November 17, 2023
4th of Kislev, 5784

Shalom Torah Academy
OF CENTRAL NEW JERSEY

Candle lighting: **4:21 pm** (Morganville)
Havdalah at **5:28 pm**

Ma Chadash?

A WEEKLY NEWSLETTER FOR SHALOM TORAH ACADEMY OF CENTRAL NEW JERSEY

A Message from Our Principal

Dear Shalom Families,

What a fantastic week we had in school! We have all settled into our routines, and are deep into learning! Please be aware that interim progress reports have been mailed home. The interim reports give you a window into your child's performance in school. You will find them to be a helpful tool in assessing your child's progress midway throught the first marking period, which gives ample time for improvement, if needed, before report card grades are determined. Parent-Teacher conferences are coming up on November 29th and are an excellent opportunity to discuss your child's progress and to ask about what you can do at home to help your child continue to succeed.

But did you see the gorilla???

Tuesday was Rosh Chodesh, a day we all look forward to! Our Rosh Chodesh Kislev assembly was super exciting, beginning as always with our school song! Shalom's Simcha Circus continues, as we are now focusing on wearing "Rose Colored Glasses" to view the events in our lives with positivity. We discussed the concept of happiness being a choice that is driven by our perceptions. People commonly assume that they will feel happy when things happen to them, or are given to them, and fail to realize that genuine happiness is a choice a person makes, regardless of his circumstances. We saw how the letters of the Hebrew word "b'simcha" can be rearranged to spell "machsava" which means "thoughts". This is one hint that reminds us that happiness is a state of mind! We learned that we notice and see what we are looking out for, and together we took one of the best known experiments in psychology, where we viewed a video of a basketball game and were instructed to count the number of passes that we saw. About half the people who view this famous clip fail to notice the large gorilla that marches around in the middle of the game! After learning that what we choose to notice affects our attitude, we played a super exciting game with a variety of real-world scenarios. We were able to use our rose colored glasses to find the good in each of them!









Next level excitement!

Our Big/Little Sisters program launched this week, as our fourth through eighth grade girls met their big sisters for the first time! With pizza and ice cream, "getting to know you" activities and lots of shmoozing, everyone had an amazing time. Now that the initial introductions were made, the program will continue with a weekly outing for each set of "sisters". The fun times have only just begun!





I am looking forward to greeting all of our preschool parents next Wednesday at our annual Thanksgiving Parade!

Wishing you all a wonderful Shabbos,
Mrs. Hoberman

Parsha Lesson

Toldos- *How you 'ACT' and who you 'ARE'*

Rabbi Eli Meir Kramer

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 have the beginning of two of the great nations and forces of the world: Eisav and Yakov. They are both diametrically opposed to each other, represent two completely different ideas of what life is all about and- uncannily enough- they are identical twin brothers.

Eisav was the forebear of the nation of Edom, generally understood to be Western Europeans: Germans, British, French, and Italians; while Yakov was the father of the Jewish nation. Edom has taught the world that might, economic success and materialism are the key to man's happiness and that being 'redeemed' from a wretched state of impoverishedness and a lacking of material possessions is the ultimate accomplishment and triumph of life.

The Jewish people, on the other hand, have shown the world that knowledge and understanding, intellect and spirituality- are the keys to man's success and redemption. Not as a means to acquire material possessions, that is the bastardized version of the Judeo-Christian world order. But rather the intellectual and spiritual capacity of man being used to grow and improve one's character and behavior, and to attain intellectual and spiritual greatness- for its own sake.

The founders of these two different nations are put on full display in this week's parsha: Eisav acts in a boorish manner in his solely focused mission for materialism. Eisav's interest in the blessings of Yitzchak are only to enable his family's success in materialistic endeavors. Yakov, on the other hand, is concerned about wisdom and character development. Yakov is interested in Yitzchak's blessings as it was understood that these blessings meant the future of Klal Yisroel. These blessings would determine which son would carry on the legacy of Avraham and Yitzchak and through whom the 'light unto the nations' would spring forth.

There are two 'minor' glimpses that we have into the essence of who these two men were:

1. Eisav returns from a day of intense hunting and he is on the verge of death. He sees Yakov cooking red lentil stew and asks for some of that 'red stuff'. It is this crass comment of his that is the reason why his nation is thus dubbed 'Edom' or 'Red'.
2. Yakov approaches his father Yitzchak, with a delicious meal, dressed up as Eisav, in an attempt to take the brachos which had been sold to him by Eisav previously (*for the bowl of 'red stuff'). As Yakov goes about serving his father, Yakov asks his father to '**please**, arise father, and partake'. This was quite uncharacteristic of how Eisav would have spoken and immediately made Yitzchak suspicious and he famously proclaimed 'for the voice is that of Yakov, but the hands are those of Eisav.*

Eisav, ever the boor and uncouth materialistic being, could not talk in a refined way. And Yakov, although dressing and trying to act like Eisav, could not speak as crudely as Eisav would have spoken.

Question

What was wrong with how Eisav spoke? Why does the Torah and Chazal take such issue with this slip of the tongue that he made- while in a state of verging on death and being desperate for food? What is so bad about referring to the soup as 'red stuff'?

And, on the flip side- how could Yakov not make sure to speak in an uncouth fashion like Eisav!? There was too much on the line! As Yakov himself mentioned to Rivkah, if Yitzchak gets upset and discovers the ruse- Yakov will earn himself a curse from his holy father!

How could we read so much into the boorish behavior of Eisav? In this situation, considering the duress he was under, shouldn't he get a pass? And, on the other hand, how can we look at Yakov favorably for his slip of the tongue- it was negligence and dangerous!?

Answer

There are behaviors and actions that a person 'does' and then there is who the person 'is'. Most probably Eisav tried to behave properly and to speak with refinement- especially in the house he lived in! But he just simply couldn't. He was uncouth. On the other hand, when trying to 'act' as Eisav, Yakov undoubtedly spoke as much like Eisav as he could- but he could not help himself in speaking in a refined and more noble fashion, and his true self 'slipped out'.

In fact, our Chazal say, that the true measure of a person is seen 'בכיסו בכעסו ובכוסו', in his money, in his anger and in his drunkenness. These are situations where the regular safeguards and pretensions are cleared aside and the true person emerges.

Eisav, when under duress, spoke as Eisav was. Yakov, in the pressured life and death situation he found himself in, slipped into showing who he truly was.

Lesson for our world

I saw a meme the other day that went as follows:

> '*I can be mean as anything, or sweet as candy. I can be cold as ice, or warm as a bunny. I can as evil as the devil or loyal like a soldier- it all depends on you*.'

The one who shared this no doubt thought that there was wisdom here and that this was something to be proud of. But they couldn't be more mistaken. The sign of a strong, good person- is someone who is fundamentally, deep down, good and strong. NOT someone who is constantly thrown around and 'a slave' of their circumstances and surroundings.

Someone who is only able to act properly when their 'ducks are in a row', is not someone who IS proper. They are someone who knows how to 'act' proper. Someone who is only considerate when they are trying to get something, is not a thoughtful person. Someone who finds themselves concerned about those around them even when they have no needs, that is a thoughtful, giving person. The goal is to become a good person, someone who is fundamentally good. Deep down. Not merely to 'act' like one.

When one does see a glimpse into who they really are, they should not despair, but rather they should take that as their marching orders to improve and develop themselves into people who they are proud of. People who are consistent, strong and in charge of their own destiny and who behave in the way they know to be correct- regardless of the circumstances they find themselves in.


Shalom Torah Academy
OF CENTRAL NEW JERSEY
THANKSGIVING
PARADE & STREET FAIR
PRESCHOOL PARENTS,
PLEASE JOIN US!
Wednesday. November 22, 2023
Torah Tots * Nursery * Pre-K * Kindergarten
2:45pm - 3:45pm
Taking your child home with you after the event?
Email attendance@shalomtorah.org

Wednesday, November 22	Preschool Thanksgiving Parade & Street Fair from 2:45 p.m. - 3:45 p.m.
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 Vacation - **No Sessions**
Wednesday, December 13	Chanukah Mommy and Me: Early Childhood Classes
Wednesday, December 13	First Marking Period Ends
Monday, December 25	Report Cards Available

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



Mazel Tov!

Great job to our students who passed Kriah levels this week!

Level One:
Bella Klagsbrun
Victoria Gorbachincky

Level Two:
Raziela Smekhov
Eyal Levy
Yosef Siller

Level Three:
Ari Klugman
Elior Levy
Aaron Baruhov

Level Four:
Moshe Dovid Stamler

Birthday Parties/Class Celebrations

Small, in-class birthday parties are permitted for students UP TO AND INCLUDING GRADE TWO provided that the classroom teacher is consulted at least *five days* in advance. Any food item brought into the school for a party must be certified as kosher by the symbols below. These items must be in their original sealed package. Please do not send in any items marked "Dairy".

Siblings from other classes are not permitted to join the party as it is disruptive and takes away from the sibling's learning.

Invitations to birthday parties held outside of the school must be sent through regular mail and may not be distributed in Shalom Torah Academy. Please take into consideration the Kashruth and Shabbat convictions of classmates when planning your party as it is very painful for a child to have to be left out. (**Leaving out one or a few individual children from the invitation list is a form of bullying**.) Please keep parties small or include all of your child's classmates. It is strongly suggested that parties not be held on the Sabbath or Jewish holidays.

All foods brought into the school must be PEANUT, TREE -NUT AND SESAME FREE. The only acceptable Kosher symbols are:



Daniel Klugman - November 18

Sareena Berger - November 19

November School Lunch Menu

Monday, 11/20	Tuesday, 11/21	Wednesday, 11/22	Thursday, 11/23	Friday, 11/24
Mac & Cheese Sliced Veg.	Grilled Cheese Sandwich, French Fries, Sliced Veg.	**Thanksgiving Feast**	**Thanksgiving** **No School**	**Thanksgiving** **No School**
Monday, 11/27	**Tuesday, 11/28**	**Wednesday, 11/29**	**Thursday, 11/30**	**Friday, 12/1**
Rotini in Alfredo Sauce, Vegetables	Sicilian Pizza Sliced Vegetables	Fish Sticks with Rice, Vegetables	Potato Knish, Boiled Egg, Split Pea Soup, Israel Salad	1 Pizza Slice