

Hebrew Day Institute

לכבוד שבת

L'chvod Shabbat



November 3, 2006



Reading Room With Mrs. R. By Mrs. Rothbard

In honor of
Jewish Book

Month this November, we are launching an exciting reading group program. Mrs. Rothbard invites all interested students to join her in this program.

The first week of each month Mrs. Rothbard and Mrs. Lempert will pick two books for the Reading Room program. One will be for Kindergarten through 3rd Grade students. One will be for 4th through 6th grade students. The books will be listed in the L'chvod.

Mrs. Rothbard will read and write a review of each book to be published in the L'chvod the 2nd or 3rd week of the month.

Students can read the books on their own any time during the month. The Reading Room groups (K -- 3rd grade and 4th -- 6th grade) will meet at lunch time during the 4th week of each month (specific dates and times will be announced) to discuss the book and create projects related to that month's

book.

To kick off the program we are starting with two Jewish books.

K - - 3rd Grade

Why Noah Chose the Dove

by Isaac Bashevis Singer, Eric Carle (Illustrator)

This re-telling of the story of Noah has the animals each praising their own special qualities.

4th - - 6th Grade

Zayda Was a Cowboy, by June Levitt Nislick. **2006 Sydney Taylor Book Awards:** Winner 2006 Notable Children's Books of Jewish Content for Older Readers

The boys aren't sure they want grandpa to move in, until he starts telling them about his lively adventures of immigration from Russia and his time as a cowboy in Texas.

To join the "Reading Room With Mrs. R". please have your child read this month's books during the next 3 weeks.



PTO Corner

By Edith Calem

BABYSITTING

There have been some requests for babysitting during the parent-teacher conferences on Tuesday, November 7th. If you are interested, please let me know the times you need

right away. Then we will see if we can round up some volunteers. If we can work out the arrangements, students should bring homework or material to read and sit quietly.

Please submit your needs

to Edith Calem ASAP. Phone: 301-963-4409 or email: pto@hebrewdayinstitute.org

SCRIP

Scrip in the form of gift cards is a great way to

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Keep in Mind

Early Dismissal Friday

This Friday begins early dismissal. School will close at **2:30 pm on Fridays** from now until April 20.

CLUB ED will close at 4:00 pm on Fridays from now through January.

Field Trips

Please remember to send students to school in their school shirts for ALL field trips.

Calendar

November 6:

Professional Day, no classes for students

November 7:

Parent-Teacher Conferences; Election Day, no classes for students

November 10:

Career Day

November 14:

Restaurant Night at Max's

Standardized Testing

Standardized Testing will be administered in grades 3 and 5 the week of November 27th.

Hanukkah Party

Save the Date

Sunday, Dec. 17th

4:30 - 6:00 pm

School-wide Hanukkah Party

PTO Corner
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raise funds for our school. Scrip is available from Giant, Shaloms, and Snyders. I'll be glad to take orders, buy the scrip and deliver it to you. The gift cards are the

same as cash when you shop at these stores. Please drop off your checks (payable to HDI) at the school office with a note about which stores you want the scrip from.



School Play

By Nancy Carlson

We are all very excited about this year's School Musical. "No Strings Attached" is a musical adaptation of Carlo Collodi's classic "Pinocchio." In this telling of the story of the talking puppet who gets into all kinds of trouble before learning what it truly means to be human, fun dialogue, modern music and a surprise ending combine to create a lively show.

**There will be an organizational meeting for all students with speaking parts on:
Tuesday, November 14 from 3:30 - 4:00 pm.**

Parents are most welcome to join their children at this meeting. We'll talk about the play, and we'll go over expectations and the rehearsal schedule. I'll be happy to answer your questions and I'm looking forward to seeing everyone at this half-hour meeting.

1st Grade Highlights

By Helen Shulman

We started a unit on Community Helpers. We have had several parents come in and volunteer their time to tell us how they contribute to our community.

The students wrote "wh" questions for their spelling homework. They used these questions to interview our

guests.

This month we will be learning about Thanksgiving. We will discuss the history and compare that time period to our lives today. We will be putting on a Thanksgiving play for the school on November 22. We are very excited.

Our reading groups are progressing nicely. Each group has read several stories. We are working on a unit on contractions and we emphasize capitalization and punctuation in our writing.



Kindergarten Highlights

By Helen Shulman

We started the second part of our math program this month. The program is all hands-on and the students not only have a good time in math, but they look forward to it. It is a spiral curriculum that grows over the year and from grade to grade. Each topic is introduced and then reinforced and built upon in units throughout the year. Our current unit teaches math through shapes.

We will be learning all about Thanksgiving this month.

Studying about the pilgrims of long ago will include some fun project and books.

We are drawing to the conclusion of the alphabet now. We know most of our letters and we are having lots of fun now trying to sound out how words are spelled.



Parsha Talk

By Rabbi Philip Pohl (a proud HDI parent)

Parshat Lech Lecha

Torah reading - Genesis 12:1 – 17:27
Haftarah (Prophetic) reading – Isaiah 40:27 – 41:16

Below you will find a lesson based on the Torah portion. I hope you will use this material to enhance your Shabbat study experience. Shabbat Shalom.

This Shabbat (November 4, 2006 – Heshvan 13, 5767) we read Parshat Lech Lecha, the first portion in Sefer Bereshit (the book of Genesis).

The Maharal, which is the acronym for the name of Rabbi Judah Lowe ben Betzalel, the 16th century scholar and leader from Prague, wrote the following in his comment to the beginning of Parshat Lech Lecha:

“In the previous Parsha, which tells us about Noah, the Torah begins by praising him as a righteous and perfect man. Why then doesn't the Torah begin its account of Abraham here, by praising *him* as a righteous and God-fearing man?

The reason why it did not do so is because if it had, it would have implied that the reason Abraham had been chosen by God was because of *that fact*. Then, if sometime in the future the Jews would not be worthy of being God's choice, it would, heaven forbid, mean that the Jews would no longer be the chosen people.”

In other words, according to the Maharal, yes, maybe God chose Abraham and Sarah because of some special qualities they possess. Yet we only hear about those later, and not right away.

Perhaps the Torah specifically doesn't mention these qualities immediately because the reality is that not all of *us* possess those qualities to the same extent as

Abraham and Sarah. If those special *inherent* qualities were the reason why God chose Abraham and Sarah, then we might think that we must necessarily also possess those *inherent* qualities for us to be continually chosen by God.

It seems that the Maharal may be teaching us that the chosen people idea and concept is based not so much upon who we are, as it is upon who we may become. It is determined not necessarily by our present reality as much as it is determined by our future potential.

Noah is immediately referred to as a righteous and perfect man. Yet he was not able to model those characteristics to others.

Abraham may have had many similar qualities, yet we do not learn of them in the beginning of Parshat Lech Lecha. Maybe they took time to develop, and maybe God is teaching us that this is the greater and more worthy model.

The commentary known as the Totza-ot Haim offers the following explanation of the second half of Genesis 12:2 – “...va-avarchecha v'agadlah shemecha, v'heh-yay bracha – and I will bless you, and I will make your name great, and you shall be a blessing - this is a commandment to Abraham (and Sarah) to offer material and spiritual wealth (blessings) to others.”

Abraham and Sarah may or may not have been known as tzaddikim right away, but clearly they were eventually able to show that the right way to find blessing in life is by being willing to share some of their own blessings with others. That is how Abraham and Sarah fulfill their roles as spiritual parents to each and every one of us.



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