

Think Again - The circle of life

The cycle of the High Holidays from Rosh Hashanah through to Simchat Torah had scarcely been over when we immediately commenced almost without catching our breath the story of the Torah and the rest of the year. We commenced the reading of Bereshis, the History and the laws of the Jewish people. There seems to be this continuous drive to charter the waters ahead and forge on. The constant pace of our existence barely extends to us the chance to reflect and deliberate on what had happened. I trust however that those of you who attended our Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur services were able to take away a little inspiration and encouragement for the year ahead. Our Simchat Torah Chatanim, Peter Jablonka, Howard Silver and Harry Schnapp certainly ended the festivities on a high; maybe not on account of the spirit of the Torah but probably on the account of the amount of spirit consumed.

But still it is hard internalise and properly grasp the entirety of the messages of the High Holiday period. It is the Human condition to grapple with these two aspects of our lives. We grapple with our responsibilities of career and family and material well being on the one hand and we also grapple with our place in community society and with the big questions, of purpose and soul and what does it all mean. Intuitively we know that it is the energy of our soul and life that keeps it all together. I hope that our Synagogue plays its part in providing the soul and energy and direction in your lives to adequately come to terms with the big questions.

One of the big questions was answered. Will New Zealand choke in the final of the Rugby World Cup ; they nearly did choke, winning by only one point to France ; Still the karma of the world can move on to the next cycle of Olympic games, Soccer World Cup and cricket; throw in an ashes series and before you know it the Rugby world cup will be on again. Sport is very much like religion; it is a big circle, in neither do they give you much of a chance to savour the moment before you are asked to move on to the next big thing.

Looking back over the last couple of weeks Gilad Shalit's release gives us the opportunity to become grounded and contemplate what really is important in life. There is nothing more important than the sanctity of life and we learn, to value better, the outstanding character of the Human spirit.

The story of creation is read over these weeks in the Synagogue service. We learn by contemplating the universe that from the day we arrive on this planet there is more to be seen than can ever be seen, there is more to do that can ever be done, more to find that can ever be found. It is the circle of life. The circle of life moves us through despair and hope through faith and love. The weekly Parsha of the scroll of the Torah and the dancing in the circle of Simchat Torah helps us find our place on the unwinding path of the circle of life. (Lion King song)

Coogee is very busy over the next few months with Bar/Bat Mitzvas and weddings. Hardly a chance to catch our breath but with full certainty I will see you in shule at the end of the circle next year at the High Holiday services

As always see you in shule

Good Shabbos and Shana Tova

Elozer Gestetner

rabbi@coogeesynagogue.org