



Join the Greater Washington Jewish community at our

# 9th Annual Chinese Auction



*Spring Is In The Air*

**Sunday, February 12, 2012**

**7:00 p.m.**



**Beth Sholom Congregation  
Potomac, MD**



Prize drawings begin at 8:30 p.m.

**Couvert** (includes one complimentary \$10 raffle ticket and one door-prize ticket)  
\$15 per person in advance\*  
\$20 per person at the door

\*To reserve your entrance ticket in advance, call 301-962-8003, ext. 2300.

—Torah School of Greater Washington—

Erev Shabbas Shirah  
Parashas Beshalach  
February 3, 2012  
Licht Bentchen: 5:14 P.M.  
Volume XVIII, Issue 19

Partner Agency of  
The Jewish Federation  
OF GREATER WASHINGTON



Torah School of Greater Washington

**E.S.T.E.R.**

Erev Shabbos "Torah" Events Report

ת"ב

Dear Parents,

Please look at our cover page and fill in the blanks below.

TSGW \_\_\_\_\_ Annual \_\_\_\_\_ Auction  
**Date:** Sunday, \_\_\_\_\_ 12, 2012.  
**Location:** Beth \_\_\_\_\_ in Potomac.  
**Time:** \_\_\_\_\_ P.M.

### Auction APB

We are searching for:

- ✓ Volunteers to *Schlep* "stuff" to Beth Sholom next Friday, February 10.
  - ✓ Volunteers to help set up on the day of the Auction.
  - ✓ Volunteers to staff tables on the night of the Auction.
  - ✓ People to encourage and *Schlep*, if necessary, parents, friends, neighbors, acquaintances, and Mah Jong partners to come to our second largest fundraiser.
- To offer your services, please call Miri Gottlieb  
301-585-3694.

### Top Billing

Once again, the highlight of our week was a *Chag HaChumash*, this time for 1G/1G. We thank Rabbi Moshe Walter for heightening the girls' already high level of excitement. He spoke to our young ladies about each person's special portion (or letter) in the Torah and about the *Simcha* evident on the face of the *Chofetz Chaim* when he opened a *Chumash*. I have read about the *Chofetz Chaim's* interactive style of studying the written Torah. It is said that he showed true joy from the good things, laughed at humorous parts, and truly felt sad at the bad times *Bnei Yisrael* experienced.

After the special moments of receiving *Chumashim*, the girls recited and translated for us the first *Posuk* in *Bereishees*. This was followed by activities in the classroom – together with parents. We

are grateful to Rabbi Malka for coming again to describe and demonstrate the work of a *Sofer*. Many thanks to Mrs. Mendlowitz and to all of you for the *Hilahavus* evident in our youngsters. May the sweetness and excitement of Torah always be "tasted" and felt by these wonderful children, and may we all see continued *Nachas Shel Torah* from them. Wouldn't it be amazing if all of us had the same sparkle in our eyes for each *Posuk* in Torah?!



### Tu B'Shevat/Shabbas Shirah

Next Wednesday is the fifteenth of *Shevat*, and this week is *Shabbas Shirah*. Some classes are bringing

home bird feeders to be put out today before *Shabbos*. The following excerpts from "The Book of Our Heritage" explain the reasons for this *Minhag* and the source for the special day of *Tu B'Shevat*.

The Torah portion which is read on this *Shabbos* contains the account of the manna which sustained Israel in the wilderness. Daily, the Israelites gathered manna in its prescribed measure, and, on Friday, they were instructed to gather a double measure, since no manna would fall on *Shabbos*. We are told, however, that, *on the seventh day, some of the people went forth to gather, but they found none (Shemos 16:27)*. The Rabbis explain that those who went forth to gather the manna on *Shabbos* did so with evil intention, for they knew that the manna would not fall on *Shabbos*, as Moshe had said so. Wanting to discredit Moshe in the eyes of the people, they went out during the night and scattered some of their leftover manna in the fields, intending to gather it in the morning and bring it into the camp before all Israel, hoping that the people would accuse Moshe of deceit and falsehood.

In the morning, they went into the fields to gather the manna, but there was none to be found! Where was the manna which they had scattered? The birds had come and gathered it, vindicating Moshe's words and causing the *Shabbos* to be sanctified among the people. The birds are therefore "deserving" of reward, which is granted to them on the Shabbos when we recount their "righteousness" – Parashas Beshalach.

Others maintain that the birds receive reward for the songs which they voice to G-d when they chirp daily. It is fitting to reward them for their song on the Shabbos when we recall our own song – Shabbos Shirah.

Based upon *Ramban, Sefer Ha Chinuch*, and other *Rishonim* the goal here is not to make the birds feel appreciated. Obviously, they feel nothing. Rather, it is to train ourselves to feel and express *HaKaros HaTov* under all circumstances to all people who benefit us and, of course, to *Hashem*.

It is important to note that we must put the bread out before *Shabbos* – not on *Shabbos* itself (*Mishnah Berurah* 324:11:31).

The 15<sup>th</sup> of *Shevat* is one of the four “First-of-the-Year” (*Rosh Hashanahs*) which each year contains: the first of *Nisan*, the first of *Elul*, the first of *Tishrei* (*Rosh HaShanah*), and the 15<sup>th</sup> of *Shevat*.

The 15<sup>th</sup> of *Shevat* is the *Rosh Hashanah* of trees, with reference to the different tithes which are brought each year, counting towards the seventh, *Shmitah* year. The same applies to the conclusion of the *Orlah* years. Some hold that it also applies to the fruit of the seventh year, so that fruits which begin to ripen before the 15<sup>th</sup> of *Shevat* of the eighth year have the status of fruit of the seventh year. (Fruits are regarded as having begun to ripen from the time of their appearance, but prior to having reached a third of their full size.)

Our sages have designated the 15<sup>th</sup> of *Shevat* as the boundary between one year and another, since most of the rains of the previous year have already fallen. Any new growth of fruit after this day is a result of the blessings of the new year. On the 15<sup>th</sup> of *Shevat*, also, the soil is already saturated with the rains of the previous winter, so that trees newly planted after the 15<sup>th</sup> of *Shevat* are assured of taking firm root and bringing forth fruit.

## **Tu B'Shevat Platters**



Thanks to Aviva Rosen for chairing and to the following for assisting with the *Tu B' Shevat* Platters fundraiser: Becky Langer, Julie Vogel, Esti Graham, Rachel Ravin, Miri Gottlieb, Rachel Robinson, the Rosen children,

and our office staff for taking orders and answering questions.

## **Today's Attachments**

- ✓ Ooroo LaTefillah.



- ✓ Classroom Close-ups by Mrs. Chani Mendlowitz.
- ✓ SOVEYA Newsletters.
- ✓ Chosen Words.
- ✓ Derech Update.

# **PROJECT DERECH**

## **On Wednesday, we started learning:**

Speaking in a soft and pleasant tone to teachers and parents.

This can be difficult to get across because “pleasant is in the ear of the listener”. Lots of examples/ practice/role playing are necessary to crystallize this concept. It is interesting to note that Nachmanides (*Ramban*), in his famous *Igeres* (letter for the Ages), opens with: “Accustom yourself to speak gently to all people at all times.”

Please:

- Read your newly formatted Derech Update.
- Discuss the Derech Update with your children.
- Practice this week's law (as well as all we've already covered) with your youngsters, coming up with various examples and scenarios.
- Then, put the *Halacha* into actual use.
- Send in Kadmah Cards for K-3.



## **On The Horizon**

**Sunday, February 5 –**

✧ 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> *Shiurim*.

✧ Rabbi Samberg's *Chumash* Skills for Adults.

**Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, Feb. 7, 8, and 9 –** Full post-3:30 line-up.

**Wednesday, February 8 –**

✧ Tu B'Shevat.

✧ Nut House pizza. Thanks to all in-house helpers this week.

✧ 4B-6B Berachos Bee – 9:20.

✧ 4G-6G Berachos Bee – 10:30.

✧ 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> Berachos Bowl – 2:10.

**Friday, February 10 –** End of Second Trimester.

**Sunday, February 12 –** Ninth Annual TSGW Chinese Auction.

**Wednesday, February 15 –** Maryland Science Center makes its annual visit.

**Thursday, February 16 –** Read to Succeed deadline.

**Sunday, February 19 –** Erev Presidents' Day – **No Classes.**

**Monday, February 20 –** Presidents' Day – **No Classes.**



**Wednesday, February 22** – Project Ascent visits 5B and 5G.

**Sunday, February 26** – Girls' Choir will have its annual pre-*Purim* performance for the women of the Ring House (1801 East Jefferson St., Rockville) at 10:30 A.M. Our stars should arrive in *Purim* costume by 10:20 A.M.

**Monday, February 27** – 6B to Smithsonian.

**Tuesday, and Wednesday, February 28 and 29** \*  
Evening Parent Teacher Conferences.

\* 2:00 Dismissal both days.

**Monday, March 1** - 10:00 a.m. opening. Day Care will begin at 8:30.

**Monday, March 12** – 6G to Smithsonian.



**We wish a heartfelt *Mazel Tov* to :**

☺ Tamara Jaffe, her parents, Steve and Pauline Jaffe, and her entire family, upon the occasion of her becoming a *Bas Mitzvah*.

☺ Rabbi and Mrs. Malka, upon the occasion of their grandson, Avi Bulman (from South Bend), becoming a *Bar Mitzvah*.

☺ Levi Raichik, his parents, Rabbi Sholom and Mrs. Chana Raichik, his siblings, and his entire family, upon his engagement to Rishi.

☺ Rabbi Reuven and Mrs. Dorit Kasierer and the entire Shames and Kasierer families, upon the birth of a boy.

☺ Mr. Shua Mendlowitz, upon his participation with the Chai Lifeline team in the ING Marathon in Florida. May they continue to be blessed with *Simachos*.

## **PROGRAMS AND MILESTONES**

✧ \$\$ turned in for the Parshathon has risen to 9,015.83.

✧ Thousands and thousands of Chemdas points continue to be accumulated. There are still 101 days to go.

✧ 6B have achieved 10,388 points/minutes of voluntary *Talmud Torah* in the *Masmid Govoha* program.

✧ 5B began their MTT (Maximizing Time for Torah) project this week and reached over 3,200 minutes of out-of-school Torah study.

## **Some Doin's**

❖ Mrs. Kasierer's Second Grades showed their dioramas and gave oral presentations of their research on animals, their habitats, their habits, their unique characteristics, and whether or not they were mammals, vertebrates, carnivores, or omnivores. Included were: bunnies, penguins, kangaroos, frogs, whales, bunches of snakes, gorillas, bats, giraffes, koalas, coyotes,

bears, alligators, and others. The kids really did creative, thorough work.

❖ K, 1B, and 1G P.M. classes had their turns today to see, "Peter and the Wolf." Thanks again to Mrs. Malka and Mrs. Gottlieb for the arrangement and to the following for driving/chaperoning: Mrs. Moses, Mrs. Schwartz, Mrs. Ferneau, Mrs. Rutstein, Mrs. Troy, Mrs. Edinger, Dr. Levin, Mrs. Drang, and Mrs. Shimoff.

❖ Mrs. Jones's 3G performed trickster tales for K and 1. The audiences were very appreciative of the thespian talents to which they were treated.

❖ Echoes of Nature visited 5G/5G/5B to present a program about skeletons. This was in conjunction with their current Science unit.

❖ Yesterday, our teachers participated in Part II of Rabbi Yisroel Meir Rubinfeld's Bully Free School session. Part I was presented in August.

❖ Second Grades are beginning their *Megillas Esther* reading project. (Yes, *Purim* is only 34 days away.)

❖ 4B/4G are into Native Americans and folktales and are writing their own *pourquoi* tales, highlighting the trait of "voice". They're also thrilled about learning spelling rules for common and uncommon suffixes and plurals.

❖ 3B have explored the Fibonacci pattern in math and have applied it to nature. In grammar, they've discovered the "grey area" of nouns. (What's that?)

❖ Lots of great stuff is happening in Computer Classes. Power Points are being created and family tree webs are being designed.

❖ K/K have been making change with pennies, nickels, and dimes. They've also made bird feeders to be placed outside before *Shabbas Shirah*.

❖ First Grades are really into their new study of *Chumash*. In *Bei'ur Tefillah*, they're getting stickers with pictures to remind them of the meaning of each prayer.

❖ 1B/1B have enjoyed playing Rabbi Feldman's "new" game, I Spy *Shoresh*.

❖ Mrs. Kasierer's 2B/2G wrote persuasive letters to Rabbi Charner (which he has yet to see.)

❖ 4G are watching the growth of their "ecosystems in a bottle."

❖ 5B have studied, in *Mishnah*, the origins of reading the *Haftorah*.

❖ In Art, each class has created friendship hands (which are hanging in the halls) to reinforce the school-wide anti-bullying programs.

❖ 6B/6G have had the undeniable pleasure of multiplying fractions with both whole and mixed numbers.

❖ 1B/1B have been making their own maps of their neighborhoods.

❖ Rabbi Lichtenstein's 2B have successfully and enthusiastically begun their *Chazara* program known as "*Hadran Alach*".

**Have a Good *Shabbos!***

*Yitzchak Charne*

**Rabbi Yitzchak Charner  
Headmaster**



"For heaven's sake, you're right! His hands have actually grafted themselves onto the surface of the Playstation™ controls!"

## CLASSROOM CLOSE-UPS

Volume VIII, Issue 14  
Mrs. Chani Mendlowitz

February 5, 2012

Although curriculum requirements are the basis for our daily schedule, there is so much other learning within our day which falls outside of the standard curriculum. I asked my First Grade girls to share with me some of the things they feel fall into this category and I would like to share their insights along with my own.

After davening, we spend time discussing a series of books about feelings. We read stories about the feelings of Avi and then discuss times when we have experienced these feelings. We also incorporate the correct way to behave when we have these emotions. Many amazing ideas come from the girls, and I hope they internalize some of what they hear. We continue to read the book about “Mommy’s feelings”. We include concepts such as: just because a Mommy may be upset, doesn’t mean she doesn’t love us! When discussing what to do if a Mommy is very busy, one of the girls responded - just help her!! What Nachas! Once this series is complete, we will continue with the children’s “Amen” book. It is wonderful to watch the girls thirst to hear Brochos so that they can have the privilege of responding, Amen!

The Ooroo LaTefillah program has helped us remember to wash Negel Vasser each morning and say Modeh Ani. We have learned how to sit during Tefilla and not to touch our shoes. Over our mid-winter break, we certainly displayed our understanding that Tefilla should occur every day even when we don’t have school. We had an amazing 95% of the class return vacation charts which indicated that the girls had davened every day!!! You may hear some loud voices outside of the bathroom downstairs, as most of our girls remember to stop and recite Asher Yatzar in front of the poster.

The young ladies also mentioned these varied lessons. First grade is a year when we learn to take responsibility for our belongings. We share desks with other girls and know that we must keep our side clean. We learn how to listen for the click when closing markers and glue sticks. We keep all our papers in a folder in our desks and don’t keep spare papers or old lunches in our lockers. We pick up supplies from the floor and help stack chairs at the end of a long day. Special attention is paid to care needed for Seforim, such as our precious Siddurim and Chumashim. We even had a lesson on how to safely open and close our new binders which we just received for learning Chumash.

The Project Derech halachos teach us so much about Derech Eretz, and it is beautiful to see the girls internalize and actualize what they have learned. We have learned to look at every person as a Tzelem Elokim and to show respect to all. Standing up for adults who walk into our classroom has become second nature. We have accumulated many Kadmah cards, as indicated by our thermometers in the main hallway. We just learned the Halacha of showing respect by speaking to adults in third person. Despite the fact that the girls are unaccustomed to speaking this way, I have had many girls attempt it both in class and at home. I even had a Kadmah card that said, “\_\_\_\_\_ asked - Can Mommy please write me a Kadmah card!!” Quite impressive.

We don’t always pay attention to the “incidentals” going on in our school day. However, it is worth recognizing them and noting that these are an *integral* part of teaching our children how to become true Bnos Yisroel!!

## עורו לתפילה

Volume V, Issue 14

February 3, 2012

### Halacha of the week:

During the recitation of *Ke'ri'as Shema* and *Shemoneh Esrei* it is not only forbidden to talk. It is also *Assur* to communicate in any other fashion. This includes any type of motioning, sign language, blinking or winking of the eyes, etc.  
(*Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim* 63:6 and 104:1; see *Mishnah Berurah*)

To continue with our *Mashal* from last week – Yankel and Mr. Important have reached a critical point in the interview. The discussion is quite intense, as the moment of decision has been reached. Yankel suddenly turns away from his prospective employer, looks out the window, and waves to some friends. How will Mr. Important view Yankel's casual and rude behavior vis a vis offering him the job?

Similarly, what will *Hashem's* reaction be to our suddenly losing focus on our *Davening* and motioning to others. Both when we say *Ke'ri'as Shema* and during *Shemoneh Esrei*, we have reached an apex in our *Tefillah*. Will a sudden, disrespectful change of focus, however minor, warrant having our requests answered in positive fashion?

Once again, we must introspect regarding this issue. Hopefully, we will, thereby, “shape up” in our conduct and focus when beseeching *Hashem*.

עורו לתפילה!  
Wake up to prayer!



A Project of the  
Torah School of Greater Washington

# Derech Update

It is a *mitzvah* of *Yirah* to speak in a soft and pleasant voice to our parents or teachers.

... שידבר להם בנחת הלשון רכה וכבוד ואדנות כמדובר למלך. (ספר חרדים פ' ד, א)  
המדבר לאביו ולאמו בקשיות ובעזות ובדרך בזיון ובכעס  
נכנס בדגור 'ארור מקלה אביו ואמו.' (פלא יועץ, אות ד', דבור האסור)



There is an opinion which states that, just as one who raises his hand to hit others is considered a “*Rasha*,” so too, is one who raises his voice (*Hashlomas Hamidos*, ch. 5), especially to a parent or *Rebbe*. Parents should be sensitive to this point, and any signs of disrespect should not be tolerated for the sake of preserving the status of the parental role. For example, in response to a child’s inappropriate tone of voice, a parent might reiterate: “I will listen when you speak softly,” or, “That tone of voice is not acceptable.”

It should also be noted that it is a lack of *Derech Eretz* to yell across distances, for example, from one room to another. Especially when it is one’s parent who is involved, one should be careful to approach the parent personally with the message.

A man may feed his parent pheasant, and yet be driven from the world-to-come; he may chain him to the millstone and merit the world-to-come, thereby (*Kiddushin* 31a,b). How can that be?

A certain young man used to eke out a living by grinding wheat at the millstone. Upon hearing of a royal decree that every miller send one employee to grind wheat at the king’s palace, he became anxious. He feared that, since he had no workers, the soldiers would take his father who lived with him and work him very hard at the palace. So, what did he do? He asked his father to take his place at the millstone while he himself went off to grind for the king.

Years later, after his death, this son was granted a place in *Gan Eden*. Although he had induced his father to grind wheat, he had done so because he had honored him and wanted to spare him pain.

There was another man who met a very different fate even though he used to feed his father fattened hens. Once, the father asked, “Son, where do you get these hens?” The son barked, “Eat and keep quiet.”

When the son eventually passed away and his soul came before the Heavenly Court, he was found guilty of not respecting his father. The fine food that he had served his father counted for nothing since it was given with meanness. (*Yerushalmi Kiddushin* 1:7)



(continued on side 2)

✂.....

## Mitzvah Note/Kadmah Card

I reviewed the *halacha* of “speaking in a soft and pleasant voice” with:

(student’s name) \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Parents’ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## **TEST YOUR CHILD!**

- 1. How would you speak in the presence of royalty?**
- 2. Name some occasions when it might be difficult to observe this *Halacha*.**

## **WHAT SHOULD YOU SAY?**

- 1. You are upset because your parent forgot to save you a piece of cake.**
- 2. Your parent is upset with your behavior and raises his/her voice to reprimand you.**
- 3. There is someone at the door (or on the phone) who would like to speak with your parent. Your parent is in another room.**



# chosen words

## Personal Growth

### What It Takes

Some people make it by luck, some by innate ability, and some by sheer determination. Then there are those who don't make it at all.

We hear of children whose learning difficulties marginalize them and turn them off to learning. Then we hear of talmidei chachomim who have started out with the exact same challenges. We know of people who are always on a diet, but never lose a pound. And we see others who reach a healthy weight and stay there. We read studies that explain why children from poor neighborhoods have trouble in school. Then we read of a breakthrough by someone from just such a neighborhood.

We ourselves make endless rounds of resolutions: to be more patient, to guard our tongues, to spend more time with our children, to be more organized, to call a lonely relative more often, to pray with more concentration, to get more sleep, to save more money—even just to floss our teeth every day—and most of them come to naught.

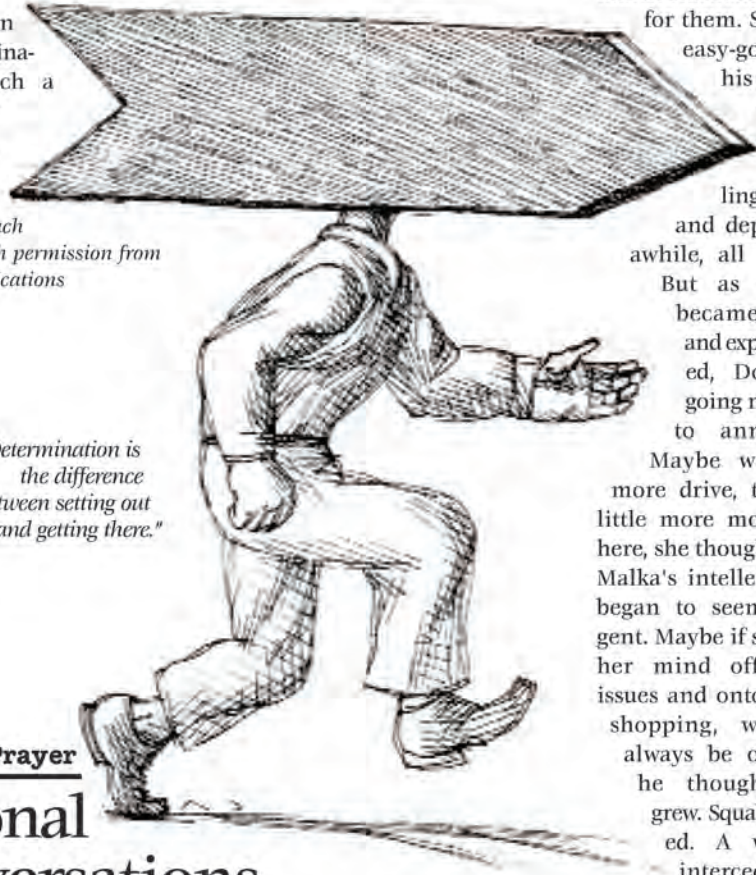
Why is it so very difficult to reach a goal? Why are some people hobbled by the obstacles, while others are able to get there? The Torah teaches us the formula to success by contrasting Avraham and his father, Terach. We learn that Terach had also set out for Canaan, but got only as far as Charan, where he lived out the rest of his life. Avraham, on the other hand, "left ...and came to the land of Canaan," all in one verse. Nothing could intercede between his departure and his arrival, because he embarked with his goal burning in his heart. Whether our goal is practical or spiritual, it's the depth of

our desire to reach it that gives us the power to go the distance. **Shabbos Table Discussion:**

How can you strengthen your determination to reach a desired goal?

*Adapted from "Majesty of Man," by Rabbi A. Henach Leibowitz, with permission from Mesorah Publications*

*"Determination is the difference between setting out and getting there."*



## Effective Prayer

### Personal Conversations

The King called his servants by name. He was the ruler of a vast swath of provinces which were home to hundreds of thousands of subjects. Yet his personal servants, he knew so very well. He loved and appreciated them, and did his best to keep them satisfied and content. The servants knew they were special to the King, beloved individuals with names and faces, lives and concerns.

When we say "Adon Olam" at the beginning and end of each day, we cast ourselves in the role of our King's beloved servants. By declaring Hashem our "adon," our "mas-

## Torah Tools for Personal Growth

Inspiration



Ideas



Excellence



Success

## Better Relationships

### Bits and Peace

When Malka and Dovid met, they each knew in an instant that this was the match Hashem had decreed for them. She loved his easy-going nature, his gentle sense of humor.

He loved her sparkling intelligence and depth. And for awhile, all was golden. But as the couple became a family and expenses mounted, Dovid's easy-going nature started to annoy Malka.

Maybe with a little more drive, there'd be a little more money around here, she thought. To Dovid, Malka's intellectual nature began to seem self-indulgent. Maybe if she could get her mind off the great issues and onto things like shopping, we wouldn't always be out of milk, he thought. Tension grew. Squabbles mounted. A wise friend interceded.

"He's a good, kind man who loves his family," she told Malka. "Why focus on the one negative?"

*continued on back*



**Published for Torah School of Greater Washington by the Chofetz Chaim Heritage Foundation. Sponsored by the Charner family, in appreciation to Hashem for all His brachos**

# Pot Boiler

The *Igeres Haramban* is a succinct and loving letter of advice from the Ramban to his son; it has long been treasured as a guide to developing one's character. This is the second of a series based on its teachings.

You put a pot of cold water on the stove and turn on the flame. For the first five minutes, the water appears virtually unchanged. Anyone who didn't notice the flame underneath would think the water was room-temperature. But finally, the invisible heat builds to the point at which the water begins to steam, then bubble, and then boil.

"A person in a full froth of anger didn't suddenly get that way."

another, then another, each adding a few more degrees of heat to his heart. Only when the final few degrees were applied did the anger boil over into a full-fledged volcano, leaving the person helplessly in the grip of his emotions.

The way to avoid this loss of control, then, is to keep the pot cool. The Ramban tells us how: "Accustom yourself to speak gently to all people at all times."

"At all times" seems like a very tall order. Yet it provides the key to "keeping cool." It means "in every situation"—even the non-stressful ones—speak gently. When nothing is going wrong, when no one is

challenging or provoking you, take charge of your thoughts and words. Keep them non-stressful and positive. Physically relax, smile, untense your face, breathe deeply. All these strategies keep the water cool, so that even when the inevitable heat is applied, the pot won't come to a boil.

*Adapted from "Reaching Your Highest Heights," a taped lecture series on Igeres Haramban by Rabbi Ephraim Wachsman, produced by the Chofetz Chaim Heritage Foundation*

## Bits and Peace

*continued from front*  
"She's a loving, devoted wife," the friend told Dovid. "She's not just her flaw."

Machlokes, dispute, has the root "chelek," which means piece. Sholeim, which means whole, is the root of shalom. The words themselves teach us that dispute comes from perceiving a portion of others, while peace comes from perceiving them in their Divinely designed totality.

**Shabbos Table Discussion:**  
How can you use this understanding of machlokes to get along better with others?

*Adapted from "A Time to Heal," a taped lecture by Rabbi Jonathan Rietti, produced by the Chofetz Chaim Heritage Foundation*

# The Din Torah

Reb Nassan and Reb Pinchas were locked in a dispute. Reb Nassan earned his meager living selling milk in the Old City of Jerusalem. Then, illness forced him to enter a hospital. During his hospital stay, Reb Pinchas had taken over his milk route. Reb Nassan worried about losing his route, yet he knew Reb Pinchas was providing his customers with a needed service.

When Reb Pinchas heard Reb Nassan was home from the hospital, he rushed to his house. He introduced himself, and presented a handful of coins. "I came to bring you your money," he explained. "I knew you had no other income, so I took over your route while you were ill."

Reb Nassan wouldn't take the money, insisting that Reb Pinchas had earned it. Reb Pinchas wouldn't keep it. So, they brought to beis din a machlokes that no doubt set the Heavens dancing with joy.

**Shabbos Table Discussion:**  
Who should keep the money? Why? [Note: For discussion only. Actual halachic decisions should be made by a rav.]

*Adapted from "Visions of Greatness," by Rabbi Yosef Weiss, with permission from CIS Publishing*

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HaRav Shmuel Kanenetsky, shlita, Chairman Rabbinical Board  
Rav Naftoli Jaeger, shlita, Rabbinical Editorial Supervisor  
361 Spook Rock Road  
Suffern, NY 10901

**Chosen Words**  
Editor: Shaindy Appelbaum  
Writer: Chana Nestlebaum  
Graphic Artist: Heidi Ort  
Illustrator: Giora Carmi

## Dedications

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Chosen Words/CCHF  
361 Spook Rock Rd.  
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Email: cwords@cchfusa.org

NEW!

For Educators

(And Everyone with Children in Their Lives)

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THE CHOFETZ CHAIM HERITAGE FOUNDATION

# SWITCHH Newsletter (Soveya Wellness Initiative To Create Healthy Habits)

## DON'T CONFUSE THE MEANS FOR THE END

(from *Ohr Gedalyahu* on חדש שבט - part one)

### Torah thought on health and wellness:

Each month of the Jewish calendar has unique characteristics and opportunities for spiritual change. The current month of *Shvat* is connected with the letter 'צ' which often refers to a tzaddik (righteous person). *Shevat* is also identified with the phrase: "לעיטה 'צ' במליך אות 'צ' בלעיטה." – Crown the letter 'צ' with 'לעיטה'.

This is a very confusing association because the word לעיטה literally means "indulgent eating". It is usually associated with the episode between Esav and Yaakov and the lentil soup - "הלעיטני נא - Pour down my throat some of that very red stuff!" In fact, Esav was willing to sell his eternal birthright for a pot of stew! This term is also referenced in the *gemara* in *Bava Kama* (סט), where it discusses a person who eats from an *orlah* orchard (a tree that has been bearing fruit for less than three years) as, "הלעיטו לרשע וימות - Stuff the wicked one (with the forbidden food) and let him die."

Coming back to the month of *Shvat*, the phrase "Crown the letter 'צ' with לעיטה" is therefore translated as either "Crown the month of *Shevat* with indulgent eating" – or – "Crown the righteous person with indulgent eating." Either way, it is quite confounding.

HaRav Gedalia Schorr explains that the difference between the words "אכילה" (eating) and "לעיטה" is a person's intentions. *HaShem* created the laws of nature so that we must eat in order to nourish ourselves and survive. However, we would not have figured this out on our own. Only because *HaShem* created our appetite and enjoyment for eating do we desire food and, therefore, sustain ourselves. Without this, we would die of hunger.

Consequently, we need to appreciate the gift of תאוה (desire and enjoyment of food) that *HaShem* gave us. But we also must keep it in the proper perspective – as a means toward an end, not an end in and of itself.

We eat exclusively to nourish our bodies in order to perform our *avodas HaShem*. That's the sole reason that the al-Mighty gave us food. *Shlomo HaMelech* writes in *Mishlei* "צדיק אוכל לשובע נפשו - ובטן רשעים תחסר - A tzaddik eats to satisfy his soul, but the stomach of the wicked will (always) be lacking," (יג:כה).



If we eat for the sake of satiation, we can stop when we've satisfied our body's nutritional needs – enjoying the food along the way. If we eat for the sake of indulging our pleasure, however, we will find it very difficult to stop – often eating to excess.

Therein lies the definition of "לעיטה" (indulgent eating) - mistaking the means for the ends. And that, HaRav Schorr writes, helps us properly translate the phrase "Crown the letter 'צ' with לעיטה". It should really be understood as "Crown the letter 'צ' over לעיטה". Allow righteousness to rule over eating – a *tzaddik* steers his desires toward a greater purpose instead of allowing them to rule over him.

We see this connection specifically to the month of *Shevat*, which is the New Year for fruit-bearing trees. Our *Tu B'Shvat Seder* is an appreciation of the wonderful and healthy gifts of nourishment which *HaShem* provides for us, as well as a rectification for the world's first transgression, with Adam and Chava and the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. Through proper eating, we have a daily opportunity to correct a part of our soul, so deep and intrinsic that it reaches back into *Gan Eden*. For as HaRav Schorr explains the *Rambam* in *Hilchos Deios*, "אם אדם אוכל כדי לעבוד את ה' - אז גם אכילתו הוא עבודה ה' - If man eats (to nourish his body) in order to serve *HaShem*, then his eating is (itself considered) *avodas HaShem*." Good שבת.

SWITCHH is a coalition of Jewish Day Schools committed to effecting real and lasting changes toward our approach to eating and nutrition. The Wellness Initiative uses a Torah educational approach combined with practical tools and the latest news and information to inform and empower parents, teachers and students about the obligation to properly care for our bodies by developing and enjoying healthy eating habits. SWITCHH is presented by Soveya, providing nutrition & wellness coaching, educational programs, teleconferences, seminars and newsletters concerning health, nutrition, and obesity prevention.

News, information and practical advice:

## Nothing Changes if Nothing Changes

One in every three adults and one in every six children in the United States is obese, according to the latest figures from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

These statistics, based on data from the 2009-2010 National Health and Nutrition Examination, show little change compared to 12 years ago, although there have been increases in certain demographics, researchers said.

"There was an increase in males overall, especially adult males," said Dr. Cynthia Ogden, an epidemiologist and branch chief at the CDC's National Center for Health Statistics. Ogden led the study along with Dr. Katherine Flegal, senior research scientist, and other colleagues at the CDC in Hyattsville, MD.

"It's important to track obesity, because we know that it's related to certain types of cancer, type 2 diabetes and heart disease," Ogden said. "It really is linked to many chronic health conditions in children and adults."

## Does Healthy Food Really Cost More?

It's a myth that healthier, whole, unprocessed foods always cost more. An individual apple costs anywhere from 25 cents to 75 cents. Less in bulk. A candy bar costs 75 cents to a dollar, and that's the smallest kind. The apple has lots of nutrients, such as vitamin C, and fiber. The candy bar is only fat and sugar, no nutritional value whatsoever.



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The apple has approximately 80 calories and no fat. The candy bar has approximately 300 calories and 13 grams of fat. The apple will give you long lasting energy and help you feel full from the fiber. The candy bar gives a quick rush of energy, but then gets you in a slump soon after. Do the math!



Quick tip toward better health:

## Variety is the Spice of Life – and Health

Experiment in the kitchen. Variety is the spice life -- it's also a great strategy for sticking to your meal plan. Trying different recipes will keep your weight-loss efforts from getting boring.

And you don't necessarily have to forsake your old favorites simply because you're dieting. A little experimentation will help you find ways to enjoy your favorites while reducing sugar, calories and fat.

The beauty of a new recipe is the new discoveries you'll make about seasonings and techniques you can apply to other dishes.

Easy & Healthy

### RECIPE CORNER



## Potato-Zucchini Soup

**Ingredients:** 3 sweet onions, diced; 3 potatoes, cubed; 3 zucchinis, chopped; 3 T. olive oil; 6 C. water; 2 cloves garlic, crushed or 1 tsp. garlic powder; Salt; Black pepper



**Directions:** Sauté onion. Add potatoes, zucchini, water and spices to taste. Bring to a boil and then lower to a simmer for one hour. Mash mixture with a potato masher or immersion blender to make soup smoother.

From Soveya's Incredibly Easy & Healthy Cookbook  
(300 no sugar, No flour, recipes – all but a few gluten free & kosher for Pesach)

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## SWITCHH Newsletter (Soveya Wellness Initiative To Create Healthy Habits)

# NO STRINGS ATTACHED

### **Torah thought on health and wellness:**

The first stage of Matan Torah began with the Jewish People leaving Egypt and entering the desert - "ויהי בשלח פרעה את העם - *And it was when Paro sent out the nation.*" The Chumash makes four references to the Jewish People in those two verses (*Shemos* 13, 17-18). The first three times with the rather non-descript title of 'העם - *the nation*', and the fourth with the more direct name, 'Bnei Yisroel' - "וחמשים עלו בני ישראל מארץ מצרים - *And the children of Israel went up v'chamushim' from the land of Egypt.*"

The commentator *Kli Yakar* asks what's different about the verse, "*And the children of Israel went up v'chamushim' from the land of Egypt*" that warrants the name change to *Bnei Yisroel*? Also, how do we accurately translate the word, '*chamushim*'? One definition is, "*to be armed*", as in possessing multiple weapons of battle. If so, asks the *Kli Yakar*, that appears to be a disparaging comment on the nation. Where was their trust in *HaShem* as they left Egypt? Why did they feel the need to stockpile weapons in anticipation of conflict, as if that would save them from defeat? And, the *Kli Yakar* adds, what were the Jewish People doing with sophisticated arms anyway? They weren't students of war, schooled in advanced battle techniques. If anything, a group of newly freed slaves would grab simple sticks and rocks to protect themselves.

Another translation offered for '*chamushim*' is '*one fifth*', meaning only 20% of the Jewish People left Egypt. The remaining 80% didn't want to leave Egypt and were killed in the plague of Darkness (see *Rashi - Shemos* 10, 22). How do we reconcile these disparate translations of the word '*chamushim*' and address the seemingly significant lack of *bitachon* the Jewish People had, necessitating them to collect weapons for protection?

The *Kli Yakar* provides a magnificent answer. True, he says, *Klal Yisroel* were armed - '*v'chamushim*' - but not with swords and shields. They were armed with חמשה חומשי תורה - *the Five Books of the Torah.* But how? They had yet to stand at *Har Sinai* and they hadn't even crossed the *Yam Suf*, only after which they are credited with possessing complete and undivided trust in *HaShem*?



Nevertheless, says the *Kli Yakar*, immediately upon committing to enter the barren desert without questioning how they would survive, they acquired the requisite *emunah* to be called '*Bnei Yisroel*' and no longer just 'העם - *the nation*'. They were armed with the Torah even though they were 50 days from Mount Sinai and a week away from *krias yam suf - the splitting of the sea*. They were willing to leave - with no strings attached.

Writes the *Kli Yakar*: "והתחלת הקנין נחשב להם כאילו היו מושרשים בה - *The beginning of a (sincere) acquisition is considered for them as if they are (fully) rooted in it.*"

We make commitments all the time - often to lose weight, eat better and live an overall healthier life style. But those often last but a few days, before the old habits and behavior return with a vengeance. It seems as if it's not *HaShem's* Will for us. We give up, and perhaps conclude that eating a lot is our lot in life.

Or maybe we should honestly ask ourselves, "How resolute is our commitment anyway?" How willing are we to genuinely and completely give up our old ways and make any and all necessary changes needed, no matter how much effort or time required.

Change can sometimes be difficult - but it's never impossible. *HaShem* will always help us if we truly and unconditionally want to help ourselves - with no strings attached. Good שבת.

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# What a Revelation!

"Our ABC Adventure took us to the Nutritious Neighborhood of "N". The undisputed highlight of the week was Rabbi Glaser enthraling the entire grade with his explanation of why it is important to eat nutritious food in order to keep our "engines" running perfectly. He showed us two things that looked SO similar – yet they were SO different. The first was a clementine – and as we know from our own "healthy snack" time, fruits are really "HaShem's candy." The girls were amazed to hear that they contain sugar.

Then Rabbi Glaser showed us another round, orange item – a jawbreaker. It also contains sugar. 'So what,' Rabbi Glaser asked, 'is the difference between the two?' the puzzlement on the girls' faces was priceless. But finally, Racheli raised her hand and said, 'the clementine has healthy sugar and the jawbreaker has un-healthy sugar.'



"What a revelation. HaShem has given us a healthy kind of sugar in the delicious fruits that come in a rainbow of colors to delight our eyes, nose and mouth. 'So why should we eat unhealthy sugar?' Rabbi Glaser asked the girls. With that 'food for thought', Rabbi Glaser gave each girl her own clementine to enjoy for a meaningful and yummy afternoon snack. Wow, thank you Rabbi Glaser!" – Bais Yaakov of Baltimore, Nursery News, parshas Vayera.



1 clementine = 35 calories & 7 grams of healthy sugar



1 jawbreaker = 390 calories & 108 grams of sugar

This recent presentation was one of many SWITCHH programs run in Jewish Day Schools across the country. To date, more than 80 schools have joined the coalition.

"The girls were very motivated by Rabbi Glaser's presentation," said Bais Yaakov teacher Morah Esti. "We're going to try to change the way we eat for today, tomorrow, for the next week, and maybe, who knows for their whole lives."

**Quick tip toward better health:**

## The Greatness of Grapes

Surely you've heard about the health benefits of wine through the grapevine by now. A compound found in wine - a polyphenol called resveratrol -- present in red wine in particular, can reduce heart disease risk and ward off some types of cancers, plus Parkinson's disease. But are grapes just as good? New studies indicate that the majority of red wine's health benefits come from red grapes themselves - the juice, pulp and skins, particularly. Recent studies have proven that eating grapes also can lower blood pressure, colon cancer risk and aid digestion; they also have antimicrobial effects, killing off unhealthy bacteria.



Grapes make a great snack, too. They're rich in fiber, B vitamins, Vitamin C and Vitamin K. A big bunch of grapes is low in calories and tastes sweet, making them a perfect diet food. They're a water-rich food, which means they go a long way in satisfying your appetite, particularly if you're craving something sweet.

However, it may not be a good idea to substitute raisins for grapes. Because they're dried, their sugars become concentrated and more caloric when compared with grapes. You can eat a lot more grapes for fewer calories than a small serving of raisins, which will satisfy your hunger longer. Grab some grapes and enjoy a whole bunch of healthful benefits!

### Easy & Healthy RECIPE CORNER



## Broccoli-Potato Kugel

**Ingredients:** 4 potatoes, shredded; 4 carrots, shredded; 2 lb. frozen chopped broccoli, thawed and drained; 5 eggs; 3/4 C. mayonnaise; 2 T. onion flakes; 1 T. salt



**Directions:** Beat eggs. Add mayonnaise, salt, and onion flakes. Add all vegetables to beaten egg mixture and pour into greased baking dish. Bake at 350°F uncovered for about 45 minutes.

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