October 27 2023
12th of Cheshvan, 5784

Shalom Torah Academy
OF CENTRAL NEW JERSEY

Candle lighting: **5:43 pm** (Morganville)
Havdalah at **7:09 pm**

Ma Chadash?

A WEEKLY NEWSLETTER FOR SHALOM TORAH ACADEMY OF CENTRAL NEW JERSEY

A Message from Our Principal

Dear Shalom Families,

The "greatest show on earth" debuted here in Shalom Torah Academy on Monday! The Shalom Simcha Circus came to town!!! Our gym was transformed into a circus wonderland as our students gathered for an incredible assembly which launched our school theme. Marching through the massive balloon arch, each class went to their own table which was decorated and prepared with everything they would need for the activity

Our G.O. Presidents, Adi Klugman and Miriam Sokol, were the ring masters of the assembly as they took to the stage to perform the school song with adorable motions. I am sure your children will be singing this catchy song around the house, so here are the words so that you can learn to sing along:





Simcha Circus Song

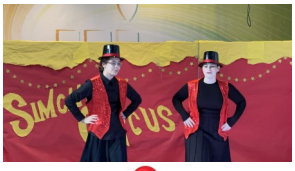
See the smile on my face as the show curtains part
Welcome to the ring, as the magic starts
Stand tall and stand proud, as you walk up on stage
In our performance where you will shine (x2)

Chorus:
Simcha Circus, this year, STA,
It's more than just a show, our smiles will stay
It's the time of our lives, and we'll share it with you
Cuz simcha is a part of every single Jew

Greatest feeling on Earth here in Shalom
All eyes on us as we bring it home
Walk on tightropes, don't look down
Hey, we're flying so high
Now put your hands together, let me hear you- it's showtime!

Ivdu Es Hashem B'simcha, join along
As I'm playing my own part, I am proud to belong,
I can dance, I can sing and be all I can be,
In Shalom Torah it's up to me! (x2)

Chorus





I spoke to the students about simcha. Hashem tells us to serve Him with joy, and being happy is a mitzva! More than anything, we all want to be happy. I asked for ideas from the audience for advice about being happy. The responses included: candy, new toys, vacations, and more. We then talked about how when we get things that we want, we do feel happy, but this happiness is temporary. Real happiness is a different feeling. It is a feeling that is deep inside of us, and feels peaceful and content. It is a feeling that we know in our hearts that Hashem is with us, He loves us, and He takes good care of us. We brought out this idea with a mashal (parable) that compares items that give us temporary happiness and pleasure to Monopoly money. We can collect millions of dollars in Monopoly money, and that is great! However, should we need to actually make a big purchase, all of that Monopoly money is not going to help us get what we want. So too, items that bring fleeting pleasure will never help us achieve the long-lasting genuine feeling of Simcha. This year, every chodesh (Jewish month) we will learn about another aspect of simcha, so that we can achieve this incredible feeling for ourselves.

At our assembly, we then talked about current events and how they relate to all of us. Together we decided to bring simcha to the brave members of the IDF, and we crafted beautiful cards with personal, uplifting messages to send their way. No doubt the simcha that is felt in STA will be making a positive impact as they sense our caring and admiration for all they are doing for Israel and the Jewish People.

Wishing you all a beautiful Shabbos,
Mrs. Hoberman

Lech Lecha- *The Challenge of Failure*

For this year's Parsha Lesson I will be applying the lesson that can be derived from the Dvar Torah to the world as we know it today.

Background

In this week's parsha we are formally and comprehensively introduced to the first of our 'forefathers', Avraham Avinu (*our father). Avraham, famously, was tested by Hashem 10 separate times in order to further develop him and perfect him so that he would merit being the forebear of the great nation of Am Yisroel, the Jewish nation, our nation.*

The second of these tests, according to the Rambam, was that of the famine in the land of Canaan. Hashem commanded Avraham to leave his birthplace, the land that he was familiar with, and living in, and travel to Eretz Yisroel.

Eretz Yisroel at that time was in the process of being conquered by the children of Canaan who was one of the sons of Cham (*the cursed, youngest son of Noach) from the children of Shem, the oldest and most righteous of Noach's sons. Shem had been allotted the land of Eretz Yisroel by Noach after the Mabul (flood). The children of Canaan would come to dominate the land for many hundreds of years, thus the land taking on the name 'Land of Canaan', until the Jewish people, who were descendants of Shem, were redeemed from slavery in the land of Egypt and then took back the land of Eretz Yisroel from the Canaanites.*

Shortly after Avraham arrived in Eretz Yisroel, in accordance with the directive of Hashem, there was a severe famine in the land of Eretz Yisroel. This necessitated Avraham traveling to Egypt, which had a steady supply of water and irrigation thanks to the Nile River, in order to obtain the necessary provisions that would be needed for him and his household to sustain themselves until the famine would pass.

Avraham's having to leave the land of Eretz Yisroel shortly after Hashem commanded him to go there, was, in the view of the Rambam, the second of the '10 tests of Avraham'.

Question

How was this a 'test' of Avraham's righteousness!? To leave his homeland and his family, that is a test. The final and ultimate test, which was the Akeidas Yitzchak (*the binding and near sacrifice of Yitzchak), that was a really challenging and difficult test of faith. But this!?*

That there is a naturally occurring famine in the land which necessitated Avraham traveling to Egypt for sustenance? How can this be considered a test of Avraham's faith? And not only a test, but such a significant test so as to be counted as one of the legendary '10 tests of Avraham.'

Answer

Chazal (*great Rabbis who pass down the Oral Torah) explain that this test challenged Avraham's faith on a few different levels:*

- Hashem had commanded Avraham to travel to Eretz Yisroel.
- Hashem had guaranteed Avraham that he would be blessed materially.
- Hashem had guaranteed Avraham that through him the nations of the world would be blessed.

And now, with these thoughts going through his head, Avraham must now leave this land and travel to Egypt for some sustenance. What was so challenging about this was whether or not Avraham would continue to have faith in Hashem and whether or not Avraham would remain steadfastly committed to the ideals of the Torah, of Hashem, or would Avraham waiver and begin to have second thoughts.

Hashem had commanded Avraham to travel to Eretz Yisroel- and that seems to have been a particularly foolish decision, in hindsight. Hashem had guaranteed that Avraham would be blessed- and now Avraham did not have sufficient food for his family and needed to travel elsewhere in order to obtain the needed provisions. Hashem had guaranteed Avraham that through him, the nations of the world would be blessed- and shortly after Avraham's arrival there is a famine which caused much suffering to the people of Eretz Yisroel.

But nevertheless, Avraham did not think twice. Avraham did not question the ways of Hashem and Avraham forged on and did what he needed to do to provide for his family, but remained committed to Hashem and devoted to upholding the Torah as he had before.

This is a real eye opener to the challenge of 'lack of success' or hardship. When someone is doing that which is right, and they are met with challenges, failures, letdowns- things do not seem to be going the right way- there is an innate challenge for one to begin to question whether or not one is doing the right thing. And the more clear it is that the person is doing that which Hashem wants them to do (*like a direct prophecy!), the more challenging failure and hardship will be to one's faith and commitment to Hashem.*

While it is true that following the ways of the Torah, following the 'instruction manual of life', does direct someone to a happy, successful and fulfilling life, it is by no means guaranteed. Why? The calculations and reasoning of Hashem are too far beyond our ability to understand, but as is very often the case, and as it was by Avraham, failure and hardship can be the exact test and challenge that Hashem is sending one's way.

Lesson for our world

This is a particular challenge for the world that we live in today. We live in an extremely materialistic world. And not only is the world that we live in materialistic, we are surrounded by advertising- from both companies selling products and people selling the success and awesomeness of their lives- which makes one feel that ease, success and comfort is a 'right.'

Within such a world, challenges, suffering and hardship are particularly difficult to bear. When you add in the additional factor of the one suffering being someone who is doing that which is right, they are following the Torah and doing that which Hashem wants them to do, and the ones who are attaining success are far less faithful than the one suffering, this can lead the one suffering to doubt the correctness of their faith and commitment and their devotion to Hashem and the Torah.

That person must review the tests of Avraham and appreciate that this type of turmoil and challenge is coming from Hashem who is testing their 'mettle' and pushing them to be resolute in their faith and commitment to the Torah. Hashem is pushing them to be even more committed to that which is right- even in the face of failure and difficulty.

A Highlight from our Judaic Studies Department

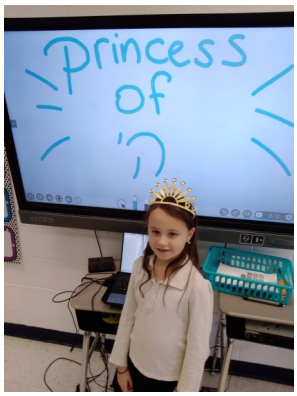
Morah Esther Berliner and the 3rd Grade Class

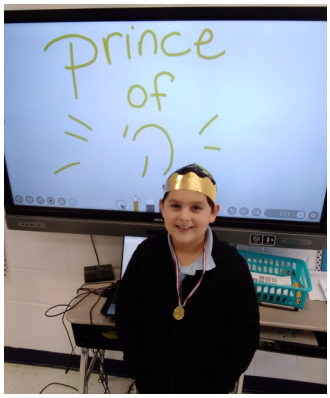
It is so beautiful to see the enthusiasm that the third graders have as they learn Chumash! This week we had a great time learning an important, meaningful message from a group of people called the 'Bnei Ches.' We chanted this special piece of information with motions and with strong voices hoping to teach whoever passed by our classroom. Did you get to hear the announcement? WE ARE PRINCES AND PRINCESSES OF HASHEM.

We are learning about how our forefather Avraham Avinu faced one of the most difficult challenges of his life- his wife's death. We learned how he respectfully and humbly addressed the 'Bnei Ches' asking for a burial spot. He offered to pay whatever money needed to which they responded 'my master, you are a prince of Hashem' etc. We know that we are all children of Hashem and therefore we are princess and princess. And although the world might not yet know that truth we must constantly remind ourselves until the coming of Moshiach.

We had a great time creating crowns using the different word parts in the passuk that we identified and highlighted.

We are b"H getting so good at finding the shorashim and figuring out the meaning of big words.







A Highlight from our Preschool Department

Morah Shoshana Stern and the Nursery Class

Nursery has been having so much fun as we learn about the Parsha each and every week! This week, we learned all about Avraham Avinu. He wondered Who created the beautiful world that we live in and discovered that it was Hashem. He began teaching people about Hashem. He married Sara and together they went to Eretz Cana'an.

We learned that Avraham and Sara didn't have any children. One night, Hashem told Avraham to go out of his house and to look up in the sky. Avraham saw all of the stars. Can you count the stars in the sky? No way! There are way too many. Hashem told Avraham that one day, he will have so many children that you won't be able to count them. Do you know what else you can't count? The sand. We made a special project that showed the two things that we can't count, stars and sand. Do you know who Avraham's children are? Me and you!

We also started learning the Aleph-Bais this week. Did you know that the Torah is written using Aleph-Bais letters? Rabbi Kramer showed us a real Torah in the Shul in our School! Stay tuned for more fun and excitement in Nursery!









Tuesday, November 7	Professional Development Day for Staff - **No Sessions for students**
Monday, November 13	Interim Reports Sent Home
Wednesday, November 22	Preschool Thanksgiving Parade & Street Fair
Thurs.– Fri., November 23,24	Thanksgiving Vacation - **No Sessions**
Wednesday, November 29	Parent Teacher Conferences - **Early Dismissal at 2:45p.m.**
Fri. - Mon., December 8-11	Chanukah Vacaton - **No Sessions**
Wednesday, December 13	Chanukah Mommy and Me: Early Childhood Classes



Binyamin Stamler - October 28

Avraham Arazi - October 31

Levi Kanelsky - November 2

Attendance Policy:

Reporting Student Absences: *If your child will be absent from school, please email attendance by 10:00 am. Include the reason for the absence.*

Dismissal Changes: *To make a change for dismissal, emails must be sent to attendance before 3:00 pm (12:00 pm on Fridays)*

attendance@shalomtorah.org

October/November School Lunch Menu

Monday, 10/30	Tuesday, 10/31	Wednesday, 11/1	Thursday, 11/2	Friday, 11/3
Baked Ziti Garden Salad	Fish Sticks with Rice, Vegetables	Cheese Quesadilla with French Fries	Mac & Cheese Sliced Vegetables	1 Pizza Slice
Monday, 11/6	**Tuesday, 11/7**	**Wednesday, 11/8**	**Thursday, 11/9**	**Friday, 11/10**
Baked Ziti Vegetable Salad	Professional Development Day for Staff **No Sessions for Students**	Chicken Nuggets (vegan), Rice, Sliced Vegetables	French Toast, Scrambles Eggs, Sliced Vegetables	1 Pizza Slice
Monday, 11/13	**Tuesday, 11/14**	**Wednesday, 11/15**	**Thursday, 11/16**	**Friday, 11/17**
Penne ala Vodka (contains no alcohol), Sliced Vegetables	Sicilian Pizza Sliced Vegetables	Falafel Sandwich, Israeli Salad, Veg. Soup	Bagel (choice of Egg Salad, Tuna or Cream Cheese), Veg. Soup, Israeli Salad	1 Pizza Slice