

**"Midwest NCSY Jr Regional Shabbaton, South Bend, February 6-8,**

Our mini Shabbatons have gotten such rave reviews that the region wants to join us. Therefore, South Bend NCSY will be hosting a Regional Junior Shabbaton for the first time in over 30 years. The Shabbaton will take place at the Waterford Estates Lodge, South Bend. There will be over 100 teens from all over the Midwest ranging from, Memphis, Kansas City, Minneapolis, Chicagoland, Milwaukee, St. Louis, and Winnipeg. Other highlights include Laser Tag, Bowling, and Roller Skating from Eby's Family & Fun. Plus Ice Skating at "The Ice Box" with a BBQ on Saturday night. This is the Shabbaton that has the region buzzing! Stay tuned for the schedule, pricing, and more information."



**Saturday Night Live! Feb. 7<sup>th</sup> - 8:30pm**  
 Join us for inspiration and entertainment at the Waterford Inn and Suites in Roseland, IN. Enjoy a fabulous Melave Malka meal with an inspirational message and hilarious entertainment. The cost is only \$15 for a wonderful evening of entertainment. Details forthcoming.



**Torah Center Retreat!** Feb. 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup>  
 The Torah Center is joining up with the Midwest Region of Jr. NCSY and having a Shabbaton retreat in South Bend, IN! We'll be energized by NCSY during our meals and davening and have our own special speakers and breakout groups. Is Judaism incompatible with science? Are the Bible stories just myths and metaphors? This is the Shabbaton where you'll find out the answers. We'll be congregating at the Waterford Hotel in Roseland. Be on the lookout for complete information or call 574-234-9092 to find out more.

**Midwest Torah Center  
 2712 S. Twyckenham Dr.  
 South Bend, IN 46614**

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 THE TORAH TELEGRAPH**



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## RABBI'S MESSAGE



Biblical Hebrew is a beautiful language. It is concise and, for those who learn the grammar, quite consistent. Much of the language is built on root words, so when I understand one root, I suddenly have the ability to decipher many variations of that word. But, what is the most fascinating thing about the Hebrew language is that one seemingly minor change in a vowel will greatly affect the meaning of the word. For example, the word "vayishlach" means "he sent" on a mission, while "vayishlach" means "he sent away" never to come back. It's what I call the "tweaking" of language. If I am running through it, I may miss the nuance. But, if I pay attention, I will have a whole new understanding and appreciation. And the truth is that this rule works well with most things.

The Halacha mandates that all of our actions should be "for the sake of Heaven." When we eat, drink, exercise, work, play, etc, all of these actions should be with the intention to better serve G-d. For example, before eating, one should think to oneself, "I'm about to eat this food in order to have energy to serve Hashem." Then one looks at the food and recites the proper blessing, asking, as it were, permission from Hashem to ingest His food. After finishing the meal, one recites the proper "grace after meals," thanking Hashem for His bounty. Another application of this rule would be to think, before starting one's exercise, "I'm exercising so that I will have the energy and overall good health with which to serve Hashem." As one will notice, it is not difficult to fulfill this dictum, it just takes a moment of recognition. The added advantage to this sort of forethought is that my life centers on the mission of serving Hashem and that one will begin to make better choices. Instead of eating the wrong foods, one will make better dietary choices, for that will lead one to have more energy. When working, the focus will not be on "how much money I can make" but rather, "how I will better be able to serve Hashem with my "new found" fortune." When exercising, one won't be working out to become "Mr. Universe;" rather one's only goal will be to remain healthy, so no steroids. The Halacha is asking us to "tweak" our life's choices, not to make gargantuan changes.

Indeed, just as a tweak in a Hebrew conjugation changes a word's intensity, so also a tweak in our daily life will have a great impact on our quality of life. So "tweak on!" Sei gesund,

Rabbi Fred Nebel

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## Highlight from South Bend NCSY Mini Shabbaton

10 kids from our NCSY chapter traveled to Northbrook, IL to join the North Shore Chapter for a Mini Shabbaton. We had 3 kids who went on their very first Shabbaton! Everyone had a great time. The themes of Shabbaton were that "we can overcome our challenges" and "don't be so quick to judge that which we initially see." On Saturday night the group went to an amazing trampoline gym called "Sky High". There was non-stop jumping action, followed by Pizza.



Hey, look mom, I can fly!

**Jewish Values: An Orthodox Approach**– Over 20 people, attended this course. For those who missed it, just go to Youtube.com channel "Rabbi Nebel" Here's what some people had to say about the course.



*"So well put together and beautifully presented. Thank you for the light and guidance. Sincerely, Golde"*



"Good evening Rabbi, I enjoyed your presentation on youtube. I am looking forward to the next lectures. Thank you for sharing the class experience on YouTube. It was very cool. Judy"

"Thanks for letting us enjoy the class remotely. Margalit"



**\*\*\*New Class: The Way of G-d\*\*\***

**Discover:**

- Your purpose in this World
- The actual mechanics of Divine Providence
- What dreams actually mean
- How to talk to an angel
- What learning Torah actually does for a person
- Why the righteous suffer and the wicked prosper
- Why Hashem created evil
- How the Afterlife works
- The process of Reincarnation

It all begins on January 6th at 7pm!

**Shabbaton Jan. 10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup> (New Date!)**

Our last Shabbaton was a grand slam with great singing, dancing, Torah, food and family. Join us for an expected repeat performance and take the excitement of Shabbat back to the rest of your family and friends. Here's our schedule:

**Friday Jan. 10<sup>th</sup>** – Mincha 5:10pm/Meal 6pm/ Lecture 7:45pm– *What There Is To Be Happy About* presented by Rabbi Kuppel Lindow

**Shabbat Jan. 11<sup>th</sup>** – Shacharit 9:30am/ Kiddush-Meal 11:15am/ Lecture 12:30pm *Moshe Had a Little Lamb* presented by Rabbi Fred Nebel / Mincha 5:05pm

**The Pursuit Of Happiness: An Orthodox Perspective Sunday, Jan. 11<sup>th</sup>, 6pm**

Is Happiness really attainable? Is it a feeling of euphoria or something simpler? People are always in the pursuit of happiness, and it is viewed as a G-d-given right, but the question is “how do we get there?” The following phrase has been toted around the Torah Center for a while: “If I’m not happy I’m doing something wrong.” Yet, we find many who are not happy. Come and join us as we discuss issues such as:

- Does Judaism offer anything to add happiness to my life?
- What is the connection between the meaning of life and happiness?
- Are there practical exercises to help one become happier?

Light refreshments will be served.

**“LIKE US” ON FACEBOOK-** MTC is all over the web. You can keep up with us by logging onto [Midwesttorah.org](http://Midwesttorah.org) for our latest blogs and calendar. Or you can go to [Midwest Torah Center fan page on Facebook](#) and “Like” us. Also if you have a child between the ages of 10-18, log onto [Sr NCSY South Bend](#) and/or [Jr NCSY South Bend](#) and “like” that page. That way, you will know the very latest goings-on at MTC. Check out [Youtube.com](#) channel Rabbi Nebel!

## ADMINISTRATOR’S ARTICLE



I find it interesting that the reasons that I decided to become a Shomer Shabbos Jew over a quarter of a century ago are the same reasons that excite me about my Judaism today. Those reasons are the “abc’s” of Judaism. For example: the Mount Sinai story and the fact that the Torah is authored by G-d Himself; the historical anomaly of Jewish existence for 1000s of years without the basics of a nation; the fact the entire universe, in all its grandeur, was created for me; the realization that Judaism has stayed ahead of the societal evolutionary curve for millennia; and so on. When one really contemplates these truths, one can get really excited and motivated about being Jewish. The challenge is remembering the big picture when it seems that Judaism focuses so much on nitty-gritty rules and some less than earth-shattering concepts.

I have felt for many years now that the Torah Center is really for Jews of all walks of life. We offer so many classes or simple shmooz sessions that I feel everyone has the ability to gain something from what we have to offer even though many of our lectures appear on the surface to just talk about the basics. Some people have never known the basics, whether they be basic philosophy, Jewish law, history or traditional texts. Some have forgotten them and wonder why they do what they do. Some thought they knew but realize that there is much they never learned. Some just need refreshers to get them excited again. These are all reasons why we’re here.

Recently, Rabbi Nebel began a five-part series on the basics of Judaism: Belief in G-d, Prayer, The Sabbath, Jewish Observance and Sexuality. The classes were met with great success and enthusiasm. More people attended those classes than any other previous class and they were of all different backgrounds: those with a blank slate of Jewish knowledge to the shomer Shabbos. Because of the variety of attendees, these classes were a mission accomplished type of realization.

I’m very proud that we’re here serving Michiana Jews and helping them come closer to their Judaism and in turn inspiring others. In a short eight years, the Torah Center has become one of the cornerstones of Jewish Michiana and we’re looking to do even more.

In order to do more, we have found that it is nearly impossible to do it all ourselves. I regularly enlist the help of a few individuals when it comes to food preparation. Rabbi Gutnicki has started enlisting parents to do more with NCSY regarding to programming and funding. I’ve even requested a few mothers to help with the children on Shabbat morning, in addition to our regular programming for them, ensuring they have an enjoyable and safe experience at the Torah Center. As we grow, though, we will probably need even more assistance. Therefore, to all of our regular attendees, please consider what you can do for the Torah Center to improve everyone’s experience. To all of you who don’t attend but enjoy our bulletin or simply appreciate what we do, please respond generously to the donation request we sent out in October. Watch the video on the flash drive again and decide the value of a wide spectrum of Jews being inspired about their heritage and carrying on the mission of the Jewish people. To us, it’s invaluable.

Rabbi Kuppel Lindow

## FOR GOODNESS SAKE

I heard a radio commercial the other day for a boys' and girls' club, in which kids foretold their futures, predicting their lives as great doctors, great lawyers, great community leaders, great people. The campaign pitch was for donations to the "Great kids" program. Great.

There's been a push in the past few decades to empower young people to think of themselves as valuable members of society. Starting with the self-esteem movement, we've been intent on teaching kids that they are each valuable, important, and unique, and can make a difference in their lives, the lives of others, and most importantly, can change the world, just by letting themselves shine.

Pop singers chime in, cheerleading from the radio speakers with anthems telling kids they're "superstars," "fireworks," and "beautiful," and encouraging them to "roar" and "be brave."

We're familiar with the "you can grow up to be president" line, but this is more like "remember how special you are, because you will grow up to be someone important." The first reminds kids of the potentials inherent in all of us and this great country if we work hard and persist. The second philosophy teaches kids that they've *already* achieved greatness within themselves; what's left is just to bring that out and let the world see it.

What's wrong with being great? Perhaps it is this philosophy of one's personal greatness rising to the surface that is to blame for the emptiness of our kids' goals, and a concurrent confusion of the idea of greatness with fame. A recent study found that the number one goal of children is to become famous. This would speak to the horrific trend of teenager suicide as a result of being bullied in school or online: in today's culture of glorification of the icon, if a child perceives that they are not liked or popular, then what kind of life is left him? So much emphasis in today's world is put on being popular, on the cult of the famous. The goals that are most highly sought after are fame, popularity, and admiration of the masses.

So being "great" has come to mean being "famous" or well liked; there is certainly the implication of a public manifesto or wide-spread recognition of one's actions.

If we look to the Torah's definition of greatness, however, we see it means something completely different. For us, achieving greatness means achieving goodness. When did we stop teaching our kids that a *good* life is a life worth living?

You have to look far and wide in the world for lessons on being virtuous, and internet searches about "being good" will lead you only to sites with religious content. (In fact, a Google search for "greatness vs. goodness" will prompt Google to ask if you REALLY mean "greatness AND goodness" instead.)

In a way greatness as a goal is easier than goodness. Achieving greatness means focusing on yourself, whereas goodness is all about other people. Greatness means concentrating on your own life, your education, dreams, goals, and abilities. Goodness often means thinking of yourself second. It means being a mensch, which is often quite hard. It means being sensitive to others' moods and feelings. It means smiling when we don't feel like it, speaking a kind word when we'd rather snipe.

Most of all, in secular life greatness implies publicity, while greatness and goodness to us Jews is achievable through —maybe even requires —modesty, humility, and quietness.

## NCSY

### Strikes and Spares – Sunday, Jan. 11, 12-2pm

Back by popular demand

Strikes and Spares with new attractions!

Bowling, go-karts, mini-golf and bumper cars

Cost: only \$10 (includes snacks) Located at 5419 North Grape Road, Mishawaka, Indiana. For more info call Rabbi Akiva at (574) 383-9524



### Lounge Night – Wed., Jan. 21, 6:30-8:30pm

South Bend NCSY Lounge Nights keep getting better all the time. Our special feature this year has been our guest

speakers. This month's Lounge Night will feature former NCSY alumnus and innovator of "Bridging the Gap", Lisa Levin. She will be talking about her days of NCSY, her own journey in Judaism, and updates and how we can get involved in the "Bridging the Gap" project. Be there! This will be a lounge night for the record books.

### Latte N' Learning at Krispy Kreme, Jan. 7 and 28, 4-4:45pm



Our first Latte N' Learning was a big hit and left the NCSYers screaming for more. This month we are going to be enjoying amazing company, doughnuts, and learning about relevant topics for today's generation. For more info and transportation please contact Rabbi Akiva Gutnicki at [\(574\) 383-9524](tel:5743839524).

### DONATIONS

Thanks to all those who contribute to MTC and insure that we can continually provide inspirational programming

#### Kiddush

Michall Goldman in honor of R. Danny's birthday  
Rabbi Akiva & Chavie Gutnicki in honor of Rabbi Gutnicki's mother's Jahrzeit  
Yanki Cohen in honor of his son's birthday  
Charles & Susan Ballinger

#### General

James Fischhoff  
Lea Goldman  
Moishe & Tira Gubin

#### General cont.

William Hostetler  
Dave & Barb Lerman  
Shannon & Lisa Levin  
Victor Marquis  
Keith & Margarita Mattingly  
Renee & Tevy Mindick  
Maryo Pasarel  
Sam & Alice Saffren  
Jeff & Arielle Sax  
Jeffrey Stephens

#### Refuah Shelaima

Mark & Janine Orenstein  
for Rabbi Nebel

#### NCSY

Mark & Janine Orenstein

#### Endowment Fund

Irvin & Minette Brown  
Jeffrey Stephens  
Rabbi & Mrs. Kuppel  
Lindow in memory of Irv Brown

#### Library

Sam & Alice Saffren  
Avi Zisook

#### Shalosh Seudot

Rabbi Fred & Chaya  
Nebel

startled, wondering what happened. Moments later I heard a news update broadcasted on the bus that two Arabs, disguised as Rabbis, were shooting automatic weapons in the center of town, the exact place that I had been heading. I was shocked and felt very fortunate that I was not there. The next day, while learning the Torah portion of the week, parshat Vayera, I was studying the story of Abraham who had three angels, pretending to be Arabs, as his guests. One of the details mentioned in the story was that Abraham escorted his guests. The commentators questioned why the Torah included this detail of Abraham accompanying his guests. They quote the Talmud which states **“from here we know that if you accompany your guest, you’re literally protecting a person from danger.”** I couldn’t believe the words that I just saw. Just one day prior to reading this part of the Torah, a Rabbi had done this and “saved me from danger.” Had he not walk with me, I would have arrived at the center of town and been in the middle of danger, where the unfortunate incident occurred. I don’t know what message G-d was sending to me, but one thing was clear in my mind: G-d was watching me.

Fast forward 10 years, I was caught in traffic, in New York City, on the highway, so I decided to take the side streets and avoid traffic. I didn’t notice that I was low on gas, and a few moments later, my car stalled. I realized that I needed to fill my car with gas, so I put on my hazard lights in middle of traffic. I started to get out of my car and then, not a moment later, a lady brings me a gas canister so that I could use to put gas in my car. I asked her, *“Why are you carrying a gas canister with you?”* She explained to me that she also ran out of gas some time ago. She did not want to see anyone else in the same predicament, so she decided to always have a gas canister with her to help anyone if that situation arose. I was blown away. I said to myself, “What are the odds that a lady with a gas canister, would arrive at the exact moment my car stalled?” I was convinced she had to be some sort of hidden angel. In my mind I was sure that G-d was working His mysterious ways.

The reality is that G-d is watching over us, including what we perceive as the most trivial and seemingly mundane things. The problem is, that it is hard for people to believe that G-d is watching over us when we are shopping at Walmart or the like. Therefore, “how does one attain awareness that G-d is constantly involved in our lives?” Rabbi Avigdor Miller, of blessed memory, was a person who walked with the awareness of G-d. How did he acquire this trait? He would, daily, take a twenty minute walk to observe the beauties of creation. He would notice amazing aspects in ordinary things, that we take for granted. For example, in a live Q & A, R. Miller was asked, “why does a leaf turn red during the fall season?” He explained “that red is a sharp and contrasting color that our eyes are very sensitive to. That is why warning signals are red. For example the red light, a stop sign, and a red alert. How do birds know when to migrate south? When they see the leaves changing red, that is their “red alert” that they must migrate south.” Rabbi Miller became sensitive to little details like these by taking a little extra time to observe life. As I internalize & practice this method, it allows me to see G-d’s involvement in the minutia of my life. Once a person realizes how much involvement G-d really has, as opposed to what appears on the surface, one will have a stronger connection with G-d. All it takes is a little extra effort to notice the small details...And that will make the biggest difference.

Rabbi Akiva Gutnicki



Most of the “great” acts that were performed by our foremothers and fathers were not in public, but rather in private. Abraham left his attendants behind to sacrifice his son Yitzchak alone, and told no one about the deed; Rochel sacrificed her happiness with Yaakov to her sister Leah in private rather than spill the beans. Moshe’s first meeting with Hashem took place in private, as was Yaakov’s meeting with the angel who wrestled him, and as do all occurrences of prophecy. The most important moments for the high priest during Yom Kippur services in the Temple occurred in the privacy of the Holy of Holies.

Great deeds that “ordinary” Jews do are also best done in modesty. The second highest level of charity, according to Maimonides, is when there is complete anonymity on both the part of the giver and receiver. The pinnacle of our prayers, the Shemona Esrai, is performed quietly. The same applies to all mitzvos that we do, from learning Torah to reaching out to others: we are urged to “walk privately with G-d,” who Himself modeled modesty by speaking from inside the Tabernacle. In fact, the greatest and most public event of our nation’s history, receiving the Torah, fell short of perfection, very precisely because it was so public. Rashi tells us that the first set of tablets, because they were given with such fanfare, publicity and convulsions of nature, were affected by the evil eye and thus doomed to destruction, in contrast to the second set which had permanence. “There is nothing more beautiful,” he concludes, “than modesty.”

So modesty and quietness is required in our performance of the mitzvos. This idea runs counter to what we think of as “great,” but only if we confuse “greatness” with “recognition by other people.”

To us, personal achievement is not about others seeing us accomplishing good, but our doing it for the sake of Heaven alone. The mitzvos are the method of achieving our highest goal in life: forging a relationship with Hashem, which is a private bond. That’s why it may seem so difficult to many: because it goes against the world’s yardstick for achievement. It runs counter to what the world says is of value. It’s difficult to put such a goal foremost in our lives.

Maybe that’s why it’s the mark of true greatness.

Chaya Nebel



### THE LITTLE THINGS MAKES THE BIGGEST DIFFERENCE

A fundamental belief is that G-d is involved in every detail in the universe. This belief is supported by the statement in our daily morning prayers, in the Blessing of Shema, which states, “He who in His goodness renews each day, constantly, the first act of Creation.” It is up to us whether we acknowledge G-d’s involvement in the world and our lives.

Over 20 years ago while at yeshiva in Israel, I was planning to meet up with my friends after having finished my evening studies. But as “luck” would have it, I arrived almost 2 hours later than intended, as I was wrangled into washing dishes at my Rabbi’s house. Upon finishing, he insisted on walking with me out to the bus stop and waited with me for an hour. Finally, while on the bus heading towards the center of town, outside my window, I saw helicopters, ambulances, S.W.A.T teams, etc. I was

## January 2015/5775

**Sunday      Monday      Tuesday      Wednesday      Thursday      Friday      Shabbat**

Can vegetarians eat animal crackers?

It is incredible how much intelligence is used in this world to prove nonsense.

4	9:00am Shacharit 9:30am Jewish Law	5	9:30am Biblical Hebrew 12:30pm Notre Dame 7pm Book of Joshua 8pm Jewish Values	6	10am Legends of the Talmud 7pm The Way of Hashem	7	10:30am Women's only class 4pm Latte & Learning 7pm Jewish Ethics	8	10am Book of Joshua 7pm Guide to the Perplexed	9	5:10pm Mincha 5:15pm Lighting	3	9:30am Shacharit 11:15am Kiddush 5:00pm Mincha
11	9:00am Shacharit 9:30am Jewish Law 12pm NCSY Goes to Strikes & Spares 6pm The Pursuit of Happiness	12	9:30am Biblical Hebrew 12:30pm Notre Dame 7pm Book of Joshua	13	10am Legends of the Talmud 7pm The Way of Hashem	14	10:30am Women's only class 12pm Lunch & Learn 7pm Jewish Ethics	15	10am Book of Joshua 7pm Guide to the Perplexed	16	5:20pm Mincha 5:22pm Lighting	17	9:30am Shacharit 11:15am Kiddush 5:15pm Mincha
18	9:00am Shacharit 9:30am Jewish Law	19	9:30am Biblical Hebrew 12:30pm Notre Dame 7pm Book of Joshua	20	10am Legends of the Talmud 7pm The Way of Hashem	21	Rosh Chodesh Shevat 10:30am Women's only class 6:30pm NCSY Lounge Night	22	10am Book of Joshua 7pm Guide to the Perplexed	23	5:30pm Mincha 5:31pm Lighting	24	9:30am Shacharit 11:15am Kiddush 5:25pm Mincha
25	9:00am Shacharit 9:30am Jewish Law	26	9:30am Biblical Hebrew 12:30pm Notre Dame 7pm Book of Joshua	27	10am Legends of the Talmud 7pm The Way of Hashem	28	10:30am Women's only class 12pm Lunch & Learn 4pm Latte & Learning 7pm Jewish Ethics	29	10am Book of Joshua 7pm Guide to the Perplexed	30	5:35pm Mincha 5:40pm Lighting	31	9:30am Shacharit 11:15am Kiddush 5:30pm Mincha

## February 2015/5775

**Sunday      Monday      Tuesday      Wednesday      Thursday      Friday      Shabbat**

1	9:00am Shacharit 9:30am Jewish Law NCSY Goes Snow Tubing 	2	9:30am Biblical Hebrew 12:30pm Notre Dame 7pm Book of Joshua	3	10am Legends of the Talmud 7pm The Way of Hashem	4	Tu B'shevat 10:30am Women's only class 6:30pm NCSY Tu B'shevat Special	5	10am Book of Joshua 7pm Guide to the Perplexed	9	5:10pm Mincha 5:15pm Lighting	14	9:30am Shacharit 11:15am Kiddush 5:05pm Mincha
8	9:00am Shacharit	9	9:30am Biblical Hebrew 12:30pm Notre Dame 7pm Book of Joshua	10	10am Legends of the Talmud 7pm The Way of Hashem	11	10:30am Women's only class 12pm Lunch & Learn 7pm Jewish Ethics	12	10am Book of Joshua 7pm Guide to the Perplexed	13	5:10pm Mincha 5:15pm Lighting Sr NCSY Yarchai Kallah Illinois	14	9:30am Shacharit 11:15am Kiddush 5:05pm Mincha Sr NCSY Yarchai Kallah Illinois

