

January 5, 2024
24th of Teves, 5784



Candle lighting: 4:27 pm (Morganville)
Havdalah at 5:36 pm

MA CHADASH?

A WEEKLY NEWSLETTER FOR SHALOM TORAH ACADEMY OF CENTRAL NEW JERSEY

Next Week!

INVITING ALL MOTHERS,
GRANDMOTHERS, FAMILY AND FRIENDS
OF STUDENTS GRADES K-8
TO OUR ANNUAL

MOTHER-DAUGHTER MELAVA MALKA

MUSICAL PERFORMANCE
"ONE NATION, ONE HEART"

♥

DAIRY BUFFET

♥

MOTZAEI SHABBOS
JAN 13 | 8 PM

♥

FOR WOMEN ONLY
\$18 PER PERSON

♥

RSVP: OFFICE@SHALOMTORAH.ORG



Shemos- Rebuke

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

At the beginning of this week's parsha, the Torah lists all of the sons of Yakov. The commentators explain that this is to highlight the fact that even though Yakov had so many sons, and they were all quite different from each other, nevertheless they were all righteous. In fact, they were so righteous that they became the 12 tribes of the Jewish nation.

To contrast Avraham, Yitzchak, Dovid Hamelech all had children who were wicked and strayed from the path of their righteous parents. Yakov, on the other hand, had a family of strong, independent and unique sons- who were all completely righteous.

Rabbeinu Bachya (b. 1255, d. 1340, Zaragoza, Spain), in his introduction to Parshas Shemos, explains that Yakov's secret was that he knew how to properly give rebuke and his sons were worthy and ready recipients of rebuke. Yakov gave rebuke softly, and consistently, with the focus and aim for his rebuke to enter into his sons' hearts.

Why is rebuke so important?

Simply put, one must be able to accept and grapple their errors if they want to live properly. Man was put into the world, frail and prone to error, with a mandate to grow and improve. Someone who cannot accept that they have made mistakes, is someone who cannot grow and improve.

In fact, Rabbeinu Bachya explains, the entirety of the Torah serves to rebuke man and help man in the struggle of this world: the struggle between the spiritual and the physical. It is therefore of profound importance for both the moment and for the child's future that the child learns to accept rebuke, and to learn from it how to improve themselves going forward.

Question

When inspiring one's self towards repentance and change, as we know from many Torah sources, it is most effective to use as powerful emotion as possible- in order to move one's self. A person needs to be moved emotionally in order to improve. And, in fact, the natural reaction of people when rebuking others is to aim for the same incisive, emotional charge.

Why, then, when it comes to rebuke is it the other way around!? Why when rebuking someone else is it important that the rebuke be done softly, calmly and gently- with as little emotion as possible?

Answer

A close reading of Rabbeinu Bachya provides us with the answer. The goal of rebuke is not to move the recipient of our rebuke emotionally, just the opposite- we want there to be as little emotional response to our rebuke as possible. Why?

Because the ultimate goal of rebuke is for one's words of rebuke to 'enter into the heart' of the one receiving the rebuke. The natural reaction to being told that one is doing something wrong is to resist greatly any idea of one's mistakes. When this reaction is provoked, the words of rebuke have no hope of entering into the heart of the one receiving the rebuke.

Rebuke is supposed to only awaken the logical reasoning of the recipient to the error of their ways, and then the recipient themselves must make the choice to change and to act properly. In order for this to happen, rebuke must be done softly and gently.

Lesson for our world

Very often parents and educators confuse 'rebuke', which is supposed to be a tool of education, with controlling the behavior of a child. At times, a child's behavior must be controlled for the safety and well being of the child. If a child is doing something dangerous- playing with fire, running into the street, etc.- then a strong emotional response is called for. In those situations the child must react instinctively and recoil at such a situation in the future.

However, when it comes to making choices and educating children in the proper way to live- emotion, from the parent or teacher, is the undoing and foil for their rebuke to take hold in the hearts of their children. Why? Because the emotion will cause the child's ego to be activated and not allow the child to consider that perhaps they have done something wrong. To educate means to open our children's eyes to wisdom and insight as to how to make the proper choices and to understand where they have erred. The choice as to how to act is theirs and theirs alone- as a human being who has been created in the image of G-d, with free will.

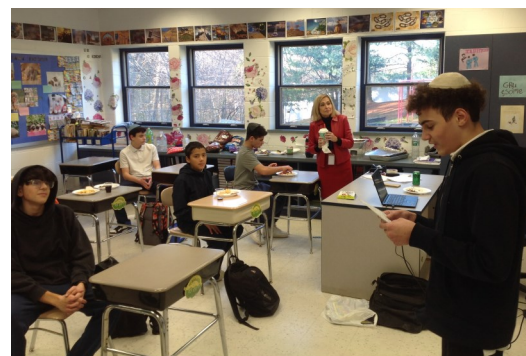
In today's day and age there is much hand-wringing from parents and educators how children 'don't get it' and are totally unreceptive to any amount of criticism. The conclusion that many come to is that education can only be done by cheerleading that which kids get right. While it is good to 'catch them being good', we also need to open our children up to receiving rebuke and consider that they may be wrong. However, the only way this will happen is if it is done softly, firmly- but lovingly, *without* emotion, and consistently.

If we can get it right, we will raise children who know right from wrong, and are able to be ready recipients of rebuke. Our children will have the confidence to look at their behavior, objectively, recognize where they have made mistakes and make the right choices in the future.

A Highlight from our General Studies Department

Rabbi David Rosenthal and the 7/8th Grade Class

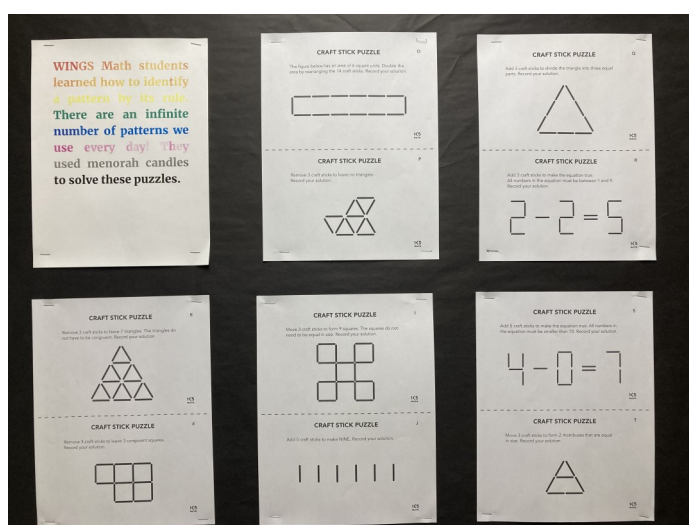
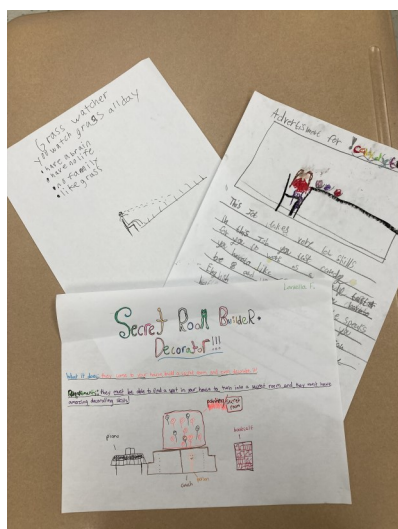
It has been a fun and productive year in ELA. The boys wrote their personal narratives learning descriptive language techniques, how to write dialogue, and other methods of effective communication. We've studied sentence structure, punctuation, and grammar. Recently, we began reading *The Cay*, a novel about an unlikely friendship and not judging others based on appearances. At our Chanukah party, the 8th graders shared *divrei Torah* they wrote themselves. We are looking forward to a productive rest of the year!



A Highlight from our WINGS Department

Mrs. Allison Kaplan

WINGS recommenced after the Yomin Tovim for another exhilarating year! In ELA students learned about unusual & interesting careers including underwater archeologists, astronautical engineers, & cave explorers. Students then stretched their minds to think & create their own distinct careers. In Math we learned about patterns. This includes recognizing them around us, understanding their function, & describing them using a rule. We concluded the unit by solving math puzzles & riddles using trial & error & logic. It was a lot of fun!! We are moving forward in our explorations. In ELA we have begun learning about the solar system. The universe is beyond our comprehension but it's fascinating to study! In Math we are starting probability. We learn how to make predictions given known information. Games are a great example & activity to demonstrate this. The students benefit from improving their critical thinking skills by thinking outside of the box. If you would like to do the activities at home with your child please email me at akaplan@shalomtorah.org.



Saturday Night, January 13	Mother - Daughter Melava Malka Grades K - 8
Monday, January 15	Martin Luther King Day - PD Day for Staff - No Sessions for Students
Saturday Night, January 20	Father - Son Melava Malka Grades K - 8
Tuesday, January 23	Picture Make Up Day
Monday, February 19	Presidents' Day - No Sessions
Wednesday, February 21	First Grade Chumash Celebration at 9:30 am
Wednesday, February 28	Kindergarten Siddur Play



Passed Level 1

Eyal Levy

Aaron Baruchov



Yosef Volovik - January 6
Daniel Gorbachinsky - January 9
Arie Leshinsky - January 9
Isaac Ades - January 10
Ariella Nektalov - January 11

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

We rely on your cooperation to have smooth and safe dismissals.



Mazel tov to Morah Chaya Leiter, and to Rabbi and Mrs. Leiter, on Chaya's engagement to Gedalia Greenfield!

Mazel Tou to Mr. and Mrs. Najar (big brother Sion in 3rd grade) on the birth of baby boy.

January School Lunch Menu

Monday, 1/8	Tuesday, 1/9	Wednesday, 1/10	Thursday, 1/11	Friday, 1/12
Baked Ziti, Sliced Vegetables	Bagel (choice of Egg Salad, Tune or Cream Cheese), Veg. Soup, Israeli Salad	Fish Sticks with Rice, Vegetables	Falafel Snadwich, Israeli Salad, Veg. Soup	1 Pizza Slice
Monday, 1/15	Tuesday, 1/16	Wednesday, 1/17	Thursday, 1/18	Friday, 1/19
Martin Luther King Day In - Service Day for Staff Only	Rotini in Alfredo Sauce, Vegetables	Cheese Quesadilla, French Fries, Sliced Veg.	Potato Knish, Boiled Egg, Split Pea Soup, Israeli Salad	1 Pizza Slice
Monday, 1/22	Tuesday, 1/23	Wednesday, 1/24	Thursday, 1/25	Friday, 1/26
Penne ala Vodka (contains no alcohol), Sliced Veg.	Sicilian Pizza, Sliced Vegetables	Hash Brown Potatoes, Scrambled Eggs, Veg. Soup, Sliced Vegetables	Bagel (choice of Egg Salad, Tune or Cream Cheese), Veg. Soup, Israeli Salad	1 Pizza Slice