

Education

Last month I asked about the purpose of education. I received the following answer from David Wiseman:

The purpose of education is to learn the Torah, and all else will follow thereafter.

"Thy commandments make me wiser than mine enemies: for they are ever with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers; for Thy testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than mine elders, because I have kept Thy precepts." Ps. 119:98-100 (JPS)

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Matt. 6:33 (KJV)

P.S. for more on this, read all of Pirkey Avot. They go further than I would with this idea, but still some good thoughts. One of the sages there said that you should only study secular subjects after you have satisfied yourself from the wellspring of Torah. So once you're satisfied with your amount of studying, having only studied the Torah, then you can study secular subjects.

Why?

For my English class I wrote a paper on the Messianic community at Sukkot. I have posted it on emidrash.net for anyone who would like to read it:

<http://www.emidrash.net/NewsLetter/SukkotCommunity.pdf>

For this paper I had to interview several people. One of the things that I was instructed to do when framing my interview questions was to avoid the question "why?". The reason interviewers are told to avoid this question is because it sounds intimidating. Why does this question sound so intimidating compared to other questions?

The answer to this question lies in how each kind of question can be answered. If I ask "Who was the first President of the United States?" you could easily answer "George Washington." If I were to ask "How is the President elected?" it would only require a knowledge of some facts to explain the process. But the question "Why did the people choose George Washington to be President?" could not be easily answered. "Who?", "What?", "When?", "Where?", and "How?" can be answered with facts. But to answer the question "Why?" requires a deeper search. The reason that the people chose Washington to be President is influenced by the people's own goals and beliefs. They did it because such a decision agreed with their own convictions. The question "Why?" reveals the identity of a man. It cannot be answered with mere facts. It must be answered with Truth.

So, my next question is: Why do you believe the Bible? How do you know that the Bible is Truth? I believe most Christians will be confronted with this question sometime in their lives. We need to be prepared to give an answer. So what is your answer? Why?

Midrash Newsletter

October 2008