

This year our group focused on Jewish Heroes. Each week we looked at a different player in our history and the impact they had on the Jewish people and the entire world. From learning about the very first man, Adam, to Sandy Koufax we were able to gain a greater understanding of our past and how these people relate to our daily lives. From each personality we were able to learn valuable lessons and qualities to incorporate in our Jewish lives.

The first few weeks of Hebrew school we delved into the high holidays, learning about the different customs and mitzvot that we do during these days. On Rosh Hashanah, we learned about the reasons behind the customs such as dipping an apple in honey and all the other yummy food we eat. We learned about the deeper spiritual meaning of these holy days. Moving on to Yom Kippur. We learned about the customs that pertain to Yom Kippur such as fasting, praying, and what the prayers such as Kol Nidre and Neilah signify. On Sukkot, we gained knowledge on the ancestral story behind Sukkot, and again were taught the customs and traditions of these spiritual days.

As we started our curriculum on Jewish Heroes, we began with the creation of the world. Ask any boy and they'll tell you what was created on which day. We also delved into learning about the 7th day of the week, Shabbat. The boys learnt the meaning behind Shabbat and the laws that apply to keeping Shabbat.

After learning about the world creation, we began learning about the first man on earth, Adam. The boys particularly enjoyed learning about The Garden of Eden, the snake and the consequences that the snake, Adam, and Eve all suffered because they ate from the Tree of Knowledge.

We then discovered Noah and the Ark. The sins of the city, the building of the ark, the actual flood and the spiritual connection to a rainbow, were just some of the wonderful things we learnt about Noah's Ark.

Fast forward 10 generations and we gained insight into our forefathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Here the boys gained a deeper understanding of our forefathers. On Abraham, we spent a lot of time learning about his attributes such as kindness and his discovery of G-D. The boys were taught the different stories with Abraham such as the destruction of Sodom and Lot's wife turning into a pillar of salt, and the Brit Milah Abraham had at the age of 99. We delved into Sarah- Abraham's wife, who was childless until the three angels who came to visit Abraham's tent told her of her upcoming pregnancy. The boys learnt about the spirituality both Abraham and Sarah imbued.

Moving on Isaac and the "near" sacrifice. The boys learnt about Eliezer traveling to find Isaac a wife. He found one- Rivka. The boys particularly were fond of this story. They learnt about the birth of his two sons: Jacob and Esav. Then on to Jacob we went. The switching of the first born rights, Jacob dressing as Esav to get the blessings, and Jacob having to flee from Esav are just a few of the things we learnt about his early years. We discovered Jacob's eventual marriage to Rachel and Leah and the twelve tribes that he fathered.

As Chanukah approached, we reflected on the miracles of the holiday, as well as the traditions that are steadfastly rooted in our Jewish heritage.

After Winter Vacation, we learnt a great deal about the women in our Jewish History such as Ruth and Chana. Chana was a childless woman who prayed with all

her might to receive a baby. Not only did she merit having a baby boy, but he grew up to be the great prophet Samuel. From Chana we are able to see the special impact prayer has. We focused on the meanings of different prayers and the spiritual importance that prayer brings.

Ruth taught us about perseverance. We learned the story of Ruth following her mother in law back to Torah even after her Jewish husband had passed away. We pondered on the reward she was given for sticking to Judaism- her descendent was King David.

Our class then began to learn about three great kings in our Jewish History: Saul, David and Salomon. We reflected on each of the kings, studying their attributes, their sins and the duty of a Jewish king in general. The boys particularly enjoyed the story of David and Goliath.

During Purim our class received their very own Mishloach Manot. We had a great time at the carnival, after reviewing the story of Purim and it's customs. Learning about Passover, the boys concentrated in great detail on the story of the Jews leaving Egypt. Knowing all the plagues in order, the boys in our class are now experts on Passover.

Recently we studied a variety of things such as Rabbi Akiva, Rabbi Yehudah Hanasi who wrote down the oral Torah, the Spanish Inquisition. And Sandy Koufax, a Jewish baseball player in the 20th century who refused to play on Yom Kippur game one of the World Series. Studying about all these famous Jewish people further enhanced our respect for our Jewish Nation.

Throughout the year we have been learning our material in a myriad of ways.

Whether it was with games such as “Let’s Make a Deal”, team competitions to review our material, or a basketball review game, our class was filled with learning and fun.

Thank you: Zack, Ezra, Evan, Simon, Danny, Joseph, and Brandon for making this year in Hebrew School awesome! To those of you who are graduating and having your own Bar Mitzvah’s.. please visit!

This was an amazing year,

Tali Imiak