

# Make a T'SHUVA BOARD



by Sherry Schoenwald

Teaching our younger children about the “fear of the Lord” and about “repentance” can be a challenging endeavor. These are difficult concepts even for adults. The T'SHUVA BOARD is a tool to help younger children visualize some topics that are often awkward to explain. The idea is based on an excerpt from Ethics of the Fathers. One of the Sages is recorded as having taught:

*If we don't want to sin, we must remember three things –*

1. God sees everything we do
2. God hears everything we say
3. God writes it all down in a book

The more we understand these three things, and the surety of our accountability to God, the more it should affect the desires of our hearts as well as our actions.

Doing this activity during the Ten Days of Awe is a good way to teach our children that God only gives us a set period of time to repent (the days of our lives) and then He no longer grants us that opportunity. And since none of us have a guarantee of our length of days, our lives should be characterized before God by a continual spirit of repentance. And God has assured us of His continual forgiveness.

## Directions for the board

Supplies:

Small white board—1 for each child (\$5-10 at Walmart depending on your choice of size)

1" Velcro dots (Walmart fabric section)

Laminate sheets, optional (Walmart or office supply)

A dry erase marker

Draw or color in a triangle on the back of the whiteboard. Laminate the puzzle pieces of the eyes, ears and book (see next page). Have the children color them beforehand if they can do so and still be neat. Otherwise leave it plain. If they are able, they can cut each piece out after you laminate it. Be sure to assist if necessary. The important thing is to make sure they are able to recognize what the piece is. This project works best if you make one board and puzzle set per child.

Attach one side of the Velcro dot to each corner of the triangle on the back of the white board and the other side of the Velcro dot on the back of each shape. They may require a little extra glue to withstand the pulling that is likely to happen.

As far as the  
east is from  
the west, so  
far has He  
removed our  
transgressions  
from us.

*Ps. 103:12*

As the children put the puzzle pieces on the triangle they can memorize the three things that they represent. Then as they recall their day during the evening Bible time or even throughout the day, they can turn over the whiteboard and write or draw something they know they did or said that was wrong. We need to be sensitive to our children's privacy. If there are things they don't feel comfortable putting on the board, you can just choose to point out a minor issue in their behavior. This way they can learn the principles without feeling shame. Also, each child's board only needs to be seen by him. None of us like having our sins publicized. In this case, private time with each child may be more appropriate.

After spending some time discussing the meaning of repentance and they understand and feel genuine sorrow, they can erase what was written on the board. Then you can explain that God says that he does not hold us to account for our sins if we truly repent. Psalm 103:12 “As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.” You could use the whiteboard to memorize the verse by writing it out and then erasing one word at a time.

**Variation:** You could make additional puzzle pieces in sets of three. For example 3 different cars, 3 different types of food, 3 different buildings, etc. Just cut them out of a magazine and glue them on same-size pieces of construction paper. Then laminate. It would be fun to add a new and different set each night to keep their interest up. If you have several children, these extra puzzle sets can be shared—especially if you do up a good number of them. Be sure each child has his own set of the eyes/ears/book. Shuffle the puzzle pieces. They can identify the sets and place each set on the triangle. Then ask them which set is the most important—the cars, the buildings, the food, or the eyes/ear/book. The puzzle should be saved for your special family time each day during the Ten Days of Awe. It is also a good quiet activity for the younger ones to do as you continue to discuss deeper issues with the older ones.



