

TEAM Spirit

STAR STUDENTS

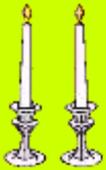
Aliza Bokor – S.S.
 Gabriella Chattah – T.S.
 Shaindel Farmer – S.S.
 Malky Koot – T.S.
 Shani Lesnik – T.S.
 Avital Nightingale – S.S.
 Tziporah Pam – S.S.
 Faige Schloss – T.S.
 Arielle Serwatien – T.S.
 Orly Stauber – T.S.
 Sarah Malkah Zeitouni – T.S.

Yosef Alber – T.S.
 Daniel Bagdadi – T.S.
 Ephraim Berkowitz – S.S.
 Rafi Bisker – S.S.
 Simcha Bistriz – S.S.
 Gershon Goldenberg – S.S.
 Michel Korff – S.S.
 Meir Liberman – T.S.
 Benjamin Mendoza – S.S.
 Aaron Riesel – S.S.
 Ailee Shanes – T.S.

פרשת ויצא

CANDLE LIGHTING

5:11 pm



28TH ANNUAL DINNER & JOURNAL CAMPAIGN

We hope you've all received your ad blanks and will respond as quickly and as generously as possible. Please see the attached Journal Update and make sure that YOUR name is there next week! Don't forget to mark JANUARY 15, 2013 on your calendars and line up your babysitters early!

TEAM PLAYERS

Aryeh Abramson
 David Bisker
 Moshe Uriel Botton
 Yoseph Zundel Dubinsky
 Joseph Feldman
 Daniel Lasry
 Tzvi Lehrer
 Aharon Liberman
 Mordechai Shapiro
 Shmuel Vaiselberg

Leeann Biton
 Tziviva Ahava Botton
 Batsheva Druin
 Elisheva Franklin
 Shira Goldenberg
 Ahuva Grossman
 Sophie Jacobs
 Tehila Klecky
 Adina Kon
 Malky Koot
 Chaviva Peromsik
 Perri Ruck
 Rochel Schloss
 Tamara Yeshurun

OOPS!

Some corrections from last week:

COTY BENARROCH - S.S.

SIMCHA GASSNER - S.S.

TZVI STERN - S.S.

Yasher Koach to all!

READY, SET
....READ!



The Annual
Book Fair

opens this
Monday, November 26 and runs through
Monday, December 3. Please share your time
to help make this year's Book Fair a resounding
success. If you are available to assist, please
call Mrs. Rachel Grossman at 305.651.6541
and/or fill out the attached volunteer schedule.
Please see the attached forms related to the
Fair, including the class visitation schedule.

NICHUM AVEILIM

To Rabbi Eliezer Rubin on the loss of his mother.
Shiva is being observed in Lakewood through
Motzei Shabbos and in North Miami Beach from
Sunday evening until Tuesday morning at the Rubin
home, 17531 N.E. 7 Court. Rabbi Rubin's cellphone
number is 954.802.0283.

MAZEL TOV

To Rabbi and Mrs. Avrami
Danziger and family on the
birth of a boy.

To Mr. and Mrs. Jacob
Bagdadi and family on the
birth of a boy.



MISHNAYOS PROGRAM KICK-OFF BRUNCH/VOLUNTARY MISHMAR



Our annual voluntary Limud Mishnayos
program for boys' grades 3-5 began on *Rosh*
Chodesh Kislev and ends in three months on *Rosh*
Chodesh Adar. Project Sponsorships begin at
\$100 and are still welcome. Kindly contact Rabbi
Baumann.

This Sunday's Kick-Off takes place at
Yeshiva Toras Chaim beginning at 10:00 AM. The
boys, fathers and grandfathers should come
together to Toras Chaim at 10:00 AM. Grades 3
and 5 report to the main Bais Medrash. Grade 4
report to the High School Auditorium. Do not report
to Toras Emes.

To help the boys in grades 4 and 5 earn extra
Mishnayos points, our voluntary Thursday Mishmar
program begins this coming week from 4-5 pm.
Sign up forms were sent home today.

If you are available to help set up for this Sunday's
Kick-Off Brunch, please call Mrs. Esta Rosenberg
at 305.651.0115 and plan to be at Toras Chaim at
9:30 AM.

RAISING G.R.E.A.T. CHILDREN

Rabbi Baumann's weekly Parenting class
takes place every Tuesday,
8:45-9:30 am, in the library.
All are welcome to attend.

This week's topic:
Building the parent/child relationship

ASSEMBLIES

Our *Chodesh Kislev* assemblies were well received as the audiences enjoyed presentations by Mrs. Lefkowitz's fifth grade girls and Rabbi Grossman's second grade boys.

Yasher Koach to Rabbi N. Grossman for his inspiring *Divrei Torah* at the assemblies.

HOT LUNCH PROGRAM

Cycle II of our Hot Lunch program begins on Monday. If you have not ordered for the coming week, please remember to send lunch from home. If you would still like to order for this cycle, please go online to order for the following week.



REFUAH SHELAIMA

Rochel bas Rivka Leah

Ariella Sara bas Elisheva Malka

Yehuda Pinchas ben Asna

Shlomo Meir ben Aviya Nechama

Malka Rivka bas Devorah

Shoshana bas Miriam

Mordechai Yisroel ben Zisa Sara

Chaya Shaina Sara bas Chana Esther

Meir Yitzchok ben Pessel

Rochel Gittel bas Yehudis Etil

Peretz ben Gittel

Yaakov ben Malka

Naftuli ben Rivka

Miriam bas Itzilah Aida

Aharon ben Shayna Golda (Rav Aharon Feldman)



HAVE YOU EVER HEARD OF HOT ICE?

When Danny Breier, from 4B, asked Mrs. Weisskoff, his science teacher, about “hot ice” she said she had never heard of it. Because of his question she researched it, and began making batches of it in her kitchen. All 4th and 5th graders, and 3B were able to see a demonstration of “hot ice” and to learn about exothermic reactions that give off heat. Yes, this solution forms crystals and gets hot. 4B then decided they wanted to see how tall they could make a tower of “hot ice.” They were all given two test tubes of the super-saturated solution --sodium acetate trihydrate, made from vinegar and baking soda. Although they didn’t get the tower as tall as hoped, the efforts were greatly enjoyed. Thanks, Danny, for your question. We all learned something.





TORAS EMES
ACADEMY OF MIAMI
 Samuel Aba & Sisel Klurman
 Elementary School

Rabbi Kalman Baumann
Principal

Rabbi Noam Grossman
Assistant Principal

Dr. Deborah Lerer
Secular Studies Principal

Mrs. Naomi Bloom
Early Childhood Director

Erev Shabbos Parashas Vayeitzei 5773

Dear Parents,

There is a very surprising phrase in this week's Parsha, describing Yaakov Avinu's emotions concerning the seven years he was forced to wait before marrying Rochel. The Pasuk (29:20) tells us "...and it was like a few days in his love for her." In our experience, feelings work exactly the opposite. That which one desires and anticipates deeply, has a seemingly longer wait; time `moves very slowly' in anticipation.

Rav Eliyahu Lopian zt'l, in Lev Eliyahu addresses this question by pointing out that people describe a desire for certain foods as loving the item of food: "I love fish," or "he loves chicken." Strange indeed that the object of one's "love" is slaughtered, cooked, cut up and then devoured! Is that anyway to treat one's beloved!? In truth, the person loves himself and that food item brings him satisfaction. This is a misuse of the term "love."

This common distortion of the term love, is based on a false understanding of the concept of love. People look at a love relationship as one that provides fulfillment for oneself. As Rav Lopian points out, that is simply wrong. True love is about giving, not receiving.

Love in Hebrew, *Ahava*, comes from the word *Hav*, which means to give. A loving relationship is in essence the opportunity to provide for another. Love means focusing more on what I can do for my beloved, and less on what my beloved can do for me.

Rav Yaakov Beifus, Shlita, explains that Yaakov Avinu's relationship with Rochel Imeinu was one based on mutual giving, not taking. The desire for self-fulfillment and self-satisfaction wasn't present, so the usual pull of personal interest wasn't a factor. Time moved quickly, because this was a holy, spiritual bond between them, without the personal agenda.

What do we teach our children about love, self-interest and concern for others? Are we role-models of concern for others, or is there an emphasis on fulfilling our own needs and pursuing our own interests. So much of what a child will become is shaped by parental values and actions during their formative years. Unwittingly, we may be creating self-centered, even selfish people, if we don't constantly emphasize the importance of helping others, of looking out for others' needs and of feeling the pain of others' suffering.

continued

So much of our children's ultimate happiness in life is dependent upon their ability to become givers, concerned for others as much as for themselves, and not be overcome by the drive to fulfill their every desire, right away and totally. Self-indulgent people are among the most miserable in the world. Look at the lives of rich and famous celebrities – behind the smiles is profound unhappiness and depression. When it comes to material desires – *Chazal* tell us one can never satisfy them, therefore, those who focus solely on material pursuits, are by definition, unhappy people.

By attempting to forge a close relationship with our children, we may be overindulging them and giving them too much, creating unrealistic expectations for life. We need to learn to balance our desire to give material things to our beloved children which may be a proper expression of our love for them, with the recognition that proper *chinuch* requires refraining from giving the children too much stuff, too many treats and privileges and too much nourishment of the selfish side of their soul.

The world truly is a narrow bridge, and the world of raising and training children even more so. If we think about these things, focus on our goals for our children and plan our approach to them accordingly, then ***B'Ezras Hashem***, we will have nothing to fear at all.

Best wishes for a loving, giving Shabbos,

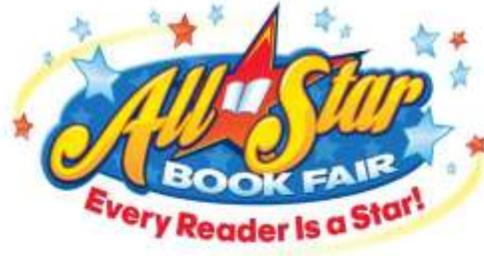
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rabbi Kalman Baumann". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rabbi Kalman Baumann

TORAS EMES ACADEMY OF MIAMI BOOK FAIR
 NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2012
 MONDAY, NOVEMBER 26-MONDAY, DECEMBER 3

CLASS	DAY/TIME	DAY/TIME
1B-L	WEDNESDAY, 10:45 AM	FRIDAY, 10:45 AM-LIB
1B-W	TUESDAY, 9:15 AM	FRIDAY, 10:45 AM-LIB
2B	WEDNESDAY, 9:15 AM	FRIDAY, 9:15 AM-LIB
3B	MONDAY, 1:00 PM	WEDNESDAY, 3:05 PM-LIB
4B	TUESDAY, 12:10 PM-LIB	FRIDAY, 1:05 PM
5B-1	MONDAY, 3:10 PM-LIB	TUESDAY, 1:15 PM
5B-2	TUESDAY, 11:25 AM	THURSDAY, 11:25 AM-LIB
		
1G-C	MONDAY, 9:15 AM	FRIDAY, 10:00 AM-LIB
1G-R	MONDAY, 12:10 PM	FRIDAY, 12:15 PM-LIB
2G	MONDAY, 2:15 PM-LIB	WEDNESDAY, 2:15 PM
3G	TUESDAY, 2:00 PM	WEDNESDAY, 12:10 PM-LIB
4G-1	WEDNESDAY, 1:30 PM	TUESDAY, 2:30 PM-LIB
4G-2	TUESDAY, 10:30 AM-LIB	THURSDAY, 10:00 AM
5G	TUESDAY, 3:05 PM-LIB	THURSDAY, 1:15 PM
		
K-1	MONDAY, 10:00 AM	
K-2	THURSDAY, 12:30 PM	
K-3	THURSDAY, 9:15 AM	

Each class is assigned to attend the Book Fair two times. Once with Ms. Grossman during the regularly scheduled library period or a special period, and an additional time with the classroom (secular studies) teacher.



Dear Parents,

The whole school is excited about our upcoming Book Fair; this year's selection of books, from easy readers, to picture books, to best sellers and more, is something you don't want to. Take the opportunity to light up your young reader's face with a good book.

Book Fair Schedule: Monday, 11/26 - Monday, 12/3 from 8:30am – 4:00pm in the Toras Emes Auditorium

Volunteers are needed and greatly appreciated.

Please call Racheli Grossman at 305-651-6541 or fill out the attached form.

NEW: This year you can start your shopping early!

Our online Book Fair begins 11/13 and runs through the book fair closing date of 12/3.

Shopping online will give you access to the full scholastic line, including titles that may not be available at the book fair. You can also create a wish list for extended family to give them the opportunity to shop as well, Chanukah is just around the corner and books make great presents. All orders will be delivered to the school. The URL is <http://bookfairs.scholastic.com/homepage/torasemes>

Here's how the Book Fair works: During the week, each child will visit the Book Fair twice with his/her class, the first time to make a wish list to bring home for parents and the second time to make purchases. You and your family are invited to shop during our open hours, during your child's class visit or during our special family event on Sunday. We have books for all ages, and we think you'll be pleasantly surprised at the various selections and reasonable prices. Not to mention the benefit to our school library and PTA from the profits of your purchases.

Besides bringing affordable, appropriate books to our school, a goal of our Book Fair is to increase classroom libraries. One way is with the **Teacher Wish List**, which allows you to donate books to your child's classroom in your child's name. Be sure to look for the Classroom Wish List display when you arrive. Donating books to the classroom and school library is even easier with the new **Gift Certificate program**, see gift certificates attached.

Participating with our **1 for Books** program helps the students in our school. All loose change and dollars donated through this program is used to buy books for needy students in our school. Simply fill out an attached slip and send it in with your loose change or dollars, each child bringing in a donation will be entered into a raffle for a reading treasure!

Sincerely,

Rachel F. Breier, Esta Rosenberg, Esther Entin and Racheli Grossman,
Book Fair Chairpersons

It's never too early to think about Pesach! Take this opportunity to clean out your - bookshelves and donate your gently used books. All donated book will be sold in our dollar (or less) section at 100% profit to the PTA, while giving children who are unable to purchase full price books the ability to buy something proudly.

P.S. For your convenience, our Book Fair accepts credit cards and secured debit cards (with Visa or MasterCard logos on them).



Gift Certificate

Help our teachers build classroom libraries

To: _____

From: _____

(Circle amount)

\$1.00 \$5.00 \$10.00

Other _____

Purchase: Fill out Gift Certificate and take to cashier with payment. Fill out bookplate at cashier table and give to cashier. *Thank You!*



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From: _____

(Circle amount)

\$1.00 \$5.00 \$10.00

Other _____

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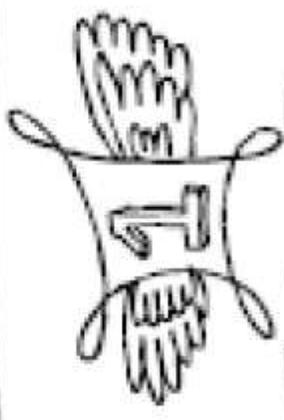
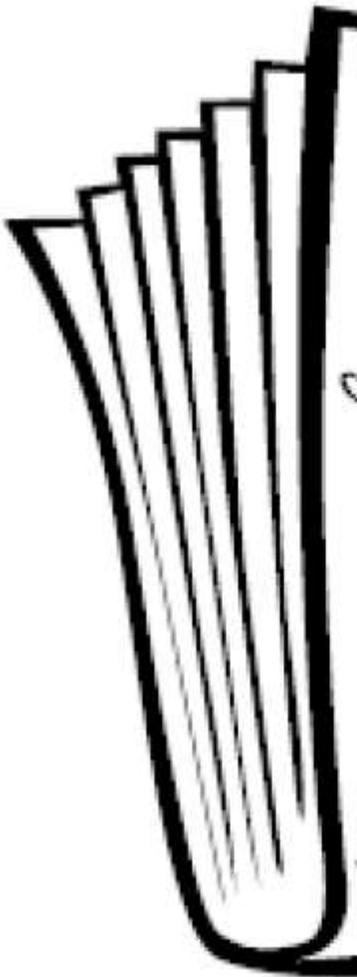


ONE for Books!
\$1 Book Slip

BOOK SLIP

From: _____

Thank you
for supporting
One for Books!



ONE for Books!
**Loose Change
Book Slip**

BOOK SLIP

From: _____

Thank you
for supporting
One for Books!

For more information or volunteering questions please contact: Racheli Grossman 305-651-6541

Enter your full name and phone # for the hours available – Your time is GREATLY appreciated and will help this be the most successful book fair yet!

Scholastic Book Fair Volunteer Schedule

	Date Mon 11/26 or Mon 12/3	Date Tuesday 11/27	Date Wednesday 11/28	Date Thursday 11/29	Date Friday 11/30 or Sun 12/2
Morning 8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.	1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____				
Afternoon 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.	1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____				
Evening 1:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.	1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____				

BOYS' SUMMER REVIEW LUNCHEON 2012



GIRLS' SUMMER REVIEW LUNCHEON 2012



CHODESH KISLEV ASSEMBLIES



***YTC/TEAM Parents Association
Chanukah 5773 / 2012***

Dear Parents,

As we anticipate the arrival of Chanukah, we are proud and honored to express thanks to the teachers and staff of Yeshiva Toras Chaim Toras Emes with a token of our appreciation for the time, energy and effort they devote to our children. Although there are many ways to say "Thank You", we have found that a cash gift is always appreciated.

The suggested gift amount of \$36 is divided amongst the faculty and staff. Additionally, in the High School, it is customary to give your son's main Rebbe a separate gift; the suggested amount is \$36. We realize that this may not be possible for everyone in light of today's economy, and therefore, are appreciative of all expressions of *HaKoras HaTov*.

Please complete the proper section(s) of the [attached form](#) and return it to one of our offices by **Thursday, November 29, 2012. WE ASK THAT YOU SEND CASH WHENEVER POSSIBLE** (please be sure to return the form so we know who you are!). If you must write a check, please make it **payable to CASH**. Please write "**Chanukah**" on the lower left corner of your envelope. We appreciate your prompt reply and wish you all a very happy Chanukah.

Sincerely yours,

Esther Entin & Esta Rosenberg
PTA Presidium

Please complete this section for students attending
EARLY CHILDHOOD, KLURMAN ELEMENTARY & ROHR MIDDLE

FAMILY NAME _____

<u>Student</u>	<u>Grade</u>		
_____	_____	x	\$36
_____	_____	x	\$36
_____	_____	x	\$36
_____	_____	x	\$36
_____	_____	x	\$36
TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED FOR TEAM/ROHR		\$	_____

Please complete this section for students attending
YESHIVA TORAS CHAIM

FAMILY NAME _____

<u>Student</u>	<u>Grade</u>		
_____	_____	x	\$36
_____	_____	x	\$36

PLEASE NOTE

- Please make the gift for your son's rebbe **payable directly to the Rebbe**, and place in a separate (preferably smaller) envelope. **Please label clearly!**
- Please include that envelope in a larger envelope together with your gift for the faculty and staff.

THANK YOU!!

28th Annual Dinner & Journal Campaign

Journal Update – November 22, 2012

Guests of Honor

Dr. & Mrs. Richard & Jody Bennett

Kesser Shem Tov Award

Dr. & Mrs. Stan & Marla Frohlinger

Kesser Torah Award

Mr. & Mrs. Chaim & Samantha Hirsch

*Accepted in Loving Memory of Chaim's Beloved Father
Raphael Mordechai Ben Yitzchak (Marwin) Hirsch 77"ב*

Campaign Goal \$1,000,000 Raised to date \$120,000.00

18,000.00	<i>Anonymous</i>	1,000.00	<i>Mr. & Mrs. Solomon Herzenborn</i>
15,000.00	<i>Dr. & Mrs. Jonathan Rubin</i>	1,000.00	<i>Mr. & Mrs. Isaac Jaroslawicz</i>
10,200.00	<i>Anonymous</i>	1,000.00	<i>Grand Rabbi & Rebbetzin YA Korff</i>
10,000.00	<i>Anonymous</i>	1,000.00	<i>Madison Title Agency, Llc</i>
10,000.00	<i>Anonymous</i>	1,000.00	<i>Mr. & Mrs. Naftali Niman</i>
7,500.00	<i>Anonymous</i>	1,000.00	<i>Dr. & Mrs. Barry Silverman</i>
5,000.00	<i>Anonymous</i>	875.00	<i>Anonymous Foundation</i>
3,600.00	<i>Anonymous</i>	540.00	<i>Anonymous</i>
3,600.00	<i>Mr. & Mrs. Jules Trump</i>	500.00	<i>Mr. & Mrs. Robert Kramer</i>
2,500.00	<i>Mr. & Mrs. Irving Moskowitz</i>	360.00	<i>Dr. & Mrs. Robert Bergida</i>
2,500.00	<i>Rabbi & Mrs. Yisroel Y. Niman</i>	360.00	<i>Mr. & Mrs. Salomon Btesh</i>
1,800.00	<i>Anonymous</i>	360.00	<i>Rabbi & Mrs. Edward Davis</i>
1,800.00	<i>Claridge House Nursing Home</i>	360.00	<i>Mr. & Mrs. Mauricio Gluck</i>
1,800.00	<i>Mr. & Mrs. Yitzi Lebensburger</i>	360.00	<i>Rabbi & Mrs. Akiva Grunblatt</i>
1,800.00	<i>Regents Park Aventura</i>	360.00	<i>Rabbi & Mrs. David Lehrfield</i>
1,800.00	<i>Regents Park of Boca Raton</i>	360.00	<i>Mr. & Mrs. Irvin Urlich</i>
1,500.00	<i>Mr. & Mrs. Chaim Blumberg</i>	250.00	<i>The Hon Judge & Mrs. Robert Grover</i>
1,250.00	<i>Mr. & Mrs. Steven Meiner</i>	250.00	<i>Mr. & Mrs. Aaron Kurlansky</i>
1,000.00	<i>Mr. & Mrs. Yosef Berelowitz</i>	250.00	<i>Pediatric Associates</i>
1,000.00	<i>Mr. David Chait</i>	250.00	<i>Mr. & Mrs. Chesky Schwartz</i>
1,000.00	<i>Mr. & Mrs. Mort Fertel</i>	180.00	<i>Mr. & Mrs. Lloyd Bennett</i>
1,000.00	<i>Dr. & Mrs. Peter Gassner</i>	180.00	<i>Ms. Judie Berger</i>
1,000.00	<i>Mr. James Hellring</i>	180.00	<i>Mr. Yitzchok Brandriss</i>

180.00	Mr. & Mrs. Yehuda Chamani	100.00	Mr. & Mrs. Bernardo Coiffman
180.00	Dr. & Mrs. Wally Fingerer	100.00	Dr. & Mrs. Robert Galbut
180.00	Mrs. Ruth Gibber	100.00	Mr. & Mrs. David Ginsberg
180.00	Dr. & Mrs. Moises Haratz	100.00	Mr. & Mrs. Sholy Greenberger
180.00	Mr. Mordechai Lach	100.00	Mr. & Mrs. Carter Hale
180.00	Rabbi & Mrs. Label Steinhardt	100.00	Mr. & Mrs. Aviel Raab
180.00	Rabbi & Mrs. Ben Sugerman	100.00	Mr. & Mrs. Ivan Sacks
180.00	Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy Tate	100.00	Mr. & Mrs. Isaac Salver
180.00	Mr. & Mrs. Binyomin Yovits	100.00	Dr. & Mrs. Michael Salzhauer
118.00	Mr. & Mrs. Elliot Freedman	100.00	Mr. Henry Schmidt
100.00	Mr. & Mrs. Warren Berney	100.00	Rabbi & Mrs. Gershon Teigman
100.00	Drs. Brilliant, Rothenberg & Meister DDS	414.00	Additional Contributions

We encourage all parents to participate in this campaign by placing their personal ad and by soliciting friends, family and business acquaintances. Personal or solicited ads will be applied towards your Give/Get obligation.

Anyone who raises \$1,000 will receive two complimentary tickets to the Dinner.

We look forward to having all our parents attend the Dinner Tuesday, January 15th at the Treetop Ballroom at Jungle Island. Invitations will follow in the mail.

Have a great Shabbos!

Yeshiva Toras Chaim Toras Emes 28th Annual Scholarship Journal Opportunities

Guests of Honor

Dr. & Mrs.

Richard & Jody Bennett

- ◇ Testimonial Page
- ◇ Benefactor Page

Kesser Shem Tov Award

Dr. & Mrs.

Stan & Marla Frohlinger

- \$25,000
- \$10,000

Kesser Torah Award

Mr. & Mrs.

Chaim & Samantha Hirsch

- ◇ Dedication Page \$18,000
- ◇ Sponsor Page \$ 7,200

(The above ads consist of 2 facing pages)

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Diamond Page \$5,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> Gold Page \$1,800 | <input type="checkbox"/> Deluxe Page \$540 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Emerald Page \$3,600 | <input type="checkbox"/> Silver Page \$1,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> Full Page \$360 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Platinum Page \$2,500 | <input type="checkbox"/> Bronze Page \$ 720 | <input type="checkbox"/> Half Page \$250 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Quarter Page \$180 | <input type="checkbox"/> Listing on Greetings Page \$100 | |

MY AD IS TO READ AS FOLLOWS: PLEASE WRITE MY TEXT FOR ME

DONATION ONLY – NO TEXT NEEDED

(Please use separate sheet for additional text)

NAME OF ADVERTISER _____ ATTN: _____

ADDRESS _____ CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

HOME PHONE _____ BUSINESS PHONE _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS _____ NAME OF FIRM _____

AD SOLICITED BY _____

PAYMENT ENCLOSED PLEASE BILL ME CHARGE MY CREDIT CARD

____ MASTERCARD ____ VISA ____ AMEX ____ DISCOVER

ACCOUNT NUMBER

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

EXPIRATION DATE ____ / ____ BILLING ZIP CODE _____

SIGNATURE _____

AD BY MAIL: 1025 NE MIAMI GARDENS DRIVE, N. MIAMI BEACH, FL 33179

ADS BY FAX: 305-402-0131 ADS BY PHONE: 305-944-5344 X 221

DEADLINE: THURSDAY, JANUARY 3, 2013

chosen words

Personal Growth

Forever Grateful

As Tova held her just-born baby girl in her arms, she felt like the slightly stunned winner of a lottery. The hundred million things that could have gone wrong went right for her, and there Tova was, face to crinkled face with this perfect little person whose open eyes were already taking in the world. Tova felt her heart simply couldn't contain her gratitude to Hashem for this, her fifth child.

She wanted to remember this feeling. More than that, she wanted to bottle it and swallow a dose whenever she felt her gratitude sinking under the burdens of the all-night feedings, the terrible twos, homework tantrums, messes, sibling quarrels and all that lay ahead.

The matriarch Leah teaches us that real gratitude means finding a way to keep alive our awareness of Hashem's kindness. While life's circumstances often cover our initial happiness with layers of gritty reality, it's our job to dust off the grit from time to time and let the joy and gratitude shine through.

The Talmud says "From the time of Creation there was no person who praised Hashem, until Leah came along and praised Him upon the birth of Yehudah." While it's obvious that others before Leah—certainly at least Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov—praised Hashem, Leah's form of gratitude is singled out for special notice. And that is because she endeavored to make her gratitude a permanent feature. The Torah tells us that upon the birth of Yehudah,



her fourth son, she said, "This time I will gratefully praise Hashem." Therefore she called his name Yehudah"



"Gratitude in its highest form is kept constantly alive."

Effective Prayer

Taking It Personally

When Reuven's father began losing his memory to Alzheimer's, Reuven began a new relationship to the brachah in Shemoneh Esrei that asks for wisdom. Suddenly, the very words brought tears to his eyes as he silently begged Hashem to restore his father's mental abilities. It was as if he had never noticed the brachah before.

Anyone who has ever had a personal plight—which is everyone—knows that kavannah, an emotional connection to the words of prayer, comes in a flash-flood when we're talking personal. Many gedolim advise

Torah Tools for Personal Growth

Inspiration

Ideas

Excellence

Success

She incorporated the feeling of gratitude into the child's name, so that whenever she spoke of him or to him, her initial joy would be revived. In the Talmud's view, this is real gratitude to Hashem. It's a feeling that may be heavily obscured or harshly tested—but it's never lost.

Shabbos Table Discussion:

Think of something for which you're grateful. What can you do to stay connected to this feeling?

Adapted from "The Pleasant Way," based on the teachings of Rav Avraham Pam, zt'l, by Rabbi Shalom Smith, used with permission from the author.

Better Relationships

Above Reproach

The idealized American stereotype is the rugged individualist. He may be a brave-hearted cowboy or a social revolutionary, but his hallmark is that he follows his heart. "What will people say?" He doesn't care, as long as he's true to himself.

But the Torah doesn't put much stock in such rugged individualism. It tells us, in fact, that we are obligated to consider what others might think, even when we know in our hearts we're right.

"You must be clean in the eyes of Hashem and in the eyes of the people of Israel," the Torah tells us. This gave the Chasam Sofer cause to comment: "...it is more plausible to fulfill the first obligation, that is, the requirements of Heaven, than to fulfill the obligation of others...because people have strange thoughts."

How can the Torah demand that we take into account people's "strange thoughts"—their ungrounded suspicions and faulty conclusions? Why isn't it good enough to be clean in the eyes of Hashem, especially when Jews are obligated to give each other the benefit of

continued on back



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By finding our personal connection to each brachah, we *continued on back*

Been There

In Rivka's class, there was no such thing as divorced parents. Some of the seven-year-olds in her class didn't even know what the word meant. As Rivka's parents made their way through this draining and frightening procedure, she began to feel more and more alone.

Fortunately, the fourth grade teacher in her school knew about the situation. One day, she sat down next to Rivka during recess and told her a story of a nine-year-old girl whose parents got a divorce. The story had many dramatic ups and downs, closely mimicking Rivka's own story. But it also had a happy ending, because the little girl grew up to have a family of her own and to teach in a wonderful girls'

school. The connection with this teacher, who had shared her own personal struggle, became Rivka's emotional life-

line through the tumultuous year ahead.

"I felt completely alone." "I felt that no one could possibly understand what I was going through." "I felt like there was something wrong with me."

These are terrifying feelings. Yet they're the very typical feelings of anyone going through a personal crisis, and they're often the most debilitating part of the crisis. Once someone feels the support and understanding of others, the good underlying all of life's challenges starts to make itself felt.

That's why one of the most compassionate acts a person

I felt that
no one
understood
what I was going
through.

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can perform is to share their own, similar experiences with those going through difficulties. People who have survived illness, divorce, unemployment, problems with children—all have something invaluable to give to people suffering through these difficulties now. While each person's situation is unique, there's little as reassuring as seeing someone who has gone through your particular trial-by-fire and come out, undefeated, on the other side.

Adapted from "Kindness," by Rabbi Zelig Pliskin, with permission from Shaar Press

Above Reproach

continued from front

the doubt? Because arousing people's suspicions—even when unjustified—erects barriers between people. It makes it impossible to live together in peace and unity. And that, in Hashem's accounting, is far too high a price to pay.

Adapted from "Don't Look Down," by Rabbi Michael Haber, with permission from Shaar Press

Taking it Personally

continued from front

can send Hashem a tefillah that really does come from our hearts.

Adapted from "Meaningful Living," by Rabbi Moshe Meir Weiss, with permission from The Judaica Press, Inc.

Dedications

לע ז"נ
ר' צבי אלימלך
בן שמואל ז"ל
Reb Herschel Waldman z"l
נלב ע נא' כסלו תשנ"ח
ת.נ.צ.ב.ה.

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Golden Opportunity

Rav Avraham Pam z'tl spent the last 10 years of his remarkable life at the helm of Shuvu, an organization he founded to give Russian children in Israel a Torah education. In those years, the organization fought tenaciously against furious opposition from Israel's secular and political forces. At Shuvu's 10th anniversary dinner, he gave what was to be his final address to the organization.

Despite all he had given of himself and all he had achieved, he spoke only of his gratitude to Hashem. To Rav Pam, the inspiration for starting the organization and the ability to bring the idea to fruition were gifts of humbling magnitude.

"How can I express even a fraction of my gratitude to HaKadosh Boruch Hu for granting me such a zechus and for granting the entire Shuvu family such a zechus!" cried Rav Pam. Serving Klal Yisrael, whatever the cost, was to him a golden opportunity.

Shabbos Table Discussion: How does being grateful, and possessing the middah of hakaras hatov, enable a person to accomplish great things?

Adapted from "Lessons in Truth," by Rabbi Shimon Finkelman, a publication of Chofetz Chaim Heritage Foundation and Mesorah Publications

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