



Shalhevet

Erev Shabbat Parshat Pinchas

Friday July 9, 2004

20 Ta'amuz 5764

Chazak Ameinu!
Be Strong, Our Nation!

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What's New in Camp?

This past week in camp has been packed with all types of programs and activities ranging from an unbelievable and inspiring Shiriah to Trip Day to moving Shiva Asar B'Taamuz programming. Here's a look back at the past week.

Sunday July 4th was a jammed packed day. The Fourth of July festivities began with a BBQ lunch complete with an appearance by General Custer on his horse (David Siegel).

After everyone had their share of American cuisine, the focus shifted to Eretz Yisrael with Morasha's 41st Annual Shiriah program dedicated to the over 1,000 families of victims of terror in Israel. The evening was entitled, *Chazak Ameinu*, Be Strong Our Nation. Guests included a group that traveled even farther than most parents, Uncle Sam (Rabbi Spodek), Lady Liberty (Carol Rhine), George Washington (Judah Ausubel), Ben Franklin (David Friedman), Betsy Ross (Debbie Rochlin), John Adams (Judah Rhine) and Thomas Jefferson (Rafi Lipner).

With spirited and lively performances from both campuses, machon and of course from the day camp, the contest was a close one. Keeping up the longest unbeaten streak in Morasha Shiriah history, the day camp walked away with the first prize. Coming in a close second were the girls with the song of the evening a beautiful rendition of *Me'ein Olam Habah*.

As has been done for the past few summers, each campus sang two traditional song and one Israeli song which was accompanied by a powerpoint presentation of pictures and images from Israel. Boys' campus began this portion of the evening by singing *B'ruchim Habaim L'elokim*, a song reminding us of the beauty and glory of *Eretz Yisrael* despite all of the bloodshed and terror of the past years. The girls added a song entitled *Ahavat Yisrael* which also served to remind us of a crucial point: it is the love that exists within the Jewish people that has helped to keep us strong during times of adversity. The song concluded with the ultimate reminder: "*Ani ma'amin b'emunah shelaima*

b'viat hamashiach."

This year's Shiriah was full of bonus songs including an inspiring tribute to Naomi Shemer, the matriarch of Israeli song as the members of the *Mishlach* sang *Lu Y'hi*.

To end the evening, we revisited the theme, *Chazak Ameinu*, after an album that was produced to benefit families of terror victims. Like the tens of Jewish and Israeli music stars that sang this song on the album, we at Camp Morasha ended our evening with the singing of this beautiful song. It was sung by everyone in the room, young and old, boys and girls as we came together as one to strengthen ourselves and our brethren in *Artzeinu Hak'dosha*. *Chazak, chazak, we stand as one, chazak, chazah we must be strong, chazak, chazak we will go on, ya'aseh shalom.*

Barely twelve hours after the conclusion of Shiriah and the Fourth of July festivities, Machzor Aleph campers boarded buses for their first trip day of the summer. The Nitzanim traveled to Carousel Park where they enjoyed water slides, bumper boats, arcade games, go karts and ice cream. According to Yolly Dratch, Aviva Mael and Lani Prus, the trip was, "Awesome! We had so much fun!" The trip ended with a shopping excursion in K-Mart and a viewing of *Shrek 2* which was "Really funny—we loved it!" according to Yolly, Aviva and Lani.



The Shtilim, although they had a little farther to travel, also had a ball. They trekked to Allentown to visit Dorney Park. In the words of Sam Gersten and Gabi Kaye of the Shtilim boys, "It was incredible! There were so many amazing rides! We had an awesome time!"

Younger Ilanot Boys and Girls had an evening of bowling and will have their full day trips next week, along with the Older Ilanot Boys and Girls. The Alufim are leaving on their two day trip to Lake Placid as the *Shalhevet* goes to print. Details to follow in next week's edition.

On a more somber note, the 17th of *Ta'amuz* was observed this past Tuesday. The day was filled

with *shiurim* and *sichot* discussing the reason for the fast day and the laws that apply. A *Yerushalayim* Fair was organized by the *Mishlachat*. It included different stations where the Machzor Aleph boys and girls had the opportunity to write letters to soldiers in Israel, build a model and color pictures of *Yerushalayim*, as well as sing songs and hear a story about the holy city. During Arts and Crafts, Machzor Aleph girls also had the opportunity to make pillowcases for children who were victims of terror in Israel.

Ilanot boys and girls participated in a program run by Assistant Boys' Head Counselor, Seth Grauer, entitled "Fatal Compromise" dealing with making important decisions in life.

Alufim boys had all night learning on the night before *Shiva Asar B'Ta'amuz* which culminated in a *vatikin* davening.

What's New In the Real World ?

John Kerry, the democratic candidate for president announced that he has selected Senator John Edwards of North Carolina to be his Vice Presidential running mate. Edwards' short voting record on Israel is called "perfect" by analysts.

Brazilian scientists have discovered a fish, related to sharks, that has been roaming the oceans since the dinosaurs walked the earth. The fish is a kind of ratfish that has large, wing-like fins, a whip-like tail and exposed nerves along its body to help it navigate in the deep, dark waters it calls home.

After a seven year, 2 billion mile journey, the Cassini-Huygens spacecraft arrived at its destination at the ringed planet Saturn. Cassini is scheduled to spend at least 4 years circling the planet, its rings and moons to collect data and send back pictures.

What's New in Israel?

Five American citizens, some of whom also hold Israeli citizenship, are preparing a \$900 million dollar lawsuit against an Arab Bank located on Madison Avenue in New York City. The Americans, victims of Arab terrorism, are targeting the

bank because it knowingly channels funds to terrorist organizations enabling them to continue their activities.

Israeli Defense Forces Judea and Samaria Division Commander Brigadier-General Gadi Eizenkot announced today that since January 1 of this year his soldiers have conducted 800 counterterrorism operations which led to the apprehension of 2,000 suspects. In Shechem alone, 60 potential suicide bombers were caught.

What's New in Sports?

The Yankees have lost 5 of their last 6 games including 3 loses to their cross-town rivals, the Mets. Despite this, the Yankees are still 6 games ahead of Boston in the standings. The Mets find themselves 2 games behind the Phillies, having won 5 of their last 6 games.

With the All-Star game ballots all accounted for, it looks like the Yankees will have 7 representatives playing for the American League team, including Derek Jeter, Jason Giambi, Alex Rodriguez (all of whom will be starting in the infield), Hideki Matsui, Gary Sheffield, Mariano Rivera and Tom Gordon. The Mets will have 2 members on the National League team with Mike Piazza as the starting catcher and Tom Glavine in the bullpen.



In tennis action, defending champion Roger Federer won his second consecutive Wimbledon men's title with a 4 set victory over Andy Roddick. Maria Sharapova beat two-time defending champion Serena Williams to capture the women's title.

Weather Update?

(As of Wednesday Afternoon, July 7)

Shabbos:	Sunny to partly cloudy, high 81°
Sunday:	Partly sunny, warm and humid, high 83°
Monday:	Thunderstorms possible, high 83°

Theme Thoughts

BY RABBI MARK DRATCH

Welcome to Week Three!

"And God said, 'Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together to one place, and let the dry land appear'; and it was so. And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters He called Seas; and God saw that it was good. And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, herb yielding seed, and fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth; and it was so. And the earth



brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after its kind, and tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after its kind; and God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, the third day."

Day Three is known as a lucky one-- *pa'amayim ki tov*, on it *Hashem* said, "It was good" two times! That is why many people like to move, start a trip or do something special on Tuesdays. Two is an important number, but three is even more special. Doing something three times makes a *chazakah*-- a sort of guarantee that things are solid and strong and will continue. Based on the verse from *Kohelet* (4:12), the *gemara* says in *Menachot* 93b, 'R. Eliezer ben Yaakov said, "Whosoever has *tefillin* on his head, the *tefillin* on his arm, the *tzizit* on his garment, and a *mezuzah* on his doorpost, will certainly not sin, for it is written, 'And a threefold cord is not quickly broken.'" And the *mishnah* says

in *Kiddushin* 40b, "One who is versed in the *Torah*, the *mishnah* and in general knowledge will not easily sin, for it is written, 'And a threefold cord is not quickly broken.'"

And three generations of learned, observant Jews is a plus for *Torah*-committed children and grandchildren for generations to come (see the beginning of *U-va le-Tziyyon* in your *siddur*.)



So, on the third day of the week during the "three weeks" during our third week of camp, wouldn't it be something if instead of a double "*ki tov*", there would be a triple!

So here's what we can do. We can add our own *tov*. How? Well, *Torah* is called "*tov*" -- *ki lekach tov natati lachem*-- I have given you a good gift (*Torah*), says *Hashem*. Let's learn with a bit more enthusiasm. Let's steal a few more minutes with a *sefer*! Also, after *Hashem* created Adam, He said, "*Lo Tov*-- It is not good for a person to be alone." We see from this that it *is tov* when people have friends and share with each other. Is there someone in your bunk who's lonely? Is there someone who could use a smile or a kind word?

So let's make Week Three of Camp Morasha not just twice, *pa'amayim ki tov*, but a three-part *chazakah* of goodness, adding our *tov* of *Torah* and friendship to *Hashem's* goodness-- and make Morasha the "goodest" place around! Have a **good** week!

The Scoop on Salamanders

Did you ever notice the red-orange creatures that surface after the rain? What about the Day Camp boys scurrying into the woods to find the slimy friends they've come to adore? These animals that we speak of are in fact amphibians of the subclass Lissamphibia and the order Caudata. The most abundant family, containing about 200 known species of salamanders is the Plethodontidae family with species throughout North America and some in Central America and Europe.

Most salamanders are about 4 to 6 inches long. They range from the smallest salamander at 2 inches to the largest, the giant salamander which can grow up to 70 inches long and weigh up to 55 pounds. Generally, salamanders have short bodies with long tails, 4 legs with clawless toes, and well-developed heads, often with large mouths and eyes. Their skin is usually smooth and moist. They are brightly colored, often brown, black, yellow or red and have light or dark spots, bands or stripes.

Salamanders don't hear the way you or I do, they sense vibrations from the ground which translates into hearing for them. They have relatively good vision but have little or no ability to vocalize sounds. Because of their sensitive tongues, sallies, as they are lovingly called, have a keen sense of smell and taste.

Their skin contains many glands which secrete substances that help to keep

them moist and that protect them when they are frightened. Salamanders molt their skin from every few days to every few weeks depending on the species.

Although I don't recommend testing this out, salamanders have an amazing ability to shed their tails and grow them back as well as to regenerate other damaged or severed parts of their bodies.

If you've ever watched a salamander walk, you'd notice their very unique pattern. They walk with one leg at a time in a diagonal pattern with the limbs sprawled out from the body and the middle of the trunk resting on the ground.



Salamanders may live in freshwater, part of the time in water or entirely on land. Most adults hide by day and feed at night, although some, like the ones we get to see, emerge only when moisture and temperature levels are appropriate. They feed on insects, worms and other small prey and even other salamanders. Their live span is from 1 to 60 years, depending on the species.

The salamander species that is common to Camp Morasha is actually a newt, the red-spotted newt or *Notophthalmus viridescens viridescens*. So, next time it rains keep your eyes open for this striking red-orange creature. You may be tempted to pick it up. Make sure to do so with care. Be nice to them, they might even outnumber us humans here in camp!