



Welcome to Spark2, the Tribe weekly parsha activity sheet for Children's Service Leaders across the United Synagogue communities.

Thank you for offering to run a service. 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.

Spark2 gives you an overview of the weekly parsha, a song, activity or Dvar 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 Spark2. Please be in touch if you have any queries, feedback or if I can be of any help.

With best wishes,
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Bamidbar

Parsha Summary:

- This week we start the fourth Sefer of the Torah, The Book of Bamidbar.
- Hashem commands Moshe to take a census of all the Jewish men ages 20 - 60.
- The Leviim are counted separately.
- Hashem gives Moshe a system of where all the different tribes should position themselves when encamped. The Mishkan is in the centre. Each tribe is given a special place.
- Each tribe is given a flag with a symbol on it that reflects the nature of that tribe.
- The Torah tells us the responsibilities that were given out for when it came to transporting the Mishkan.

Children's Service: Tots – Year 2

Activity 1:

In the parsha this week we read about the 12 tribes of the Bnei Yisrael – the Jewish People. Each tribe had their very own flag with a special sign on it. For example the Tribe of Yehudah had a blue flag with a lion on it. The lion was a sign of royalty as King David came from the Tribe of Yehudah. The Tribe of Yissachar had a sun and moon on its flag as the people from this tribe were very good astronomers and they set up the Jewish calendar.

- Ask the children if each one of them had their own flag which represented them, what would it have embroidered on it and why?

Activity 2:

Sit the children in a circle. The game is called 'Stand up, sit down.' The leader should say a statement and the children should stand up if it is true for them. They should sit down before the next statement is said.

Discuss the following points:

- Was anyone surprised by the results?
- Did you learn anything about the group today?
- What would it be like if we were all exactly the same?
- We can see from the parsha that each shevet/tribe had their own strengths, yet they were all part of the Jewish People. Every person in the world is a unique creation and we must respect everyone.

Activity 3:

Sing the names of the Tribes to the tune of '*In and Out the Dusty Bluebells*'. (Tune can be found on 'YouTube')

'Reuven, Shimon, Levi, Yehudah,
Yissachar, Zevulun, Dan, Naftali,
Gad, Asher, Yosef and Binyamin,
These are the Tribes of Yisrael.

Children's Service: Years 3-6

In the parsha this week we read about the 12 Shevatim/ Tribes of the Bnei Yisrael – the Jewish People. Each shevet had their very own flag with a special sign on it. For example the shevet of Yehudah had a blue flag with a lion on it. The lion was a sign of royalty as King David came from the shevet of Yehudah. The shevet of Yissachar had a sun and moon on its flag as the people from this shevet were very good astronomers and they set up the Jewish calendar.

Activity 1:

Start by introducing the concept of prejudice and ask the children to give their own definition of the word. The dictionary defines prejudice as:

'A preconceived idea, usually one that is unfavourable or an opinion held in disregard of facts that contradict it. Intolerance of other races.'

Before Shabbat prepare cards or papers with characters on from movies, stories, music, TV, historical times, fairy tales etc... Some

examples are Shrek, The Hunchback of Notre Dame, Cinderella and Aladdin.

Split the children into small groups and give each group a card. The groups should brainstorm all the ways that the character on their card was discriminated against and the prejudice that took place in each situation. They can also discuss how each character handled the situation. In my examples above, Shrek would be physical appearance, Hunchback of Notre Dame would be disability, Aladdin would be social class and Cinderella would be position in the family.

The groups should feedback to the rest of the groups and the leader should facilitate a discussion on how the characters felt, and how they handled their situation.

Other questions to discuss might include:

- Why do people sometimes show prejudice toward a group of people? (Learnt at home, follow the crowd, etc.)
- Can they apply any of the character's successful strategies to combat present day prejudice?
- Does any of the prejudice and discrimination in the examples remind them of anything in their own life?
- Why is it important to discuss prejudice?

Sum up:

If possible end off by putting on a large brimmed hat as a prop. Explain that in the parsha this week we are told that each shevet/tribe had their own flag with its own picture embroidered on it. The picture was a symbol of the characters and it reflected

the nature of the people in that shevet. They were however all part of the Jewish people.

The Jewish people are strongest when they respect each other and work together as a united nation. Prejudice is like putting on a large hat. (Point to the brim of the hat you are wearing.) The hat blocks the vision of the wearer who can only see the brim.

The hat represents prejudice blocking one's vision to see others as they really are. Prejudice has always been present in the world and challenges us to practice ways to show acceptance of our differences.

Ask the participants if each one of them had their own flag which represented them what would it have embroidered on it and why?