



Thoughts from the Head of School

We all know the famous encounter between Moshe Rabeinu and Hashem at the burning bush in which Hakadosh Baruch Hu reveals the mission for Moshe to lead the Jews out of Mitzrayim. Moshe does not accept this position easily. In fact, he brings up multiple reasons why he is not the right person. In one argument, he asks, “who am I that I will go to Paroh and I will take out the Jews from Egypt?!?!”.



Rabbi Meir Cohen

Rashi points out that Moshe mentions two distinct challenges with this statement. The first is, “I am not worthy of this task”. The second is that “I will not be able to lead them as a nation”. Rabbi Shimshon Rafael Hirsh further expounds on this Rashi saying that he is really pointing out two distinct missions that Hashem is requesting of Moshe, and he feels he is not the right person for either. The first mission is to confront and go to war with Paroh. The second is to unite the Jews as a leader so they follow him towards freedom with one heart. For both these claims against himself, Hashem answers, “I will be with you”.

Rabbi Hirsh explains this exchange as a paradigm shift between Moshe’s understanding of leadership and Hashem’s. Moshe, at this point in the conversation, understands that leadership comes with a number of qualities, depending on the type of leader. For a leader to converse with presidents and important dignitaries, he needs status, power, and presence. For a leader to unite the nation in a freedom march he needs charisma and an inspirational aura. Moshe knows he possesses none of these traits, so he rightfully responds that he is not Hashem’s guy.

Hashem’s answer, though, reveals Moshe’s mistaken understanding of leadership. Externally seen character traits do not, alone, make a leader effective if the mission is l’shem shamayim. Leadership is about placing yourself *with* the people you are leading. It is about understanding who they are and what they are experiencing. It is about knowing that you, the leader, are placed in a situation in which you will think outside of your own needs and capabilities and draw upon your strength to serve. And if one does so earnestly, with the right humility, then Hashem will be with you.

I think this concept helps us as we try to ‘lead’ our children properly. There will be times in which we feel stuck or incompetent to parent in a way that advocates for our children and/or inspires them. But know, that Hashem appointed us their leaders. And if we approach our parenting with the attitude of service – paying attention to who they are and what they are experiencing – coupled with the knowledge that Hashem is with us, we will find the strengths and capabilities to successfully lead.

Good Shabbos.



We Love our Alum!

Isn’t this the BEST! These guys graduated from Torah Day School of Atlanta around 20 years ago, and here they are, still grinning for the camera! Can you guess who they are? Please send your guesses to Imorris@toraday.org. And thank you, dear alums for staying in touch!



**RE-ENROLLMENT
BEGINS
MONDAY, JANUARY 8TH
AT 5 P.M.**

פרנס היום *Day of Learning*

TDSA's Day of Learning Program is an opportunity to dedicate a day, a week, or a month of Torah learning and davening at school in memory of, in honor of, or in the merit of the recovery of a loved one. The dedication is sent out to the school's email list, announced to the students daily, and printed in the SPOTLIGHT, TDSA's weekly newsletter. For more information, please contact Marcy Kalnitz at mkalnitz@torahday.org or 404.982.0800 ext. 101.

Second Grade Boys Reading Rotations

It's like a gears-go-round classroom on a regular basis. Each student has an opportunity to operate in a small group with the teacher, work on a writing project, finesse his phonics or be challenged on a program using up-to-date and appropriate technology. It's a classroom of engaged, busy-bee learners!



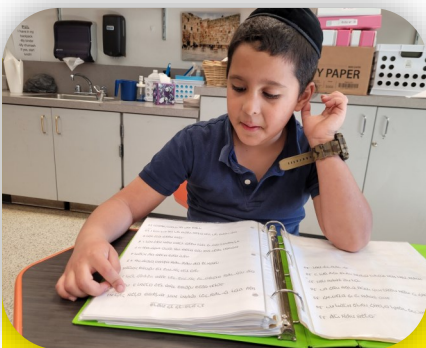
Translating Chumash in 2nd Grade!

It was impossible to determine if there were students in the classroom. From the other side of the door, there was just silence. And...inside the classroom, the students were working on their Chumash sheets and booklets with determination and grit. With a quick glance at their desks, it was obvious that they understood an incredible amount of words and phrases in the Chumash. This is second grade!



First Grade Girls Kriah Groups

In the first grade classroom, in the hallway, and in a different classroom split into two classrooms, there are four distinct kriah groups mastering Hebrew. Their kriah practice will allow them to eventually read and understand the words in their precious siddur, which they will be receiving later this month.



Second graders start their day with Rabbi Hiller singing Al Cheinu, followed with several songs that aid the students to memorize rules and shortcuts in their Chumash learning.



After reading Snowflake Bentley, and learning how snowflakes form in STEAM class, the **3rd grade students** made unique models of snowflakes using marshmallows and toothpicks!



Eighth graders literally "leave their mark" on TDSA...by painting a brick on the wall behind the gym. This has been a time-honored tradition for over 10 years, if not longer!