

Igeret HaRamban

Tevet 5774

Who are the sons of the Maccabee?

In Preparation for a Lecture by Prof. Danny Schwartz

Last Shabbat (Parashat vaYeshev), the Ramban synagogue hosted Rabbi Yaacov Meidan, Rosh Yeshiva of Har Etzion, who honored us with a shiur on chapter 24 of the first book of Samuel, on the meeting of Saul and David in a cave in the Judean Desert. The greater part of the shiur related to a fascinating question on the significance of David's situation in which Saul falls into his hands "like a ripened fruit" at the entrance to the cave. David's soldiers think that the religious significance of this is that G-d wants Saul dead. Rabbi Meidan focused on a great danger of understanding events in our own lives as revelations from G-d. People can look at an historic event and directly attribute to it religious significance, and then use this to determine their own actions.

Rabbi Meidan did not say so, but through his words one could discern a strong call for caution in the Zionist interpretation of historic events such as the Holocaust, the return to Zion, and the founding of the State of Israel. Religious Zionism is built and based on the Gmara in Sanhedrin that determines that

"there is no more manifest [sign of] redemption than this:
viz., what is said, But ye, O mountains of Israel, ye shall
shoot forth your branches, and yield your fruit...
(Sanhedrin, 98a)

The whole concept of religious Zionism is based on the idea that we are at the "start of redemption." Rav Kook's philosophy is based on the "Vision of Redemption".

The holiday of Chanukah is also taught in Zionist circles as a holiday of national independence and not necessarily as a religious holiday. It is a known fact that Chanukah is not mentioned in the literature of the Tanaim (other than brief times). In the Babylonian Talmud the reply to the question "What is Chanukah?" - "מאי חנוכה" - is the story of the miracle of the oil but not wars.

Only with the return to Israel - שיבת ציון - of the Zionist movement did national consciousness return to tell the story of the Hasmoneans. They began to sing songs of battles and the bravery of the Maccabees - "a miracle did not happen to us, a container of oil we did not find." Bialik composed a number of poems on the bravery of the Maccabees, with comparison to his own generation - "the last generation of slavery and the first generation of redemption." The miracles and wonders became: "על הניסים" - "ועל הנפלאות אשר חוללו המקבים" - "the miracles and the wonders brought on by the Maccabees."

Religious Zionism leans heavily on historical exegesis that explains a process leading up to the current return to Zion as the Hand of G-d who redeems His People once again. The significance of this redemption is completely physical. Building the Land, Jerusalem and the Temple are not an idea, but a true realization. We are the children of the children of the Maccabees and we draw our strength from them.

Haredi Judaism seeks to dampen these messianic waves and dim the clear reading of the course of history.

And here, in the Zionist community of Ramban, lives one of the greatest scholars of the Second Temple period, and wishes to awaken us to a new reading of the place of Zionist thought in general and religious Zionist thought in particular, in light on the history of the kingdom of the Hasmoneans. Our friend, Professor Danny Schwartz, poses a challenge to us. He poses the streams that existed then up against those that exist today. According to his Modern Zionist reading, there is no direct line from the world of the sages of the Second Temple, but rather in the provinces of the priests of the temple and members of cults of the Judean Desert. Danny kindly responded to my request and he will discuss these thoughts on Shabbat afternoon, (after Mincha, at the time of my Shiur in Tanach). It is a great privilege for us all to open our minds in the midst of Hanukkah to these deep thoughts on the meaning of Israeli life today.

Announcements

Shabbat Afternoon Shiur

This Shabbat, Parshat Vayigash, Prof. Danny Schwartz will be giving a special talk on Religious Zionism in light of the history of the Hasmonean kingdom.

The talk will take place in the shul after mincha, at 16:30.

Community Trip to Poland

All those interested in joining, who have not yet signed up, are asked to please do so ASAP.

Those who have signed up but have not yet handed over the payment are requested to please do so by Sunday, the 1st of December.

Shiur Cancellations During Chanuka

The following shiurim **will not** be taking place during Chanuka:

- Parshat Hashavua on Thursday (25 Kislev, 28.11)
- Gemara for women with Noa Lau on Sunday (28 Kislev, 1.12)
- Beit Midrash Chevratit with Rav Benny Lau on Monday (29 Kislev, 2.12)
- Tanach Chug for kids with Sophie Pfeffer on Tuesday (30 Kislev, 3.12)
- Rav Krauss's Gemara shiur in English will not be taking place for the next three weeks.

Tevet Events

Ramban Shabbaton in Akko Shabbat Parshat Vayigash, 3-4 Tevet (6-7.12)

A detailed program will be sent out separately to all those joining.

Asara B'Tevet Thursday, Erev Asara B'Tevet (12.12) at 8pm

An Evening of Story, Music & Memory

On Asara B'Tevet we will gather at the shul to hear the amazing story of **Esther Scheinberger** (mother of Meir Harnoy), accompanied by music by Bernie Merinbach. More details to follow.

Hosting Netiv Soldiers Shabbat Parshat Vayechi, 11 Tevet (14.12)

On Shabbat Parshat Vayechi, 11 Tevet (14.12), the community will be hosting soldiers from the Netiv Program. The more host families the better!

All those interested in hosting soldiers are asked to please contact Ruth Eisenman – 054-4646951

Davening Times

שבת פרשת מקץ | שבת מברכין | חנוכה | כ"ז בכסלו (30.11)

16: 00	זמן הדלקת נרות
16: 25	מנחה וקבלת שבת
	דרשה בסוף התפילה – שולי אייזקס
	שחרית
06: 30	מנין ראשון
07: 45	דף יומי
08: 30	מנין שני
09: 30/10: 00	תפילות ילדים
08: 54	סוף זמן ק"ש – הגר"א
	לאחר התפילה (מנין שני) – קידושא רבה
13: 00	מנחה גדולה
16: 10	מנחה קטנה
	שיעור של פרופ' דניאל שוורץ בנושא: "הציונות הדתית לאור תקופת מלכות בית חשמונאי"
	16: 30
17: 14	צאת השבת וערבית

ימות החול | כ"ח בכסלו – ג' בטבת (1-6.12)

שחרית מנין א'	שחרית מנין ב'	
05: 50	07: 00	ימים א', ב', ה' (חנוכה)
05: 45	07: 00	ימים ג', ד' (חנוכה וראש חודש)
06: 00	07: 00	יום ו'
06: 15		דף יומי
		שיעור גמרא באנגלית - מסכת תענית - הרב פנחס קאהן - 06: 30
16: 25		מנחה
		שיעור בגמרא ירושלמי - מסכת חגיגה - ר' ראובן קמפנינו
17: 00		ערבית