



Schechter

School of Long Island

SSLI Lower School

Friday Letter – January 28, 2022

Parshat Mishpatim-Candle Lighting 4:49 pm

Dear Schechter Parents,

This week the students learned about International Holocaust Memorial Day which took place on Thursday. The 5th grade class discussed the significance of this day which commemorated the 77th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau. After Kabbalat Shabbat, in continuation of this theme, Ms. Stern spoke with the 3rd-5th grade students about the significance of the Hebrew name of the day, Yom HaShoah U'Gevurah, meaning Yom Hashoah as a day of strength. We celebrate the unwavering spirit of the Jewish people, who remain strong despite the challenges faced as a nation.

Ms. Stern further said we celebrate this day to recognize the victory of the Neshama-the strength that is found within each and every one of us. The students concluded the ceremony by singing the words of the famous verse, "nation shall not stand up against nation and we should not see war any more." May these words of song and prayer from our students soar to the heavens and may we indeed live a life of peace here, in Israel and throughout the world.

Shifting to art class, the hallways were beautifully decorated with the artworks of finished still life projects. The students learned about surrealism and artist Rene Magritte who created dreamlike images. They used the wax resist technique on their background with watercolor and crayon. The students also learned about birch trees. Birch trees are beautifully decorated white trees with nature made designs. The students created their own birch trees by putting masking tape over their paper and paint around it. After they took off the tape they decorated the white space with a thin brush by using thin black and gray lines across the tree trunks. A great job to all of our artists!

In 4th Grade, the students continued learning about circuits by designing their own LED-illuminated cards. They used copper tape, 3V batteries and an LED light bulb to construct a circuit. They created a "button" that closes the circuit when pressed, thereby powering the LED. The cards were beautifully constructed with lovely messages written on each of them. One student's card said, "You light up my life!" At SSLI we continuously do such hands-on, interactive, and engaging activities for the students to learn in a fun and creative way.



Schechter

School of Long Island

This week during Kabbalat Shabbat we spoke about the important message of Parshat Mishpatim which discusses our interactions with each other. We must be careful and sensitive toward the people around us. Some of the Mitzvot that exhibit this theme include watching our animals so they don't injure others, cleaning up any spills so our classmates don't slip and to remember to return whatever we borrow. The Torah opens with the words Vayleh Hamishpatim- **And** these are the laws which links these laws to Yitro and the receiving of the Aseret HaDibrot- the Ten Commandments. This teaches us that it is necessary, as a Jew to be just as concerned with our interpersonal relationships as the Aseret HaDibrot themselves.

Question of the Week (Please submit your answer to be featured in next week's email.)

The Torah instructs us that if someone steals, they are required to pay back double. In other words, if they stole \$100, they must pay back \$200. We usually find the punishment fit the crime so why does the Torah feel it is appropriate to make him pay back more than what he stole?

Last Week's Question And Answer

Q. There are two primary topics in this week's Parsha. The beginning of the Parsha discusses the advice Yitro provided to his son-in-law, Moshe, namely to delegate his responsibilities and not do everything himself. The second topic of our Parsha is Kabbalat HaTorah and the receiving of the Aseret HaDibrot-the 10 Commandments at Har Sinai. What is the connection between these two seemingly unrelated topics?

A. In the midst of Yitro's conversation, he mentioned that he no longer worshiped idols and instead showed his allegiance to Hashem which is the first and second of the Ten Commandments. Alternatively, Yitro needed to bring Moshe's family before the Jewish people were able to accept the Torah. A final possible explanation is that Yitro taught Moshe that it is important to delegate and empower others in judging and teaching Torah. This is an integral belief namely that every Jew has a portion in Torah study and not just a chosen few.

Shabbat Shalom!

Dr. Boaz Tomsy

Lower School Administrator