

MESIVTA'S MESSAGE

A COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER FROM MISSOURI TORAH INSTITUTE

VOLUME 6, ISSUE 3

THOUGHTS *on the* PARSHA

Rabbi Shraga Zachai

One of the most common themes that I have heard over the past month is the idea that nature itself is a miracle. 'ה created the world in a way that's seemingly run by nature. This sets in motion our responsibility to put in our own effort/hishtadlus and yet at the same time remind ourselves that 'ה is the One who is pulling the strings. In fact, even at times of great miracles, 'ה will take away something from the miracle to allow things to seem as natural as possible.

It is necessary for 'ה to run the world according to the rules of nature because if it were obvious that 'ה was running the world, we would have no bechira. We would not have the opportunity to work towards that belief and the reward that comes with it.

This is highlighted by one of the answers that is given to the בית יוסף's question. We know that there was a miracle that the oil at the time of חנוכה lasted for 8 days. However there was enough oil for one day, so in reality the miracle was only for 7 days! One of the answers given by the baalei mussar is that although the 7 days were an incredible נס, we must realize that oil burning at *all*

continued on back

FEATURED TORAH *Message*

Dovid Stroh, 12th grade

The story of Yosef and his brothers in this week's parsha teaches us an important lesson about the consequences of speaking negatively about others. Rashi says that the brothers had initially asked for assistance from Mitzrayim despite having ample food, due to their desire to avoid appearing in better straits than their hungry neighbors. However, eventually, their supply dried up, and they were forced to return to Mitzrayim. Only after doing teshuvah for their wrongdoing did they have a means of sustaining themselves.

The Chofetz Chaim takes this concept even further, suggesting that poverty is a punishment for speaking loshon hora when tzaraas does not apply. This punishment is exemplified in the story of Rav Nosson Adler, who was wrongly persecuted by ignorant townspeople and forced to leave his city. His talmid, the Chasam Sofer, later observed that those who had spoken against Rav Adler and caused him to leave all eventually fell into poverty, while the innocent man they had wronged remained prosperous.

This story is a powerful reminder of the importance of speaking positively about others and avoiding loshon hora. The consequences of our words can be far-reaching and long-lasting, affecting not only ourselves but those around us as well.

SPARKS *of* MUSSAR

Reprinted with permission from "Sparks of Mussar" by Rabbi Chaim Ephraim Zaitchik, Feldheim Publishers

Rav Simcha Zissel

The story is told in Mussar circles that at a convention of German University deans to discuss curricula, a professor rose and said, "There is one area of knowledge that is studied in only one institution in the world,

a small Russian town named Kelm. That subject is correcting man's character traits."

A baron was among the supporters of the Beis HaTalmud founded by R' Simcha Zissel in Grobin. At a party he threw for his friends, the baron began to boast of the wonderful educational institution he supported, and invited his guests to visit it. The other noblemen accepted, and immediately got

into their elegant carriages drawn by teams of horses and drove off.

The rattling of the carriages and the snorting and stamping of the horses as they pulled up made a thunderous noise at the gates of Beis HaTalmud. But not one of the talmidim, who were welcoming the Sabbath with prayer, turned his head to look.

MAZEL TOV

Noach Bienstock on his recent marriage to Ms. Aliza Meltzer!

Upcoming SHABBATON FOR 8TH GRADE BOYS

Sign up now at missouritorah.org/admissions

שבת פרשת יתרו

THOUGHTS on the PARSHA continued

is also a miracle. Oil burns because 'ה' says that oil should burn.

In recent years, fascinating and informative books have come out compiling midrashim which discuss in detail the day to day stories that happened throughout תנ"ך. In a way, these stories can seem to minimize the 'ה' by making the chain of events in תנ"ך seem more natural. But we have to keep the focus in mind - 'ה' is completely in control.

We know that the גמרא tells us that one of the causes of the destruction of the בית המקדש was because of קמצא and בר קמצא. In Rav Yaakov Edelstein's sefer בעקבי - he quotes the חזון איש explaining that history books which talk about the wars of Titus have a way of explaining the destruction due to the natural course of

events. He goes on to explain that קמצא wasn't significant enough for the history books. But רוח הקודש, through חז"ל, know the real reason behind the בית המקדש being destroyed.

While it may seem natural for the second בית המקדש to have been destroyed in light of the events at that time, the גמרא is telling us otherwise. 'ה' decides the chain of events for this world and the real reasons for why events occur can only be learned from what the גמרא tells us.

This is a message that we really should be focusing on throughout our lives. Hopefully, we can use this recent time period of חנוכה and the current fast of עשרה בטבת to remind ourselves of this very important foundation of our lives and strengthen ourselves to take this responsibility to heart and always be aware of the 'ה'.

RECENT Happenings

Yosef Elisha Friedman, 10th grade

This past week, on Zos Chanukah, we had our Chanukah chagigah and MTI-Tunes, a competition in which each class writes and performs a song. In addition, some individuals wrote and sang their own songs, and the bais medrash bochurim performed as well. The songs were reflections about the yeshiva and how it has helped us grow tremendously - from 9th grade writing about just joining, to the 12th grade's song about how much they will miss MTI once they leave. When all the performances were finished, everyone came up on stage for spirited dancing while the scores were tallied.

When the judges finished, Rabbi Rosner announced that 12th grade had won 2nd place, while the best score went to my class - 10th grade! Our song, written by Avraham Rosenblum and myself, was an emotional song about our growth, how we have gratitude to MTI, and our journey from 9th grade until this point, which was the secret formula that the judges (who are the rebbeim) were looking for, but it was also the truth! The Chanukah chagigah with MTI-Tunes is a great way to celebrate together with friends and rebbeim and we look forward to it each year.

As a zechus for Klal Yisroel during this difficult time -

JOIN A GROWING GROUP OF WOMEN AND *commit to the study of Mussar!*



A Mussar Series for Women with Mrs. Toby Goldman

THIS MONTH'S SHIUR DATES:
Dec 24, 31 & Jan 7, 21(TBD), 28
NO CLASS 1/14 - WINTER BREAK

ZOOM ID 525 786 3657
OR PHONE 646.558.8656

Sunday Evenings 8:00 pm

OUR SPONSORS

AMC AMERICAN MORTGAGE CORPORATION
We Own Your Dream
JORDAN ROSENBLUM
VICE PRESIDENT
314.423.0351
www.stuartsamc.com
Jordan@amcmort.com

Aryeh Freylicher, Realtor

platinum realty.

Cell: 314.387.0888
Office: 888.220.0988
aryehfrey@gmail.com