

Rambam Record Parshat Vayetze

Ethics of the Fathers Inspires American Educators at Orlando National Conference

This year's gathering of Blue Ribbon schools from across the country heard something they never heard before. Among the 400 representatives from across the nation was the one Yeshiva high school that was chosen by the Department of Education to be awarded the coveted Blue Ribbon status: Rambam Mesivta.

Every year, out of a total of 37,000 high schools in the United States, .14%, about 1 and a half out of every thousand schools, qualify to be named as Blue Ribbon schools.

The application process is lengthy and the standards are rigorous. Ultimately, to qualify, Blue Ribbons Schools must have average SAT scores which rank in the top tier nationally. Rambam Mesivta, of Lawrence, Long Island, was the only yeshiva in the country to thus qualify.

Blue Ribbon Schools were then asked to submit a topic to discuss and review at an educators conference. Rambam's topic of "Teaching Values in a Challenging World" was chosen by the Blue Ribbon School committee and Rabbi Zev Meir Friedman, Rambam's Rosh Mesivta, made the presentation this past Wednesday morning.

"I thought it would be important to share some of the insights that CHAZAL taught us and demonstrate to those assembled the universal value of those lessons," said Rabbi Friedman.

Among other references to Biblical and classical Jewish sources Rabbi Friedman repeatedly cited Pirkei Avos in terms of the proper attitude and shared that it is the prerequisite for a successful education. "Two thousand years ago, Hillel the Sage instructed teachers to encourage students to ask questions and not be bashful and concomitantly told them not to be short tempered or frustrated students, lest it discourage them from learning and asking," said Friedman.

Other topics covered dealt with the importance of introspection, recognizing one's own shortcomings and developing effective strategies to correct them. "While we understand the ongoing nature of teshuva and the growth it affords us, so many others in attendance viewed this as a 'novel' idea, which they appreciated hearing about," said Rabbi Friedman.

After the lecture concluded, the room was filled with applause and admiration for the "ancient" values of Torah which remain relevant in every generation.



Rav Shenvald, Rosh Yeshiva of Meir Harel, Speaks at Rambam

This past Thursday, the talmidim at Rambam had the honor of hearing Rabbi Eliezer Shenvald, Rosh Yeshiva of Meir Harel Hesder Yeshiva and IDF Colonel (res.), share some words of Torah. Rav Shenvald noted Rambam's commitment to religious Zionism and his close personal friendship with Rabbi Yotav Eliach, Rambam's Principal. Prior to Rav Shenvald taking center stage, a video was shown featuring talmidim currently learning in Yeshiva Meir Harel who discussed their commitment to learning Torah while at the same time being active members of the IDF who are there to protect all of Klal Yisroel.

The focus of Rav Shenvald's message was the miracle of Eretz Yisroel. He discussed the significance of the connection to the Land and Ivrit and said that "Dreaming in Ivrit is a different experience from dreaming in English or any other language." On that note, he explored the unique experience one can have by having a Hesder Yeshiva year in Israel. "You talk in Hebrew about things that are happening in Israel." He showed how the people who are there synthesize their learning, growth, and desire to serve and protect Eretz Yisroel.

He also discussed the beauty of Israel and how Israel has become a model nation to all nations. From the Germans, to the Koreans, and so many other countries, they all look to "Israel as the leader in tech and agriculture." Rav Shenvald said that the reason why Israel is so successful is because of its commitment to Torah values.

The talk was truly inspiring and Rav Shenvald was left with a standing ovation.



Project Based Learning Poe Project

Having been inspired by the Montresor Family Crest from Edgar Allan Poe's iconic story, "The Cask of Amontillado," Mr. Goldman's 10A English class also created their own Family Crests.

Each Crest had to have an English, Hebrew, and Latin quote representing their family's value system. The Crests also featured symbolism, a commitment to form and content, and even had 3D elements.

The project, which began with reading and then went to incorporation art, also included a public speaking element as each student presented his Crest to the class. Each student also had to write an essay describing the overall ethos of their Crest.

The Crest Project also featured "Gamification" as each member of the class voted on his favorite Crests with the winners earning Plaques in recognition of their "artistic talents, use of symbolism, and depth of character." Past winners, now in 10th and 11th grade were invited in to vote as well. Rafi Schlager and Max Yacker, as voted by the class, earned Honorable Mention Plaques while Daniel Ganopolsky came away with the 1st Place Plaque.



