



Parsha Talk

By Rabbi Philip Pohl (a proud Hebrew Day Institute parent)

February 1, 2008

It was common during the biblical period for people to “own” slaves. Parshat Mishpatim (this week’s Parasha) informs us of the guidelines which were in place should someone purchase an “Eved Ivri – a Hebrew slave.” After six years of servitude the slave was to be granted freedom. Exodus 21:6 tells us of a ceremony that was to take place should the slave choose to forsake his freedom and stay with his master:

“Then the master will bring him to the judges; he will also bring him to the door, or to the doorpost; and his master will bore his ear through with an awl; and he will serve him for ever.”

Many commentators try to understand the meaning of this ceremony. The commentary known as the “Kli Yakar” asks, “Why should he be brought to the door or the doorpost? It is because the door was opened for him to go free, and he nevertheless refused to go free. He is therefore taken to the door to have his ear pierced.”

Here we learn that the Torah provides an opportunity, a doorway to freedom which is rejected by the slave who wishes to remain with his human master. And so the slave is brought to the doorway to remind him and to publicize that this is a doorway through which this person decides not to cross.

All of us face similar experiences in our own lives on a regular basis. Hashem consistently brings us to new doorways, new opportunities, new thresholds we must cross in our growth as human beings and in our ability to continually improve our servitude to Hashem. Too often, we remain enslaved in our comfort zones. We refuse to move ahead and explore the new opportunity, because it’s frightening, unknown and might even be worse than what we currently experience. Yet, never wishing to move ahead is also a form of slavery. It is an indication that we are serving entities other than the G-d who took our ancestors from slavery to freedom.

While we must be careful to examine and evaluate the doorways, which are before us, we must also realize the consequence of never moving ahead and always just staying right where we are.

How appropriate it is to ponder these thoughts from this week’s Parasha as Hebrew Day Institute decides to move ahead and enter new doorways, creating new opportunities of growth for our children and our entire community.

Shabbat Shalom,

Rabbi Philip Pohl

Upcoming Dates to Remember

School Closed for President’s Day

School will be closed on Friday, February 15th and Monday, February 18th in observance of President’s Day.

Tzedakah of the Month

February is Save a Child’s Heart month. Each child will be given their own tzedakah box and we will welcome the founders of the program on February 8th.

Please send your children to school on Fridays wearing their blue school shirt and remind them to bring their tzedakah!



PTO Corner by Edith Calem

By Edith Calem

PTO announcements:

Max's Night - Tuesday Feb 5th.

Parent coffee - Friday Feb 8th - Please join us after you drop off your child(ren) for coffee and nosh. All parents are welcome!

Barton's candy sale - due Thursday Feb 14th

**PTO February meeting will be on Sunday, February 10th at 9:30 am (previously scheduled for the 3rd)

Volunteer — It's good for your soul!



News from the Admissions Office

Reenrollment forms have been sent home. Please return your forms and tuition deposit as soon as possible. New applications are coming in and we want to reserve your place for next year!

Please contact Renee Salzberg to schedule a visit to our new location. 301-649-5808 or by email at rsalzberg@hebrewdayinstitute.org



Rehearsals for our spring production, "*Everything's Groovy*" will begin on Tuesday, February 12th for students with speaking parts only. Please pick your child(ren) up promptly at 4:45 pm.

Thank you!

BOARD NEWS

Thank you to Marc Hall, Jeff Freedman, Julie Boynton, Joe Gamson, Ruth Newhouse, Laura Torchinsky, Shelley Kline and Edith Calem for having the strength and character to carry out the school's vision. Mazel tov!

**Shabbat Shalom from the Faculty and Staff at
Hebrew Day Institute**



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Candle Lighting Time

February 1st 5:11 pm