

- * There will not be a shiur at Mark Franck's house on Shabbos afternoon.
- * There will be a kiddush this shabbos in the main shule, to celebrate the affruf of Nathan & Susie Katz.
ALL are invited to attend.

Katanga

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Caulfield
Beth Hamedrash Weekly Newsletter

D'var Torah

LIVE AND LEAD BY EXAMPLE...

by Rabbi Zelig Pliskin

In this week's Torah portion is part of the Shema prayer, "And you shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your might" (Deut. 6:5). How does one actually love God?

The Talmud (Yoma 86a) states in reference to this verse that we must behave in a manner that will cause the Name of Heaven to be beloved. One should study Torah (God's instructions for living) and serve Torah scholars.

"Values are caught, not taught." By being in proximity to people who are wise and lead exemplary lives, one can learn much on how to lead his own life. Be honest in business dealings and speak pleasantly to others and people will say, "How pleasant are the ways and how proper are the actions of this person who has learned Torah."

If, however, someone studies Torah and serves Torah scholars, but is not honest in business dealings and

does not speak pleasantly to others, what do people say about him? "Woe to that person who learned Torah. See how corrupt are the actions and how ugly are the ways of this person who learned Torah."



The goal of learning Torah is to perfect ourselves and to perfect the world. The world knows that God gave the Torah to the Jews on Mt. Sinai and in the Sinai desert. That is why they are constantly looking at how we behave. They expect more of us. It is interesting that some Jews have this same attitude towards Orthodox Jews, but exclude themselves from those same expectations of honesty and pleasantness.

We are all in the same boat. We must all live our lives in a manner that causes respect for the Torah and for God and causes God to be beloved.

TU B'AV - HAPPY DAYS ARE HERE AGAIN!

by Rabbi Shlomo Aviner

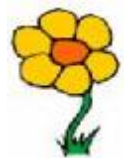
Rabban Shimon Ben Gamliel stated, "Israel had no holidays as joyous as Tu B'Av and Yom Kippur, when the young women of Jerusalem would go out and dance in the vineyards" (Mishna Ta'anit 4:8).

Our sages compared Tu B'Av to Yom Kippur, no less. What is so special about this day - the fifteenth day of the month of Av - which makes it deserving of such a noble comparison? The Talmud (in Baba Bathra 121a) gives several reasons for us to rejoice on Tu B'Av. All have one thing in common: on this day, different segments of the Jewish Nation were united:

1. The tribes were granted permission to intermarry.
2. The tribe of Benjamin was allowed to intermarry.
3. The Generation of the Desert ceased to die, and the sin of the spies was forgiven.
4. Hoshea Ben Ela, annulled Yerovam Ben Nevat's (the first king of the break-away Kingdom of Israel) decree preventing anyone from the Kingdom of Israel from crossing over into the Kingdom of Judah and going to the Holy Temple in Jerusalem (I Kings 12) on Tu B'Av, thus allowing the pilgrimage to Jerusalem.
5. The corpses of Beitar were brought to burial, honouring the memory of these freedom-fighters who gave their lives to regain a sovereign state and the freedom to worship God as they chose.

Tu B'Av is the opposite of Tisha B'Av. In contrast to the baseless hatred that brought about the destruction of the Holy Temple and the Exile, the events commemorated on Tu B'Av revolve around love and unity among different sectors of the nation, and our deep connection to Israel and the Holy Temple. Tu B'Av is a day of renewal of ties among the nation, and Yom Kippur is a day of renewal of our ties to the Holy One of Blessed Name. On this day we turn over a new leaf.

There is a famous story about the Ba'al Shem Tov, who sent his disciples to learn how to repent by following the example of a very simple man. The man recorded all the sins committed during the year and all the suffering and troubles brought upon him. "I will forgive You for all the troubles if You forgive me for all my sins!"



He then threw both notebooks into the fire. This should serve as a model for all our relationships - with our friends, our spouses, and so on. We must learn to throw all the notebooks into the fire, and begin anew.

This is also why it is fitting for Yom Kippur to be the "Wedding Day" of Israel to God, and Tu B'Av to be a day for Jewish weddings. Therefore, "Israel had no holidays as joyous as Tu B'Av and Yom Kippur."

Other Developments

* Guest Speaker in the Youth Minyan on shabbos was Rabbi Leon Goldman. Rabbi Goldman contrasted the differing causes of the destruction of the two Batei Mikdash, with their resultant exiles. Idolatry, Immorality and Murder were the causes of the destruction and subsequent exile of the First Beit HaMikdash which lasted 70 years. However, the sin of Sinas Chinam (baseless hatred) causing the destruction of the Second Beit HaMikdash, has led to a Golus (exile) of over 2,000 years. Our Teshuvah (repentance) for peace amongst our own is still not complete, as the Geula (redemption) we are all waiting for has not yet arrived. Yasher Koach.

* Katanga became something of a 'Minyan Factory' on shabbos as numerous minyanim orchestrated their davening times in preparation for Tisha B'Av on Motzei Shabbat. Following shacharis on shabbos, Mr & Mrs Schon made a kiddush in honour of a Yorzheit, during which Ari Bergman made a siyum on Masechta Kidusshin, as part of the Daf Yomi learning cycle. Thousands of Daf Yomi students around the world have now begun Mesechta Bava Kama. Yasher Koach.

* After Eicha on Tisha B'Av evening, some 70 people joined with hundreds of cities around the world in the screening of "A Time to Heal" (a production of the Chofetz Chaim Heritage Foundation). The video's speakers discussed the importance of maintaining shalom ('peace') between ourselves, as a precursor to achieving a lasting peace in our Homeland. Rabbi Yisocher Frand urged viewers to 'go the extra mile' in preventing and healing Machlokes (divisions), while Rabbi Rietti highlighted the importance of focussing on the big picture rather than getting caught up with petty differences. The video was dedicated to the many victims of terror in Israel over the past year. Special thanks to Ari & Esther Bergman for providing the technical infrastructure and to Isi Pacanowski for organising the video.

* In keeping with an age-old Boys Minyan tradition, a special Boys program followed the video. Highlights were a Tisha B'AV quiz, stories by candlelight. Special thanks to Shimon Susskind for his sparkling addition to the evening. There were no refreshments!

* On the day of Tisha B'Av there were special shiurim - in the morning, after Kinot, the famous Sugya of Churban Bayis Sheni in Mesechta Gittin was given. The Shiur was jointly attended by both Youth Minyan and Main Shule members. After Mincha, the Halachos of the 10th of Av as brought in the Kitzur Shulchan Aruch were covered.

MAZAL TOV!

- Y A very hearty Mazal Tov to Steven & Tess Goldman on the occasion of the birth of a son last Shabbos.
- Y Katanga would like to wish the parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters and extended families much naches and simchas in the future.
- Y Steven & Tess invite everyone to celebrate the Shalom Zocher this Friday night (3 August), in their home at 30/55 Hotham Street, East St Kilda, from 8:30pm - 10pm.

Announcements

- Relaunch of the Katanga website. The Katanga website now contains copies of all past newsletters in online (html) and offline (PDF) formats. You can now download and review some of your old favourites in direct printable format. Again, we welcome all suggestions for further enhancements to the website.

Parsha Overview - Vaetchanan

Moshe pleads with God to enter the Holy Land, but is turned down. Moshe commands the Children of Israel not to add or subtract from the words of the Torah and to keep all of the Commandments. The cities of Bezer, Ramot and Golan are designated as Cities of Refuge east of the Jordan river. The Ten Commandments are repeated and Moshe relates the Shema and the commandment not to intermarry "for they will lead your children away from Me." (Deut. 7:3-4)

MAZAL TOV!

- Y A very hearty Mazal Tov to Nathan & Susie Katz on the occasion of their affruf and upcoming wedding in America.
- Y Katanga would like to wish the parents, Hymie & Sue, grandparents, brothers, sisters and extended families much naches and simchas in the future.
- Y Nathan will be in Australia to celebrate his offruf on home turf in Katanga, before flying off to America for his wedding. Sholom Aliechem and Baruch Atah Bevoiecha.

This Shabbos (31 July) is Tu B'Av - a truly joyous occasion in the Jewish calendar.

- This Shabbat is called Shabbat Nachamu after the beginning of the Haftarah, "Nachamu, Nachamu Ami" ('Be comforted, be comforted my people' - from Yeshayahu). After the three Haftoras of 'punishment,' we now begin the seven Haftorahs of 'consolation'.

Thoughts for the week:

"It is a mystery to me how a person can feel honoured by the humiliation of his fellow human beings."
(Gandhi)

"Lack of will power has caused more failure than lack of intelligence or ability."
(F. A. Newhouse)

"That all our knowledge begins with experience there can be no doubt."
(Immanuel Kant)

"The direct use of force is such a poor solution to any problem, it is generally employed only by small children and large nations."
(David Friedman)

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"