

February 24, 2023
3rd of Adar, 5783



Candle lighting: 5:24 pm (Morganville)
Havdalah at 6:34pm

MA CHADASH?

A WEEKLY NEWSLETTER FOR SHALOM TORAH ACADEMY OF CENTRAL NEW JERSEY

PURIM
Carnival
FRIDAY, MARCH 3, 2023

BRING A COSTUME IN A BAG

**AMAZING
BOOTHS** **TONS OF
FUN**
PRIZES! PRIZES! PRIZES!

Shalom Torah Academy
OF CENTRAL NEW JERSEY

Parsha Lesson

Terumah- Rewards and Incentives

Rabbi Eli Meir Kramer

For this year's Parsha Lesson I will be focusing on a chinuch (parenting/educational) lesson that can be derived from the Dvar Torah.

Background

In this week's Parsha we read about the beginning of the instructions as to how to build the Mishkan (Tabernacle), which was the Temple of Hashem until the building of the Beis Hamikdash, the permanent temple, which would not be built until the days of Shlomo Hamelech (King Solomon) some 350 years later.

The main focal point of the Mishkan, and of the Beis Hamikdash later on, was the Kodesh Hakedoshim (Holy of Holies) which was only entered once a year, on Yom Kippur, and housed the Aron Kodesh (Holy Ark), upon which the presence of Hashem rested. This Ark was built by Betzalel, the manager of the entire project of the building of the Mishkan and its vessels and utensils, and it remained intact and the same throughout the period of the First Beis Hamikdash.

The Gemara tells us that at the end of the First Beis Hamikdash, King Yoshiyahu realized that the Jewish nation was on an almost certain path towards ruin, and the destruction of the Beis Hamikdash was imminent. As such, Yoshiyahu was concerned that the Ark of Hashem should not fall into the hands of whichever nation would conquer Eretz Yisroel (Israel), so he hid the Ark in a place which would remain hidden until the rebuilding of the permanent Third Beis Hamikdash.

The Ark was a rectangular box made of shetim (likely acacia) wood which was then coated, both on the inside and outside, with gold. The Gemara explains that the symbolism of the Ark being coated with gold is that a Talmud Chacham (expert Torah scholar) must be as beautiful on the inside as on the outside.

The commentators explain that this refers to the 'fear of Heaven' that the Torah scholar must have. If a Torah scholar does not have a commensurate level of 'fear of Heaven', the Gemara says, you know that this fellow is not really a Torah scholar. In last year's Parsha Lesson we explored what this means and how to understand that.

Question

Famously, the Sefer HaChinuch (*of unknown authorship, emanating from Spain in the 13th century*) explains in Parshas Bo (mitzvah 16) that the reason why Judaism has such a profound focus on actions is because, contrary to what many believe, actions lead feeling and emotion and determine who and what a person is. Not the other way around. In fact, the Chinuch says, if someone was a completely evil person and devoid of any thought or feeling of goodness, and they forced themselves- even for ulterior motives- to behave properly, they would come to develop thoughts and feelings of goodness and soon become righteous people.

How then, can one understand the existence of an expert Torah scholar who is devoid of 'fear of Heaven'? Wouldn't the mere fact that this person has studied a tremendous amount of Torah- even if it was with ulterior motives- have made this person become righteous? Wouldn't the fact that this person 'seems to be' a great Torah scholar mean that he is acting very much the right way? Why then wouldn't the rule of the Sefer HaChinuch play out, whereby the external behavior lead his internal feelings and emotions and make it that he becomes 'inside and outside' like a Talmud Chacham?

Answer

R' Yechezkal Levenstein (b. 1885 in Warsaw, d. 1974 in Bnei Brak. R' 'Chatzkel' was the Mashgiach or Dean of Students of the Mirrer Yeshiva in Belarus and then later on in Eretz Yisroel) explains in his sefer (book) 'Ohr Yechezkel', that the key word in the Chinuch is that this person's 'spirit was awakened'. Meaning, that there was an initial motivation and inspiration to action for this person to become good or do good. In order for someone who is trying to change himself from the 'outside in' to be successful, there must be an initial inspiration and interest in becoming righteous, in doing the right thing.

If a person is fundamentally driven by their interest in honor or money, or any other ulterior motive- other than doing the will of Hashem, or to do the action in question properly (for its own sake), then the system of the Sefer HaChinuch will not work. Being that the entire purpose of this person's behavior is in order to reach a goal which is not to do the will of Hashem, or to become better at the matter at hand for its own sake, then the person will be developing and growing towards whatever is that fundamental goal- honor, money, jealousy, etc.

If, on the other hand, the person is inspired to become righteous, but they realize that the inspiration will peter out and they will not be able to be successful in really effectuating change, and they therefore use as a 'tool' ulterior motives and tricks to appeal to the animalistic part of the person, that will be successful. Since the initial spark behind this person's journey towards righteousness was coming from a place of wanting to be better, therefore the actions he does afterwards are all to further this goal of becoming good and just as a means of getting over the obstacles that are in his path.

A good picture with which to appreciate this difference is as follows: When a child is 'bribed' with the promise of a prize if they would do the kindness of sharing with their friend, they are growing in their interest and appreciation that if you want something good on this world you need to work for it (not a bad lesson), as well as strengthening their interest in prizes and treats. They are NOT going to be developing in their kindness to others! Kindness, in this instance, is merely the tool which is being used to attain that which they really want, which is more prizes and treats!

Chinuch Lesson

How important it is to be cognizant of the way we structure the 'ulterior motives' that we use to motivate ourselves and our children towards behaving the right way. Structured properly, rewards and incentives can be a tremendous tool towards helping us and the children in our care to overcome the human obstacles that stand in the way to accomplishment and growth. Not structured correctly, the rewards and incentives will not accomplish any of the goals we are trying to incentivize- and they may even be counterproductive..

In the words of a famous developmental psychologist, in discussing paying one's child to learn Torah: One needs to structure the rewards and incentives in a way which 'builds in our children a good feeling and helps make learning Torah more pleasant, and not to convey that money is so valuable that it is worthwhile to do something as difficult and painful as learning in order to earn it.'

A Highlight from our Judaic Studies Department

Rabbi Yehuda Friedman and 5/6 Grade Boys

The 5th/6th grade boys are taking it to the next level! The 5th graders have finally begun Gemara and are reading and understanding it beautifully! It is written in a different language (Aramaic) but they're doing great so far. In Chumash, we have been learning some pretty difficult Rashi's and the boys are with it every step of the way. I'm also very proud to say that the boys are reaching new levels in Kriah every week! They are pushing themselves and it's really paying off!



A Highlight from our Pre-School

Morah Nechama Greenwald and the Pre-K Class

In Pre-K we are just finishing up our unit on Brachos. In honor of Tu B'Shevat we learned the brocha of *borie peri ha'eitz*, the brocha that we say on fruit that grows on a tree. Each student brought in a fruit to share with the class. They then created their own fruit person. They were so imaginative. Best of all, they enjoyed the 'fruits' of their labor. All we have to show for their creativity are the pictures.



A Highlight from our Specials Department

Mrs. Sarah Salmansohn

All Ivrit classes are doing excellent work and progressing very nicely. They have been learning many new vocabulary words and are properly constructing Hebrew sentences. They are able to converse in short sentences and write short stories.

Second Gr wrote a story: I love Second Grade-

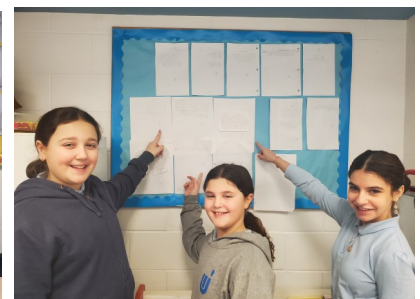
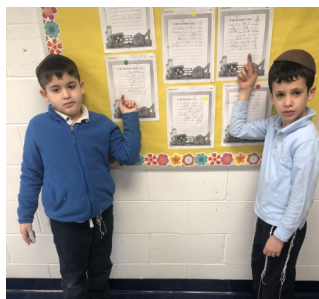
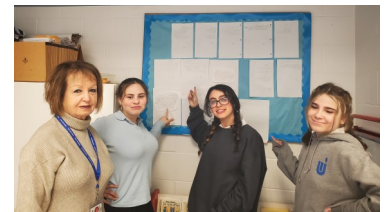
"אני אוהב- אוהבת את כיתה ב"

Fifth and Sixth Grades wrote a poem- seasons of the year

"עונות השנה"

Eighth Grade wrote a story about a trip they took-"טיילתי וראיתי"

I am very proud of their achievements and hope they continue to do well.



Friday, March 3	Purim Carnival
Monday, March 6	Erev Purim - Early Dismissal at 1:30 pm
Tuesday, March 7	Purim - No Sessions
Wednesday, March 8	Shushan Purim - Delayed Opening at 10:00 am
Tuesday, March 28	Parent Teacher Conferences - 2:45 pm Dismissal
Monday, April 3	Model Seder Day



Mazel Tov Jake Terzo on his Bar Mitzvah!



Mazel Tov to Morah Mazal Uzan on the birth of a baby girl
Mazel Tov to Brocha Greenwald on her engagement to Yisroel Fishman



Chaya Sarah Khaimova - February 19
 Yisroel Dovid Stein - February 21
 Yael Halton - February 23
 Tziporah Frenk - February 25
 Esther Malka Kramer - February 28



Mazel Tov!

Level One:

Daniel Stamler
 Oriyan Levi
 Kayla Clare
 Brooke Visner

Level Two:

Elora Maksumov
 Maor Lasri
 Tziporah Kramer
 Haim Maksumov

Level Three:

Leibel Frenk
 Eyal Levy

Level Four:

Tehilla Lasry



These students passed Level 1

Etamar Haliva

These students passed Level 2

Eitan Mistriel
 Nathanel Ilizirov
 Aaron Baruchov

These Students Passed Level 3

Ruby Rozenberg
 Gabe Topas
 Orel Itzhaky

February/March School Lunch Menu

Monday, 2/27	Tuesday, 2/28	Wednesday, 3/1	Thursday, 3/2	Friday, 3/3
Baked Ziti & Garden Salad	Fish Sticks with Rice, Vegetables	Bagel (choice of Egg Salad, Tuna or Cream Cheese), Vegetable Soup & Israeli Salad	Rotini in Alfredo Sauce, Split Pea Soup & Vegetables	1 Pizza Slice
Monday, 3/6	Tuesday, 3/7	Wednesday, 3/8	Thursday, 3/9	Friday, 3/10
Mac & Cheese, Sliced Veg. Early Dismissal at 1:30pm	No School Purim	Delayed opening at 10:00am Fish Sticks with Rice, Veg.	Scrambled Eggs, Garlic Knots, Veg. Soup, Israeli Salad	1 Pizza Slice