



Campus Rabbi's Message

Dvar Torah

Dear Parents,

What a term we have had, or perhaps it's better to say what a few days we have just had!

The coronavirus has had (and will continue to have) an unimaginable impact on the world. I have heard and read numerous reasons as to why Hashem might be bringing this upon the world. Some reasons try to give hope and bring out the positive in the situation while others prefer to explain it as some sort of punishment for wrongdoing. My view is that it is impossible to know with certainty why this virus has been brought upon the world. As the Prophet Yeshayahu teaches us about Hashem, "My thoughts are not your thoughts and your actions are not mine", we can't know with absolute clarity why Hashem runs the world in the way that he does.

However, every individual can and must ask themselves what they can learn from the situation that we find ourselves in. What personal message is Hashem trying to tell them and what can they take away to improve themselves going forward.

While the past week has been very busy and despite having not had much quiet time to myself, some ideas and emotions have emerged to the fore for me: I would like to share two.

Firstly, the past week has been a wake up call for me to remember how Hashem is always running this world. We often become attached to such a fixed routine that we expect every day to follow the plan we have mapped out for it. We have this false sense of assuredness that we are in control. These past few days, with the rapidly changing situation globally and the uncertainty that each day brings with it, has reminded me that, in fact, everyday is uncertain. Just think of how many plans you have had to change or cancel for the next few weeks. Human beings don't run the world, Hashem does.

The second realisation that has moved me powerfully is how special the people in the Phyllis Jowell community are. Although it's been only a few days of social distancing, the thought of not seeing the lively and energetic children or our kind security team every morning or engaging with our passionate staff face to face has left me feeling down. Sometimes one truly appreciates something only when one doesn't have it. We can look back fondly on the first term which has been filled with exciting outings and fun on-site activities, from Kirstenbosch for Tu BeShvat to Purim dancing and the Shpiel. In the Primary School the themes in the IPC have been engaging and diverse. The Pre School to have had their carnivals and outings as well stimulating learning.

In term two we will still be learning and growing together as well as seeing each other online which will be challenging and exciting. However, there is no doubt that when the time comes (pG sooner rather than later), I will return to school with renewed gratitude for being able to teach and learn from the amazing children in our school.

Wishing you a safe and restful holiday

Rav Gav
Campus Rabbi