

Knesset Israel

Your Beverlywood Shul

Jason Weiner, Rabbi

2364 South Robertson Boulevard, Los Angeles, California 90034

TheShulOnRobertson@gmail.com

Facebook.com/TheShulOnRobertson

Parshat Bo

By Rabbi Avraham Schefres

What's on your calendar? That is precisely the first question Hashem asked Bnei Yisrael right after slavery ended. In parashat Bo, Hashem commands "Hachodesh hazeh lachem rosh chadashim, rishon hu lachem l'chadshei hashana" (Shemot 12:2), this month is for you the head of months, it is the first month of the year, marking Bnei Yisroel's first mitzvah of freedom. Rashi on this pasuk explains that Hashem showed Moshe exactly what the moon needed to look like in order to proclaim a new month. Hashem is giving Bnei Yisrael the privilege of determining the beginning of each month; the establishment of a calendar. By establishing Rosh Chodesh, Bnei Yisrael are essentially in charge of when holidays occur – with the exception of Shabbat. In addition, we learn from chazal that the declaration of Rosh Chodesh by Bnei Yisrael is binding even if they erroneously or even deliberately declare the new month on the wrong day (Rosh HaShana 25a). This is further proof that Hashem, in this first mitzvah, is sharing with Bnei Yisrael the mastery over time, at least Jewish time, which is one of the most powerful realities of creation.

Moreover, the famous Rashi on the first pasuk of the Torah (Bereshit 1:1) strengthens this concept by offering the possibility that the Torah could have begun with the mitzvah of declaring Rosh Chodesh. Rashi's logic seems to be that since our life's focus is the performance of mitzvot, it would be most appropriate to begin the Torah with the first mitzvah Bnei Yisrael receives right after slavery.

Why is this the first mitzvah? After liberation, would it not have been easier to begin with a mitzvah that is associated with the commemoration of liberation, or some other mitzvah that would be more appeasing and appealing to a nation coming out of slavery?

Establishing a calendar is the first mitzvah after liberation because Bnei Yisrael need to first put Hashem on their calendar. The calendar, which sets the tone for Jewish life, involves Bnei Yisrael consciously recognizing Him in their lives. Had Hashem given Bnei Yisrael any other mitzvah, they may have been more appeased, but they may not have associated that mitzvah with Hashem

being present in our daily lives. For example, had the first mitzvah been matzah, they may have associated eating it during slavery and freedom, but not the fact that Hashem was our redeemer. What is the difference? Practicing Judaism with intent to learn Hashem's influence in the world or practicing Judaism purely for the academic understanding of their physical experiences in Egypt. The former engages the soul and spirituality while the latter involves only the intellect. As is pointed out by the mitzvah of declaring Rosh Chodesh – in Jewish living the intent in our actions is as important as the action itself. Therefore, we as Jews, need to pencil Hashem into our calendars.

I am privileged, as part of Knesset Israel, to witness individuals who not only pencil in Hashem into their calendar but also involve the Almighty in their Jewish life. I recall a few weeks ago a gentleman came to shul and when we spoke after davening he mentioned that he likes to daven for the amud but he normally goes to a large shul where he is not able to do so. The next week, when he returned to shul, he led the congregation in prayers. This was very special because he wanted to do something that strengthened his connection to Hashem and the shul was able to benefit from it. We hope to see you in shul so we can enjoy Rabbi Weiner's beautiful divrei Torah and strengthen our connection to Hashem together.

Shabbat Times

Erev Shabbat Jan 15, 2015 / 5 Sh'vat, 5776

Candle Lighting.....4:04 pm to 4:49 pm

Mincha.....4:50 pm

Shabbat Day Jan 16, 2015 / 6 Sh'vat, 5776

Shacharit.....9:00 am

Kiddush.....11:30 am

Mincha.....4:45 pm

Havdalah / Shabbat Ends.....5:51 pm

Tu B'Shvat Summary

By Adam Hyman

וְכִי תָבֹאוּ אֶל הָאָרֶץ וְנִטְעַתֶּם כָּל עֵץ מֵאֲכָל וְעֵרְלָתֶם
עֵרְלָתוֹ אֶת רִיחֹ שְׁלֹשׁ שָׁנִים יִהְיֶה לָכֶם עֵרְלִים לֹא
יֵאָכֵל.

When you come to the land and plant any tree, you should consider the fruit forbidden, for three years it will be forbidden, it must not be eaten.

Vayikra 19:23-25

ארבעה ראשי שנים הם.... באחד בשבט ראש השנה לאילן,
כדברי בית שמאי. בית הלל אומרים בחמשה עשר בו.

The four new years are... on the first of Sh'vat is the new year of the trees according to Bait Shammai. Bait Hillel says it's on the 15th.

Mishna Rosh HaShana 1:1

Tu B'Shvat is the new year for calculating the age of trees when it comes to tithing.

The Torah says that fruits which were grown in the land of Israel may not be eaten during the first three years.

For these calculations, every tree gets one year older on Tu B'Shvat, regardless of how many months it was planted before Tu B'Shvat.

There are a few customs on Tu B'Shvat:

- Eat a new fruit
- Eat from the Shivat HaMinim (7 Species)
 - Wheat, barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives and dates.
- Planting trees

Tu B'shvat comes out this year on Jan 25!

Kneset Israel Giving Opportunities

Kneset Israel is honored to be on your list of charities. We are here for you all year long with prayers that will enlighten your heart and with words of Torah that will touch your soul. You can support Kneset Israel by contributing to the general fund or choose a specific fund. You may give 'in honor of,' 'in memory of,' or commemorate a life cycle event such as a birthday or an anniversary. We thank you in advance for your generosity and for enabling Kneset Israel to continue providing you with quality services in a family environment.

Shul Membership \$360

Suggested Levels of Giving

Double Chai	\$36
Donor	\$72
Friend	\$180
Supporter	\$360
Partner	\$720
Sponsor	\$1800
Builder	\$2600

Fund

Description

General fund	General support for operations
Building fund	Maintenance / improvement
Youth fund	Programing and supplies
Education fund	Sidurim, Machzorim, speakers
Torah fund	Repair / purchase Torah/s
Website Fund	Creation and maintenance
Publicity fund	Advertising
Chesed Fund	Assistance to families
Israel Aid Fund	Assistance in Israel

Sponsorship Opportunities

Kidush	\$150 / \$200
Seudah Shlishit	\$ 75
Newsletter	\$100 per newsletter