



TorahDaySchool
OF ATLANTA



THE SPOTLIGHT

Friday, September 1, 2023

15 Elul 5783

Parshas Ki Savo

Thoughts from the Head of School

Living in *Eretz Yisroel* during the times of the *Beis Hamikdash* afforded many opportunities to recognize the greatness of *Hashem* and His people. Every farmer separated tithes to the *Kohanim* and *Leviim* in appreciation of their service to *Hashem* on behalf of the Jewish nation. They also left corners of their field and dropped fruits for the poor to show recognition that all people are valued members of *Hashem's* community. Everyone was able to offer various personal *karbonos* to give thanks to *Hashem* or further their connection to Him. None of these, though, contain the public fanfare involved in the *mitzvah* of *Bikkurim* - bringing of the first fruits.



Rabbi Meir Cohen
Head of School

The Torah commands us to designate the first of our fruits to *Hashem*. After placing them in a basket, we march the produce from our farm to the *Beis HaMikdash* with an awe-inspiring, celebratory parade escorting and cheering on the fruits. Upon handing this offering of *Hakaras HaTov* to the *Kohen*, a recitation of our nation's history from *Yaakov* to entering *Eretz Yisroel* commences. Yes, it is a beautiful moment. But why is this form of *Hakaras HaTov* so unique compared to the other forms of thanks and recognition?

I want to suggest that the *mitzvah* of *Bikkurim* represents the totality of our relationship with *Hashem* and the full realization of the potential partnership between *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* and the Jewish Nation. *Rashi* explains that the *Mitzvah* of *Bikkurim* only kicks in once we conquered the land and divided it among the tribes. He also explains that the *Mitzvah* is only fulfilled using the 7 species special to the land of *Eretz Yisroel*. Therefore, it is clearly not a *mitzvah* to show thanks for *Hashem's* Hand in successful farming. Rather, it is a *mitzvah* directly related to our settling and living in His country.

The *Torah* is our prescription for a prosperous world and a meaningful connection to the Creator. The only way to keep all the *mitzvahs* as a nation is to live in *Eretz Yisroel* with a *Beis HaMikdash*. Only once we are settled in the land are we capable of living a *Torah* life as fully intended to strengthen our bond with *Hashem* and perfect the world as is the goal of life. Therefore, bringing *Bikkurim* is the ultimate type of *Hakaras HaTov*. It represents the fullness of how we can partner with *Hashem* in this world to bring it to its full potential. With this perspective of the *mitzvah*, it makes sense that we perform it in such a publicly *simchadik* way.

As we approach the new year, we have a unique opportunity to contemplate how we can partner with *Hashem* to improve the world. Without the *Beis HaMikdash* we obviously cannot fully realize His *Torah* in this world. But we can use this *mitzvah* as a springboard to help us realize our unique opportunities to better ourselves and provide a positive contribution to the Jewish Nation.

Good *Shabbos*

Digital Citizenship: TDSA's Year-Long Initiative for School, Home, Parents, Students, and Teachers

Parents attended a workshop as part of Torah Day School's comprehensive approach for building a community that engages healthily and responsibly with the digital world. We are all aware how technology enhances our lives. Dr. Eli Shapiro presented the research on how our relationship with technology can also affect our children's psychology, social interactions, behavior, and day-to-day life. In addition to the parent workshop, he conducted a full-day professional development on this topic for all faculty, including training on how to implement the Digital Citizenship Curriculum TDSA is adopting for grades 5-8. The final piece will be to organize "fire-side" chats led by parents of each class as a social support as we navigate raising children in a digital age.



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פרנס היום Day of Learning

Thursday, August 24, 2023 7 Elul 5783

Refuah Shleimah for

Dr. Robert Cohen Moshe Zelig be Raizel
Former TDSA Board President, TDSA Parent,
and Community Leader

Friday, August 25, 2023 8 Elul 5783

In honor of Fayga Miriam Drori
By Grandpa and Grandpa
Steve and Nell Brownstein

&

Refuah Shleimah for Dr. Nisolin Shleifer
Nison Chaim Alter ben Chana
By the Robbins, Freeman, Harris
and Juni Families

Monday, August 28, 2023 11 Elul 5783

Refuah Shleimah for Shayna Gibora bas Tema
By Matt and Ericka Needleman

Tuesday, August 29, 2023 12 Elul 5783

Refuah Shleimah for Dr. Nison Shleifer
Nison Chaim Alter ben Chana

Thursday, August 31, 2023 14 Elul 5783

In Memory of Alan Pollock, z"l
Yitzchak ben Zev HaLevi

&

Refuah Shleimah for Shayna Gibora bas Tema
By Daniel and Elizabeth Lieberman

Friday, September 1, 2023 15 Elul 5783

In Honor of Naomi Kahn on becoming a Bas Mitzvah
By Josh and Raizel Kahn

*For more information, please contact
Marcy Kalnitz at mkalnitz@torahday.org
or 404.982.0800 ext. 101.*

First Assembly!

Every Friday, the kindergarten through fourth grade students gather in the gym for an erev Shabbos story, nachas certificates to be handed out, and birthdays to be announced. The first Friday of the 2023-24 school year, Rabbi Cohen re-introduced TDSA's theme song. It's words reflect our **core values** of being a **caring, engaging, and contributing** member of the Torah Day School community.



8th Grade Humanities

Eighth graders are discussing and writing about various escape routes from their imaginary hike through the forest. They've run into some challenges and must **persevere** to work their way out of their dilemma, whether it be a bees nest or a grizzly bear, while staying safe. Once done, they will present their work to the entire class.

Fourth Grade Limudei Kodesh

Even on the first day of school, fourth grade students showcased **teamwork** as they learned and developed new skills and information in Mrs. Alterman's classroom.



Spotlight on Mrs. Mindy Tanenbaum

Mrs. Mindy Tanenbaum, TDSA's General Studies Kindergarten teacher, is showing this young man his מקום, place, in the classroom. She is not only providing him his own space, but also a sense of his innate value within the classroom's **community**.



Mrs. Bolnick patiently motivates her 3rd graders to organize their school supplies, a first step in teaching the students how to **responsible**.



I can do it! TDSA students are encouraged to stretch academically, socially, and emotionally. This first grader's determination and GRIT are evident.



Kindergarteners are already singing "I love Hashem and Hashem loves me..." This is a message that encompasses all of our **core values**.

