

## DEAR PARENTS & CAMPERS,

I would like to share a beautiful idea I heard from Rabbi Beinenfeld this past Sunday, on the 17th of Tammuz. In quoting over the **בני יששכר** he mentioned that it is no coincidence that **פרשת פנחס** always falls out during the three weeks, our quasi mourning period that culminates in the painful Tisha B'Av experience. The reason being that there is a danger during this time period, as we start to tap into all the calamities that have befallen our people over the years, we could sink to a level of despair that is unhealthy. So **חז"ל** arranged the Parshios that this week we get a bit of a boost, as **פנחס** has the **חגים** discussed in detail.

Rabbi Beinenfeld explained (I hope I am not misquoting too badly) that there is a connection between the pain of Tisha B'Av and the joy of **יום טוב**; it is entirely appropriate that focusing on the **חגים** could help us combat the pain of this time period. Because at its essence, what we are mourning with the onset of these days is the lessening of our relationship with Hashem. When we had the Beis Hamikdash, the presence of Hashem was real, it was constant, and we felt it much more acutely than we do today. The reality of Galus is that this connection is not as strong. Celebrating our Holidays is the antidote to this. The energy of the **חגים** comes with a focus that despite our current circumstances, we are still the children of Hashem. Our Father will always cherish us, and He will never forsake us. The perfect cure to our harsh existence.

The thought occurs to me, if despite all our mistakes as a nation, this relationship still rings true, what a pedestal that puts us on! And what a privilege it is to in some way facilitate a meaningful summer experience for the children of such a people! While our days are filled with non-stop action and activities, and we sometimes lose sight of the big picture, at our core, the Eeshay staff signed up because of this opportunity- to help provide a productive experience for an amazing and special group of Jewish children. We humbly thank you for entrusting us with this sacred mission, and we will continue working to this end!

I would just like to acknowledge and thank Rabbi Kaye for his incredible efforts, being the glue behind, and in front of, the scenes to help camp run so beautifully. The time stamps on Rabbi Kaye's Whatsapp posts are irrefutable evidence to the hours that he put into this job, and while we as a camp will forge on, he is a big loss. But we are super excited to welcome the incredibly talented Rabbi Friedler to our Eeshay team! Rest assured, your children are still in dedicated, talented hands!

Have a great Shabbos, looking forward to our second half at Camp Eeshay!

*Rabbi Glatt*

## THIS WEEK IN CAMP!

### What. A. Week.

Let's start with the learning, shall we? Throughout this month, R' Kaye's group has been learning about the Parsha, which includes illustrations on the board, animated stories, and coloring pages. R' Friedman and R' Friedler have both been going through Pirkei Avos, focussing on appreciating our worth and treating each other properly, and using stories, parables, and discussions to bring the Mishnayos to life. The "Shisha Sidrei Mishna" Song also seems to be a chart-topping summer hit. Speaking of hits, R' Glatt's group is on the cusp of completing Mishnayos Makkos! And finally, Mazel Tov to R' Kramer's shiur for finishing the third perek of Gemara Meseches Megilla! Thanks for allowing the rest of us to partake in your siyum!

In crafts, the Junior and Intermediate boys created Cholent Bean Kotels and Fruit Loop Necklaces (although some decided to make Fruit Loop beards... I don't ask questions; I just work here). The Senior boys have completed their handcrafted, ergonomic shtenders! Each one added their own unique touch - or extra stroke of stain. Looking forward to seeing them pop up in a shul near you. The late activities were also enjoyable, beginning with the "Price Is Right", followed by a "Deal or No Deal" style activity where many fun and exciting prizes were won - and not won (believe it or not, R' Kramer can be sneaky).

On Wednesday, we had a massive, but good-natured, competition throughout the entire day. Traditionally, "Block Wars" began when the camp was so small, we could fit all the campers into a golf cart and a couple e-scooters. It has since evolved to a generational rivalry between the inhabitants of Cherry Hill Estates (Team Eretz Estates) and the local tribes in the surrounding areas and beyond (Team Chutz La'Aretz). The boys had a blast competing in the Field Events at Jake's Place, splashed through their Aqua Meets, created signs and banners for their respective teams, played or cheered for their teams during the Senior/Staff basketball game, and cheered their merry little hearts out during the Grand Finale. Hats off to both teams for having good sportsmanship (especially during the three weeks), and Mazel Tov to hand-clapping, feet-stomping Eretz Estates for squeaking out a win against Chutz La'Aretz by only 5 points!

Thursday brought us, in conjunction with Camp Reyim, a trip of epic proportions: Thrillz! We observed as boys were launched across the room out of massive slides, thrown upside down on a VR roller coaster, and spun all over by a massive, ominous orb. Surprisingly, only I became nauseous - and I only watched. We beheld the defeat of our young men to giant blue balloons, the victory of our proud campers in trampoline volleyball, and their valiant efforts in Laser Tag games. Props to those who came out alive and whole.

Throughout the week, the Junior Division had fun playing various sports activities, and they have become more and more accepting of "Rule #1" (The teams will never be fair...). The league games for the older divisions arrived at a climactic conclusion on Friday, with the teams battling out nail-biting playoff performances and challenging championship games! All of this is pure assumption on my part, of course, as I am writing this on Thursday night. Totally possible there was a massive brawl causing a team to lose three players and a tooth, thereby forfeiting the championship. Hopefully it was the former. I will maintain the assumption that a team from both Intermediate and Senior will have won by the time you all read this. Congratulations to the winners, whoever you are! Of course, this was followed up by our Gala Grand Oneg, with a little extra ice cream "simcha" to it. Congratulations, as well, to all those who earned prizes through their participation during davening and learning!

Here I sit - finally - at the end of an exhilarating day, an action-packed week, and a phenomenal first half of Camp Eeshay, completing my final weekly recap of the summer. Although I will still be maintaining a presence at Eeshay, Rabbi Dr. Avraham J.B. Friedler IV Esq. will be taking over as Junior Division Head for the second half of the summer - Hatzlacha Rabbah! Before I log off, I first want to thank R' Kramer, R' Glatt and R' Friedman for working together with me on a very successful program so far. I can't thank our counselors enough for their dedication to the campers. Shmulik and Yeshaya, Peretz and Eytan, Hillel and Shiloh - you actually ran the activities on a daily basis, building relationships with the boys and being positive role models to them. Thank you!

Second Session is on its way! In the words of a wise counselor: "Aaaarrrrr, Yoooouuuu, Reeaaaayyyy!?!?"

"Speaking of hits, R' Glatt's group is on the cusp of completing the first perek of Mishnayos Makkos!

*Rabbi Kaye*



