



Shmuel Bass

TORAH ACADEMY

of San Antonio

SUKKOT CARNIVAL BRINGS HOLIDAY JOY

BEREISHEET 5781

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TASA students enjoyed a beautiful outdoor Sukkot Carnival in the Rodfei Sukkah. "While we couldn't do some of the activities we normally do every year, we wanted to create a fun and Covid-19 friendly Sukkot activity" said Rabbi Marrus, Dean of Students. "The Middle School students took charge, organizing the booths and running the entire the carnival from top to

bottom", said Mrs. Diric, Dir. of General Studies. "We are so proud of their efforts and leadership abilities," she said.



Operation Motivation: BOOKS!!

Our Kindergarten and 1st graders are TASA's budding readers. We have devised a way to encourage reading while allowing for smooth transitioning between classes. Here's how it works: Twice a week, our students choose two books that pique their interests.

They keep these books in a special book bag on their own desks.

After each class, students hear the clean up bell, and are expected to put away all papers and supplies. If they clean up quickly, they can take out their special book bag and sit quietly with their books.

They really look forward to their "library" days. They can't wait to see what books are available. Our library is filled with picture books, and easy to read books on all levels. More than 50% of our books were purchased with Scholastic points! The class earns points for free books from every Scholastic order placed by a parent, so thank you and keep buying! It fosters an excitement for reading, and helps build our library!

Lulav & Etrog Shake



What's New TASA Crew!

FROM THE DEAN'S DESK

Let there Be Light! Parshat Bereisheet



With the holiday of *Simchat Torah* behind us, we now turn our focus on the new cycle of *Torah* reading, as we read again the first portion, *Bereisheet*. Our commentaries explain that the *Torah* is meant to be a book of instruction for us. Although it does contain history, stories, and many other details, it is primarily a book of instruction, as the Hebrew word *Torah* comes from the word *Ho'raha*-instruction. Therefore, every word and verse teaches us important lessons of how to live our lives in a G-dly manner.

We are told that Hashem created the world "*B'Asarah Ma'amarot* - with Ten Utterances". Almighty G-d did not create the world with physical labor, rather, by uttering the commands found in the account of Creation in *Bereisheet*. As we read the account of creation and Adam and Chava (Eve), we also read of the first Mitzvah given to them "but of the tree of knowledge of Good and Bad, you shall not eat". Nonetheless, our sages do not see this as the first Mitzvah per se, as this was a specific command to them, not all of humanity. The first Mitzvah in the *Torah* as discussed by the *Rishonim* (codifiers) is *Peru U'Revu*-"be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth". Others count the Mitzvah of *Rosh Chodesh* (commandment of maintaining the Lunar calendar in the Book of Shemot) as the actual first Mitzvah in the count of the "613 Mitzvot", as it was the first Mitzvah given to the Jewish Nation as a whole, just prior to the Exodus.

But when we look closely, we see that the actual first command or words spoken by G-d in the *Torah* are "*Yehi Ohr*-Let there be light". Simply understood, this was the beginning of the creation, when G-d created light as the precursor to separating the "Night and Day".

But is there perhaps a lesson to be learned of WHY the first G-dly utterance is "Let there be Light"?

When we think of our role as human beings and more specifically as Jews, what is it that we are supposed to accomplish? What is the ultimate reason for the Creation? The answer our sages tell us, is to create a dwelling place for Hashem in this world. To bring holiness and G-dliness into every aspect of the physical world. We are enjoined to bring hope and light to every living being, or as the prophet tells us "to be a shining light onto the nations of the worlds" (Isaiah 49:6).



Coming Soon!!

- * **Monday, October 19th** - Cognia Reaccreditation—Students Zoom Meeting during regular school hours
- * **Tuesday, October 20th** - Cognia Reaccreditation - Parents Zoom Meeting @6pm
- * **Monday, November 2nd** - Professional Development, No School

At the Jewish Day School of San Antonio-TASA, we view this directive as the cornerstone of our mission and vision of our educational philosophy. We aspire to prepare our students, so they can become future ambassadors of light for their families and communities. For all the study, academics, Mitzvot, and lessons, need to lead us in the direction of infusing everything with a Higher Purpose. Perhaps, this is the reason why the first utterance by Hashem is "Let there be light". Because without radiating light and hope to others, what would be the point of all of humanity?

Shabbat Shalom!
Rabbi Y. Marrus

SAVE THE DATE!!

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Nov. 9 & 10

Annual Matchathon

Get Involved, We need YOU!



We are still on the look out for volunteers to join PTO.

Please reach out to TASA Administration if you're interested.

" Together we can do so much!"