



Shmuel Bass

TORAH ACADEMY

of San Antonio

Semester 1—Hebrew Assessment Completed

Rabbi Y. Marrus, Dean of Students and Director of Judaic Studies, recently completed a Hebrew Assessment on every child in our program. This assessment done at the very beginning of the school year, at the end of the 1st semester and at the end of the 2nd Semester, allows our school to track the Hebrew reading growth of all our TASA students.

"This year, more than in previous years, this assessment was absolutely critical to us understanding what the educational gaps were in Hebrew reading, and putting together a plan of action to close them by bolstering the Hebrew reading level in our school. Many students had forgotten their Alef Bet and Nekudot and had to be retaught in an effort to close these gaps" said Rabbi Marrus. "Thank G-d, we have already seen much improvement and we look forward to continued growth and success of our students" he said.

Sefer Beraishit Celebration

In Judaics, Kinder and 1st Graders celebrated the completion of learning the book of Beraishit, the first book of the Torah, from their weekly Parshah lessons.

All students reflected on their favorite story/section, and drew their interpretations. They also enjoyed preparing an edible Torah craft!

"With the festive music and the spirit of celebration in the air, it was a day to remember!", said Mrs. Endzweig.



To **Mr. Nammie Ichilov** for being appointed as the **new CEO** of the **Jewish Federation of San Antonio.**

THE TASA TIMES

B'SHALACH
January 29, 2021 - 16 Shevat, 5781
Light Candles at 5:52pm
Issue 8, 2020-21



2021-2022 Kindergarten Roundup!

ATTENTION PARENTS! We will have a Zoom Kindergarten Round up at 7pm on Thursday February 4th for incoming kindergarten parents! Take a look at what our awesome Kindergarten Classroom looks like, get a chance to meet our amazing TASA teachers, and ask questions!



What's New TASA Crew!

FROM THE DEAN'S DESK

The Music of Life Shabbat Shira—Parshat Beshalach



Imagine yourself hearing some fantastic news and you want to express that moment to your friend, you would probably say something like "it was music to my ears". The reason for this idiom is because music makes us happy and when we hear good news, we associate it with happiness and music.

In this week's Torah portion of *Beshalach* we read of three beautiful songs. First we read about the *Shirat Hayam* (song of the sea) which was sung by Moshe and the Jewish people after experiencing deliverance at the splitting of the sea. The Torah also describes the *Shirat Miriam* (Song of Miriam), where the great prophetess Miriam led the women in song and music. The third song is *Shirat Devorah* (song of Deborah) in the weekly *Haftarah* (*Shoftim* Ch. 4-5). In this song the great prophetess Devorah sings a song of thanks to Hashem for the salvation of Jewish people from *Yavin King of Canaan* and *Sisra* his general.

The juxta positioning of these three songs are purposeful. As this Shabbat is called *Shabbat Shirah* - the Shabbat of Song, our sages found it appropriate to dedicate the *Haftarah* to the theme of song as well.

But why the big deal about song? Should song or music really play such an important role in theology and faith?

The Kabbalah tells us "Music is the pen of the soul". It is for this reason that *Niggun* or Song plays such an important role in Judaism. Music allows us to take the negative and transform it into positive. In other words, music allows us to reach beyond words. Music is the expression of pure happiness and connectivity. That is why *Niggun* plays such an important role in our prayers, life cycle events and faith.

As we go through life and deal with our daily challenges and pressures, we often feel overwhelmed.

Everyone has challenges. Everyone has moments of despair. We may even feel that there is nothing to smile about, let alone sing about.

While we cannot control our challenges, we can control our attitude and demeanor. So, we need to ask ourselves the following;



Coming Soon!!

- * **100th Days of School** - Thursday February 4th
- * **Kindergarten Roundup** - Thursday, February 4th Zoom @7pm
- * **President's Day** - Monday, February 15th, **No School!**
- * **Fast of Esther, Erev Purim & Carnival** - Thursday, February 25th, **Noon Dismissal.**
- * **Purim** - Friday, February 26th, **No School!**

what type of person am I going to be? When my child looks at me, what will they see?" Do they see a happy person? Do they see someone who loves Hashem? Do they see a person who sings a happy song or will they see a resentful and angry person. That is how our children will view their Judaism and form their outlook on life.

Make no mistake about it, Music has the power to transform and we just need to learn how to bring that music into our faith and lives.

Shabbat Shalom!
Rabbi Y. Marrus

Just around the corner!



Sunday, May 23rd