



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 raging flame of passion for Judaism.

With kindest regards,

Rabbi Nicky (Goldmeier)

## Matot and Masei 5779

### Parasha Summary:

This week we read 2 Parashot (Torah portions), Matot and Masei.

**Matot:** The first Parasha (Torah portion) this week starts by telling us about the laws of vows and other kinds of promises that were made. Either a positive vow (a person promising he would make a contribution to the Mishkan - Tabernacle) or a negative vow (a person promising he would abstain from certain activities) were binding. The Parasha (weekly Torah portion) tells us about a couple of exceptions, when the vow was not binding.

The Parasha (Torah portion) describes the battle between the B'nei Yisrael (Children of Israel) and the Midianites. Twelve thousand men from the B'nei Yisrael (Children of Israel), one thousand from each tribe, made up the army and they were victorious over the Midianites. They shared the spoils they had captured equally and to show gratitude to God for their victory, the soldiers contributed some of the gold and silver and other valuable materials to the Mishkan (The Tabernacle).

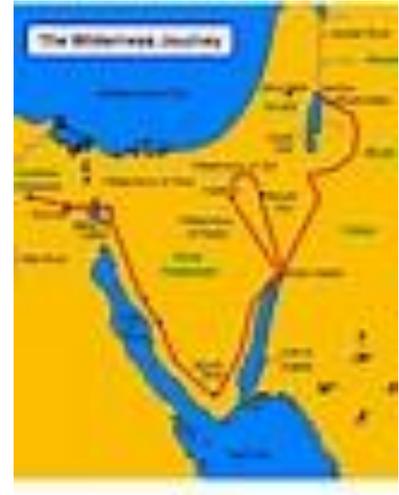
The tribes of Reuven (Reuben) and Gad asked Moshe (Moses) if they could settle with their flocks and herds, on the East side of the Yarden river (River Jordan) and after some discussion, Moshe (Moses) allowed them to do so as long as they promised to help the other tribes conquer the land of Canaan.

**Masei:** Moshe (Moses) recorded the itinerary of the B'nei Yisrael (Children of Israel) through the Midbar (Wilderness) from the time they left Egypt until their arrival at the plains of Moav (Moab). The people were told that once they had entered the Land of Canaan they would have to destroy every trace of idolatry and the land would be distributed by lots in proportion to the size of each tribe.

The Levi'im (Levites) were given forty eight cities on either side of the River Jordan, six of which were designated as Arei Miklat (Cities of Refuge), where someone who had killed negligently, but not in cold blood could run and seek refuge from any retribution.

Leaders of the family of Gilad from the tribe of Menashe (Menasseh) raised the problem of daughters from one tribe marrying into another tribe and the problems as to who any inheritance was given.

In the Shul (Synagogue) at the end of this week's Parasha (Torah portion) the congregation stands and says the words Chazak, Chazak, V'nitchazek (Be strong, be strong and may we be strengthened) giving us that urge and



## determination to continue reading and studying Torah and on to reading the fifth book of the Torah, Devarim (Deuteronomy).

### Matot

- At the beginning of the Parasha (weekly portion), the Torah discusses different types of vows and promises which were made by individuals. The Torah clarifies which vows were upheld and which were not, depending on the type of person and the overall circumstances.
- The B'nei Yisrael (Children of Israel) gathered an army of twelve thousand men, one thousand from each tribe and battled the Midianites who had brought disarray among the B'nei Yisrael (Children of Israel). During the battle the five kings of Midian and Bilam were killed and the soldiers of the B'nei Yisrael (Children of Israel) took the spoils of the battle, such as gold, silver, sheep and cattle.
- These different materials were divided fairly between those who had gone in to battle and the rest of the people. The People who had not fought in the battle still gave a proportion of the spoils to the Leviim (Levites) who worked in the Mishkan (Tabernacle) and those who had fought in the battle gave a larger contribution to show their gratitude to God for having made them victorious.
- The Tribes of Reuven (Reuben) and Gad possessed a large number of sheep and cattle and asked Moshe (Moses) if they could settle on the east side of the River Jordan in a place called Gilad. At first, Moshe (Moses) disapproved of this plan as he feared that the other tribes may lose heart when conquering the land of Canaan. However, when the people of Reuven (Reuben) and Gad told Moshe (Moses) that they had every intention of fighting alongside their fellow Israelites, Moshe (Moses) changed his mind. He charged Yehoshua (Joshua) with making sure their promise be fulfilled, otherwise they would forfeit any claims they had to settling in Gilad.

### Masei

- Moshe (Moses) recalled the different journeys the B'nei Yisrael (Children of Israel) had been through during their forty years in the Midbar (Wilderness). In total, they had encamped in forty two separate places during their forty year journey from Egypt.
- Moshe (Moses) commanded the B'nei Yisrael (Children of Israel), that after having conquered the land, they would have to destroy every remnant of idol worship in the country.
- Leaders of the tribes would be appointed and together with Elazar the Kohen Gadol (High Priest) and Yehoshua (Joshua) they were to divide the land equally between the tribes. The Leviim (Levites) however, were

not given separate territory but were instead given forty eight cities on both sides of the River Jordan.

- Six of these cities of the Leviim (Levitical Cities) were designated as Arei Miklat (Cities of Refuge), besides the other 42 cities which acted as minor Arei Miklat (Cities of Refuge).
- Following a case of a negligent murder (a common case of negligent murder given in the Talmud, is of 2 people who are chopping trees in the forest and one doesn't check that his axe head is tied on securely before he starts chopping. As he swings his axe, the head flies off and kills his partner) the perpetrator could run to one of these forty eight cities of refuge where he could escape any retribution from his friend's family and also be brought before a judicial tribunal.
- Leaders from the family of Gilad from the tribe of Menashe (Menasseh) were concerned that if a person only had daughters and these daughters married someone from a different tribe, their property would go to that tribe, leading to a reduction of that tribe's holdings. It was decided that in such cases, an heiress should marry within her own tribe.
- This is what occurred in the case of Tzelafchad's daughters, Machlah, Tirtzah, Chaglah, Milkah and Noa, who married men from their own tribe. However, this law only applied for that generation.

## Children's Service: Tot's – Year 3



**Remind the children that in the second of this week's Parashot (Torah portions) the B'nei Yisrael (Children of Israel) are reminded of all their travels through the Midbar (Wilderness). They all had to listen very carefully to God's instructions, so that they knew when to continue on their journey, wait for a while or camp for a long period of time.**

### **Activity: One If by Land, Two If by Sea**

Place a long piece of string or ribbon on the floor. Choose one person to call out the commands "land," "sea," or "air." The players stand in front of the line, shoulder to shoulder. If the caller says "land," everyone jumps behind the line.

If the caller says "sea," everyone jumps over the line. If the caller says "air," everyone jumps straight up. (For an extra challenge: If the caller says "land" or "sea" twice in a row, don't move on the second call.) Anyone who jumps on the line or makes a mistake is out.

### **Activity: I went travelling and I packed in my suitcase...'**

This game can be played with different age groups of children and it's quite a well-known memory game.

The children sit in a circle and one child starts by saying the line, 'I went travelling and I packed in my suitcase...'. Then they say one thing they would pack (Eg jumper, toothbrush, sunglasses, soap, snack, siddur etc). The next child says the same line, but before saying what s/he will pack, they need to remember what the previous children have said. Of course, an adult should help children the further round the circle it goes!

## Story – ‘The Little Red Rabbi’ (based on the well-known story of ‘The Little Red Hen’).



It was the start of the summer holidays and the Little Red Rabbi thought it would be really nice if he took his family on a holiday.

He asked his wife and his children where they would all like to go for their holiday and they all agreed that Devon would be a really nice place to go. It had lots and lots of beautiful countryside, lots of sheep and lots of cows. It even had beeches where the Little Red Rabbi’s children could play in the sand and splash about in the sea.

Luckily, the Little Red Rabbi had a big car, so there was going to be no problem at all getting everyone’s cases down to Devon.

The week before they were due to drive to Devon for their holiday, the Little Red Rabbi and his wife went to the shops to buy all the food they would need, all the drinks, all the buckets and spades and the sun cream to protect their skin from the hot sun. In fact, they had remembered to buy just about everything they would need for their holiday in Devon.

The day of the holiday arrived and the Little Red Rabbi and his family were so excited. They packed their suitcases, food and drinks in to the car. The Little Red Rabbi made sure to place his Tallit and Tefillin carefully in a special bag, as he still wanted to say tefillot (prayers) while he was on holiday. As they all sat in the car, the Little Red Rabbi turned the key to start the engine and....NOTHING. He tried again, but the car just wouldn’t start!

I know, thought the Little Red Rabbi, I’ll ask my friends if they can come round and help mend the car so that we can get to Devon in time for the start of our holiday. So the Little Red Rabbi called Michael. ‘Hi Michael, would you be able to come over and give me a hand starting my car?’ ‘I’m ever so sorry, but I’m actually in Israel at the moment, on holiday with my family’ said Michael. ‘No problem’, said the Little Red Rabbi. Next, the Little Red Rabbi called Michaela. ‘Hi Michaela,

would you be able to come over and give me a hand starting my car?' 'I'm ever so sorry, but I'm actually in Manchester at the moment, on holiday with my family' said Michaela. 'No problem', said the Little Red Rabbi. Finally he called Morris. Hi Morris, would you be able to come over and give me a hand starting my car?' 'I'm ever so sorry, but I'm actually in Spain at the moment, on holiday with my family' said Morris. 'No problem', said the Little Red Rabbi.

The Little Red Rabbi asked his family to get out of the car and go into the house for a few minutes, he opened the bonnet and looked around at the engine. He took a spanner and tightened some bolts. He checked the water, the oil and the battery and he made sure everything was in the right place.

After half an hour the Little Red Rabbi jumped back into the car, turned the key and...IT STARTED. The Little Red Rabbi's family came out of the house and back into the car. 'HURRAY' they all shouted. 'Thank you so much Daddy, you are the best Little Red Rabbi in the world!

'I think I'm the ONLY Little Red Rabbi in the world' said the Little Red Rabbi.

They all had such a fabulous holiday, enjoying the food, the drink, the sun and the sea. It was amazing.

## Children's Service: Years 3- 6

### Activity:

**The 'B'li Neder' ('Without a Promise') Game - teaches children the importance of keeping their word without actually making a promise, as in Judaism we try not to make a promise and so we say 'B'li Neder' (I have every intention of fulfilling my word, but won't make a promise) .**

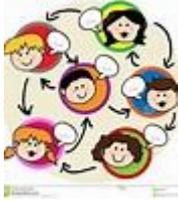


This group game will be a fun activity for children and will also teach them the importance of keeping their word, but not actually **promising** to do something. Have children sit in a circle. Each child must think of something for which they would like to keep their word. They then act this out for the other children. For instance, if a child really wants to keep his/her teeth healthy, they

could pretend they are brushing their teeth. Remind the children they cannot speak. Pick one child to go in the middle of the circle and act out the thing they would most like to try and keep their word about. Once the action has correctly been guessed by another child, the child who has been acting says, 'I will, B'li Neder, try my best to ....'

Other children may want to work on their sports skills, to be the best footballer/basketball player. They may want to work on tidying their bedroom or they may want to try to always do what their parents tell them! These are just some examples.

## Discussion Points



Tell the children this short parable first.

In the second of the two Parashot (Torah portions) we read this week, Masei, Moshe (Moses) reminds the B'nei Yisrael (Children of Israel) about their journeys. All the places they had visited and the various events that happened in those places.

There is a Mashal (Parable) told which compares this situation to that of a king who took his unwell son to a distant place for a cure. On their way home, the king lovingly reviewed all the experiences they had gone through at each and every place they had stopped. 'Where we stopped, Where we found shelter, where you felt unwell.'

By doing this, the king reminded his son of all they had experienced during their successful journey.

- Who would you compare the King to in this story?
- Who do you compare the son (prince) to in this story?
- What message is this story giving us about the B'nei Yisrael (Children of Israel) in the wilderness?
- Have you ever been on a memorable journey?
- Would you like to share the reasons why it was memorable?

Tefillah Treasures



בְּרוּךְ שֶׁאָמַר

**Baruch**

**Sheamar**

**Blessed is the**

# One Who said

Ask the children to turn to this Tefillah (prayer) in their Tribe Siddur, on page 11 and count the number of words in this Tefillah (Prayer). They will count 87 words and this number of words is no coincidence.

A famous Rabbi called Rabbi Sa'adiyah Gaon, a prominent rabbi of the Geonic period, who lived in the first Century of the Common Era, added this prayer to be said on Shabbat, but later (in France) it was added in to the daily prayer book.

The numerical value for 87 in Hebrew is

פ (Pay) and ז (Zayin) which spells:

זפ (Paz) and this word means 'Finest gold'.

So, when we say the Tefillah (Prayer) Baruch Sheamar (Blessed is the One Who said) we want God to receive our prayers as if they were a gift of finest gold.

Songs – The links have been included for you to watch before Shabbat and if you so wish, to teach the children these songs.

# Yerushalayim Shel Zahav Jerusalem of Gold



<https://www.bing.com/search?q=yerushalayim+shel+zahav&form=EDGTC&qs=PF&cvid=efef9a9e63af4bbaba361d38d317c8e1&refig=83068db170c945c8fcc3ff4e418d56dd&cc=GB&setlang=en-GB&PC=ACTS>

Avir harim zalul kayayin  
Ve-rei'ah oranim  
Nissa be-ru'ah ha'arbaim  
I'm kol pa'amonim

Yerushalayim shel zahav  
Ve-shel nehoshet ve-shel or  
Ha-lo le-khol shirayikh  
Ani kinnor.

Eikhah yavshu borot ha-mayim  
Kikkar ha-shuk reikah  
Ve-ein poked et Har ha-Bayit  
Ba-ir ha-attikah

You-va-me'arot asher ba-selah  
Meyallelot ruhot  
Ve-ein yored el Yam ha-Melah  
Be-derekh Yeriho

Yerushalayim shel zahav  
Ve-shel nehoshet ve-shel or  
Ha-lo le-khol shirayikh  
Ani kinnor.

Akh be-vo'i ha-yom la-shir lakh  
Ve-lakh likshor ketarim  
Katonti mi-ze'ir bana'ikh  
You-me-aharon ha-meshorerim

Ki shemekh zorev et ha-sefatayim  
Ke-neshikat saraf  
I'm eshkakhekh Yerushalayim  
Asher kullah zahav

Yerushalayim shel zahav  
Ve-shel nehoshet ve-shel or

Ha-lo le-khol shirayikh  
Ani kinnor.

Hazarnu el borot ha-mayim  
La-shuk ve-la-kikkar  
Shofar kore be-Har ha-Bayit  
Ba-ir ha-attikah

You-va-me'arot asher ba-selah  
Alfey shemashot zorhot  
Nashuv nered el Yam ha-Melah  
Be-derekh Yeriho

Yerushalayim shel zahav  
Ve-shel nehoshet ve-shel or  
Ha-lo le-khol shirayikh  
Ani kinnor.

As clear as wine, the wind is flying  
Among the dreamy pines  
As evening light is slowly dying  
And a lonely bell still chimes.

So many songs, so many stories  
The stony hills recall...  
Around her heart my city carries  
A lonely ancient wall.

Yerushalaim all of gold  
Yerushalaim, bronze and light  
Within my heart I shall treasure  
Your song and sight.

Alas, the dry wells and fountains,  
Forgotten market-day  
The sound of horn from Temple's mountain  
No longer calls to pray.

The rocky caves at night are haunted  
By sounds of long ago  
When we were going to the Jordan  
By way of Jericho.

Yerushalaim all of gold  
Yerushalaim, bronze and light  
Within my heart I shall treasure  
Your song and sight.

But when I come to count your praises  
And sing Hallel to you  
With pretty rhymes I dare not crown you  
As other poets do.

Upon my lips is always burning  
Your name, so dear, so old:  
If I forget Yerushalaim  
Of bronze and light and gold...

Yerushalaim all of gold  
Yerushalaim, bronze and light  
Within my heart I shall treasure

Your song and sight.

Back to the wells and to the fountains  
Within the ancient walls  
The sound of horn from Temple's mountain  
Again so loudly calls,

From rocky caves, this very morning  
A thousand suns will glow  
And we shall go down to the Jordan  
By way of Jericho.

Yerushalaim all of gold  
Yerushalaim, bronze and light  
Within my heart I shall treasure  
Your song and sight.

## Shabbat Shalom Song for younger children

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VCMBkxr2WSc>

**It is the first song on the link**

Shabbat Shalom  
Shabbat Shalom  
Shabbat, Shabbat, Shabbat, Shabbat Shalom