



“We All Work For The Same Boss” 40,000 Downloads And Counting

Torah Umesorah’s Hochberger Chinuch.org, is the destination for rabbeim and moros to share their educational materials with other mechanchim and parents across the world for the sole benefit of all our children. In this article we talk to Rabbi Binyamin Plotzker of Monsey, New York, a veteran rebbi and contributor to the site.

By Rabbi Yehuda Boruch Kamenetzky Rabbi Binyomin Plotzker has an energy that almost speaks to the listener. “How can this create a deeper meaning for my *talmidim*?” Living on three separate continents, each for a significant amount



of time, has given him the opportunity to realize a certain global mentality which equates all the *talmidim* he has encountered over the years with the penetrating question, “What is the deeper meaning behind the details of our lives?”

Growing up in Monsey, NY, in the 1970s, he attended Yeshiva Spring Valley, where his mother was a beloved teacher. He moved on to *mesivta* at Yeshiva Shaarei Torah, then headed by Rabbi Berel Wein, and later attended Yeshivas Toras Moshe in Yerushalayim. During his seven years there, he grew to understand his role in the world and gained *hashkofas hachaim*, which he tries to impart to his *talmidim*. He began to realize by observing his *rabbeim* and talking things over with them that the seemingly unimportant details that govern the way people live their lives are not so simple indeed. There is depth to every action we perform every day. The *hashkofos* he lived while in Toras Moshe have become a part of his life. One of his sons is currently in his fourth year learning at Toras Moshe.

Understanding the meaning of what we do on a daily basis and coming to the realization that what we do matters, says Rabbi Plotzker, is as much a necessary factor for *rabbeim* to impart to their *talmidim* as the material itself. Otherwise, their daily activities are just by rote.

Wherever Rabbi Plotzker teaches, whether in Gateshead, England, for seven years, or back in his hometown of Monsey, where he is now the 6th grade *rebbei* in

Yeshiva Darchei Noam, he tries to connect meaning to the subject material at hand. In fact, while living in Gateshead, aside from being a *rebbei* in the local middle school, he gave a *shiur* to *beis medrash bochurim* on *Shabbos* entitled *Toamehah Chaim Zochu*. His wife would prepare some *Shabbos* delicacies for the *shiur*, based on this well-known dictum regarding the power of tasting the special *Shabbos* foods. Although his students enjoyed that aspect of the *shiur*, he related to them an alternative meaning: “*Toamehah*, if one understands the reasoning, the *ta’am*, behind the things they do, then and only then, *chaim zochu*, they are *zoche* to a meaningful life.” That premise comes out clearly in his over 50 submissions to chinuch.org.

Take, for example, The *Gedolim* Book Report (Folder# Y_01438), where each *talmid* has a chance to present to the rest of his or her class the relevant details of a *gadol*’s life. However they also must relate to the class the *middah* or *hanhogah* that the *gadol* exemplified that relates most closely to them. This way, it is not only about the details, it is about personal growth as well, and provides a chance for the *talmid* to personalize his or her relationship with that *gadol*.

Additionally, the 80 page unit on *Oz Yoshir* (Folder B_01760) includes worksheets on the *pesukim*, a one page double-sided translation sheet which students can place in their *siddurim* and multiple choice tests reviewing the translations. The worksheets include a linear translation of *pesukim* and *Rashi* that the students learned inside, and short *vertlach* expounding on the material to further the *talmid*’s appreciation for Hashem’s wondrous ways.

Another wonderful contribution is the unit on *Tu B’Shevat* (Folder# L_01211). Rabbi Plotzker expounds on the *posuk*, “*Ki ho’odom eitz hasodeh*.” He provides many insightful *peshotim* on the *posuk*. They are tied to the fact that we can learn how to grow if we analyze the life process of a tree. With almost 3,300 downloads, the feedback on this submission has been remarkable. One user from a *kiruv* oriented school commented that one student, who previously was unimpressed with anything related to *Yiddishkeit*, became more receptive after that *Tu B’Shevat* lesson.

Rabbi Plotzker is a strong believer in utilizing technology to enhance *chinuch* materials and create interactive items which will be palatable to today’s youth.

Rabbi Plotzker remains an ardent contributor to chinuch.org. Even as he spoke, he was in the process of upload-

Recently, Raanana Deputy Mayor Chaim Goldman took the day off from his everyday occupations and municipal obligations to join 150 other Kapparos at Pine and Vine, 4-7

volunteer drivers who came with their own jeeps and four-wheel drive terrain vehicles to take part in a jeeping trip for Ezer Mizion’s summer camp for cancer patients and their families.

Givat Olga’s seashore looked like a military gathering site. 160 ATVs waited anxiously for their guests. Passengers were assigned to each jeep, and after brief organization, the convoy set off northward. The people on the jeeps weren’t soldiers, but rather 150 of Ezer Mizion’s children and adults with cancer, along with their families.

The 160 volunteer drivers reported for “work” on their own time and at their own expense to take part in Ezer Mizion’s jeep trip – a trip that has become one of the high points of the annual summer camp for children and adults with cancer, which marked its twentieth year this summer.

The nightmare that has entered the lives of cancer patients has virtually destroyed every smile in their being. Only discomfort, fear, pain and terror inhabit their inner world. Their spirit weakens and is unable to partner with the body in its battle for life. Ezer Mizion fights this depression by creating “fun days,” birthday parties, retreats and trips.

Deputy Mayor Goldman, who has been volunteering with Ezer Mizion as a jeep driver for the last decade, led a line-up of jeeps that took campers from Givat Olga through scenic routes, fields and dirt roads to the Takun Fortress. Each jeep carried a child or parent with cancer together with his

Ezer Mizion: A Hand in the Dark

Ezer Mizion’s Jeeping Trip



family.

“To wake up in the morning without asking myself, ‘What did I do for somebody else?’ just doesn’t happen to me,” said Goldman. “That’s why I volunteer regularly. It keeps my life in the right proportions.”

Jeep drivers came from all walks of life. They included clothing retail owner David Golbary and CEO of Harel

Technologies Effie Cha’oso. Ben Hauman also left his business for the day and came with his jeep to volunteer.

“I joined the trip after I read about it online,” said Hauman. “The way I see it, the more I give, the more I get.”

One unifying feeling pervaded the entire group: bringing a bit of sunshine into the lives of these families.

This was the second jeeping mission that Deputy Mayor Goldman participated in this summer season as part of Ezer Mizion’s summer camp programs. His first jeeping trip was facilitated by Ezer Mizion’s Mental Health Division, enabling a group of adult rehab clients to taste a day of fun within the confines of their limitations.

“We are delighted by the warm response of volunteer drivers who gave up a day at work or a day off to join us and drive our campers at this special jeeping excursion,” said Dr. Bracha Zisser, director of Ezer Mizion’s cancer support services at the Donald Berman Rehabilitation Center. “Their involvement and giving has become an integral part of our summer camp experience and is part of the unforgettable, energizing experience our summer camps create for cancer patients and their families.”

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For further info, call 718. 853.8400 or visit www.ezermizion.org.



ing some new materials. Additionally, he is presently putting together Powerpoint presentations on the entire *perek Eilu Mitziot*, which he plans on uploading upon completion. While he acknowledges the hard work *mechanchim* put into developing their lessons and materials, he decries the attitude of those who wish not to share their hard work for the sake of *Klal Yisroel*. If one’s principal asks them to share a worksheet with a fellow teacher, it is obvious that they would. If so, asks Rabbi Plotzker, “Are we not all really working for the same Boss? So, instead of walls separating our classrooms, there are roads, cities, and even countries. Our real Principal wants us to share His Torah with His other *talmidim*. Who are we to say no?”

With close to 40,000 downloads of his

materials worldwide, imagine the impact a *rebbei* can have on *talmidim* far beyond his own classroom. When viewing his personal chinuch.org statistics, Rabbi Plotzker commented that he didn’t know that Jews lived in some of the locations where his materials were downloaded. He found it rather humorous to relate that his nephew in Gibraltar come home from *yeshiva* with *parshah* sheets and *divrei Torah* from Uncle Binyomin. Furthermore, if a *rebbei* produces quality materials, the time that another *rebbei* can save and devote to other preparations by using the already produced worksheets is beneficial for all.

We wish Rabbi Plotzker success with his *talmidim* in his classroom and around the globe, and look forward to his continued contributions to the study of Torah.