



Welcome to Spark, the Tribe Parasha activity sheet that will help you bring Judaism to life in a varied and exciting way. I'd like these activities to enthuse the children and show them how the Torah given almost 3500 years ago is still as relevant and as exciting in our lives today.

Thank you for offering to run a Children's Service, for all the hard work 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 Parasha, songs, an activity, discussion questions or D'var Torah linked to the Parasha 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 am sure the children at your shul 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 the work you do in enabling so many young Jews to access their heritage and traditions in such an exciting way.

All it takes is a small spark of interest, to ignite a flame of passion for Judaism.

With kindest regards,

Rabbi Nicky (Goldmeier)
Spark Editor and Education Consultant

Welcome

Beshalach – ‘The Parasha in a Nutshell’:



Parashat Beshalach is the fourth Parasha (Weekly Torah Portion) in the second book of the Torah, Shemot. The word Beshalach means ‘sent’ and the Parasha (Weekly Torah Portion) begins, ‘And it was when Pharaoh sent the people...’

This Shabbat is also known as ‘Shabbat Shira’, the ‘Shabbat of Song’, because Moshe (Moses) and the Israelites sang a song of praise to God, after they had safely crossed the Sea of Reeds and watched as their enemies were defeated.

Having left Egypt, the Israelites were not led to Canaan (The Promised Land) by the direct route, as they may have met hostile armies if they had gone the direct way and this may have led to the Israelites wanting to go back to Egypt.

Instead, the Israelites were led in the opposite direction and God ensured that a pillar of cloud led them by day and a pillar of fire by night. The people camped by the Sea of Reeds, more popularly known as the Red Sea and it was at that point when Pharaoh decided to pursue them.

Regretting his decision to let the Israelites leave his land, Pharaoh gathered his army and chased after them. When the Israelites saw the Egyptian army approaching, they cried out to Moshe (Moses). He reassured them that God would rescue them.

Moshe (Moses) stretched his rod over the Red Sea and it split in two, allowing the Israelites to cross it on dry land. Once all the people had reached the other side, Moshe (Moses) once again, stretched out his rod over the sea and it came together over the advancing Egyptian army.

Moshe (Moses) and the Israelites sang a song of praise to God, after which they continued on their journey to a place called Marah. The Israelites refreshed themselves there and moved on to the oasis of Elim.

The Israelites proceeded to the wilderness of Sinai and soon they were complaining about the lack of food. They were subsequently told that God would indeed send Manna from heaven and Quails for meat.

The Israelites then complained about a lack of water and God commanded Moshe (Moses) to hit a rock from which water gushed forth.

The tribe of Amalek attacked the Israelites at Rephidim, but they fought back and the Amalekites were decisively defeated.

The Parasha - In a Nutshell!

Parasha Overview – In a Little More Detail

- When the Israelites left Egypt, God did not lead them to Canaan through the land of the Philistines, in case they met hostile armies and regretted having left Egypt. The people were led by a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night and Moshe (Moses) made sure to take the remains of Yoseph (Joseph) with him as Yoseph (Joseph) had been promised.
- The people had reached Etham on the edge of the wilderness, when they were commanded to turn back and camp by the Red Sea. But Pharaoh was not happy he had let the Israelites leave and he gathered together soldiers, horses and chariots and pursued the Israelites. When the people saw the Egyptian army hot on their heels they complained to Moshe (Moses). They said, 'it would have been better to serve in Egypt than to die in the wilderness.'
- Moshe (Moses) reassured them and the guiding pillar of cloud moved to the rear, creating a veil of darkness that hindered the Egyptian advance.
- God told Moshe (Moses) to stretch out his hand over the Red Sea and a strong east wind blew and divided the water, allowing the Israelites to cross on dry land. The Egyptians followed them into the seabed, but God threw them in to confusion and the wheels of the chariots became stuck. Moshe (Moses) and the entire nation of Israelites crossed safely to the other side and Moshe (Moses) then stretched out his hand again and the waters came crashing down on the Egyptian army.
- A song of triumph was sung by Moshe (Moses) and the Israelites, in which they praised God's infinite power in destroying the enemy.
- The Israelites then marched southwards through the wilderness of Shur to a place called Marah which means bitterness, so named because of its bitter water. The Israelites complained that they had no water which was fit to drink and Moshe (Moses) was shown a tree which when thrown into the waters, made them sweet. The Israelites refreshed themselves and then moved on to a place called Elim.
- One month after leaving Egypt they entered the wilderness of Sinai and due to the lack of food, the Israelites wished that they were back in Egypt. God let it be known that He would cause Manna to rain down each morning. Migratory birds known as Quails came to the camp of the Israelites and that way, they were able to eat meat.





- Each morning Manna would fall and be collected, but on Fridays, a double portion (one for Friday and one for Shabbat) fell, as the Israelites were not to carry the Manna on Shabbat. An earthenware pot with a piece of manna inside was to be kept in the Holy Ark as a testimony for all future generations, of God's kindness.
- At Rephidim, which was further south, the Israelites once again complained to Moshe (Moses), this time, about a lack of water. God told Moshe (Moses) to hit a rock and out gushed water which the people were able to drink.
- It was at Rephidim that the tribe of Amalek attacked the Israelites. But they fought back, led by Joshua. While the battle raged, Moshe (Moses) went to the top of a hill with his rod. He was accompanied by Aharon (Aaron) and Chur, who supported his arms when he became tired, for the Israelites only prevailed when he held his hands aloft, praying to God for assistance. Amalek was defeated and Moshe (Moses) was told to record the incident and ensure that what the tribe of Amalek did, never be forgotten.

Parasha Overview
- In a Little More Detail!



Children's Service: Tot's – Year 3 (this game can actually be played with children of all ages)

Activity Red Light, Green Light

These 2 games will encourage the children to be patient and explain to them that in this week's Parasha (Weekly Torah Portion) Moshe (Moses) had to display an incredible amount of patience. The Israelites complained about a lack of food, a lack of water and a lack of meat. They told Moshe (Moses) that they would rather be back in Egypt, in those terrible conditions rather than be in the wilderness without food or water! Indeed, the Israelites could have displayed a little more patience themselves. (The 'Red Light, Green Light' game will be easier for the younger children to play).

You won't need too much space for this game and it shouldn't involve any running. The game will also encourage children to show a degree of patience. You will need to mark out a 'finish line, using some string. In the game "Red Light, Green Light," all the players line up at the starting point. When you say, "Green light," the participants walk toward the finish line. But, when you say, "Red Light," the children have to stop in their tracks. If a player keeps walking, s/he has to go back to the start line. The game "Mother, May I?" is similar. Tell each player the action that you want him/her to do to help get him/her closer to the finish line. For example, you might tell a participant to take two hops or three baby steps. Before the player moves, s/he has to ask, "Mother, may I?" You then answer, "Yes, you may," or to really test a young player's patience, say, "No, you may not." If a player forgets to ask for permission, s/he has to go back to the start line.



Story Time – This story is related to Tu B'Shvat (the New Year for Trees) which is celebrated this coming Sunday night and Monday – 15th Sh'vat. It can be read to children of all ages. It also relates to the good Middah (Character Trait) of 'Patience'.



The old man watched with a satisfied smile as the cars drove in one by one to the far side of the apple orchard. He loved this time of year when the apples were hanging red and heavy on their branches, waiting to be picked, eaten and enjoyed, and when people came from miles around for their yearly outing.

He saw a green car, and watched as parents, kids, packages, bags, and a baby's buggy came tumbling out. One of the kids, a girl of around 11 years old, caught his eye, not because of her enthusiasm but rather, her extreme lack of it.

"Apple picking. Apple picking. Every year, boring apple picking," Nancy huffed. "What's wrong with the apples we buy in the shops? They're perfectly good. Why do we have to make this big trip every year for a few silly apples?"

"Nancy, can you grab this bag please? Be careful, it has a flask in it," said her mum.

Mrs. Krieger felt bad that her daughter was feeling so impatient and having such a rough time of it today. She had such fond memories of apple picking in this very same orchard back when she was a girl and hoped to share it with her children. But Nancy wanted no part of it.

It was taking *forever* for her parents to get everything organised, so Nancy started wandering around the orchard. She just wanted to finish quickly and go home to join her friends, who were at the new ice cream shop that had just opened. Free ice cream, as much as you can eat, all day, and here she was, stuck surrounded by these ridiculous apples. As she was walking, she suddenly came upon a sight that looked strange to her. She went over to take a closer look.

The old man, the orchard owner, was bending down over some tiny apple-tree seedlings, picking up each one lovingly and placing it gently into neatly spaced holes already dug into the ground. Nancy snorted out loud as she watched him pat down the dirt around each sapling, like they were his babies or something. The man looked up at her and smiled.

Story Time



"Beautiful, aren't they?" he said.

"Maybe," replied Nancy. "But how long will it be until they're big enough to make apples?"

"Oh, to really produce apples? About 20 years, maybe more."

"Twenty years! Then what are you bothering for? Don't get offended sir, but let's face it, at your age," she paused as she took in his wrinkled face, "it doesn't really look like you'll be around to enjoy them, you know?"

The man smiled warmly again. "Right you are about that, young lady. Nothing lasts forever, does it? Even so, all these apples here that everyone is picking and enjoying were planted by my father and grandfather. They cared enough back then to plant for the future. And look - with a little patience, the future came quick enough, didn't it? I hope these saplings here will provide lots of good fruit for my children and grandchildren, and whoever else might want to come and enjoy them."

Nancy was speechless. Nothing in her eleven years of life had prepared her for such a patient and unselfish outlook on life.

"Here, would *you* like to plant one, young lady?" the man said as he offered her one of the saplings. "Maybe one day you'll come back here and *your* children can pick apples from '*your*' tree."

Nancy took it and felt surprisingly good as she placed it into the ground.

"Oh Nancy, there you are," said her mum, walking over. "I know you're in a rush to get home, so we'll try to hurry things as much as we can."

"No mum, it's okay," smiled the girl as she glanced at the old man, still patiently planting for the future, "I'm really happy we're spending this time together. There's no rush, after all. Don't all good things and good *times*, take time - to bear fruit?"

Questions for younger children - How did Nancy feel at first about the apple-picking trip?

How did she feel in the end?

Questions for older children - What do you think Nancy learned that day that changed the way she felt?

What, if anything, do you think a person gains by being patient?

Story Time



Service: Years 3- 6

Activity – ‘Tu B’Shvat Matching Game’ - This activity is related to Tu B’Shvat – The New Year for Trees and at the end of the Spark you will find pictures of the 7 fruit of Israel, 5 of which we traditionally eat on 15th Shvat (we generally do not eat wheat and barley raw!) You will also find pictures of ways in which we use each of the 7 fruits of Israel. Prepare a few sets of all the pictures as cards and put them in 2 piles. Then, place the fruit on one table/chair and the ways we can use the fruit on another table/chair. In groups or pairs, the children have to match up the fruit and its use.

Wheat and Barley – For feeding animals (Cow)

Grapes – For saying Kiddush on Shabbat and Festivals (Bottle of wine/grape juice and Kiddush cup)

Figs – We eat these on Rosh Hashanah and say a blessing ‘Shehecheyanu’ before eating them ('Shehecheyanu')

Pomegranate – We traditionally eat this on Rosh Hashana, as we hope our good deeds are as many as the seeds in a Pomegranate (Rosh Hashana picture of apple, honey and pomegranate)

Olives – Many people use Olive oil to light their Chanukiah on Chanukah (Chanukiah)

Dates – Some people use Date Honey on Rosh Hashanah (Apple and honey)



Years 3-6 - Activities

What do Dan and Dina Teach us this Week

In this week's Tribe Scribe, you'll find another really great lesson that we can learn from the Parasha (Weekly Torah Portion) of Beshalach.

Spreading Sunshine.

Give the children copies of the Tribe Scribe (perhaps one between two) and read the story with the children, pointing out the captions and the illustrations.

Dan tells us all about Lady J, who was such an inspirational woman.

Ask the children what it means that there was no 'I' in her life, only 'We'?

How is this story related to the Parasha, Beshalach?

How did Lady J put the great Middah (Character Trait) of 'Say a little, do a lot' into practice?

For the full page download of The Tribe Scribe please [click here](#)



What do Dan and Dina Teach us this Week?



What does this Story Teach us?

As a father and his son were going on a long journey, the father decided to put his son on to his shoulders so as to protect his child from any dangers they may meet on the road. The father and son travelled for a fair distance and then a man passed by. 'Have you seen my father?', the boy asked the man.



Upon hearing this, the father became angry and said to his son, 'I have been carrying you all this way and protecting you from any dangers, yet you have shown me no appreciation for all I have done for you.'

- 1. What does this story teach us about The Children of Israel's relationship with God?**
- 2. Who is the father in the story?**
- 3. Who is the child in the story?**
- 4. How were the Israelites like the boy in the story?**
- 5. Think of examples of when the Israelites complained to Moshe (Moses) in this week's Parasha?**
- 6. What was God's response?**

What does this Story Teach Me?

Tefillah Treasures



There is a prayer which we say at the end of the silent/personal Amidah – The Silent Prayer beginning with the words ‘Elokai Netzor’. In this paragraph we are asking God to help us talk nicely about other people and not let others talk badly about us or try to hurt our feelings in any way.

Ask the children to have a go at reading the Hebrew and certainly the English translation.

Ask the children how they try to make sure they don’t speak badly about others and only use their mouths for talking nicely about people.

אֱלֹקָנוּ נְצֹר לְשׂוֹנוּ מֶרֶעַ וְשִׁפְטוּ מִזְבֵּחַ מְרֻמָּה וְלִמְקָלֵי נְדֹם וּנְפָנֵשי נְפָנֵשׁ עֲפָר לְפָל תְּהִיה. פָּתָח לִבִּי בְּתוֹרַתְךָ וּבְמִצְוֹתְךָ תְּרַדוֹף נְפָנֵשׁ. וְכָל הַחֹוּשִׁבִים עַלְיָ רָעָה מִהְרָה הַפֵּר עַצְתָּם וְקַלְקַל מִחְשְׁבָתָם. עֲשֵׂה לִמְעֵן שְׁמָךָ עֲשֵׂה לִמְעֵן יְמִינָה וְעַמְקָנָה. יְמִינָה, עֲשֵׂה לִמְעֵן קְדֹשָׁתָךָ. לִמְעֵן יְחִילָתָךָ יְדִידָה, הַזְּשִׁיעָה יְמִינָה וְעַמְקָנָה.

*Elohai, n'tzor l'shoni meira us'fatai
midabeir mirmah, v'limkal'lai nafshi
tidom, v'nafshi ke-afar lakol tih'yeh.
P'tach libi b'Toratecha, uv'mitzvotecha
tirdof nafshi. V'chol hachoshvim
alai raah, m'heirah hafeir atzatam
v'kalkeil machashavtam. Aseih l'maan
sh'mecha, aseih l'maan y'minecha, aseih
l'maan k'dushatecha, aseih l'maan
Toratecha. L'maan yeichaltzun y'didecha,
hoshiah y'mincha vaaneini.*

**My God, guard my speech from evil and my lips
from deception.**

**Before those who slander me, I will hold my
tongue; I will practice humility.
Open my heart to Your Torah, that I may pursue
Your mitzvot.
As for all who think evil of me, cancel their
designs and frustrate their schemes.
Act for Your own sake, for the sake of Your
Power,
for the sake of Your Holiness, for the sake of
Your Torah,
so that Your loved ones may be rescued.
Save with Your power, and answer me.**



Song – The link has been included for you to watch before Shabbat and if you so wish, to teach the children this song.

Beshalach Song

https://www.chabad.org/kids/article_cdo/aid/549237/jewish/Beshalach-I.htm

To the promised land

Through the desert sand

A cloud guided them by day

At night fire led the way

To the sea the Jews fled

"Chase after them," Paroh said,

When the Jews saw Paroh's men

"Save us!" they cried to Hashem

Hashem split the Red Sea

Our people now were free

Moshe sang a song of praise

To Hashem and his mighty ways



Songs

	
	
<p>Shehecheyanu is the blessing said on fruit that hasn't been eaten for a while on Rosh Hashanah, like figs.</p> 	

