

May 15, 2020
21th of Iyyar, 5780
36th day of the Omer



Candle lighting: 7:49pm (Morganville)
Havdalah at 8:58 pm
Parshas Behar - Bechukosai

MA CHADASH?

A WEEKLY NEWSLETTER FOR SHALOM TORAH ACADEMY OF CENTRAL NEW JERSEY

Dear Shalom Families,

This week's Teacher Appreciation Event was a beautiful expression of the sentiments of admiration and gratitude which have been building in the past weeks of distance learning. Our superb, cut-above teaching staff is truly doing an unparalleled job in these unusual circumstances, and the effort they put in around the clock is inspirational. I know, based on my conversations with so many of you, and the many notes of appreciation that we have been receiving, that you feel the same way.

Our PTO put together a novel and fun way to get together and see one another while showing appreciation to our fantastic teachers. A big thank you to Mrs. Levy and Mrs. Terzo for coordinating and planning the parade and the teacher gifts, and to all of you who came out to show your support!

A sampling of notes from my inbox:

"Our son's teacher page includes such cute videos she made herself- we were just watching one and my child loved it! We really appreciate the hard work she is doing...all my kids are enjoying it!"

"I sit next to my son every day...I've been so impressed by how his Morah adapted to teaching from home so quickly and so well...my son loves his teacher and we couldn't be happier!"

"I wanted to express how very impressed I have been with my daughter's morah over the past few weeks, and how grateful I am that my daughter has had the privilege to be her student.

Having overheard some of her teaching, I have been continually struck by her ability to weave Jewish thought in with almost every reply she gives to students. Her deep love of Hashem and enthusiasm for His Torah also come through so consistently and beautifully, surely penetrating the hearts of her students...."

It is heartwarming and encouraging to see the level of involvement and appreciation our parents have, which is a testament to the high level of importance you place on your child's education.

On another note, we have so much excitement happening in our virtual school. Every couple weeks we have a special edition of Ma Chadash for students (Ma Chadash Jr.) which is emailed directly to your child. If you have not yet taken a look, I encourage you to check it out and update yourself about our projects, contests, and activities.

Have a wonderful Shabbos and a great week ahead,
Mrs. Hoberman

Parsha in a Paragraph

A project of Klal Govoha. Klal Govoha is an organization founded by Ira Zlotowitz in memory of his father, Rabbi Meir Zlotowitz. Check out their website: klalgovoha.org

BEHAR: The laws of Shemittah and Yovel • Selling and redeeming ancestral properties and homes • Helping impoverished Israelites • The Israelite who is sold as a slave • We are slaves of Hashem who took us out of Mitzrayim **BECHUKOSAI:** Reward for following the Torah • The Tochachah, prophecy of destruction • The laws of Arachin and Hekdesh

Pirkei Avos Lesson- Chapter 5

It is customary to study a chapter from the Tractate Avos, or Pirkei Avos, in the weeks in between Pesach and Shavuos. Pirkei Avos are filled with the ethical teachings and wisdom of the great sages of the Mishnah.

Background

In the first Mishnah of this week's chapter, or perek, we learn that the world was created in 10 utterances by the Almighty, Hashem. The Mishnah continues to explain: why is it that Hashem created the world in 10 utterances, why not just one? In order that the punishment for those who transgress the Torah and thereby destroy the world will be that much worse. In addition, in order that those who adhere to the Torah and thereby uphold the world will be rewarded even more.

One of the commentators explains, that what the Mishnah means when it says that one who upholds the Torah upholds the world, refers to the righteous person himself. As we know, one person is likened to the whole world. When this person is doing as the Torah commands, he is improving himself and betters his entire being.

Question

Many other sources in the Torah very clearly and unequivocally say that the fate of the entire world hangs in a balance of the totality of the merits and transgressions of all people. Therefore, these other sources continue, that when someone does a mitzvah or refrains from doing an averiah, sin, he is in fact upholding the entire world!

Why, therefore, would the commentator assert that the Mishnah does not mean its simple and straightforward message!? Being that the simple message of the Mishnah is in fact true, what is compelling this commentator to explain it in a different way?

Answer

Clearly, both explanations are true. It is true that when a person follows the Torah properly he uplifts himself AND the entire world as well. It is also true that a single person is likened to the entire world.

Perhaps, the reason why the commentator felt that the Mishnah is telling us the message about the person himself is because that is the real value of what he did! When an individual does good that others benefit from- the main beneficiary is he himself! It is therefore the main accomplishment of what he did. It is most appropriate to comment on this situation where one bettered himself and the world, that this person has improved himself!

Lesson

The world naturally has a very skewed perspective of what accomplishment is. We focus on the global effects that someone had. How a person's "legacy" is what is most important, and who he was comes in a distant second. This Mishnah is teaching us that that is not true. The good that a person does with others is worthwhile because it benefits others, but it is PRIMARILY worthwhile because of that which he himself has gained by being generous to others.

The proper perspective for a person to have is that when one does that which is correct, by helping others, by "being moser nefesh", giving up from your own life, for some other cause or group, the main beneficiary is the protagonist himself! For someone to do good for others and only come away with the idea that other people benefitted from his efforts is a distortion of reality. When you do good for others- YOU YOURSELF are the main beneficiary!

Wishing you a wonderful Shabbos!

Rabbi Eli Meir Kramer

A Highlight from our Judaic Studies Department

Morah Tirtza Zachai, 1st Grade Class

Kitah Aleph is so excited to have finally started Chumash! We are learning so many new words and it is unbelievable how well we know it. We have so much fun decorating our milim booklet. It is amazing to see the creativity with our limited resources. Congratulations to all of those that have reached 100 points – almost the whole class! Wow!

A Peek into our Preschool

Morah Nechama Greenwald, Pre-K Class

Pre-K has been doing a fantastic job with distance learning. All of the students come on time and ready to daven and learn. With the cooperation of the students and the great effort of the parents, we were able to put together a slideshow. For Sefiras Ha'Omer, we spoke about the importance of treating our friends and family with kindness and respect. Enjoy the show depicting drawings that our students have made and pictures reminding us of our friends and the fun we had together, which we will be'ezras Hashem, return to when it is safe. Until then, stay safe, happy, and healthy.

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1OWV0MIPPRA5N_b5nzDih0HmJaf9vPnBN/view?usp=drive_web

A Highlight from General Studies Department

Mr. David Pavlick, STEM and Computer Class

STEM and Computer assignments have centered on a deeper understanding of who each student is as a Jewish person. As Science becomes more influential throughout society, understanding that the Pesach miracles do not have a scientific explanation - regardless of how hard scientists try to develop one - reinforces Hashem's power in performing miracles. In more modern contexts, students explored the beginnings of the new nation of Israel started by the 66 founding members of Tel Aviv.

Recent classwork is centering on DNA and its role in determining who we are as individuals yet also showing how we are connected to our family. Students learned how to extract DNA from plants and have it clump together so that it is visible, created models of DNA, and are learning how DNA results in Family Traits that connect us to our families while still providing our own unique individuality.



Between now and the end of the school year, students will gain understanding of how Science and Computers are pushing new frontiers, using our DNA along with new technologies to improve our lives. Students will have a life full of amazing new discoveries as humans continue to push beyond today's limits and set new expectations for what is achievable!



Monday, May 25	Memorial Day - No Sessions
Thursday, May 28	Erev Shavous
Friday, May 29	Shavous - No Sessions
Wednesday, June 17	Last Day of School for Students



Tziporah Reines – May 21



We would like to wish our condolences to Mrs. Sara Agarunov, mother of Eli- 3rd grade and Ethan – 1st grade. on the passing of her father.



Please Daven for:
Ruchoma Aidel bas Fraida Breindel

Fun Recipes

Please enjoy these recipes. If you would like to share a recipe in the MaChadash, please email office@shalomtorah.org



S'mores Rugelach

Ingredients

2 sticks unsalted butter at room temperature
8 oz cream cheese at room temperature
¼ cup sugar
¼ tsp salt
2 cups all-purpose flour
2 cup marshmallow fluff
1 cup mini chocolate chips
1 ¼ cup crushed graham cracker crumbs
1 egg beaten with 1 Tbsp water for egg wash

Directions

Cream the butter and cream cheese together in a mixer until light. Add sugar and salt. With the mixer on its lowest speed, add the flour ½ cup at a time until a dough forms.

Place dough onto a well floured surface and shape into a ball. Cut the ball into quarters and wrap each with plastic. Chill in the refrigerator until firm, about 1 hour. If making ahead of time, you can also freeze the dough at this point.

Right before you're ready to take the dough out, prepare the marshmallow filling. Place 2 cups of the marshmallow fluff in a medium size microwavable bowl. Microwave for 10-15 seconds so that the fluff becomes easier to spread.

On a well floured surface, roll each ball out into a 8 inch circle. This dough can be sticky, so sprinkle more flour as necessary. Spread the marshmallow fluff across the dough in a thin layer. Sprinkle ¼ cup of mini chocolate chips and ¼ c crushed graham crackers. Use a pizza cutter to cut the circle into 12 wedges. Start by slicing the circle into quarters and then slice thirds into each quarter to ensure your rugelach will be evenly sized. Roll each wedge up, starting with the wider side.

Place cookies on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Chill for 30 minutes.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Brush each cookie with egg wash and sprinkle with remaining graham cracker crumbs.

Bake 15 to 20 minutes until browned. Let cool on a wire rack and enjoy.



Sweet Ricotta & Strawberry Bourekas Recipe

Ingredients

1 sheet of puff pastry, cut into 3 ½" – 4" squares
¾ cup finely diced strawberries
½ tsp sugar
¾ cup ricotta
1 ½ Tbsp sugar
½ tsp vanilla bean paste or vanilla extract
1 egg
coarse sugar

Directions

Mix the diced strawberries and sugar (1/2 tsp) in a small bowl and allow to sit for 5 minutes. In a separate bowl, combine the ricotta with the sugar (1 ½ tbsp) and the vanilla bean paste.

Prepare an egg wash by whisking the egg with a splash of water. Line a sheet pan with tin foil and coat with a bit of cooking spray.

Fill each square with about 2 teaspoons of ricotta filling and about a teaspoon of strawberries leaving at least a 1/4 " border. Brush some egg wash along the edges of the puff pastry and seal them into triangles. Use a fork to press down along the edges. Brush the tops with egg wash and sprinkle with lots of coarse sugar.

Transfer the bourekas to the prepared sheet pan and place in the freezer for at least 30 minutes. At this point you can transfer them to ziplock bags and keep frozen until you're ready to bake them.

Pre-heat the oven to 400°F and bake until golden brown and flakey, about 18-20 minutes.