

DEAR PARENTS & CAMPERS,

This week's פרשה has the first paragraph of שמע, with the famous words imploring us to love Hashem. "וְאָהַבְתָּ אֶת ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ." This is also the Posuk quoted by Rebbe Akiva, who we just read about in the heartwrenching Kinnah describing the barbaric deaths of the מלכות הרוגי מלכות. As described in the Gemarah in ברכות, Rebbe Akiva was experiencing horrific torture with a level of calm and tranquility. As his flabbergasted students asked how he could have the fortitude to endure such pain, he responded that it was his opportunity to express his love for Hashem "בכל נפשו", with his very life." How could he not embrace such an opportunity?

That same Gemarah discusses another episode which also exhibits the supreme greatness of this courageous man. As the Romans passed a rule outlawing the teaching of Torah, Rebbe Akiva was undeterred. He continued teaching to massive gatherings in public, making no efforts to conceal his rebellion. Papus Ben Yehudah asks "Rebbe, how could you risk your life like this?" We are all familiar with his epic response. Essentially, not learning Torah is like a fish being out of water. While sometimes in the water there are lurking dangers, it is a far more preferable environment to leaping up onto dry land, where there is no oxygen, and the fish will assuredly die. So too a Jew without Torah. Perhaps there are real dangers to studying in certain environments. But removing the Torah from בני ישראל is akin to removing our oxygen, we will not survive. Tragically, Rebbe Akiva gave up his life, but these words have become a rallying cry that we have turned to in times of peril throughout the generations.

In Camp, the action is non-stop. There is so much happening each day, it's hard to keep track! But first and foremost, we start each day with Davening and learning. Walk through the halls in the morning, and you hear the melodious sounds of Kedushah emanating from each classroom. We are so blessed to have experienced Mechanchim in our Shiurim! And it's so gratifying to see that the Lesson Rebbe Akiva so emphatically declared all those years ago is still being adhered to in Eeshay, 2026!

Have a great Shabbos Nachamu!

Rabbi Glatt

THIS WEEK IN CAMP!

As one unforgettable week came to a close and another exciting half of camp began, Camp EESHAY wasted no time jumping right back into the action!

Across camp, our leagues got off to a thrilling start with spirited competition, incredible teamwork, and enough close finishes to keep even the referees on the edge of their seats. Intermediate Division opened with a joint dodgeball showdown that came down to the very last throw, while Senior Division's record-breaking enrollment meant splitting into Upper and Lower leagues—much to the dismay of many of our 7th graders, who somehow went from the bullies to the victims practically overnight!

Our activity program continued to be second to none. Junior Division enjoyed an action-packed lineup featuring soccer, football, whiffleball, and the highly anticipated Elimination: EXTREME EDITION! Yet perhaps no event captures the spirit of Camp EESHAY quite like the legendary Crossing of Cooper Landing—a journey historians are already predicting will rival Washington's crossing of the Delaware in both courage and historical significance.

Creativity was on full display throughout camp as well. Intermediate campers designed colorful beach balls, enjoyed an EESHAY original game of All In, and showcased their artistic talents by creating beautiful Yerushalayim posters. Meanwhile, Senior Division launched an exciting new woodshop project under the expert guidance of Rabbi Laster, with campers crafting stunning state-of-the-art Shabbos lamps they can proudly use for years to come.

Late Activity also received a special upgrade this week as Junior Division debuted its own exclusive edition of The Price Is Right! Contestants laughed, guessed, negotiated, and celebrated as the competition proved that sometimes estimating the price of a box of cereal can be every bit as intense as the World Series.

As we prepared our hearts for Tishah B'Av, Junior Division had the privilege of hearing a moving and inspiring story from world-renowned storyteller Rabbi Friedler, helping us reflect on the significance of the day while reminding us of the values that unite us as one camp family.

Finally, congratulations to Senior Division's own Rami Blumberg, who conquered the Pac-Man bowling arcade with such mastery that witnesses are still debating whether they had accidentally traveled back to 1975.

The second half is officially underway—and if this week is any indication, the best is still yet to come!

Rabbi Friedler

LEAGUE STANDINGS

INTERMEDIATE

Dolphins 5-0
Roaring Lions 2-2-1
King Cobras 1-3-1
Buffaloes 0-3-2

SPORTSMANSHIP SHOUTOUTS

Menachem Baum

for praising his arch nemesis after a hotly contested football game

Haviv Levi

for encouraging his teammates even when they made mistakes



THE EESHAY BLAST

