



July – August 2017

| Tammuz – Av – Elul 5777

# NEW LIGHT NEWS

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## A BREAK FOR ETHICS?

One of my favorite Jewish traditions is the reading of the *Pirkei Avot* over the summer. The oldest traditional time to read the *Pirkei Avot* is during the weeks between the holidays of Passover and Shavuot, but this has since been extended to the period between Passover and Rosh Hashanah. The period between Shavuot and Rosh Hashanah is somewhat vacant in terms of Jewish observance, and our sages sought to fill it up with something good. Throughout most of the year we have a steady stream of holidays, an ever-renewing cycle of things to learn and to practice, but that stream thins out after Shavuot, and we have a long wait for it to return strong at Rosh Hashanah. You may have heard someone reference the “long, hot summer gap” in the Jewish holiday cycle, and this is it. Reading the *Pirkei Avot* during this period is very timely, as it gives us a meaningful and delightful study during an otherwise empty period. It’s a good way to keep ourselves ethical over the summer break, instead of taking a break from our ethics!

But what is the *Pirkei Avot*? *Pirkei Avot* is the *Chapters of the Fathers*, a tractate of the Mishnah, which is part of the Talmud. It is also called the *Ethics (or Sayings) of the Fathers*. This tractate deals with practical wisdom and with moral principles. The verses are worded short and sweet, yet they are deep and insightful.

If this description sounds anything like the book of Proverbs to you, it should. The sayings found in the *Pirkei Avot* should also remind you of the sayings of Yeshua in the Gospels, and for that matter, the sayings of the rabbis, including the rabbis in the other Newer Testament books. The wisdom literature in general, and the *Pirkei Avot* and the teachings of Yeshua in particular, all employ the rabbinic style of thought and teaching through parables. Here are a few verses from the *Pirkei Avot*. See if they ring a bell!

- ◆ Make your Torah study a fixed practice, say little and do much, and receive everyone cheerfully.
- ◆ Be clear in your speech, and don’t tell secrets, for eventually they will be heard. Don’t say, “I’ll study when I have time,” for perhaps you will never free yourself.
- ◆ Let the honor of your friend be as dear to you as your own.
- ◆ The day is short, the work is vast, the workers are lazy, the reward is great, and the master is pressing.
- ◆ What is it like to learn from a young person? Like eating unripe grapes and drinking unfermented wine. What is it like to learn from old people? Like eating ripe grapes and drinking aged wine.
- ◆ Don’t look at the container but at what’s inside of it. A new container can be filled with old wine and an old container might not even have new wine within.
- ◆ Exile yourself to a place of Torah. Don’t assume that the Torah will follow you or that your friends and colleagues will help you retain it. Don’t rely only on your own understanding or perception. \_\_\_\_\_
- ◆ Envy, desire and craving honor drive a person from the world.
- ◆ If your fear of sin comes before your wisdom, your wisdom will last. But if your wisdom comes before your fear of sin, your wisdom will not last. If your good deeds go beyond your wisdom, your wisdom will last. But if your wisdom goes beyond your good deeds, your wisdom will not last.

Speaking of which, Dr. Patrice will teach Torah this Fall Semester! Call the seminary at 727-399-0276 to register.

Free copies and translations of the *Pirkei Avot* can be found in many places online, and you can print them out if you prefer. Many new translations have been made over the centuries and are available at your local library, bookshop or online store. An illustrated version has even been made by Jessica Tamar Deutsch, and I can tell you it is excellent. Happy studying!

– Matt Lilly

The enclosed envelope is for your convenience, or use the PayPal button that is located on our reworked web site. Please click on [www.ohrchadash.org](http://www.ohrchadash.org).

## July 2017 / Tammuz – Av 5777

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<b>MISS A SERVICE?</b> You can watch videos of our services here: <a href="http://vimeo.com/ohrchadash">vimeo.com/ohrchadash</a> Audio recordings of the sermon are sent out every week. Send us an email at <a href="mailto:OhrChadashOffice@aol.com">OhrChadashOffice@aol.com</a> to be added to the list!					1 / 7 Tammuz Chukat  <span style="background-color: #FFD700; padding: 2px;">HAVDALAH &amp; GAME NIGHT 7 pm</span>
2 / 8 Tammuz	3 / 9 Tammuz	4 / 10 Tammuz	5 / 11 Tammuz	6 / 12 Tammuz	7 / 13 Tammuz Shabbat Service, 8 PM	8 / 14 Tammuz Balak
9 / 15 Tammuz	10 / 16 Tammuz	11 / 17 Tammuz  Tzom Tammuz	12 / 18 Tammuz	13 / 19 Tammuz	14 / 20 Tammuz Shabbat Service, 8 PM	15 / 21 Tammuz Pinchas
16 / 22 Tammuz	17 / 23 Tammuz	18 / 24 Tammuz	19 / 25 Tammuz	20 / 26 Tammuz	21 / 27 Tammuz Shabbat Service, 8 PM	22 / 28 Tammuz Mattote-Masei
23 / 29 Tammuz	24 / 1 Av Rosh Chodesh Av	25 / 2 Av	26 / 3 Av	27 / 4 Av	28 / 5 Av Shabbat Service, 8 PM	29 / 6 Av Devarim
30 / 7 Av	31 / 8 Av Erev Tisha B'Av					<span style="background-color: #ADD8E6; padding: 2px;">HAVDALAH &amp; GAME NIGHT 7 pm</span>

## August 2017 / Av – Elul 5777

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 / 9 Av  Tisha B'Av	2 / 10 Av	3 / 11 Av	4 / 12 Av Shabbat Service, 8PM	5 / 13 Av Va'etchannan Shabbat Nachamu
6 / 14 Av	7 / 15 Av	8 / 16 Av	9 / 17 Av	10 / 18 Av	11 / 19 Av Shabbat Service, 8 PM	12 / 20 Av Eikev
13 / 21 Av	14 / 22 Av	15 / 23 Av	16 / 24 Av	17 / 25 Av	18 / 26 Av Shabbat Service, 8 PM	19 / 27 Av Re'eh
20 / 28 Av	21 / 29 Av	22 / 30 Av  Rosh Chodesh Av, 1st Day	23 / 1 Elul  Rosh Chodesh Av, 2nd Day	24 / 2 Elul	25 / 3 Elul Shabbat Service, 8 PM	26 / 4 Elul Shoftim
27 / 5 Elul	28 / 6 Elul	29 / 7 Elul	30 / 8 Elul	31 / 9 Elul	1 Sept / 10 Elul Shabbat Service, 8 PM	2 Sept / 11 Elul Ki Teitzei  <span style="background-color: #90EE90; padding: 2px;">HAVDALAH &amp; GAME NIGHT 7 pm</span>