

MA CHADASH?

A WEEKLY NEWSLETTER FOR SHALOM TORAH ACADEMY OF CENTRAL NEW JERSEY

Message From Our Principal

Dear Shalom Families,

Walking down the middle school hallway you can feel the intensity as students are busy preparing for and taking their final exams. They are working so hard and we are very impressed with the effort they are putting into their studying. We are beginning to assess our elementary students on their Chumash skills, using the summative assessments from CoJDS on the Quizalize platform. As our teachers are getting their final grades into Gradelink for all subjects, it is important to ensure that your children are present in school each day so that they do not miss any important reviews or tests.

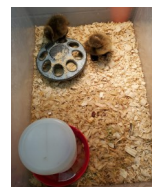
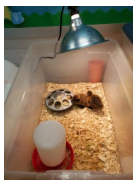
This past Sunday we hosted two very special events. The first was our Sixth Grade Bas Mitzva party in honor of our girls reaching the milestone of becoming Jewish women, responsible for keeping the mitzvos. Mothers, grandmothers, and family members gathered in the beautifully decorated tent to celebrate this occasion together. A highlight of the event was the beautiful, moving performance by our girls with accompanying slideshows. A big thank you to Morah Leiter for leading the performance and making it such a great success!



Later on that evening, our teachers and staff, as well as their spouses were invited to a Staff Appreciation Dinner. Our fantastic teachers are the bedrock of our school, and we are so incredibly blessed to have such dedicated, talented and caring teachers who do so much for each and every child here in our school. We can't thank them enough, but this was definitely a good start! Rabbi Gruman, rabbi of Congregation Toras Emes in East Windsor, addressed the teachers as the guest speaker, with words of inspiration that renewed the sense of mission that we all feel as a part of Shalom Torah. The beautiful music and singing, delicious food, and gorgeous decor all added to the evening.



On another note, we have exciting news! Our ducklings are hatching! Our preschool students are mesmerized as one by one the eggs in the incubator are hatching, and the ducklings are emerging. The chirping, fuzzy ducklings are very popular in our kindergarten classroom, and they have many visitors stopping by to marvel at the wondrous sight.



We are preparing for our last full week of school with a full schedule of exciting activities: our 8th graders will be going on their graduation trip, our school wide Spelling Bee, our Yedios Klalios game show, and our Preschool End-of-Year Event are just some of the highlights on our schedule! Looking forward!

Have a great Shabbos,
Mrs. Hoberman

Parshas at a Glance

Korach Parsha Lesson- *You don't understand me!*

For Year 2 of Parsha Lesson, I will be focusing on one practical middah, character trait, to think about in the week ahead and steps we can take to attain it.

Background

In this week's parsha we have the infamous story of the most serious uprising and rebellion in our history. Right at the beginning of the development of the Jewish people as a nation and a people who received the Torah from Hashem through Moshe, a fabulously wealthy, brilliant, pious and influential person challenged the very tenets of our faith. This man was Korach.

The commentators explain that the reason for Korach's rebellion was honor. Korach, like almost all people, had a desire and lust for honor which drove him to not only lose his life in this world, but in the next world as well. Honor, and the pursuit of it, can drive people to do almost anything.

At the end Korach suffered and his rebellion not only cost him his life and that of his followers and family, but it also cost Korach his eternal life in the world to come. Korach earned himself the ignoble distinction, shared by only a few other Jewish people, of not having any share in the World to come.

Rashi explains that the first thing that Korach did to kickstart his rebellion was to 'take himself aside to be separated from the congregation (of Israel).' Rashi continues to explain that Korach separated himself in order to 'take hold' of division and quarrel- in order to then continue on and challenge Moshe and Aharon's positions.

Question

Why was this necessary? Why couldn't Korach be 'one of the people', yet lead a coup to overthrow the king?

As the sages explained, Korach had a tremendous desire for honor. This desire for honor blinded him to the truth and brought him to truly think that Moshe and Aharon were not really appointed by Hashem and that he, Korach, was really the rightful leader. Why were any other ingredients necessary for Korach to lead his rebellion? It would seem that Korach had all he needed to stage a coup, why this extra step of separating himself from the rest of the Jewish nation?

Answer

So long as a person is *mixed in with society and other people*, a person is checked from many of their own bad character traits and lusts and urges. Only when a person removes themselves from society, and therefore frees themselves of conforming to societal norms and 'derech erez' or the 'way of the land', can a person find expression for their darker, more unseemly parts of their personality.

Korach could not take this gigantic leap into rebellion without first separating himself from the rest of the Jewish nation. He would not have found it within him to actually act on that which he was thinking. Only by first 'self-ostracizing' could he free himself to act out in the horrible way he did and destroy himself and his future in the process.

Lesson

Society has a very VERY powerful influence on the individual. Hashem made the world in this way in order for a person to be able to grow and develop by using the people around them as yardsticks to check their own behavior- besides for the tremendous benefits of being able to do kindnesses, etc. At times, of course, this societal pressure and 'check' can be problematic, but it is also a very powerful tool to enable a person to be *stay away from bad*.

The key is, as our sages so often exhort us, to make sure that we are *mixed in with society and other people*. When people separate themselves, think of themselves as apart from those around them- even if there may be some positives from this- it can open the door for the person to engage in truly negative and destructive behaviors.

First Step

There are two very important steps which are important for one to mix in with those around them:

- 1. A person must be ready to negate their own wants in the face of others.** If a person sees that which they want as the 'be all and end all' they will not be able to have real relationships with those around them. A person must be able to be *על מדותיו*, 'not violate' their own wants, for the wants of others around them. This is the secret to people being able to get along with others or not.
- 2. A person must see the good in those around them.** A person must admire and truly look up to those around them. If a person looks at those around them as being inferior, then there is no reason for them to respect others and no impetus for them to give up what they want for the other. Only by truly respecting and being admirable of those around you can one come to get along with them. Everyone has what to be respectful and admirable of. To the point that Moshe Rabbeinu, the greatest Human being to ever live, had tremendous respect and admiration for everyone he encountered. How much more so can we look up to those that we interact with and admire something about them.

And what are the benefits of good relationships with others? We will be saved from our own mistakes, blind-spots and, sometimes fatal, flaws.

Wishing you a wonderful Shabbos!

Rabbi Eli Meir Kramer

A Highlight from our Judaic Studies Department

Morah Esther Berliner and 3rd grade

The third graders of Shalom Torah Academy had a major siyum to celebrate their completion of Parshas Toldos. The students learned in depth about the brachos that our forefather Yaakov received from his father Yitzchak. The brachos that Yitzchak had intended to give to Eisav.

We celebrated with a trip to Lakewood, we had a gala lunch at the Jerusalem2 pizza shop, followed by a meeting with R' Simcha Bunim Cohen and his wife. The rabbi spoke to the students and gave each one a bracha.



A Highlight from Pre-School

Morah Shuly Amsel and Torah Tots

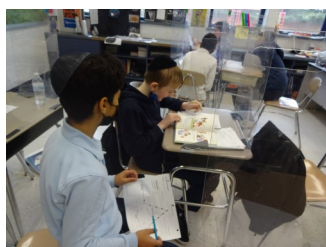
Last week, in Torah Tots we learned about another surprise spring brings. Not only does it bring rain, grass, green leaves and beautiful flowers, it also brings baby animals. We spent the week talking about the baby animals that live on a farm. The children enjoyed making baby cows, horses, sheep, and chicks which we hung up on our Torah Tots Farm bulletin board in our classroom.



A Highlight from our General Studies Department

Miss Chaya Leiter and 7th grade

"The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go." - Dr. Seuss Over the course of this year the 7th and 8th graders have blossomed into strong readers. They have worked on developing skills that good readers implement while reading. Some of these skills include asking questions before, during, and after reading, making predictions, visualizing the text, character analysis, making inferences, and many other important skills. The students used both trade books, including The Wave, The Boy in the Striped Pajamas, and Nothing But the Truth, and classic children's books to practice and improve with these skills. It is my hope that these hard-working students will continue to develop these skills and foster a love of reading. After all... *"The Journey of a Lifetime starts with the Turning of a Page"*!



Thursday, June 17	Early Childhood End of the Year Event at 10:15 am
Monday, June 21	Eighth grade Graduation - Early Dismissal at 1:30 pm
Tuesday, June 22	Last Day of School for Students - Early Dismissal at 1:30 pm
Wednesday, June 23	Last Day of School for Staff, and Staff Lunch

School Lunch Menu

Monday, June 14	Tuesday, June 15	Wednesday, June 16	Thursday, June 17	Friday, June 18
Penne ala Vodka Garden Salad	Scrambled Eggs Garlic Knots Israeli Salad	Pizza Bagel Vegetable Soup Health Salad	Fish Sticks Rice Corn	1 Slice Pizza



Eliya Zohar - June 16



to our PTO for the
wonderful staff gifts and
the delicious iced treats!
They were enjoyed by all!



Help Us Plan!

Register for
the 2021-2022 school year!
The online form is now available
on
Gradelink.com.
Contact Mrs. Rifkin for any
questions or for assistance.

According to the STA parent handbook:

*In case of an absence,
please email:*

attendance@shalomtorah.org

by 10:00am

*To notify the school of
the reason for your
child's absence.*