



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

Nasso Summary:

**Parashat Nasso is the second Parasha in the 4<sup>th</sup> book of the Torah, Bamidbar. It is the longest single Parasha in the Torah, with 144 verses. The Parasha teaches us a number of laws involving the Kohanim and the gifts which were presented to the Mishkan (portable Temple in the wilderness), when it was dedicated in the second year after the exodus from Egypt. A count of the Levites revealed that there were 8,580 individuals ready for service in the Mishkan (portable Temple). We learn about a number of different laws involving the Kohanim, with a most interesting law being that of the 'Nazir'. The 'Nazir' was someone who made a promise to dedicate themselves to the service of God for a fixed period of time.**

- One law, of particular interest, is that of the Nazir (Nazzarite). The Nazir was a person who voluntarily made a promise to become completely devoted to God for a stipulated period of time. The Nazir was expected to abstain from wine and other strong drinks which come from grapes, to let his hair grow and to avoid coming in to contact with a dead body.
- Once the stipulated period of time was at an end, the Nazir brought an offering in the Temple and cut his long hair. The Kohen then performed additional ceremonies, after which the individual could go back to living his life as normal.
- We read about the very special blessings with which the Kohanim (Priests) blessed the people. The Kohanim still use this blessing nowadays, to bless the people in shul; in Israel they say it every day and outside Israel they bless the people on Chaggim such as Pesach, Rosh Hashanah and Succot. We also use this blessing to bless our children on a Friday night, on the eve of Yom Kippur and at a bar or bat Mitzvah. The words of the blessing are *'May God bless you and protect you. May God make His face shine on you and be gracious to you. May God turn His face to you and give you peace.'*
- As the Mishkan (portable Temple in the wilderness) had been set up, the leaders of the twelve tribes presented gifts of 6 wagons and 12 oxen for transporting the Mishkan and its contents.
- The leader of each of the tribes then donated gifts of gold and silver utensils and animals for offerings. They did this over 12 successive days.
- The Torah reading on each day of Chanukah comes from Parashat Nasso. On each day of Chanukah we read about the special things dedicated to the Mishkan (the portable Temple in the wilderness). This reminds us of Chanukah, which means 'Dedication', as after the Yevanim (Assyrian-Greeks) had been defeated and driven out of Jerusalem, the Beit Hamikdash (Holy Temple) could be re-dedicated.

### Children's Service: Tot's – Year 3 – Activity

Activity – 'Building a Complete House' - This is a great activity which encourages the children to think about all the important things in their house, which makes everything run smoothly. Explain to the children that all the objects in the Mishkan (Portable Temple) were absolutely necessary for it to run smoothly. The Ark, the Golden Alter, the Menorah, the Table for the Showbread, the Kiyor (washbasin), the ramp leading up to the Copper Alter and the beautiful curtain separating the courtyard of the Mishkan from the Kodesh Kodashim (Holy of Holies).

Start by giving the children a slip of paper with the name of an article/object found in most houses. Ask a child to call out the name of his/her object. The children should then say whether or not the household could run smoothly without it. Does the household actually need it? Why do they need it?

If this game can be played in a circle, that's even better.

1. Food
2. Water
3. Sweets and chocolates
4. Medicines
5. Plasters and bandages
6. Toothpaste
7. A table
8. A TV
9. Chairs
10. Beds
11. Lights
12. Radio
13. Washing Machine
14. PlayStation
15. Coffee Table

**Story – ‘The Little Red Rabbi’ (based on the well-known story of ‘The Little Red Hen’...but with a difference!!).**



**This story is about the time the Little Red Rabbi first became the Rabbi of the Synagogue in ‘Massawagini’. He was shown a very large building that had absolutely nothing inside it. No chairs, no tables, no lights, no Chanukiyah (candelabra lit on Chanukah). No Bimah (central platform in the Synagogue), no Ner Tammid (Everlasting light) and no Aron Hakodesh (holy Ark) for the Sifrei Torah (Torah scrolls).**

**The Little Red Rabbi stood in the middle of the building and looked all around. He imagined what the shul would look like when it had all the things inside. ‘How beautiful it will look when I finish putting everything inside it.’, he said.**

**So the Little Red Rabbi asked his three friends, Michael, Michaela and Morris if they would help him bring different things in to the shul.**

**‘Michael, will you help me bring the chairs and tables in to the shul for people to sit on?’**

**‘Oh I’m afraid that I am incredibly busy and I won’t be able to help you.’ Said Michael.**

**So the Little Red Rabbi went to Michaela and asked her if she could help bring the Chanukiya in to the shul. Unfortunately, Michaela told the Little Red Rabbi that she was so busy and couldn’t help out.**

**Finally the Little Red Rabbi asked Morris if he could help carry the Bimah in to the shul. The Little Red Rabbi was so very pleased when Morris said, ‘yes of course Rabbi, I would love to help.’**

**The Little Red Rabbi and Morris worked all day long to get the Bimah, the Ark, the chairs and tables, the Chanukiya and the Everlasting light in to the new shul. They were both so happy.**

**The Little Red Rabbi and Morris met Michael and Michaela on the way to shul the following Shabbat. Michael and Michaela told Morris and the Little Red Rabbi that they were really looking forward to seeing all the beautiful things that had been placed inside**

**the new building to make it in to a wonderful Synagogue.**

**The Little Red Rabbi and Morris looked at each other and smiled. They were looking forward to showing their friends the work they had done to make the shul look so nice.**

### Children's Service: Years 3- 6

Get the children to form a circle and close their eyes. Ask them to reach across and grab hands with two different people. By doing this, they should create a 'human knot'. Ask them to untangle the human knot they've created without speaking or unlocking hands.



Encourage them to work together until the task is completed. After the activity, ask them to discuss what it felt like in the beginning and the end. Stress the importance of sticking with a task and also stress the importance of everyone making a contribution to ensure success.

Remind the children that the Mishkan was a joint effort and all 12 tribes contributed to it and worked together to ensure it was a fully functioning structure.

### Discussion Points

When a parent or grandparent gives a child the blessing usually said by the Kohanim (priests) in the Synagogue when blessing the people, they also say the blessing to a girl 'May God make you be like Sarah, Rivkah, Rachel and Leah' and to a boy they say, 'May God make you be like Ephraim and Menashe.'



- Why do we bless girls to be like Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah? (they had special qualities)
- What were some of their special qualities? (kindness, modesty, hospitable, gracious)
- Why do boys get blessed to be like Ephraim and Menashe? (Ephraim and Menashe were born in Ancient Egypt, amidst immorality and idol worship. They could have quite easily become assimilated with their surrounding culture, but they stayed firm in their service of God)

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

**I have included a fun song about Modeh Ani!**

**Ma Tovu –Shwekey – You may have to listen to this a few times, but the chorus can easily be taught to children.**

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

### **Modeh Ani Song**

MODEH ANI- Country Yossi (T.T.T.O. You Are My Sunshine)- Strike Again

Oh, every morning, when I'm through sleeping,  
I open up my eyes and say,  
Thank you Hashem for my Neshoma,  
And for giving me another day.

#### **CHORUS:**

Modeh ani lefanecha,  
Melech chai vekayam,  
She'hechezarta bi nishmasi,  
Bechemlah raba emunasecha.

Thank you Hashem for all the sunshine,  
And for the raindrops that must fall,  
For all the flowers in the springtime,  
But for the Torah, we thank you most of all.

#### **CHORUS:**

Modeh ani lefanecha,  
Melech chai vekayam,  
She'hechezarta bi nishmasi,  
Bechemlah, raba emunasecha.

Thank you Hashem for Kosher pizza,  
And for creating swimming pools,  
Thank you for latkes and for Paszkes,  
And for snowstorms that keep us home from school.

**CHORUS:**

Modeh ani lefanecha,  
Melech chai vekayam,  
She'hechezarta bi nishmasi,  
Bechemlah raba emunasecha