
KOL KADIMA

The Voice of the Memphis Jewish High School

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24 Elul, 5767

September 7, 2007

Nitzavin/Vayelech

Candlelighting 7:01p.m.

Havdalah 7:56 p.m.

Schedule of Events

September 10 Parent Teacher Night 7:00 P.M.

September 12,13, 14 No School Rosh Hashanah

Reminders

You can purchase honorials or memorials on the web site or by calling the school at 767-4818

We have Kroger and Schnuck's cards in the office

Todah Rabah

Marc and Bonnie Belz for hosting the student council outing

Pam Malkin for driving

Mark Wank for driving

Jeri Rubin for driving

Mr. and Mrs. Eric Trotz for donating snacks

Mr. and Mrs. Gary Malkin for donating snacks

Head of School

Please remember that Monday, September 10th we will have a parent teacher open house. It is important to have all our parents here for this informative evening.

Our students had a fun outing last Wednesday and a special thanks goes to Logan Belz for being our host and for Monte Eiseman and the students that helped him plan a fun afternoon.

As we approach Rosh Hashanah I urge each of you to figuratively focus yourself under a microscope and use a telescope on others. It is time for reflection and judgment. Hashem wants each of to be the best we can be. We are not being compared to others, but to ourselves.

In this week's Torah portion Moshe assures us that our commitment to Hashem's covenant is doable and reachable. We can live a torah life. Moshe also reminds us that this covenant was given to all Jewish people, not just those that were there when Moshe spoke to the people, but to the Jews that turned away from Torah and to the future generations as well. This is an everlasting covenant and we must insure its continuity by passing the Torah from generation to generation. Hard

decisions must be made to maintain an attachment to Torah life.

Nitzavim concludes with perhaps the clearest and most powerful statement in the Torah about the purpose of life and the existence of freewill:

"I have set before you this day life and good, death and evil ... the blessing and the curse. Therefore, choose life that you may live, you and your descendants."

Shabbat Shalom

Adrian Weissman

Parent Corner

ONLINE DANGERS

Although no one disputes that there are some pretty nasty things on the internet, most of the web falls into the "good" category. We want to make you careful about surfing the web, not scare you away from it entirely.

While the risk posed by people trying to meet our children off-line is one of the most serious, there are many less serious risks our children face online. These include access to information that may be inappropriate for children, sites related to illegal activities, and sites that pose risks to their privacy.

Even though pornography and sexual content are receiving most of the attention, there are other kinds of inappropriate information accessible which may be far more dangerous to your children than being exposed to sexually explicit content. We will not only be educating you on these risks but also how to try to prevent them.

We will also warn you about the dangers your children (and their friends) may pose to others in cyberspace, including you.

What kind of risks exist online?

There are the risks of your child accessing

inappropriate information. This includes access to information that may be inappropriate for children generally, sites that sell contraband or advocate illegal activities, and sites that pose risks to their privacy.

Sites which show graphic and inappropriate pornography and sexual content which our children can easily access. Also sites with tobacco and alcohol advertisements, bomb-building sites, sites that advocate taking drugs, as well as sites that contain violence and gore, misinformation, and hate literature.

Some sites even sell guns, drugs, poisons, or alcohol, or let your kids gamble online. Others collect and sell private information about your kids and your family, and use unfair interactive marketing strategies that target cybertots.

These things may be far more dangerous to your children than being exposed to sexually explicit content. And, since we're here to discuss risks and how to avoid them, we need to warn you about the dangers your children (and their friends) may pose to others in cyberspace, including you.

They may give out your credit card information or passwords, share private information about you and your family, buy things and charge them to you, infringe copyrights, commit computer crimes, and access, lose, or destroy your files.

In some cases, they may not even know they're doing it, but the dangers are just as real. Finally, there are risks that viruses and hackers pose to your computer.

Lots of things to think about. But we will provide guidance and help, as you need it.

Dean of Jewish Studies

My 10th grade teacher would always find a way to connect the Parasha to an actual matter of the week or the month. This week the task is very easy. We are only one week away from Rosh Hashanah, and the Parasha we read this time every year happens to be **Nitzavim** (and Vayelech), which starts out with the words "*You are standing (Nitzavim) this day all of you before the LORD*". The Hassidic Rabbis say that this verse is a reminder for all of us that Rosh Hashanah is just around the corner; on the holy

holidays we should all feel that we are actually **standing before G-D!**

But what does this mean? Which is the proper mood to enter the high holidays? Should we feel nervous, frightened, happy or maybe comfortable, in this situation?

I'd like to quote an interesting attitude from Rabbi Avi Weiss¹ on this topic, based on our Parasha which replete with the message of *teshuvah* (repentance). *Teshuvah* is most often associated with our return **to** God. This portion also speaks of a different form of *teshuvah*—the return **of** God.

Note the sentence "*V'shav Hashem...et shevutkhah*" which is often translated "then the Lord your God will bring back your captivity."² The term used here is not "*ve-heishiv*" which means God will "bring back" your captivity, rather it is "*ve-shav*" which literally means that God "will return with" your captivity. The message according to the Midrash is clear. When we are in captivity God is in exile with us³. Thus, when we return, God returns with us as He, too, has been exiled.

Similarly, God first appears to Moshe in a burning bush telling him to lead the Jewish people out of Egypt. The Midrash points out that God purposely appears in the lowly bush to teach that He felt the pain of the Jewish people enslaved in Egypt. As we were lowly, so did God feel that lowliness? God is one in our suffering, empathizing with our despair⁴.

This idea teaches an important message. God is a God of love who cares deeply for His people. Hence, when we are cast aside, God suffers with us and is cast aside as well.

As we participate in the *teshuvah* process on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur this idea teaches that God is one with us, caring, leading and carrying us from step to step, higher and higher. As we return to God, God returns to us.

So let me wish us all that we remember this on our journey on the high holidays this year,
Shabbat Shalom

¹ Of Riverdale

² Deuteronomy 30:3

³ Rashi, Deuteronomy 30:3

⁴ Rashi, Exodus 3:2