



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

## ACHAREI 5779

### Parsha Summary:

- God speaks to Moshe after the death of two of Aharon's sons. Moshe is told to warn Aharon, the Kohen Gadol, not to enter the Holy of Holies (Kodesh Hakodashim) area of the Mishkan (Tabernacle), except on Yom Kippur.
- The parsha details the Yom Kippur service in the Mishkan: Aharon will have to bring a bull as a chatat (sin) offering and a ram as an olah (elevation) offering.
- The people will provide two male goats. Aharon must place lots on the two goats, designating one to be a chatat and the other to be thrown off a cliff in the wilderness.
- Inside the Kodesh Hakodashim, Aharon will bring an incense offering (ketoret). He will also sprinkle blood from the various offerings in specific areas of the Mishkan.
- The nation is commanded to fast on Yom Kippur. When Yom Kippur arrives, Aharon does exactly as commanded by God. This special service is to be repeated every year by future incumbents of his office. It is forbidden to bring an animal offering to anywhere other than the Mishkan.
- It is forbidden to consume the blood of any animal. After doing shechita (slaughter) on kosher fowl or non-domesticated animals, there is a mitzvah to cover the blood.
- The laws of forbidden relationships are listed, such as with close relatives, or with another's spouse. The nation's well-being in the Land is dependent upon adhering to the laws about forbidden relationships.

## 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.

Tip: This week is quite a tricky parsha to use as the basis for a quiz so ensure you are well prepared if you do decide to quiz your participants.

### **Activity: Peer pressure**

In the Parsha this week God instructs the Bnei Israel not to follow the bad ways of other people. In this activity, we are trying to teach our participants about the dangers of peer pressure. Sometimes it's very difficult to stand up for ourselves and make the right decisions based on our own decisions. When there are friends of ours or big groups of other people saying otherwise, it can be very hard not to follow them. It's important to try and surround ourselves with the right people who will be a good influence on us.

Sit your group in a circle and choose one child to leave the room. The remaining children choose one person to be the leader. The point of the game is that the leader will start different hand motions such as clapping, slapping your knees, snapping your fingers, drumming on the ground and so on. All the other participants should follow in unison and every time the leader switches an action the rest of the group should follow suit. The child who was outside has to guess who the leader is. The leader and the group have to try to ensure that it's not obvious who the leader is. If the child picks correctly a new chief is chosen.

Alternative or a second game:

Sit your group in a circle and choose one child to sit in the middle. The first time you play this it's probably a good idea to choose a strong character to be the one in the middle. Ask the room what's the best ever

song. The child in the middle picks his/her best song and the rest of the group pick one song for the group.

The aim of the game is for the child in the middle to try to sing as loud as possible and perform as dramatically as they can. They are trying to get as many children on the outside circle as possible to stop singing the group song and sing their song whilst joining them in the middle. The outside group is going to try to persuade the child in the middle to join in with their song.

Participants can do whatever they like (within reason) to achieve this. The rules are, no touching another person and not to get too uncomfortably close to the person in the middle. The facilitator should ensure it doesn't become too rowdy. (If you are worried that you may not be able to stop the game getting out of hand perhaps play one of the games below as this week they may be suitable for your group.)

Play the game several times using different people in the middle each time.

### **Discuss:**

- What did it feel like in the first game being the only person who didn't know who the leader was?
- What did it feel like in game two when you were in the middle and everyone around you isn't only doing something different to you but were actively trying to get you to join them?
- Is it hard to stay strong in your beliefs?
- When there's a big group of people doing something, do you feel pressure to join them?

Peer pressure is very difficult to overcome. If we surround ourselves with people who don't have such great characteristics or values then we may become influenced by them. On the other hand, if we surround ourselves by good influences, imagine what impact they can have on us. Thinking carefully about our company can help us become the best people we can possibly be.

## 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.

Tip: This week is quite a tricky parsha to use as the basis of a quiz so ensure you are well prepared if you do decide to quiz your participants.

### **Activity: Peer Pressure**

The Jewish people had been slaves in Egypt and were shortly going to enter Canaan. Rashi writes that Egypt and Canaan were the most morally corrupt nations in the world at the time. In the parsha this week God instructs the Jewish people not to become influenced by these nations.

Do not discuss the above yet but go straight into the activities. You will be able to discuss the concept above at the end.

### **Game One:**

Prepare in advance, three or four complex words that the children at your service would not know. Write each word on a slip of paper. Next to one word write the correct definition of the word and on the other papers, make up and write a meaning that is incorrect.

Choose three children and give them a slip of paper each. Do not let them know who has the correct meaning of the word. Ask them in turn to present the word and the meaning to the rest of the group and convince the group that the meaning they have been given, is the correct one. The can embellish it to try and make it sound true if they wish. The rest of the

children will need to discuss and vote which child has the correct definition. The children you have chosen can try and argue their case.

### Game 2:

Divide the room into two sections. It can be the left wall and the right wall. You don't need to physically define it with an object but just tell the children. Next, choose a child to be the 'anchor'. The anchor calls out two choices. For example, hot or cold, dry or wet, football or tennis, crisps or chocolate and so on. The anchor will also assign one to each section of the room as they call out their two choices. Crisps may be right and chocolate left. Each child has to quickly choose between each choice and run to the side of the room they have chosen. This activity needs to move fast so that quick decision making will happen. It will be plain to see which children move to a side because their friends have chosen to move there.

### Discuss:

- Ask the children who were given a word in activity 1, how they felt when they had to convince everyone that they were right?
- How did they feel when everyone rejected what they said?
- How did they feel if they had the right explanation but no one had accepted it?
- Would they have kept arguing and said they were really correct or given in to peer pressure?
- Ask the children what made them choose a different side of the room in activity 2?
- Was it their own choice or did they go there because their friends were going in that direction?
- Ask the children if they have ever felt that they needed to do something that they were not comfortable with because their friends were doing it? How did it feel?

As mentioned above, in the parsha this week God instructs the Jewish people not to become influenced by the nations of Egypt where they had just been slaves, or by the people in Canaan where they were shortly to

go. Rashi writes that Egypt and Canaan were the most morally corrupt nations in the world at that time. We can learn from here to make sure we stay true to our beliefs and not bow to peer pressure. In the book of Mishlei (13.20) it says; "He who goes with the wise will become wise, but he who befriends the fools will be broken."

The Midrash tells us a parable. When a man walks into a spice seller's shop, even if he buys nothing, never the less, when he leaves he carries the smell of spices with him. When a man walks into a bad smelling tanner's shop, even if he leaves empty handed, the bad odour will linger on him.

It is easy to become influenced by the actions of those around us. We must be careful only to be influenced by positive values. Peer pressure may compel one into certain actions which are contradictory to one's personal values and beliefs. Therefore it is important to be careful while choosing our friends.