



CAMP RAMAH IN CALIFORNIA

At the Max & Pauline Zimmer Conference Center

A Journey for a Lifetime

News from Camp Ramah in California - Summer 2006

Staff Week

June 23, 2006 - 27 Sivan, 5766

Shalom!

I am writing you from Ramah in Ojai where preparations are well underway for session 1 and Gesher A campers to arrive next week. After the arrival of our senior staff last Sunday, our new staff on Wednesday, and our returning staff last night, we are now a staff more than 200 strong preparing for an unforgettable 50th summer at Camp Ramah in California. Staff week preparations include re-learning the Ramah mission, reviewing health and safety standards and procedures, and planning programs that are creative, fun, educational and engaging for kids of all ages.



A Journey for a Lifetime

Ramah Parents Panel

In an effort to continue to partner with our parent community, we've added a special session to this year's staff week: the Ramah parents panel. In a few hours 8 moms and dads of Ramah campers this summer will address our staff, sharing with them why they chose Ramah as the camp for their kids and what are their hopes and fears and dreams for their kids' experiences this summer. I believe this session will be a powerful one both for the parents involved and for all of our staff as they take on the sacred responsibility of caring for and educating hundreds of Jewish children at Ramah this summer.

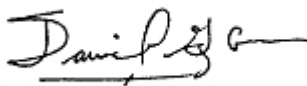


Torah Portion

In this week's Torah portion, Shlach Lecha, we learn about the mitzvah of placing tzitzit on all four- cornered garments "so that you will remember and observe all of My [God's] commandments and to be holy to your God." Such a commandment arises out of an educational premise that the physical world can educate and uplift the spiritual world, that the body can educate the soul, that nothing in this world is beyond God's reach. It reminds me of the Hasidic story about the father who wakes up each morning to discover that his son has been going out in the morning and returning home to start the day. One morning, the father wakes up early and follows the boy to discover that his son has been praying in the woods.

When he returns home, he asks, "my son, why do you go such a long way into the woods to pray? Does it not say in our prayers, "God's glory fills the whole world?" Surely God hears your prayers the same at home as He does in the woods!" "You are right father," replies the son. "God is the same everywhere. But I am not." Surely our campers can find God anywhere in the world, but I pray as the summer approaches that Ramah is a place where they will be different, where the sheer beauty of the physical world of camp can educate and uplift the souls of all those who come to Ojai. Amen.

Shabbat Shalom,



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