



November 2018

Welcome to Spark, the Tribe weekly parsha activity sheet for Children's Service Leaders across the United Synagogue communities.

Thank you for offering to run a service, for all the hard work that you put into it and for making a real difference to so many young people. The US is very proud of the numerous Children's Services that are run every week across the UK and this would not happen without you.

Spark gives you an overview of the weekly parsha, a song, an activity, discussion questions or D'var Torah linked to the parsha or important event that week. Every Children's Service will be different, in terms of how many participants there are, their age range, its length and the varying abilities of the children. Please read through the document and find the activities that will best suit the needs of your group. It is advisable to read it before Shabbat in case there is some preparation that may be needed in advance.

I hope you and the children at your service will benefit from Spark. Please be in touch if you have any queries, feedback or if we can be of any help. Thank you again for your amazing work.

With best wishes,
Sharon Radley
sharonradley@tribeuk.com

BESHALACH 5779

- Please note that this week it will be Tu B'shevat – the New Year for the Trees. Please see below for more information and activities.

Parsha Summary:

- After Pharaoh sends the Israelites out of Egypt, God does not lead them on a straight path through the land of the Pelishtim (Philistines) towards Cana'an (later Israel), but rather towards the Sea of Reeds. Moshe is carrying Yosef's bones, as Yosef had requested before his death. A pillar of cloud guides the Israelites by day, and a pillar of fire lights up their journey at night. Pharaoh's pursues the Israelites with his armed chariots.
- The Egyptians catch up with the Israelites, who are encamped by the Sea. Seeing the approaching army, the people cry out in prayer, and ask Moshe why they left Egypt only to die in the desert? Moshe tells them not to fear; they will experience God's salvation.
- Moshe raises his staff; an easterly wind blows and the Sea splits. The Israelites walk through the dry channel, the water providing a wall on either side of them. The Egyptians enter the Sea but struggle to move.
- Moshe raises his staff; the Sea 'closes' on the Egyptians, drowning them. The Israelites see the drowned Egyptians on the shore. Together with Moshe, they sing the Song at the Sea (Shirat HaYam) which celebrates God's miraculous salvation. The nation travels on, experiencing three days in the desert without water. They come to a place called Marah, where the waters are too bitter to drink. They complain to Moshe, who is shown a tree by God. Moshe throws the tree into the water, thus sweetening it.
- The Israelites arrive in the Sin Desert and complain to Moshe that they are hungry. God tells Moshe that he will send down a daily portion of

'bread' from the heavens. Moshe tells the people they will also get meat in the evening.

- The heavenly bread – called 'man' (manna) – falls between two layers of dew. Each household gets a daily portion sufficient for its members. Moshe tells them not to leave any over until the next day. Some people ignore this warning and their manna becomes infested. A double portion falls on Friday. Moshe tells them to use the excess for Shabbat but not to go out to collect any manna on Shabbat. Again, some ignore this instruction. Moshe tells Aharon to keep some manna in a container, as a reminder to future generations.
- The Israelites travel to Refidim, but again do not find water. God tells Moshe to strike a rock with his staff; water emerges from the rock. Amalek attacks the Israelites at Refidim. Yehoshua (Joshua) leads the battle against them, whilst Moshe, Aharon and Chur (Moshe's nephew) ascend a nearby hill. Whenever Moshe raises his arms, Israel overcomes Amalek. Aharon and Chur support Moshe's tired arms. Yehoshua is victorious.

Children's Service: Tot's – Year 3

- Tip: The information in the parsha summary above can be used as the basis of a quiz. Make sure if you do decide to have a quiz that it's inclusive and fair. Think through carefully before your service to decide if a quiz is a suitable activity for the dynamics of your group.

Discuss:

In the parsha this week we read that God split the Red Sea so that the Israelites could cross it and escape from the Egyptian army. When the Israelites reached the other side they were so happy, relieved and grateful to God about the amazing miracle that He had performed that they sang a special song to Him. This song is written in the Torah and we say it in Shacharit every morning. It is known as 'Shirat Hayam' – the 'Song of the Sea.'

- If you have the green Tribe Siddur for Children and Families, show the children Shirat Hayam on page 14.
- Ask the children what song they would sing if they were happy?
- How would they show someone that they were happy with them?

Activity: The Bnei Yisrael travel through the desert

In this activity, your participants will "travel through the desert" as the Bnei Yisrael and when trouble comes along will use either the "Amud haAnan" (pillar of cloud) or "Amud haAish (pillar of fire) to protect themselves.

Begin by explaining that when the Jewish people travelled through the desert, Hashem was with them protecting them every step of the way. He protected them with a pillar of cloud during the day and with a pillar of fire at night. At all times, either the cloud or fire was resting over Bnei Yisrael and watching over them throughout their journey through the desert.

Step up chairs, like you would for Musical Chairs, in two rows facing each other back to back (like this _/_). If possible, decorate the chairs with different blue material and different ocean like things to make it look like the Yam Suf. Have one less chair than there are participants. Give each child a “cloud” and a “fire”. These can either be a picture of them or you can be creative and use cotton balls for the clouds and red/orange tissue paper for fire. The children must hold on to these the entire game, one in each hand.

One group leader should play “Moshe” and help lead the children around the chairs. “Moshe” shouldn’t play but should help lead them around. “Moshe” should also announce to the children whether they are travelling during the day or at night. When they travel during the day they should hold up the cloud, when they travel at night they should hold up the fire. Have other group leaders sing a song while the children circle around the chairs. As soon as they stop singing, the children must sit down as quickly as possible. Since there is one less chair than participants in the group, each round someone will be out. Despite being out, they won’t be out of the game completely though, instead they will help “Moshe” lead. Before you take out chairs, play a few rounds with the exact amount of chairs per children so that the children don’t get out right away.

After you play a few rounds, have everyone walk through the chairs set up facing each other with space in between the two rows like walking through the Yam Suf. This is where “Moshe” will really take the lead and get all the kids singing together and raising their clouds and fire into the air having a great time! Enjoy! We’re finally free from Egypt!

Tu Bishevat

- The 15 of Shevat is the 'New Year for the Trees.' It is the New Year for determining the Torah's agricultural laws.
- It is a custom to eat fruits of the 'Shivat Haminim' – the 'Seven Species of Israel'. These are: wheat, barley, olives, dates, grapes, figs and pomegranates.
- Other customs include holding a Tu Bishevat Seder created by the kabbalist Arizal, eating fifteen fruit, praying for a beautiful etrog on the following Sukkot and eating a 'new' fruit after saying the blessing Shehechyanu. A 'new' fruit is a seasonal fruit that one has not tasted yet this season.
- In Israel Tu Bishevat is a day of environmental awareness. Trees are planted in celebration.
- The Torah, Deut 20:19 compares people to trees. 'A person is like the tree of a field.'

Activity: The Seven Species: Shivat Haminim

Please find below a Tu Bishevat snap game based on the Shivat Haminim. Before Shabbat print out as many copies of the cards (on the last two pages) as you will need, cut them out and give them to the children to play in pairs. Link the Shivat Haminim to Tu Bishevat as written above.

Snap Rules:

The dealer deals out the whole deck of cards face-down, one card at a time to each player, in a clockwise rotation. Each player, starting with the player to the left of the dealer, takes a turn flipping over the top card of his pile and putting it face-up in front of him. After a few turns, each player has a little pile of face-up cards.

When you turn over all the cards into the pile in front of you, you pick up the pile and use it again without shuffling them. The flipping process

continues until one player turns over a card of the same rank as the top card on another player's pile. As soon as the matching card is revealed, the first person to call out "Snap!" takes the two piles with matching cards and puts them face down under his own pile.

Frequently, two players make the Snap call simultaneously. In this case, you put the two piles with the same card together, face-up, in middle of the table. Everyone continues to turn over the top cards on their piles until someone turns over a card that matches the card on the pile in the middle of the table. The first person to shout "Snap pool!" wins the middle pile. The new piles that are being created are still up for grabs in the usual way, of course. Whenever a pairing is created, the first to shout "Snap" wins them.

When a player mistakenly calls out "Snap!" her pile goes into the centre of the table; the first player to call "Snap pool!" at the relevant moment gets her pile. You have to operate with what you have left, and if you run out of cards, you are out of the game.

The player who ends up with all the cards wins the game.

Set rules about the proper way to turn over your card. You can't turn over the card so that you see it first, which means that you must flip over the card in a continuous, fast motion onto your pile.

Have an impartial witness to decide on all close calls. If you can, choose someone who isn't playing the game.

Activity: As Tall as a Tree!

Tu Bishevat is a time when deep below the cold earth, the plants are starting to awaken and grow again. Have all the children stand in a circle...

- everyone should fold their bodies as little and balled up like a seed as possible...
- tumbling a bit as you, the seed, are put in the ground....

- pushing up a first little shoot out of the seed and out of the earth...
- stretching up more bits in the sun...
- drinking up the fresh rain, digging your roots (toes) more deeply in the ground for a nice drink...
- quickening your growth...
- getting taller!
- swaying and dancing in the wind...
- enjoying the music of the birds...
- shading a tired hot visitor....
- feeding a hungry visitor...
- frowning at someone's leaving litter, like a plastic bag stuck on your branch and waiting for help from the wind with that...
- losing leaves in autumn...
- feeling weighted by snow in winter...
- sprouting happy flowers and new leaves in the spring...
- growing fruit to give through summer and fall...
- getting taller and older and stronger!

Children's Service: Years 3- 6

- Please check the activities written in the age group above as some of them may be suitable for your service too.
- Tip: The information in the parsha summary above can be used as the basis of a quiz. Make sure if you do decide to have a quiz that it's inclusive and fair. Think through carefully before your service to decide if a quiz is a suitable activity for the dynamics of your group.

Discuss:

In the parsha this week we read that God split the Red Sea so that the Israelites could cross it and escape from the Egyptian army. When the Israelites reached the other side they were so happy, relieved and grateful to God about the amazing miracle that He had performed that they sang a special song to Him. This song is written in the Torah and we say it in Shacharit every morning. It is known as 'Shirat Hayam' – the 'Song of the Sea.'

- If you have the green Tribe Siddur for Children and Families show the children Shirat Hayam on page 14.
- Ask the children what song they would sing if they were happy.
- How would they show someone that they were happy with them?

Activity: Be the Change!

Have everyone stand in a circle. Tell everyone to look across the circle and make eye contact with somebody else, focus on them, and copy their actions. If they wave, you wave; if they smile, you smile; if they stand around looking uncomfortable, you stand around looking uncomfortable. It'll take a few minutes but eventually everyone will be doing the same thing and all following one another. The children will stand still for a few seconds with no one doing anything at all. It will take a "Nachson ben Aminadav" to be the first one to make the first move. Once everyone sees "Nachshon" make the first move, then everyone will start.

Discuss:

The Midrash relates that during the Exodus, when the Bnei Yisrael reached the Red Sea, it did not automatically part. The Israelites stood at the banks of the sea and wailed with despair, but Nachshon ben Aminadav entered the waters. Once he was up to his nose in the water, the sea parted.

Nachshon ben Aminadav is looked highly upon for his courageous act of trust and belief in God. How was it possible for Nachshon to have such courage? How was Nachshon able to change life forever for the Jewish people? He's only one person!

That is the exact answer, he is only one person and that's all he needed. Rabbi Israel Lipkin has a famous quote that says "I wanted to change the world, but I realized it was too large of a task for one person, so I tried to change my community. That was also too hard, so I tried to change my family. That was also too hard, so I decided to try and change myself. And though it was very hard, I finally changed myself. And once I changed myself, I discovered my family changed, the community changed, and the entire world changed." You might have a tough time changing the whole world, but if you just change yourself, all you need is one person to follow suit and eventually the whole world will be different.

- Do you always need to be first?
- Is it ever important to be last or be in the background helping out?
- Can you think of something you never thought you could accomplish, but once you tried you found you really could?
- The sages teach us that "All beginnings are difficult." How do we understand this? How can this knowledge empower a person?

Human nature is to resist change. This includes attempting something new. This resistance is known as the force of inertia and because of this it is likely that when we find ourselves at the beginning of any given task, it is going to seem especially difficult

to us. The sages have revealed, however, that this is only a temporary phase. Once we go beyond the inertia, things become much easier. This knowledge is quite valuable as it can give us the extra boost to begin and stick with worthwhile projects that we might otherwise be discouraged to try.

Activity: Instruments in the Desert

Begin with the following question for your group:

After the Torah recounts that Moshe and the Israelites sang Shirat Hayam we are told that Moshe's sister, Miriam:

"Took her drum in her hand and all the women went forth after her with drums and with dances." Beshalach: 15: 20

How did Miriam and the women find instruments in the middle of the desert?

- Play the following game and then link it to the answer of the above question:

You will need a blindfold, a big bowl, 20 to 30 cotton wool balls (this will depend on the size of your children's service) and a large serving spoon.

Sit the children in a circle and place the bowl on the floor in the middle. Scatter the cotton wool balls randomly around it. Choose one child to be blindfolded and ask him to sit or kneel on the floor in front of the bowl. Hand him the spoon and ask him to put his other arm behind his back. Explain that he has one minute to scoop up as many cotton wool balls as possible with the spoon and put them in the bowl. After one minute count how many balls are in the bowl. Repeat the process again with a few children.

The game is not a competition so watch that it doesn't turn into one.

Discuss

- When one of the participants 'blindly' scooped the cotton wool balls into the bowl he couldn't feel if he was doing any good or not. He didn't know if his efforts would be productive or not. However, he kept on trying, trusting that some of his efforts would be rewarded.
- Miriam and the women had trusted from the very beginning that God was going to save them. So much so that they had taken instruments with them from Egypt, so they could celebrate when it happened! God wants us to learn from these great women, to trust Him by being optimistic and focusing on positive outcomes.
- Ask the participants when are there times in their life when they need to trust or have faith in other people or God. Some examples could be listening to parents when they say that you can't ride your bike in a certain area, trusting your doctor if he tells you not to go swimming if you have an ear infection, praying to Hashem if someone is not well. We trust that Hashem will make the outcome be the one that He knows is right.
- Does trust in God mean that we always expect that He will make things turn out the way we want? (No. Trust in God means just that we trust that He will do what's ultimately best for us. We should do our best to do what we think is correct but if things don't work out we should trust that God knows what is really right for us.)

Tu Bshevat

- The 15 of Shevat is the 'New Year for the Trees.' It is the New Year for determining the Torah's agricultural laws.
- It is a custom to eat fruits of the 'Shivat Haminim' – the 'Seven Species of Israel'. These are: wheat, barley, olives, dates, grapes, figs and pomegranates.
- Other customs include holding a Tu Bshevat Seder created by the kabbalist Arizal, eating fifteen fruit, praying for a beautiful etrog on the following Sukkot and eating a 'new' fruit after saying the blessing Shehechyanu. A 'new' fruit is a seasonal fruit that one has not tasted yet this season.
- In Israel Tu Bshevat is a day of environmental awareness. Trees are planted in celebration.
- The Torah, Deut 20:19 compares people to trees. 'A person is like the tree of a field.'

Activity: The Seven Species: Shivat Haminim

Please find below a Tu Bshevat snap game based on the Shivat Haminim. Before Shabbat print out as many copies of the cards (on the last two pages) as you will need, cut them out and give them to the children to play in pairs. Link the Shivat Haminim to Tu Bshevat as written above.

Snap Rules:

The dealer deals out the whole deck of cards face-down, one card at a time to each player, in a clockwise rotation. Each player, starting with the player to the left of the dealer, takes a turn flipping over the top card of his pile and putting it face-up in front of him. After a few turns, each player has a little pile of face-up cards.

When you turn over all the cards into the pile in front of you, you pick up the pile and use it again without shuffling them. The flipping process continues until one player turns over a card of the same rank as the top card on another player's pile. As soon as the matching card is revealed, the first person to call out "Snap!" takes the two piles with matching cards and puts them face down under his own pile.

Frequently, two players make the Snap call simultaneously. In this case, you put the two piles with the same card together, face-up, in middle of the table. Everyone continues to turn over the top cards on their piles until someone turns over a card that matches the card on the pile in the middle of the table. The first person to shout "Snap pool!" wins the middle pile. The new piles that are being created are still up for grabs in the usual way, of course. Whenever a pairing is created, the first to shout "Snap" wins them.

When a player mistakenly calls out "Snap!" her pile goes into the centre of the table; the first player to call "Snap pool!" at the relevant moment gets her pile. You have to operate with what you have left, and if you run out of cards, you are out of the game.

The player who ends up with all the cards wins the game.

Set rules about the proper way to turn over your card. You can't turn over the card so that you see it first, which means that you must flip over the card in a continuous, fast motion onto your pile.

Have an impartial witness to decide on all close calls. If you can, choose someone who isn't playing the game.

גֶפֶן

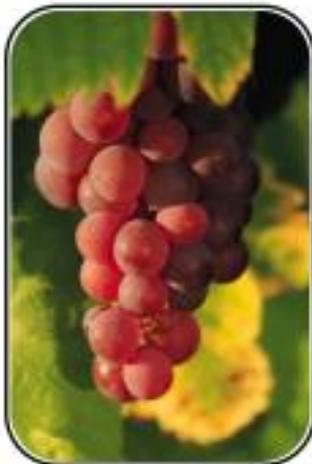
Grapes

שְׁעָרָה

Barley

חֹטָה

Wheat



זֵית

שָׁמֶן

Olive Oil

רְמוֹן

Pomegranate

תְּאֵנָה

Fig





דָּבַשׁ
Date -
Honey



