

* Mark Franck's Gemorah Brachos shiur will be back at its regular location (Franck residence) on Shabbos afternoon at 4:25pm.

Katanga

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Caulfield Beth Hamedrash Weekly Newsletter

D'var Torah

THE FINAL STRETCH...

by Rabbi Yaacov Haber

We've all been there. We are enjoying the first course at the wedding meal. There is light music in the background, pleasant conversation and a beautiful setting. Suddenly the band pumps up. With pomp and fanfare the music reaches a crescendo and a new beginning is about to be announced. Everyone stands up. "Ladies and gentleman, for the very first time, ." The volume is deafening, we all get very excited and we dance like crazy.

If you've been to a bris you will have observed how everyone is shmoozing comfortably when the Mohel will shout "Boruch HaBa!" A hush comes over the assembled as the week old baby is brought into the room and officially welcomed into the Jewish community.

And of course the Bar Mitzvah! Our first grand entrance into manhood. Every one of us remembers our Bar-Mitzvah. It was a milestone that we worked hard to reach and finally, on that day, we were welcomed to be an adult part of the community - a real part of Klal Yisroel.

We celebrate new beginnings. We have identified every milestone and have made it into a holiday.

This week's Torah portion identifies the ends, the completion and the accomplishment of our goals.

The Jewish people are setting up an army. There is a selection of soldiers. "Who is the man who has built a house. planted a vineyard. been engaged to be married? They should go home! Lest they get killed in the upcoming war and be unable to bring these beginnings to fruition, they shall not fight with the nation."

Apparently, beginning or even intending to see these beginnings through, is not good enough. The Torah is telling us that until we reach our individual goals, those grand beginning remains meaningless. We would think that the Mitzvah of

conquering

Eretz Yisroel takes precedence over our personal vineyard, orchard or home. When we consider the national security of our people it may even be more important than my marriage . Yet the Torah instructs us: go home! Finish what you started. Don't begin processes without completing them. Experience Shleimus - completion.

All of us have paved quite a few roads with good intentions. There's a whole stretch of road going towards mastering Tanach, an expressway leading to spending time with our children, and an eight-lane highway staring us in the face each time we see our to-do list. We all start projects with the intention of finishing them, but the path to fruition is fraught with obstacles: self doubt, fear of commitment, fear of lost opportunity, fear of putting in hard work that might not pay off, fear of failure - even fear of success!

G-d gives us the miracle of inspiration at the beginning of an endeavor, but then it's up to us to recreate that miracle as soon as that initial burst of motivation starts to fade. "Shalem", completion brings about "shalom" peace.

Laying a foundation to a house is great -- but seeing a HOME lit with Shabbos candles on Friday night is shalem. It represents peace.

Meeting a couple who just got engaged or dancing at their wedding and feeling the incredible joy is a beautiful thing, but nothing compared to seeing a mature couple look at each other with love and cooperation.

The Torah commands us to resist getting involved with new, apparently more important projects, and to go home and finish what we started. Become a shalem, and G-d will grant us the ultimate blessing: Shalom.



Other Developments

* Last Shabbos the Shule combined the traditional Shabbos Mevorachim Kiddish with the opportunity to wish Mazal Tov to Ronnie Jacobs & Karli Ciechanowski and their respective families on their recent engagement. Katanga President, Mr Tom May elaborated on the Mitzva of Tzedoka - Charity, mentioned in the weekly Parsha. This Mitzva also includes lending money to someone in a time of need. Practising Tzedoka is a great zechus and deserves our special attention with the approach of the Yomim Noraim. Caulfield Beth Hamedrash has a Ge"Mech - Free Loan Fund, offering interest free loans to members. All enquiries in confidence to Tom May.

* About 25 participants enjoyed a gala Boys Minyan Rosh Chodesh breakfast on Sunday at Shule. A Siyum on Mishnayes Mesechta Pe'ah was also held. 'Caterers' Ezra Susskind and Eli May outdid themselves with a menu including bagels with smoked salmon, sandwich maker cheese treats, vegetable platters and assorted cakes. Special thanks to all helpers and to the main Shule management for sponsoring this inaugural event.

* Professor Hasofer spoke at Shaleh Seudos about the Torah prohibition against Idolatry and how in the modern context, with the Torah being eternal, refers to the secular ideologies of Secularism, Reductionalism and other cults. He explained how the Torah commands us to actively fight these false Ideologies.

* A Shloshim was held last Sunday evening for the late Mrs Jacobs. Rabbi Meir Rabbi completed the Siyum Mishnayes and gave inspiring Divrei Torah, focussing on the great rewards to come for Mitzvos in Olom Haba. The Siyum was made during a Seudas Mitzva and Lechayim prepared by the family.

Embrace the Challenge...

By Rabbi Eliyahu Safran

Commentaries explain that the L'Dovid Psalm is divided into two distinct parts. The second half, verses 7-14, is a call for help on behalf of all Jews. It is an injunction to "hold on", in spite of the seemingly insurmountable obstacles. It is a call reminiscent of the sign put up by Bratzlever Chassidim on the gate to their Second World War ghetto: Yiden-Zeit zich nisht M'yaesh- "Jews-Don't Give Up!" You want to give up because the other half of the glass is empty; because innocent Jews are being killed in their homeland, because the world is yet again silent when Jewish blood is spilled. But, now is not the time to yield and be pessimistic.

"Hope in the Lord, be strong, and let your heart be brave; yes, hope in the Lord." Why the repetition? The Brisker Rav explains that David is reassuring the individual Jew, as well as the collective Jewish communities of all eras, that the

Announcements

- World renowned speaker Rabbi Lewis Furman (from Ohr Somayach South Africa) will be touring Melbourne from 31 August to September 4 beginning with a Friday night Shabbos meal next week (31 August). Drawing huge crowds everywhere he goes, Rabbi Furman will be presenting a series of shiurim on diverse topics including: Dignity of Self, Passion and Intimacy, Uses and Abuses of Anger. For a detailed itinerary of shiurim he will be giving, please email us here.

great reward for the heroic optimism and hope we sustain even in the bleakest of times, is that God will bestow us with even greater abilities and inner strength to hope and persevere. When you and I hold on to God with bitachon and hope that at times may even be fraught with doubt and pain, God will gift us with the ability to truly "Hope in the Lord", with ease, satisfaction and tranquility. God's reward for the one whose trust in Him shall never waiver, is "hope in the Lord" - to merit even greater hope and trust. What a gift!

Yes, we face serious and unanswered problems and crisis that may not easily be resolved. For some of us, it seems as if a state of paralysis has taken over our being-but let it not touch our hearts. Let us begin to optimistically await a new year, as we seek to reattach ourselves to the One and the only One who can "make peace upon us, and upon Israel."

- Welcome back to Mark & Chana Franck after their recent European vacation. Looking forward to the resumption of the weekly shabbos shiur in its regular location. Sholom Aleichem and Beruchim Atem Bevoiachem.

- Minyanim times for this coming week are: Mornings: early minyan @ 6:15am, late minyan @ 7am. Mincha at 5:55pm followed by shiurim. Ma'ariv at 6:35pm.

- Interested in presenting a shiur in the Youth Minyan? Speak to Ezra May or email us here.

Parsha Overview - Shoftim

This week's Parsha is jam-packed with commandments. Topics covered in this week's portion include: Judges and Justice, Sacred Trees and Pillars, Blemished Sacrifice, Penalties for Idolatry, The Supreme Court, The King, Levitical Priests, Priestly Portions, Special Service, Divination and Prophecy, Cities of Refuge, Murder, Preserving Boundaries, Conspiring Witnesses, Preparing for War, Taking Captives, Conducting a Siege and the Case of the Unsolved Murder. This week we have the famous admonition: "Righteousness, Righteousness shall you pursue, so that you will live and possess the Land that the Almighty your God, gives you."

Thoughts for the week:
"Experience is not what happens to a man. It is what a man does with what happens to him."
(Aldous Huxley)
"Two are better than one; for if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow; but woe to him that is alone when he falleth, and hath not another to lift him up."
(Ecclesiastes 4:9)
"Kind words can be short and easy to speak, but their echoes are truly endless."
(M.T.)
"Maybe, just once, someone will call me 'sir' without adding, 'you're making a scene'."
(Homer Simpson)

Suggestions or comments regarding our website or newsletter? Email us - we would love to hear from you.



Shabbat Shalom & Gut Shabbos to all!
"The Editors"