

Student Dvar Torah - Parashat Nitzavim
By Vivian Cohen & Shelley Shamah – Grade 8

In this week's Parashah, the Torah tells us "choose life!" (30;19). Why is the Torah telling us something so obvious? We would think that it would be the clear choice to choose life over any other temptation. The answer is that sometimes our yetzer harah steers us towards unhealthy temporary pleasures, even when this can be a matter of life or death in the long run. The way to prevent this from happening is by thinking before we act. On every Shabbat we say לכה דודי written by Rabbi Shlomo Halevi Alkabetz. In it he writes "סוף מעשה במחשבה תחילה" - literally translated as "The final act, in thought first". If we want our actions to be good we have to think about them first, we have to look at the bigger picture and "choose life". Think for a second! Is your life really worth a harmful temporary pleasure?