



# ***Miktav Ayin (Letter 16)***

Dear Reader,

Feel it! It was here! Whether we are sighing of relief or you are still dazed with the euphoria of a successful World Cup, it is time to plough again, to pick up the seed bag and scatter the seed of productivity. It was good while it lasted; it was absolutely crucial to participate fully, but now it is back to serving our neighbour wherever you are called to do this. May we do this with the same zeal we displayed the last few weeks?

This newsletter dwells a little on the World Cup but also pushes our mind forward again to the challenges that await. Thanks to Bishop Bowles, Br Mokotedi for input for this newsletter.

**Blessed is the one who takes the time to read this newsletter.**


## **1. Walking in the light**


*When you and your children return to the Lord your God and obey Him with all your heart and with all your soul according to everything I command you today, then the Lord will restore you fortunes and have compassion on you*

(Deut.30:2,3)

This week according to our lectionary we contemplate the will of God for our lives, as expressed in the commandments. I again realized that with God there is only one way of living –His way! We have seen this in the Garden of Eden and in the life of the nation Israel. Disobedience has negative consequences; expulsion from the Garden and expulsion from their land, meaning exile in Babylon, respectively. Fortunately our actions cannot frustrate the plans of God and fortunately with God return/repentance is always an option in His mercy.

Where does freedom of choice fit in? Is that not possible seeing that we are created in the image of God? Certainly God does not want robots, but His commands are always given against the backdrop of His care and love for us. He reveals to us what is possible and in a way the further providence and experience of this bliss is dependent on our choices. God is not unfair





I want us today not to cheapen the mercy and forgiveness of God. May we ( in comparison to human experiences ) realize this supreme opportunity to return and get restoration- without penalties, interest being added, records being kept; without the need of bribery, corruption or favours. Let us not “try God”; let us not succumb to temptation in the hope that we can get away with it. Obedience will result in blessings, whilst disobedience or questioning the value of the guidance will result that we learn the hard way that the consequences are dire.

Let us stick to the perfect plan as formulated in God’s goals and commands. Hereto may we constantly pray: **Show me your ways o Lord, teach me your paths (Ps 25:4)**

## **2. What shall we say about all these?**

{Reflections on the current national and international news events will be mirrored by/in the Word of God to console, direct and challenge (where needed).}


Last Sunday when we expressed a prayer of thanksgiving to God for the World Cup, I cannot help but recall the fears we had, the doubts about our preparations and capabilities and the misrepresentations that was created abroad about our capacity to pull off such an international spectacle. You would recall some of these were expressed in the last newsletters. From hindsight most were mercifully proven to be unfounded. Why did we doubt ourselves and why did some deliberately not give their assistance? Well, we need to learn to trust our own abilities (personal and collective) and not wait for others to decide what is possible and what not beyond our means.

With a 9 out of 10 from the lone struggler and voice in the international wilderness - Mr Blatter- all of a sudden the “*they* will never pull it off” change to “*we* have done it!” and everyone wants to cash in and buy into the new felt confidence and hope for the future. (Even President Obama now reveals that he never doubted South Africa’s capability to host the World Cup)

Afro-pessimism and negative stereotypes about South Africa and Africa were fortunately in the process given a huge dent and this needs to be maintained till its final destruction, so as to break down the irresponsible views that are held and spread about Africa internationally.

I sincerely hope that indeed this will strengthen our unity in the country and that the commitment shown to impress the world can indeed filter through to every level of society and be of benefit there. Hereto we seriously need to give attention to a dark





shadow that is looming over us, that can undo all the good and that is the possibility of xenophobic attacks. This must never be allowed or condoned as these can destroy our current peaceful co-existence. Ill-feelings and revenge can harm us at levels that we cannot fathom now or in the future.

We are called upon by our Creator to show loving kindness to all; to treat the stranger with respect and always apply the golden rule. May we indeed do unto others as we want them to do unto us.

### **3. Joy with the sorrow.**

Indeed it is fitting to give a pat on the back to all South Africans who had contributed to the success of the World Cup. Thanks for those who made it possible by putting their bodies on the line, who were hospitable, who showed restraint, the organizers, supporters who put their hard earned money where their mouths are. You made South Africa great and built a bridge to a better tomorrow! Let us secure this by not going off into xenophobic notions now.

#### **To those whose heart mourn today**

Our Prayer is: *O Lord, You will hear the desires of the weak; You will strengthen their hearts* (Ps.10:17)

We read your power to bless and save

Even in the darkness of the grave


Still more in resurrection light

We read the fullness of your might.

### **4. Chess (nee CHURCH) moves: Bishop to...**

{All the movements of the Bishop (and deans), where they sow, plant, water will be made known so you can pray to God for these ventures at your Prayer groups and during Worship services}





An all-important **Partnership and Property Management meeting** is taking place 16 and 17 July 2010 in Kimberley. These are two burning issues on the agenda of the Bishop who wants to measure what he needs to manage.

On the one hand our properties are in danger due to various reasons. No transparency exist with the utilization thereof, our assets are not insured; rates and taxes are not up to date; properties are not maintained according to the Constitutional directions, etc. Our properties are also underutilized in the sense that they are not income generating as can be possible. All this, the Bishop wants to rectify when an Assets-Property Register come to its rightful place. This will be one of the goals of the meeting.

On the other hand, our Partnerships sometime *also* do not operate at optimal level. The who, how, what answers are sometimes kept secret for various reasons or just neglected robbing us of growth and vital links. It is envisaged to create a Body that will give attention to these issues, advice the parishes and congregations so that sound communication can be created and maintained. Your constant intercession will be appreciated for these matters.

Likewise please pray for the Young Adults League (YAL) Conference, dates: 30 Jul -1 Aug 2010, Venue: Deo Gloria in Barkly West, about 25km from Kimberley. Cost: R500 per parish; R150 p/p.


## **5. What about... Making a serious investigating into the current state of your parish properties**


How many properties belong to your congregation, parish? Are they really yours, i.e. registered in your name? Do you rent/lease some property? At what price? Can you prevent that property be sold without your consent? How? Are your properties insured? Under what conditions and specifications?

Can your assets not be used more profitable? Could Church buildings not be use far more productively than two hours on a Sunday and then it is locked to gather dust?

What employment opportunities can be created whilst still maintaining the sanctity of the building? Will God be happier if we utilize His house to fulfill and enhance the quality of the lives of our neighbours vis-à-vis keeping the Church spotlessly clean for worship?

How do we utilize vacant lots? We might not have the capital to build on the site, but it can be rented to a member in the meantime. What are the possibility/dangers in starting





a market or organized demarcated street vending on this site whilst you wait to utilize it. Can we define it to someone more entrepreneurial than ourselves?

Not your property, so not your business? Well, you might be right. There are supposed to be pastors and elders looking after these matters. The reality is that sometimes these officials are so involved in their own challenges that your assets are far outside their immediate concerns. So do make sure that things are in order –prevention is better than cure. Your pioneers gave their all to secure what you have today. How do we maintain their efforts and build on it constructively? We only realize what we have when we lost it .Let us learn in advance from others' mistakes!

## **6. Spotlight on...The Synod (again)**


With the world Cup something of the past and everything back to normal, it is time to focus on the forthcoming **Synod sitting at Kings Haven in Bloemfontein, 7-12 August**. Is your Synod delegate prepared for the deliberations? Does he/she know the background to the theme? Did you have time to give attention to the theme? What are the other relevant themes you want to see addressed at the Synod?

I suggested that you bring the congregational or better parish council together to have a discussion on the state of our morality in South Africa, your parish, community, etc. Analyze the situation and come up with deductions where you are at and why. The success of Synod deliberations depend on the vital participation of each delegate. Not only will he/she make informed contributions, but will also will your representative be more free and relax to speak from a position based on consensus in the parish. Please assist your delegate with this mandate.

Likewise try to pre-empt thorny issues, borderline cases. We must not shy away from moral challenges, as they do impact on the parish and her relationships. How do we stay with our Source the Bible and yet accommodate people with views different than ours? Again, do we need to adjust our values to accept persons with different understandings and views than ours? Please pray that the Holy Spirit will guide us through the input of the Bible studies and other lectures to honestly wrestle with the challenges and come up with decisions in the light of the love of Christ.

## **7. What's in it for me?**





Where do you think we go wrong with our properties? What should the Diocesan Property Management Committee give attention to? How can we motivate our members to own and maintain our property proudly? How do we prevent and get out of arrears with the Municipality accounts? Share your stories and suggestions. The **Message Board** is waiting to capture your views and discussions (and on anything else!) Handy spiritual books are up for grabs for the ones posting the most creative views! Your efforts here can just stimulate others (even internationally to embark on your suggestions and enhance the lives of many!)

## **Wishful thinking ....**

*The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams (E. Roosevelt.)*

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