



Shmuel Bass

# TORAH ACADEMY

of San Antonio

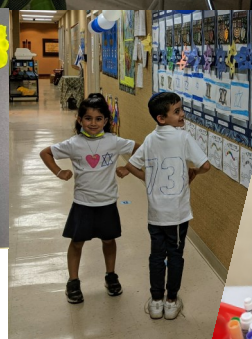
**Happy 73rd Birthday  
Israel**  
**חג עצמאות שמח**

**3000  
YEARS OLD,  
73  
YEARS YOUNG**

Happy Birthday Israel



StandWithUs



TASA celebrated **Yom HaZikaron** (Israel's Memorial Day) and **Yom Ha'Atzmaut** (Independence Day) in a COVID friendly way. Grades 2-7 were privileged to have a special Zoom class with Israeli Tour Guide Avi Baldasar of Jerusalem (a friend of Rabbi Marrus), who spoke to them and showed them a special slide presentation about the history of the State of Israel, as well as his military service. He also explained what Memorial Day means in Israel and how it differs from Memorial Day in the U.S. The students watched Israeli highways and streets come to a full-stop, as the siren of Yom Hazikaron began. For Yom Ha'Atzmaut our Israeli native and Ivrit teacher Morah Keren Ashkenazi prepared an afternoon of fun and games, and also



decorated our school so beautifully (with the help of some students) in **Kachol V'Lavan** (Blue and White, the colors of Israel). The students also learned Hebrew

songs associated with these days. We thank Morah Keren for bringing the **Avirah** (feeling of) Eretz Yisrael to our school.

## Fraction Frenzy

Do you remember learning fractions in 2nd and 3rd grade? At TASA, 2nd Grade students recently finished a long fractions unit which focused on equivalent fractions as well as adding and subtracting fractions with like-denominators. As they finish this unit, 3rd grade students are moving into a similar fractions unit, where they must manipulate fractions to have equivalent denominators so they can add and subtract fractions appropriately.

TASA secular studies will be conducting our annual ITBS (Iowa Test of Basic Skills) the first week of May. ITBS is an intricate part of learning, where data drives student instruction for both the school and for TASA Accreditation. It is important for students to be on time to school and ready to do their best on standardized testing.

# What's New TASA Crew!



## Coming Soon!!

- \* **1st Grade Siddur Celebration** - Thursday, May 6th.
- \* **2nd Grade Chumash Celebration** - Thursday, May 13th.
- \* **Shavout** - Monday, May 17th & Tuesday, May 18th - **No School!**
- \* **7th Grade Graduation** - Friday, May 21st
- \* **2021 Casino Night** - Sunday May 23rd.
- \* **End of 4th Quarter & School Year** - Friday, May 28th.

## FROM THE DEAN'S DESK

### The Bully, Bullied and Bystander Parshat Tazria-Metzora



This week's double portion of *Tazria-Metzora* is primarily dedicated to the laws of *Tzaraat* (*Leprosy*). In ancient times, a person would sometimes be afflicted with *Tzaraat* either on their person, clothing or home. This malady was not a "physical medical malady" but rather a spiritual malady that was meant to awaken the afflicted to change their behavior.

Our rabbis teach that the *Tzaraat* came primarily as a result of the sin of *Loshon Hara*, *Motzie Shem Ra* and *Rechilus* (speaking evil of others and gossip). The purpose of this skin ailment was to get the attention of the perpetrator and have them go through a process of self-introspection, quarantine-solitude, prayer and mend their ways.

Rabbi Yisrael Meir Hakaohen Kagan also known as the *Chofetz Chaim* (1838-1933 Belarus) famously wrote the *Shmiras Halashon* - a book on the laws of being careful with our speech. This book is based on the verse in Psalms (34:12-15) "*Guard your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking deceitfully. Shun evil and do good, seek peace and pursue it.*" The essential idea in his magnum opus is that we must do everything in our power to be mindful of our speech and stay away from speaking badly about others. We must actively guard ourselves from this terrible trait.

*The Talmud (Archin 15b)* says "Loshon Hara "kills" three people; the subject-person, the speaker and the listener".

The explanation is (1) the one who is spoken about, because his reputation is ruined (2) the one who speaks Loshon Hara, because he transgresses and lowers himself spiritually (3) the one who listens to the Loshon Hara, because he is providing the speaker with the opportunity to transgress. In other words, the onus of responsibility lies not only with the "Speaker" but also with the bystanders who listen and give him/her the opportunity to spread the gossip.

In recent years, much focus has been dedicated to the sad and unacceptable act of Bullying. It is not okay in any

format and we must work together to protect children and adults alike from its dangerous and destructive force. While we will never be able to control what everyone may or may not say, we can educate our children and students to not participate in Bullying in any shape or form.

The lesson derived from our Parshah is clear; the "Listener" also gets "killed" by listening and enabling the bad behavior to continue. For when there is no one participating or listening the evil doer will cease to do so. To requote the Talmud "Bullying "kills" three people; the Bullied, Bully and the Bystander".

*Shabbat Shalom*

*Rabbi Y. Marrus*

