

קשר KESHER

Friday 13 November 2026
ד' כסלו תשפ"ז

פרשת תולדות

Parshat Toldot: Davening Together

David Fisher, *Head of Administration*

When I was a boy, (a while back now), I sat beside my father, Anton Fisher a"h in shule over the Yamim Noraim. Like most boys, I had other plans. Every so often I would lean over and ask, "Dad, can I go outside?"

He would look at me as though I had suggested something outrageous. "What, now? Oh no, you cannot go out for Unetaneh Tokef."

Fair enough, I thought. Ten minutes later I would try again. "Now? You cannot go out for Ochila."

And so, it went. There was always another tefillah too important to miss. Somehow, I spent most of the morning beside my father, following along and taking part. I am not sure he ever said no. He just kept finding a reason for me to stay a little longer.

Last Shabbat I davened in a different shule from my usual one. I noticed how many children were sitting with their fathers and mothers, siddurim open, taking part. It took me straight back to those Yom Tov mornings.

There comes a time when most children want to daven with their friends. For some it is Bnei Akiva. For me it was Mr Caspi's a"h minyan. That is a good thing, because children need tefillah that feels like their own. But perhaps we parents, and grandparents too, have been thinking about it only one way.

We usually picture the child coming to daven in the parent's place. Perhaps, sometimes it could be the other way around, with parents going to daven in their place.

This week's parsha opens with a curious verse: "Ve'eleh toldot Yitzchak ben Avraham, Avraham holid et Yitzchak." These are the generations of Yitzchak son of Avraham; Avraham begot Yitzchak (Bereishit 25:19). The Torah says the same thing twice, and the second time it turns the relationship around. First the son is identified through his father, then the father through his son.

Rashi explains that the scoffers of that generation questioned whether Avraham was really Yitzchak's father. So, Hashem made Yitzchak's face resemble Avraham's, and everyone could see that "Avraham was the father of Yitzchak."

פרשת תולדות

Shabbat Times

Light candles	7:49pm
Shabbat ends	8:52pm

Goldschlager Family School of Jewish Studies
Leopold and Isabella Abrahamovits
Yavneh Primary School
A.S. Leibler Secondary School
P +61 3 9528 4911

Abeles Liberman Pre-School incorporating
The Gillian and Colin Mandel Family
Yavneh Creche
81 Balaclava Road, Caulfield VIC 3161
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LEIBLER YAVNEH COLLEGE

Yavneh

Parshat Toldot: Davening Together, continued...

The Midrash (Bereishit Rabbah 63) reads the verse alongside Mishlei 17:6: "Ateret zekenim bnei vanim, vetiferet banim avotam". (עֲטֶרֶת זְקֵנִים בְּנֵי בָנִים וְתִפְאֶרֶת בָּנִים אֲבוֹתָם) Grandchildren are the crown of the elderly, and the glory of children is their parents. The crown runs both ways: "The fathers are a crown to the children, and the children are a crown to their fathers."

The Navi Malachi promises that Eliyahu will return "the hearts of parents to their children, and the hearts of children to their parents" (Malachi 3:24). It is striking that the parents' hearts come first.

So here is a thought for this Shabbat. By all means, bring your children to sit beside you in shule, and find them a reason to stay for one more tefillah, as my father did. And every now and then, go and daven where they daven. Sit in on the youth minyan or join the Bnei Akiva tefillah. They will notice that you came.

"Ve'eleh toldot Yitzchak ben Avraham, Avraham holid et Yitzchak – Let us build relationships in both directions.
Shabbat Shalom.

David Fisher

CHILD SAFETY AT YAVNEH

Victoria's 11 Child Safe Standards

Leibler Yavneh College is committed to the safety and wellbeing of every child. Since 1 July 2022, every Victorian school has been required to meet these standards.

1. **Culturally safe for Aboriginal children**
   Their identities and experiences are respected and valued.
2. **Leadership and culture**
   Child safety is built into how the school is led and run.
3. **Children's voices**
   Children know their rights, help make decisions and are taken seriously.
4. **Families and community**
   Families are informed and involved in keeping children safe.
5. **Equity and diversity**
   Every child's needs are respected, whatever their background.
6. **Suitable, supported staff**
   Everyone working with children is screened and supported.
7. **Child-focused complaints**
   Concerns are handled with children at the centre.
8. **Training**
   Staff and volunteers are trained to keep children safe.
9. **Safe spaces, online and off**
   Our physical and online environments minimise the risk of harm.
10. **Review and improve**
    How we meet the standards is regularly reviewed.
11. **Clear policies**
    Our policies and procedures show how we keep children safe.

Have a concern?

Contact our Child Safety Team, LT, HODs and HOYS

Sandpapergate and Toldot

Samuel Brygel, *Head Of Humanities and Social Sciences*

"A publisher is a tradesman… Often a publisher knows what the public will buy in literature. Very rarely he knows what is good literature." – Arnold Bennett

Autobiographies of sports stars are all too often rather similar. Usually ghost-written, they begin with stories of incredible childhood ability and promise at their chosen sport, matched with supportive parents willing to invest both the time and money in this pursuit. This soon moves to tales of the sport star's youthful naivete and immaturity at entering the world of elite professional sport as a young teenager. The middle of the book is usually comprised of a description of some form of major setback; being dropped from the team, suffering a long-term injury or perhaps a personal/family crisis. Almost always this challenge is overcome or nullified and the book can neatly end with a polished redemptive arc, involving both personal and team success in the chosen sport. Despite the predictability of the sports autobiography, many still adorn my shelves!

Well, it's fair to say that former Australian cricketer Usman Khawaja's newly released autobiography Sabr found a way to distinguish itself from the formulaic and predictable sports autobiography! He did this by writing one chapter, Chapter 17, titled 'Sandpaper'.

For those non-cricket fans reading, I'll quickly catch you up. In 2018, one of the young Australian cricket players, Cameron Bancroft, was caught on camera using sandpaper to rough up one side of the ball (known as ball tampering) in an attempt to help the bowlers receive more swing with the ball. Yet, this tactic is against both the spirit and rules of the game. An official investigation soon found that the only players to blame were Bancroft, captain Steve Smith and vice-captain David Warner, all of whom received large suspensions. The rest of the team at the time and on a few occasions since have denied any knowledge or involvement in 'Sandpapergate'.

Returning to Usman's new book, he writes that knowledge of the ball tampering plot extended far beyond the three suspended players. Putting aside the commercial convenience of these new revelations from Usman, Usman has potentially exposed the other Australian players (many of whom are still on the team) of hiding the truth for the last eight years. You would think that after eight years the nation and the media has moved on. Yet if you read the newspapers this week, you would see it is to the contrary. The public is craving and demanding the full truth. As we always tell our own children and our students at Yavneh, we don't mind if you made a mistake but just tell us the truth!

Shifting to Parashat Toldot, many of us were taught the key features of the story of Yaakov and Esav all the way back in primary school. Esav and Yaakov, the twins destined through prophecy to be eternal rivals, the red lentil soup, Isaac's blindness to the sins of his eldest son and his physical blindness, and of course the crescendo of the story; Rivkah's guidance in creating a ploy for Yaakov to receive the birthright. This story certainly has it all.

I distinctly remember my first year of teaching Parashat Toldot to a primary class. Learning the various twists and turns of the story together, as we read the pessukim of Yaakov taking the birthright, adorned with his sheep's clothing, an earnest, sincere student put up their hand and asked, "I understand that Yaakov deserved the birthright but why did he have to pretend he was his brother to get it? We are always told that not telling the truth is bad." What a brilliant question.

Thankfully, many mepharshim address this question. Rashi, for example, points out that Yaakov purchased the birthright from Esav legally and therefore was only claiming what was rightfully his.

The Radak, however, notes that Yaakov himself was intensely uncomfortable with the plan, explicitly warning Rivka: "I will seem to him as a deceiver, and I will bring a curse upon myself, and not a blessing" (Bereshit 27:12) Radak highlights that Yaakov recognised the inherent violation of truth and only complied out of obligation to his mother. Moreover, the Midrash connects Lavan's later deception towards Yaakov, swapping his beloved Rachel for Leah, as divine punishment for his own deception.

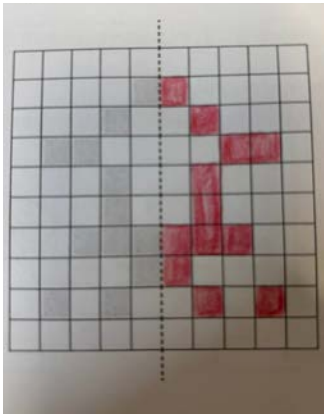
Returning to Yaakov and Esav, while of course we know that Yaakov was required to receive this birthright, for the future of our people relied on it, this perspective allows us not to criticise Yaakov Chas VeShalom, but to see that obscuring the truth always has a cost and it almost always comes out in some form or another. Let us always strive to the best of our abilities to tell the truth and to continue to demonstrate to our students and children the eternal value of emet.

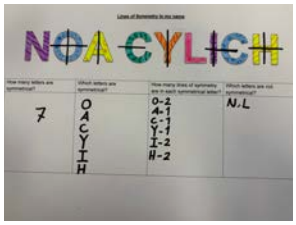


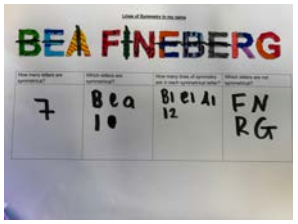
Year 3 Maths: The Art of being Symmetrical

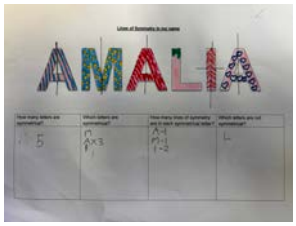
Melanie Adelist, *Primary General Studies*

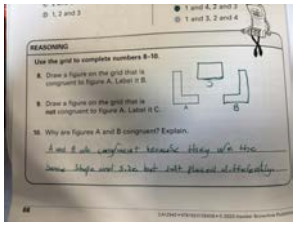
Year 3 students have been busy exploring symmetrical figures and letters. They discovered that if you can fold the image exactly in half and have both halves match exactly – you've got yourself some symmetry! And that fold is the line of symmetry. We discussed whether we are symmetrical (we are not!) and had fun seeing what we would look like if we were symmetrical.





























Adding Light, Growing Together

Pnina Landau, *Primary Jewish Studies*

As we find ourselves at the beginning of the month of Kislev, our thoughts naturally begin turning towards Chanukah. Along with the excitement of lighting the menorah, singing Chanukah songs and enjoying sufganiyot, Chanukah offers us some beautiful lessons that extend far beyond the eight days of celebration.

One of the pitgamim we are exploring with our students is מעלין בקודש ואין מורידין – we increase in holiness rather than decrease.

On the first night of Chanukah, we light one candle. On the second night, we add another, and on the third night, another again. But why do we keep adding candles? Why not simply light one candle each night?

The answer teaches us something important. Chanukah reminds us that we should always be looking for opportunities to grow. We don't take away the light we already have, we build upon it. In our own lives, this means continually trying to become better versions of ourselves – showing a little more kindness, making a little more effort, helping someone who needs it and finding ways to add goodness to each day.

Another beautiful pitgam connected to the month of Kislev is נר אחד נר למאה – one light can become a light for a hundred.

Think about what happens when one candle lights another. The original candle doesn't become dimmer or lose any of its light. Instead, there are now two glowing candles. That second candle can go on to light another, and the light continues to spread.

A kind word, a thoughtful action or a positive attitude can influence far more people than we realise. When one student chooses to include someone, others may follow. When one person makes an effort to help, it can inspire others to do the same. Just as one candle can light many others, one person's positive actions can create a ripple effect throughout a classroom, a school and a community.

As parents and educators, we want our children to understand that growth isn't always about achieving something bigger or being the best. Sometimes it is about making a small improvement, sometimes it's about helping someone else shine.

As we in the month of Kislev the month of light, we can encourage our children to think about two simple questions: How can I add a little more light to my own life? And whose light can I help brighten?

Because the beauty of light is that it never diminishes when it is shared. The more we give, the more we can create.

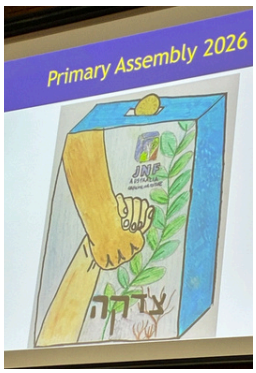
Sara Amzalak, *Head of Jewish Life and Learning (Primary)*

JLife Primary once again teamed up with JNF to promote a Tzedakah Box Design Competition. This competition started back in the month of Elul when we increased in Tzedakah. We are thrilled to announce that Arielle W. in Year 4 was a winner of this competition. Eden, the JNF Education Coordinator, came to our assembly on Monday to present Ariella with a Tzedakah box with her very own design on it. Well done Ariella – Kol HaKavod.

This week in craft club, students came to colour a picture for Parashat Toldot of Yaakov cooking lentil stew. Students then had the option of creating a 3D fire out of cellophane, as well as sticking real red lentils into the pot on the picture. For many students, this was their first time seeing lentils, with a number of students wanting to try cooking them in a soup a home!














Remembrance Day Service at Caulfield RSL

Samuel Brygel, *Head Of Humanities and Social Sciences*

On Wednesday the 11th of November at 11AM, the nation came together, as it does each year, to acknowledge all our Australian Defence Force soldiers, sailors and aviators who died or suffered while serving in wars, conflicts and peace operations. In partnership with VAJEX (Victorian Association of Jewish Ex & Servicemen & Women Australia), the Caulfield RSL hosted a community commemoration service for Remembrance Day. Two of our school captains, Gali and Ozzie proudly represented Leibler Yavneh College at the service, engaging in discussion with veterans, community members and politicians after the ceremony and ensuring both a kiddush Yavneh and a kiddush Hashem!



Speaking to Hashem

Chaim Cowen, *Deputy Principal, Head of Jewish Studies*

Learning Torah and davening are two pillars of Jewish life. But how do they relate to one another?

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks z"l offered a beautiful way of understanding their relationship: "In prayer we speak to God, but in study we listen to God." Together, learning and davening turn our day into a conversation with Hashem. Through Torah, we listen to what He asks of us; through tefillah, we bring our own words, hopes and concerns to Him.

One of my teachers, Rabbi Dov Zinger, offers another perspective through a small but significant distinction in Hebrew: לדבר על, to speak about, and לדבר אל, to speak to.

Much of our school day involves speaking about things. In Gemara, we might discuss the laws of lost property or a dispute between neighbours. In general studies, we learn about history, mathematics and the physical world. We investigate, analyse, question and explain.

Alongside all this learning, there are moments of a different kind: a conversation between friends at recess, a heart-to-heart between a teacher and student, an exchange in which we share something of ourselves. Here, we are speaking to another person. There is someone listening, and a relationship being lived.

Davening brings this encounter into our relationship with Hashem. We address Him directly. We thank Him, ask for His help, express our worries and share our hopes. We try to become conscious of standing in His presence and directing our words towards Him. Tefillah is a time of living our relationship with Hashem.

That understanding sits at the heart of the new tefillah format we launched this week, as we begin settling into our arrangements for 2027.

Previously, boys and girls generally davened in separate groups, although some girls joined the tefillah in the shul. We have now brought our students together in two groups: current Years 6–7, next year's Years 7–8, in the MPR; and current Years 8–11, next year's Years 9–12, in the shul. Each group is supported by dedicated and inspirational staff who help bring energy, meaning and connection to our mornings.

The two days of Rosh Chodesh Kislev have made this a particularly special opening week. There has been tremendous ruach, with musical instruments helping to lift the singing in the shul and a wonderful sense of students coming together in tefillah.

Our hope is that this shared energy will help each student find their own voice in davening. The singing, the community and the encouragement of those around us can help us become more present, more engaged and more aware of Whom we are addressing.

Please God, we will carry this spirit through the rest of the year and into 2027, growing together as a student body in our capacity to speak to Hashem.

Pink Lunch

Ruby Alford, *Jewish Life Educator*

This week, the Jlife team together with the captains hosted a “pink lunch” for all female secondary staff and students. Over 50 people attended to hear from Sarah Singer, a breast cancer survivor and advocate. Sarah shared her story and expressed the importance of awareness and staying happy and healthy. The lunch was meaningful, delicious and raised money for the Breast Cancer Foundation.







Noah Epstein, *Head of Jewish Life and Co-Curricular*

The month of Kislev has arrived and you can already sense that Chanukah is on its way! Rosh Chodesh was celebrated with beautiful singing and ruach in Tefillah and some delicious.













Upcoming Dates 2026

November:
Thursday 19 ELC End of Year BBQ
Sunday 22 Year 12 Graduation
Thursday 26 SKB Concert

December:
Tuesday 1 JKA Concert
Thursday 3 SKA Concert
Thursday 3 Speech Night
Friday 4 Year 11 Torah U'Maddah
Monday 7 JKB Concert
Monday 7 Shorashim
Tuesday 8 Nitzanim
Thursday 10 Pri Gan
Thursday 10 SKG Concert
Thursday 10 Year 6 Graduation
Friday 11 Last Day term 4
Wednesday 16 Garinim
Wednesday 16 Last Day for staff
Friday 18 Last Day for Creche

JOIN OUR TEAM

Enrolments Officer

Part-time | **From January 2027** | **Elsternwick**

Do you love welcoming new families? We're looking for an organised, personable Enrolments Officer to join our administration team and look after every family's journey, from their first enquiry to their child's first day.

THE ROLE

- Manage enrolment administration: enquiries, applications, offers, records and reporting
- Meet prospective families, and arrange and lead school tours
- Make sure families starting at the school, crèche or kinder have the right information and paperwork
- Support new students and families through a smooth transition
- Work with teaching, early learning and admin staff, and help with open days and events

ABOUT YOU

- Experience in school enrolments, administration or a similar customer-facing role
- Warm, professional and confident with families and visitors
- Highly organised, with strong attention to detail
- Comfortable with databases and school systems
- Discreet with sensitive information, and respectful of the College's Jewish ethos

To apply: send your résumé and a cover letter to **hr@yavneh.vic.edu.au** by **Thursday 26 November 2026.** Applications will be reviewed as they arrive, so please apply early.

Leibler Yavneh College is committed to child safety and wellbeing. The successful applicant will need a current Working with Children Check and must meet all child safety screening requirements.