbi Paysach Krohn about a shul where there was a two man rotation for Shabbat Torah reading. On one particular Shabbat, it was Reuvain's turn to read, but he had a very sore throat and it was impossible for him to be heard by anyone. Reuvain asked Shimon if he would read instead and Shimon happily agreed. Reuvain requested that he at least read the first aliyah. Again Shimon happily agreed. After Reuvain was done Shimon finished reading the rest of the parasha. When asked why Reuvain even bothered reading the first section where it was obvious that his throat was sore, Reuvain replied that he wanted the tzibbur to know that it was his turn to read. This way if Shimon made any mistakes everyone would know it was not due to Shimon's lack of preparation but it was simply Shimon being a tzaddik and filling in for Reuvain at the last moment.

This week's parasha starts with the letter vav and then continues to teach us many laws of Bein Adam Lachveiro. The vav teaches us that all of the laws of our parasha are connected to the previous parasha which tells the story of Bnei Yisrael receiving the Torah at Har Sinai. Business laws, laws of stealing, laws of honesty, laws of treating each other nicely all emanate from Har Sinai.

Somehow we have lost sight of this. Our davening, our Shabbat, our kashrut are mehadrin min hemhadrin (which they should be); Yet when it comes to how we treat others, this seems to take a back seat. It is as if we fear that Hashem will strike us down if we violate Bein Adam Lamakom, yet when it comes to insulting a fellow human being we are not worried, because what can that person actually do to me? They are not G-d, they can not strike me down. Are we forgetting that Hashem killed off the generation of the flood because their Bein Adam Lachaveiro was so bad, yet the generation of the tower who rebelled against G-d were merely scattered?

I asked my students the question "Why are the punishments in the Torah so severe for Bein Adam Lamakom (Shabbat, Idol worship etc.) yet for many of the bein adam lachaveiro the punishment is much less severe (stealing, charging interest) or not mentioned at all (lashon

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## תורת תפארת (המשך)

hara, do not take revenge)?

A possible answer is that inherent within every aveirah that we do to another is the punishment itself - a punishment so severe Hashem does not need to add on to it. If we really understood the pain we cause others by insulting them, cheating them, embarrassing them we would feel so horrible we would not need a written punishment. The pain would be so great that would be punishment enough.

A friend of mine always points out to me that our goal in this world is to be Kadosh. How can we be Kadosh? Let us look at how G-d views a kadosh person. Hashem himself chooses Avraham as the leader or founder of the Jewish people. What is Avraham's greatest middah? It is that of chessed that Hashem favors to be the overriding trait that the first Jew should have. In fact all the 13 attributes of Hashem are all middot of Bein Adam Lachaveiro (Merciful, truthful, slow to anger). This is how we become Kadosh.

Let us remember that the aseret hadibrot are not multiple choice. They were all given at Har Sinai and all deserve our utmost attention. Sinat Chinam destroyed the second Beit Hamikdash and we are still in galut for it. Maybe we should start doing some soul searching to try to understand why.



*Vaad at the Mayers' Home*



### The Sabbath of the Land Leah Schiff (5774)

This week's parsha is Parshat Mishpatim. Unlike the previous parashot, it is filled with mitzvot. It contains the first mention of Shmittah (the sabbatical year). As it says, "Six years shall you sow your land and gather its produce. And on the seventh year you shall let it rest and lie fallow; and the poor of your people shall eat; and what they leave over, the animals of the field shall eat (23:10-11). Immediately after the Torah introduces shmittah it talks about keeping Shabbos. Interestingly enough, in Parashat Behar, where the main discussion of shmittah is, the Torah uses the word 'Shabbat' numerous times. Now there must be a correlation between shmittah and Shabbat.

The Shadal (R. Shmuel David Luzzato) explains that just as Shabbat is a day proving that the Jewish people are holy in the eyes of G-d, so too, Shmittah year proves that this land of Eretz Yisrael is holier than other lands. He expands on this that just as G-d "rested" on the seventh day, so too, the land of Israel rests on the seventh year. Some add that just as Shabbat is a day bestowing blessing on us for the rest of the week, the Shmittah year bestows blessing on the land for the next six years of the cycle. The Abarbanel gives a beautiful interpretation of this correlation. He says that Shmittah teaches us that the land of Israel is chosen just as the Jewish people are chosen. And the Jewish nation has Shabbat just as Eretz Yisrael has Shmittah. Shmittah is one of many mitzvot that can only be observed in Israel; it only pertains to this land.

There was/is a machloket (argument) whether or not these laws should still be observed today. Some say that since the majority of the Jewish People are in exile nowadays we are not obligated to observe them. Most poskim however paskin that those living in the land have only a De'rabana (rabbinical) obligation to keep shmittah. However, when the majority of Jews live here in Israel, it will become a mitzvah De'orita (biblical commandment). That is to say that if a large number of Jews were to make Aliya today, Shmittah and other mitzvot that only pertain to the land of Israel, would become De'orita commandments, something that hasn't happened since the time of the Beit Hamikdash. (Rav Moshe Lichtman : Eretz Yisrael in the Parasha)