



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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Korach

Parsha Summary:

- Korach and his followers stage a rebellion against Moshe and accuse him of grabbing power.
- God punishes them and the earth opens up and swallows Korach and his family. A fire destroys the rest of the rebels.
- The Jewish people protest and God brings a plague to destroy them. Moshe once again intervenes to save the people.
- The parsha now continues with the 'test of the staffs.' God asks Moshe to take a stick from each of the twelve tribes and place them overnight in the Mishkan. The next morning the staffs were retrieved and miraculously the stick of Aaron is covered with almond blossoms and almonds. This was further proof that Aaron was God's choice for Kohen Gadol/ High Priest.
- The parsha concludes with instructions to the Jewish people about what gifts were due to the Kohanim and Leviim.

Children's Service: Tot's –Year 2

Activity 1:

Divide the room into two parts.

Choose a leader. The leader gives two choices for example, 'chocolates or sweets' and designates which side of the room is the 'chocolate side' and which is the 'sweets side'. The leader then says, "Off you go!" The children should run or walk to the side of the room of the choice that they prefer. There is no correct answer but observe the children changing their minds based on their friends choices.

(Examples of choices could be; red or blue, hot or cold, fish or birds, cars or trains, football or cricket....)

Discuss:

- Ask the children if during the game they changed their minds about any decisions.
- What made them change their mind?
- Talk about what you observed in each activity – without mentioning names.
- Explain to the children that in the parsha this week we read a sad but important story that occurred while the Jewish people were in the desert. A man named Korach challenged Moshe and argued with him. Many good people joined in with Korach and in the end this had disastrous consequences.

The Torah is trying to teach us through this episode to think carefully before we act. Don't just follow the crowd and copy what everyone else is doing but use your own mind

to decide how to act in every situation. It takes a brave person to stand up for what they believe in and not to follow the crowd.

- Ask the children if they have any practical ideas about how to resist peer pressure. For example, walk away or change the subject, say no. ...

Activity 2:

If you are able to use a separate room, go into it and spray quite a bit of perfume. (Check if you have any children with allergies first.) Ask one or two children to go into the room for a couple of minutes. When they come back to the group ask the other children what they can smell. Hopefully they will notice the smell of the perfume!

Explain that the children smelling of perfume had been in a room that had been sprayed with the scent. The smell clung on to them and stayed with them. When we mix with people their behaviour influences us too. If we play with kind, helpful, sensible and well behaved children we will learn from them. It is quite a mature message for this age group but for those children who do grasp the message, it is a powerful activity.

Activity 3:

The parsha this week contains the word with the largest gematria in the Torah. (See Korach 16: 13, the word 'tistarer', 'to dominate'.) Explain to the children that gematria is a system where each letter of the Alef Bet is assigned a numerical value. The best known example of gematria is the Hebrew word 'Chai' which is composed of the letters 'Chet' and 'Yud' - 8 and 10, totaling 18.

This would be a good opportunity to practise singing the Alef Bet. You could also sing 'Am Yisrael **Chai**'. As an activity, print out the numbers 1-10 on card several times and scatter them on the floor. Ask the children to run/walk around and when you call out a letter of the Alef Bet between Alef and Yud, the children should stand on the corresponding numerical value.

Please see the numerical values of the Alef Bet below:

Alef	1
Bet	2
Gimmel	3
Dalet	4
Hey	5
Vav	6
Zayin	7
Chet	8
Tet	9
Yud	10

Children's Service: Years 3-6

Activity 1:

Ask a child to leave the room.

Have ready two pictures. One should be a lovely picture and one something unpleasant. Explain to the children left in the room that they will need to convince the child who left the room that the unpleasant picture is the prettiest one.

Call the child back in to the room and ask him which picture is prettiest. He will say that the lovely one is the prettiest. Everyone else will say that it is the other one and should try to convince him. He will need courage to stand up to peer pressure.

Discuss:

- Ask the children if during the game they changed their minds about any decisions.
- What made them change their mind?
- Talk about what you observed in each activity – without mentioning names.
- Explain to the children that in the parsha this week we read a sad but important story that occurred while the Jewish people were in the desert. A man named Korach challenged Moshe and argued with him. Many good people joined in with Korach and in the end this had disastrous consequences.

The Torah is trying to teach us through this episode to think carefully before we act. Don't just follow the crowd and copy what everyone else is doing, but use your own mind to decide how to act in every situation. It takes a brave

person to stand up for what they believe in and not to follow the crowd.

- Ask the children if they have any practical ideas about how to resist peer pressure. For example, walk away or change the subject, say no.
- Ask if any children have examples of times when they feel they were influenced by peer pressure. (They shouldn't mention names.)
- How we can work out if we are living the way we really want to or if we are just following the crowd?

Activity 2:

If you are able to use a separate room, go into it and spray quite a bit of perfume. (Check if you have any children with allergies first.) Ask one or two children to go into the room for a couple of minutes. When they come back to the group ask the other children what they can smell. Hopefully they will notice the smell of the perfume!

Explain that the children smelling of perfume had been in a room that had been sprayed with the scent. The smell clung on to them and stayed with them. When we mix with people their behaviour influences us too. If we play with kind, helpful, sensible and well behaved children we will learn from them. Sometimes we can be influenced for the good by a crowd of people who have the same values as us.

Dvar Torah: 'Ohn Ben Peles and Peer Pressure.'

Who was Ohn Ben Peles? The first verse of Parshat Korach lists him as being one of the men who joined Korach in his rebellion against Moshe. We find however, later in the parsha, that Ohn was not punished like the rest of Korach's followers. Why was this the case? The Gemara (Sanhedrin 109b) tells us that when Ohn's wife heard that her husband was joining the rebellion she used her great wisdom to persuade him that he was wrong.

Ohn replied to his wife that he felt he could not back out as he had already promised Korach and the rest of the group that he would join them. He didn't feel that he could now change his mind and break his promise.

His clever wife told him not to worry and that she would handle the situation. The Gemara tells us that she stood by her front door with her hair uncovered. This prevented anyone from approaching and coming to find her husband.

The discussion between Ohn and his wife is somewhat curious. Ohn was a learned man. Didn't he know that a promise to sin is null and void? The promise is no longer binding. Why did he need his wife to deal with the situation? Could he not explain to Korach and his men that he now realized that what they were doing was wrong and that he no longer felt he could join them?

Ohn did realise that he was no longer bound by his promise but he was worried that if he met the rebels their influence over him would be so strong that he would not be able to stand up to them. Ohn knew the power of peer pressure.

His wife was very wise. She knew she had to prevent Korach's men from meeting with her husband and weaken his resolve. She devised a plan to solve the problem.

Ohn and his wife realized the huge influence that can be exerted by friends and we can learn from them to stay away from bad friends. It takes strength and courage to resist peer pressure but we learn from the parsha this week to stand up for what we believe is true and not to follow the crowd.