



Elsa High School Newsletter

Weekly Daf

Term 1 Edition 5

14 September 2018 - 5 Tishrei 5779



Mrs. Friedmann wishes everyone a Gmar Chatima Tova and well over the Fast.

Dvar Torah: Yom Kippur

Next Tuesday evening is the beginning of Yom Kippur, the holiest day in the Jewish calendar.

On Yom Kippur during Mincha, the afternoon prayer, we read the Book of Jonah, the story of a prophet who was given a task to go to Ninevah and speak out against the evil there. However, instead of fulfilling his task and going to Ninevah, Jonah decides to run away to Tarshish and disobey the word of G-d. During the boat ride, a huge storm appears and Jonah realizes that the storm is a reaction from G-d due to Jonah running away and so the passengers on the boat throw him into the water.

In the water, Jonah is swallowed by a big fish and is stuck there for three days, praying. G-d hears his prayers and lets him out so Jonah can finish his mission. Jonah goes to Ninevah and tells the people there that the city would be destroyed in forty days. The citizens of Ninevah realize they need to pray to G-d and after the forty days the city is not destroyed.

At this point, we would have thought Jonah will be happy that the people of Ninevah ceased their bad deeds and repented and that their city was not destroyed. But instead the Book tells us that Jonah was very angry and

disappointed that the bad decree on the city was not fulfilled. Jonah's reaction is surprising and unexpected, and it helps to illuminate the deeper message of the Book of Jonah.

Jonah is angry with G-d's decision to accept the repentance of the people of Ninevah; he thinks it isn't fair that they were saved because they were doing Teshuvah, the act of repentance, since they aren't taking responsibility for their actions. Jonah thought the act of Teshuvah is against the just and true way of leading the world in which a sinner should be responsible for his actions and be punished.

At the end of the Book however, G-d is teaching Jonah the the real truth: that a person is good and therefore making Teshuvah is not against the truth, on the contrary - it reveals the real truth of the world.

That is why we read the Book of Jonah on Yom Kippur, since Teshuvah teaches us that even if we do horrible things, we can all atone for our sins and be forgiven.

Have a safe Fast and shabbat shalom!

Elianna Diestel Grade 10



Last Friday in assembly, Elsa students had the privilege of hearing Rabbi Oser speak on Rosh Hashana

Last Friday, Elsa students had the privilege of hearing Rabbi Oser and Ori & Alisa Harel on the occasion of Rosh Hashana.

Alisa told an uplifting story about the significance of being grateful for what we have by using a metaphor of an apple tree, which was befitting to the holiday since we eat apples and honey to celebrate a sweet new year. Rabbi Oser then addressed the students, using an anecdote from his daily life to illustrate the importance of helping others and keeping an awareness of the world around us. Rabbi Oser told the story of when he was in a taxi, distracted by his cell phone when the driver stopped the car and got out the help a man with a heavy load cross the street.

Rabbi Oser did not notice the driver was gone until he lifted his head from his phone and found that the driver was assisting the man. He felt bad that he hadn't noticed sooner and hadn't sprung into action. The moral of the

story is sometimes we let ourselves get too distracted with our various electronic devices and social media accounts and we do not have the time or the awareness to help those around us. These mundane distractions keep us from doing deeds that would define us as moral human beings.

With Rosh Hashana having just passed, we can use these days leading to Yom Kippur to compile a list of 'New Year Resolutions' for ourselves. Often, resolutions don't get fulfilled to their full extent but we can promise ourselves to look a little less at our screens and a little more at the world around us.

Thank you to Rabbi Oser and the Harels for sharing their words of wisdom which are much needed during this time of year. Shana Tova!

Hanna Hipwell-Serfaty Grade 12

Last Wednesday, Grades 9 through 12 were treated to a discussion from several **US College Admissions** Directors. The speakers came from four specific colleges: Washington Lee, Sarah Lawrence, Skidmore and Bucknell University. The discussion encompassed what it takes to stand out in our applications, the unique benefits of attending a Liberal Arts school and the individual characteristics of each of the four Schools.

One of the crucial points mentioned in applying to colleges was standing out as much as possible in one's personal statement. As many applicants can come out with perfect grades, the personal statement is a student's best opportunity to differentiate themselves from the rest.

In addition, the Directors discussed what to expect when attending a Liberal Arts college, stating that most schools provide a very well-rounded education, maximising one's potential by supplying a diverse range of courses from which to choose. What I had personally gained from the discussion was a significant increase in my understanding of Liberal Arts colleges and the requirements expected of me when applying.



Thank you to Mr. Ford for providing us with this very insightful discussion.

Louis Effron Grade 11



During May of 2018, I went to take the C1 **DELE Exams for Spanish**. DELE levels are sectioned into three categories, each with levels one and two. Ranging from lowest to highest are the levels of A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, and C2. In my case, I had spent most of the school year preparing for the C1 exam, going through many worksheets and having many debates with my teacher. Halfway through, I realised one important problem I had was that I wasn't focusing enough during listening comprehensions, so I worked hard on focusing. Lastly, doing all those exercises under the guidance of a great teacher, I managed to pass my exam and obtained a lifetime language certificate which I can use in college and job applications!

Victor Fong Grade 10

TASHLICH *on the Waterfront*

On Thursday afternoon, the whole school walked down to the Shau Kei Wan waterfront for the annual **Elsa High School Tashlich Ceremony**. The goal of Tashlich is to symbolically cast off the sins of the previous year and it should be recited next to a body of water, such as a sea, river, stream, lake or pond.

One of the reasons for this is that water symbolizes the trait of kindness and during the days from Rosh Hashanah to Yom Kippur we want to sweeten the judgment by having G-d add kindness to it. People often throw crumbs into the water to represent their sins being cast off, however as we didn't want to throw anything into the harbour we wrote our sins on paper and tore them up. Whilst Tashlich is usually performed on the first day of Rosh Hashanah it can be performed up until Hoshanah Rabba (the last day of Sukkot).

"It was good to take the time to think about how we can be better people as we start the new year"

It was good to take the time to think about how we can be better people as we start the New Year. Thank you to the Jewish Studies department for organising this powerful experience,

Milly Golovsky Grade 7



Out and About in Hong Kong

Places to Perform Tashlich

In this crucial time within the Jewish calendar, between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, there is an important custom known as Tashlich. Tashlich is the act of metaphorically throwing away one's sins into a natural body of water in order to cleanse oneself before the day of judgment and the beginning of the next year.

We carry out Tashlich through the tossing of bread crumbs in representation of our sins, hoping that the fish will consume them. In both the spirit of this and the hope to further explore our surroundings, we decided to take this opportunity and share some unique and meaningful places to reenact this holy tradition.

Tai Tam Waterfall

Tucked away in Tai Tam's lush greenery is a gorgeous cascading waterfall. The waterfall is separated by the surrounding trees, creating a calm, serene atmosphere. A favorite among hikers, it's a small but beautiful sight after a short and easy trek (10 minutes) from the bus stop – perfect for giving oneself time to reflect on one's sins before actually carrying out Tashlich.

Long Kei Wan Beach

Deep within Sai Kung, via a short but wondrous hike consisting of unique terrain, one will find oneself on the white sand of a tropical beach known as Long Kei Wan, surrounded by turquoise sparkling waves. The beach itself is not only luxurious in its physical attributes, but also brimming with fish, making this a perfect location for one to perform the traditional cleansing of one's sins.

Po Pin Chau

Po Pin Chau is an island cut away from the mainland. The hexagonal columns of Po Pin Chau came from a number of violent volcanic eruptions in eastern Hong Kong about 140 million years ago. These columns now form a beautiful piece of land, ideal for anyone looking to perform Tashlich on an isolated, but nonetheless beautiful stretch of sand.





Yom Kippur

Next Wednesday, on the 10th of Tishrei, it is Yom Kippur – the holiest day of the Jewish year. On this day we ask G-d to forgive us for our sins against him or against other people and to give us a good and healthy year ahead. In the month of Elul, Rosh Hashanah and the 10 Days of Repentance (עשרת ימי תשובה) and finally on Yom Kippur, there is a recurring theme of self reflection.

The purpose of Yom Kippur is to leave the physical world and enter a spiritual realm where we can reflect on our relationship with our friends, our relationship with G-d and how, in the coming year, can we improve and become a better person.

There are many components to Yom Kippur and many customs. One of the laws is that from sunset to sunset – a period of 25 hours – we cannot eat or drink. This is because on Yom Kippur we are leaving the physical world, not thinking about what to eat or what to wear, but entering the spiritual world where we find a connection with G-d. This is also why it is a custom to wear white on Yom Kippur, in order to look like an angel and to make our relationship with G-d strong.

In conclusion, Yom Kippur helps us connect with G-d and establishes a spiritual connection with Hashem. But, an important thing to remember is that G-d can forgive us for our sins against him; in order to be completely free from our sins against one another, we must ask our friends or family for forgiveness for any wrongdoings we may have done in the past year. After the powerful and jarring experience of Yom Kippur, we can look forward to a happy and successful year, starting with the festival of Sukkot.

Hannah Davidson Grade 8



PTA Announcements

The **Elsa Parent Teacher Cocktail Evening** is one of the most popular annual highlights of the PTA event calendar – and this year was no exception. A cheerful crowd of 70-80 combined faculty and parents congregated this Thursday at the JCC Garden Room to usher in the new Academic Year as well as the Jewish New Year. Most conversations started with updates on respective Summer holidays and quickly turned to the common interest of the two groups – namely the students.

The event is designed by the PTA to be more of a social occasion for the main school stakeholders to gather, and enjoy getting to know each other a little bit better in a relaxed and informal environment.

In a setting of delicious Italian snacks and wine, parents and teachers assembled in small groups and one-on-one conversations to discuss progress so far. "New" Elsa parents, joining the event for the first time, mingled with "veteran" parents, each one with their own preoccupations and approach to a new school year.

As Mrs. Friedmann highlighted in a short welcoming note, students are at the heart of our combined focus and they have to be challenged so they constantly give their best. In her message she also reminded the audience of one of the main wishes that are exchanged on the occasion of Rosh Hashana – *"May You All Be Inscribed in the Book of Life"*. How fitting in a school environment!

Great thanks go to the PTA Chair and co-Chair Agnes Efron, Krysia Allard as well as Belinda Caviglia and the rest of the PTA for organizing such a lively evening to kick off the new year. Special thanks must go to Tal Shahar for acting as photographer for the evening!

L'Shana Tova 5779 to all!

Romy Serfaty



Elsa PTA Lunch Meeting

Monday 17 September (12:30pm)

Elsa High School

Davidson Conference Room (3rd Floor)

Join Mr. Kyle Ford (Elsa's Director of Art and Design) and Mr. Lloyd Gravett (Elsa's Head of Science and Robotics) as they present developments in STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) and Robotics at Elsa High School. Learn more about how this field is going to effects the curriculum of the future.

RSVP to elsahighadmin@carmel.edu.hk

STEAM



Carmel School Association Elsa High School



Tuesday, 23 October 2018

460 Shau Kei Wan
Shau Kei Wan, Hong Kong

In conversation with students and
faculty at Carmel's Elsa High School



Happy Birthday to
Harel Geffen, Myron Wong
and **Pav Haviv**



We hope you've enjoyed reading The
Weekly Daf!

From **The Weekly Daf Team**

Tyra Dahlberg, Louis Effron, Hanna
Hipwell-Serfaty, Ian Lyons, Luis Yap
and Mr. Dan Bartholomew

Library

Support at home is key to how young people approach reading for pleasure. Every week we will be promoting books new and old, fiction and non-fiction for readers of all ages and levels.

Our libraries are open to students and parents alike and books can be borrowed through student's accounts.

These books, and more, can be found directly here:

libraryceo.com/carmel/opac/index.php

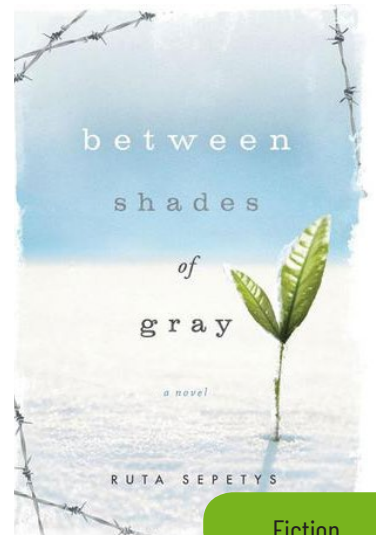
or through our school library site here:

carmel.edu.hk/learning/library

Between Shades of Gray by Ruta Sepetys

Fifteen-year-old Lina is a Lithuanian girl living an ordinary life – until Soviet officers invade her home and tear her family apart. Separated from her father and forced onto a crowded train, Lina, her mother, and her young brother slowly make their way north, crossing the Arctic Circle, to a work camp in the coldest reaches of Siberia. Here they are forced, under Stalin's orders, to dig for beets and fight for their lives under the cruelest of conditions.

Lina finds solace in her art, documenting these events by drawing. Risking everything, she imbeds clues in her drawings of their location and secretly passes them along, hoping her drawings will make their way to her father's prison camp. But will strength, love, and hope be enough for Lina and her family to survive?



"Few books are beautifully written, fewer still are important; this novel is both."

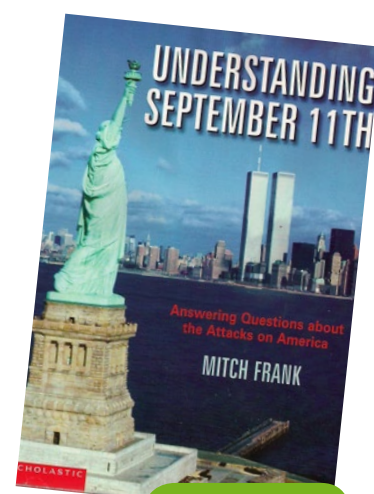
The Washington Post

Understanding September 11th Answering Questions about the Attacks on America by Mitch Frank

Frank, a reporter for Time magazine, opens his informative narrative with a chilling account of his experiences on September 11, when he rushed from his Brooklyn Heights home to the scene of the disaster just after the first of the Twin Towers was hit.

Using a question-and-answer format, the author then effectively distills for young readers information about the Middle East (especially Afghanistan), Islam, Islamism, the Taliban, Osama bin Laden and al Qaeda. He also discusses terrorist groups' hatred of America and their campaigns against it. Readers may find here a useful framework for examining the possible motives for the terrorist attacks and the U.S. government's subsequent responses.

Filled with pictures, maps, and straightforward explanations, this is the book that will enable young people to understand both the events of 9/11 and the history leading up to it.



Non Fiction



Fiction

The Throwaway Children by Diney Costeloe

Gritty, heartrending, and unputdownable - the story of two sisters sent first to an English, then an Australian orphanage in the aftermath of World War II

Rita and Rosie Stevens are only nine and five years old when their widowed mother marries a violent bully called Jimmy Randall and has a baby boy by him. Under pressure from her new husband, she is persuaded to send the girls to an orphanage - not knowing that the papers she has signed will entitle them to do what they like with the children.

And it is not long before the powers that be decide to send a consignment of orphans to their sister institution in Australia. Among them - without their family's consent or knowledge - are Rita and Rosie, the throwaway children.

"The story is a compelling one and as a consequence, the book is very hard to put down ... many a reader will inevitably find themselves heckling the characters from the sidelines, encouraging the good guys and booing the baddies"

Bookbag

פינת הספרייה העברית

סמסטר ראשון: מהדורה מספר 3
ה' תשרי ה'תשע"ט



כאשר הגעתי לספרייה העברית באלסה, לפני סידורם ותיוגם של הספרים הסתכלתי על כולם, ספר זה משר את תשומת ליבי בגלל שם הסופרת שהיה מוכר לי מאוד, חיפשתי את תמונתה באינטרנט לוודא שאני מתכוונת לאותה הגברת, וכן. הגברת רעיה בלטמן, היתה המורה המקסימה והמיוחדת שלי לדרמה בבית הספר התיכון בירושלים. בזמן הלימודים לא ידעתי עליה דבר, ממש לא ידעתי שהיא כותבת ספרים, לא ממש שאלנו את המורים שאלות פרטיות אם הם לא בחרו לספר, היא רק סיפרה לנו שהיא אוהבת תיאטרון. עניין אותי מאוד להכיר אותה, עכשיו אחרי הרבה שנים, קצת יותר. גיליתי שהיא גם כתבה תוכניות ילדים לרדיו ולטלוויזיה ופרסמה סיפורים רבים בעיתוני ילדים והייתי ממש מאוכזבת שלא הכרתי אותה קצת יותר כשיכולתי.

בספר הבית עם שעון האותיות היא מספרת את סיפור חייה מאז עלייתה ארצה מסרביה (כיום אוקראינה). היא מספרת בחן על אותם ימים ראשונים בארץ שבהם חשה זרה ובודדה.

מתוך הספר "הבית עם שעון האותיות" כתבה: רעיה בלטמן

לכולם! מדוע דיברה אלי הדודה דינה בקול קר? ומדוע נתנה לי מרק פירות בכוס קטנה? מדוע הביא אותי הדוד יוסף לבית הספר הזה? ומדוע לקחו אותי אבא ואמא מהבית שלי למקום זר כזה? מגיע להם! לכולם! מגיע! שידאגו לי! כולם! ליד אחת החנויות עצרתי. על השלט היה כתוב "סלון לכלות". בחלון הראווה היתה בובה של כלה עם שמלה מפוארת. פתאום נזכרתי שבחנותות מגישים אוכל, אוכל טעים, הרגשתי שאני רעבה. רעבה מאוד. כל היום לא אכלתי! ישבתי על מדרגה קטנה ליד החנות, והוצאתי מהילקוט את הכריך שנתנה לי אמא. אכלתי לאט לאט. מה יהיה כשאגמור לאכול? איני יודעת כיצד מגיעים הביתה. איני יודעת את כתובתם של הדודים. גם את הכתובת שלנו איני יודעת. מה יהיה? מה יהיה?

הפעמון המבשר את סיום הלימודים צילצל. היום הנושא הזה נגמר סוף סוף. מיהרתי לצאת מהכיתה. המורה אמרה לי משהו, אך לא התעכבתי לשמוע. רצתי מהר במורד המדרגות. שמעתי את הבנות רצות אחרי. קולות הצחוק שלהן דקרו את גבי כסכינים. הושטתי את ידי והורדתי את הסרט האדום מראשי. שמתי אותו בילקוט. עכשיו היו השערות שלי פרוצות עוד יותר. יותר לא אלך לבית הספר הזה החלטתי. זה היה יומי הראשון בבית הספר, וגם האחרון. הגעתי לשער. הילדה הנחמדה לא חיכתה לי שם. לאן לפנות? לצד ימין או לצד שמאל? לא חשוב! העיקר לברוח! להסתתר! להתחמק! רצתי בכיוון ההפוך לזה שממנו באתי בבוקר. ריח של לחם ושל עוגות היה באוויר. לא רחוק מבית הספר היתה מאפיה, לידה חצר עם שער. נכנסתי בשער. החצר היתה רחבה, וסביבה דירות רבות. בשעת הצהרים ההיא היתה החצר ריקה מאנשים. רק אישה אחת זקנה ישבה על כיסא נמוך ליד דלת דירתה והיטליאה גרביים. קולות הבנות הרודפות אחרי הלכנו וקרבנו. מה עושים?

הזקנה קמה ממקומה ושאלה: "מה את מחפשת כאן ילדה?" "אני... אני צמאה. אפשר... אולי לקבל קצת מים? בבקשה, היכנסו!"

נכנסתי אחריה לחדר קטן ואפל. הזקנה הושיבה אותי ליד שולחן עגול והגישה לי כוס מים. אחר כך הביאה צלחת קטנה ובה ריבה כתומה. "זו ריבת תפוזים. בעצמי רקחתי אותה. אני שומעת רעש בחצר. ילדות מדברות וצוחקות שם". אילו בנות מהכיתה שלי? אל תגידי להן שאני כאן. הן מחפשות אותי. "מה קרה? עשית מעשה רע?" "לא. לא. זה... מין משחק. משחק מחבואים."

הזקנה הטובה חייכה, והגישה לי עוד ריבה. אכלתי ושתייתי לאט לאט. לבסוף השתקו הקולות בחצר. הודיתי לזקנה, ויצאתי לרחוב. המשכתי ללכת. הגעתי לרחוב רחב וארוך. זה לא היה הרחוב שבו הלכתי בבוקר עם הדוד יוסף. כל הרחובות זרים לי. איך אמצא את הדרך הביתה? הדוד יוסף והדודה דינה ודאי דואגים לי. עוד מעט יחזרו אבא ואמא מהעבודה. הם ידאגו מאד. מגיע להם!

