



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



### Lech Lecha - 5780

At the beginning of this week's Parasha (Torah portion), God told Avram (Abraham) to leave Charan and journey to another land which he would be shown. Avram (Abraham), who was 75 years old, took his wife, Sarai (Sarah), his nephew Lot and all their possessions together with the other people they had shown hospitality towards whilst in Charan.

Avram (Abraham) reached the land of Canaan and continued travelling until he had reached the city of Shechem. At Shechem God appeared to Avram (Abraham) in a vision and reaffirmed the promise that the land of Canaan would one day be the domain of his descendants. Avram (Abraham) built an alter to God as thanksgiving for this wonderful news.

As a result of a famine in the land of Canaan, Avram (Abraham), Sarai (Sarah) and the entire party of travellers had to make their way down to Egypt.

After some time Avram (Abraham) and Sarai (Sarah) went back to Canaan to a city called Bet-El and because Avram (Abraham) and his nephew Lot had become very wealthy, with a huge number of sheep and cattle, an argument erupted between their herdsmen, which was settled by Avram (Abraham).



The Parasha (Torah portion) then goes on to relate the episode of the five kings in the south of Canaan, including the kings of Sedom and Amorah (Sodom and Gomorrah) and their revolt against a king named Kedorlaomer, king of Elam, who himself, joined forces with 3 other kings, proving victorious over the five kings.

When Avram (Abraham) heard that his nephew, Lot, had been taken captive, he gathered an army together and was victorious against the four kings, rescuing Lot at the same time.

Avram (Abraham) was afraid that he would have no children to whom to pass on his heritage, but God told him to gaze at the heavens and try to count the stars in the sky. This was, of course, impossible and God told Avram (Abraham) that his descendants would be as many as the stars in the sky.

Then, Avram (Abraham) asked God how he was to be sure that he and his descendants would inherit the land of Canaan. So, God made a covenant with Avram, called the Brit Bein Habetarim (The Covenant between the Halves). During this ceremony, God told Avram (Abraham) that his descendants would be enslaved in a strange land but would go free with great wealth.

Avram (Abraham) took Hagar, his maidservant as a second wife and they had a child named Yishmael (Ishmael), at which point Avram (Abraham) was 86 years of age.

When Avram (Abraham) was 99 years old, God changed his name to Avraham (Abraham) and his wife Sarai's name to Sara (Sarah). God then informed him of the Mitzvah (Command) of Brit Milah (Circumcision). God told Avraham (Abraham) that all his male descendants should have a Brit Milah (Circumcision) when they are 8 days old.



The Parasha (Torah portion) ends with Avraham (Abraham) and Sara (Sarah) being told that they would have a child at the age of 100 and 99 respectively and Avraham (Abraham) performed the Mitzvah (Command) of Brit Milah (Circumcision) on himself.

The Parasha - In a Nutshell!



- The call came from God to Avram (Abraham) to leave the land of Charan (Haran) and go to the land he was to be shown. This was one of Avram's (Abraham's) 10 tests and despite not knowing where he was to go, he obeyed God's request and left Charan with his wife, Sarai (Sarah), his nephew Lot and all the people who had become part of their household.
- After God had reassured Avram (Abraham) of the promise that the land he was standing on would be inherited by his children, there was a famine in the land, with no food available. This meant that Avram (Abraham) and Sarai (Sarah) had to go south, down to the land of Egypt where there was food.
- Fearing that the Egyptians would kill him if they found out that Sarai (Sarah) was his wife, Avram (Abraham) asked his wife Sarai (Sarah) to tell the Egyptians that she was his sister. Indeed, when they arrived in Egypt, Sarai (Sarah) was taken into Pharaoh's household, but when he was smitten with a mysterious illness, Pharaoh sensed there was something wrong. He found out that Sarai (Sarah) was really Avram's (Abraham's) wife and Pharaoh told them to leave, giving them many riches to take with them.
- Avram (Abraham), his wife and Lot, his nephew returned to Canaan with many herds of cattle and flocks of sheep. As a result, there was not enough pasture from which the sheep and cattle could feed and this resulted in an argument between the shepherds of Avram (Abraham) and Lot. To



settle the dispute, Avram (Abraham) offered Lot the first choice of land in which to settle and he chose the well-watered plain of Jordan. Lot settled in the city of Sedom (Sodom) which was infamous for the wickedness of its inhabitants.

- Avram (Abraham) settled in the plains of Mamrei near Chevron (Hebron) and was once again promised by God, that one day his children would inherit the land.
- At the time Avram (Abraham) settled in Mamrei, the five kings in the south of Canaan, including the king of Sedom (Sodom) and Amorah (Gomorrah) were in the midst of a revolt against Kedorlaomer, king of Elam, to whom they had paid tribute for twelve years. Kedorlaomer sought the help of his three neighbouring rulers. A battle ensued, with the four kings being victorious over the five kings and taking many of their possessions, including Lot.
- At this point, Avram (Abraham) decided to do battle against the four kings so as to rescue his nephew. Avram (Abraham) was victorious and the king of Sedom (Sodom) wanted to shower him with gold and silver and all kinds of riches, but Avram (Abraham) refused the offer.
- At this point in the Parasha (Torah portion) we are told that Avram (Abraham) was still saddened by the fact that he had no children. God told him to go outside, look up at the night sky and count the stars. Of course, there were too many to count and God reassured Avram (Abraham) that so too would people be unable to count the number of his descendants.
- God reassured Avram (Abraham) that he would fulfil His promise, in a ceremony known as the Brit Bein Habetarim (the Covenant between the Halves). God also informed Avram (Abraham) that his descendants would be slaves in a strange land, but would eventually be set free, taking great riches and wealth with them.



- Sarai (Sarah) urged Avram (Abraham) to marry Hagar as well and she gave birth to a son called Yishmael (Ishmeal).
- When Avram was 99 years of age, God renewed his promise with him and changed his name to Avraham (Abraham). Meaning 'father of a multitude of nations.'
- Sarai's name was also changed to Sara (Sarah) and God told her that kings would be descended from her.
- Avraham (Abraham) and Sara (Sarah) were told that they would have a child who they would call Yitzchak (Isaac). Neither Avraham (Abraham) or Sara (Sarah) could imagine having a child at such an old age, nonetheless they were reassured that indeed they would have a son.
- God told Avraham (Abraham) to circumcise himself and all his male descendants would be circumcised at 8 days old. Yishmael (Ishmael) was circumcised at 13 years of age.

Parasha Overview  
- In a Little More Detail!



### Activity - The Courage to Believe

When God told Avram (Abraham) to leave his home, his birthplace and his father's house he listened to Him without any hesitation. This is because Avram (Abraham) trusted that anything God told him to do was for the best. Avram (Abraham) showed tremendous courage in leaving his home and his birthplace and go to where God would show him. Avram (Abraham) didn't even know where God wanted him to go!

This activity will encourage the children to think about people who are courageous and do brave things, just like Avram (Abraham) showed courage when he left his homeland.

Have the children sitting in a circle and divide them in to pairs, giving each pair one of the professions mentioned below, to share. Give them a minute to tell each other why they think their person is brave. Then, each pair should tell the whole circle of children why they think their professional is brave.

You could start by giving them an example.

- 1) Firefighter
- 2) Paramedic (Ambulance person)
- 3) Policeman/woman
- 4) Teacher
- 5) Soldier
- 6) Pilot
- 7) Nurse
- 8) Doctor



### **Avram (Abraham) realised that God was the ruler of the whole world!**

Our Rabbis teach us that Avram (Abraham) realised there was one God who rules over everything, because one day, when he was a little boy, he was sitting on a hill looking at the bright sun and he thought, 'the sun is so wonderful and bright. The sun must rule the whole wide world.'

But a short time later, the sun disappeared and out came the moon and stars. 'I know', thought Avram (Abraham), 'the sun can't be the ruler of the world, because it has disappeared. So, the moon and the stars must be the rulers. But the next day, the moon and the stars disappeared.'

The next day, the rain came and soaked the fields, so Avram (Abraham) thought, 'I know, the rain must be the ruler of the world.' But the rain soon stopped and the sun dried the earth and shortly after that, the sun once again went away and the moon and stars could be seen in the night sky.

Avram (Abraham) thought and thought and suddenly he said, 'I know. There must be something that rules over all these things. There must be something that rules over the sun, rules over the moon, rules over the stars and rules over the rain. 'I know, there must be one God ruling over everything!'

So Avram (Abraham) became the first person to recognise the Almighty God all by himself!



### **The Courage to Believe – An Activity for older children**

Before starting this activity, tell the children that, when God told Avram (Abraham) to leave his home, his birthplace and his father's house he listened to him without any hesitation. This is because Avram (Abraham) trusted that anything God told him to do was for the best. Avram (Abraham) showed tremendous courage in leaving his home and his birthplace and go to where God would show him. Avram (Abraham) didn't even know where God wanted him to go!

Once again, have the children sitting in a circle and ask them the following 3 questions, one at a time, each time going around the circle giving each child the opportunity to give their response;

- 1. Think of an example of when you know someone has shown courage.**
- 2. Think of an example of when you have shown courage yourself.**
- 3. Think of an example of when you might have to show courage in the future.**



**What Action would you take in this Situation? The POPULAR action, or the RIGHT action!?**

**First, go through the Tribe Scribe with the children.**

**Then remind the children that the Parasha (Torah portion) this week begins with God asking Avram (Abraham) to leave his home and go to a place where He would show him.**

**Avram (Abraham) could easily have said 'no. I want to stay in my home and not have to travel to a distant land, especially when I don't even know where I am supposed to be going.' But Avram (Abraham) listened to God and did the right thing.**

- a. How does the story in the Tribe Scribe explain that it is always better to do the right thing?
- b. What do you think would have happened if Dan and Dina hadn't swapped the grape juice and wine back over?
- c. Have you ever been in a situation when you have had to choose between doing the popular thing or the right thing?
- d. Can you think of the famous Navi (Prophet) who was asked by God to go somewhere, but refused to go, at first. A clue is, we read about him on Yom Kippur and his story involves a big fish!

**What do Dan and Dina Teach us this Week?**

## מְשִׁיב הַרוּחַ וּמוֹרִיד הַגֶּשֶׁם

**‘Who causes the wind to Blow and the rain to Fall’**



From the festival of Shemini Atzeret (at the very end of Succot) until Pesach (Passover) we Add this line in to the Amidah (Silent Prayer) which we say three times each day and four times on Shabbat.

By saying this short prayer, we are asking God to make it rain in the Land of Israel during the winter months, so that there is plenty of water for the crops and the cattle and the sheep and of course all the human beings! The rain that falls in the winter in the Land of Israel is especially important during the summer months when it doesn't rain at all!



### A Song for Lecha Lecha

[https://www.chabad.org/kids/article\\_cdo/aid/528140/jewish/Lech-Lecha-II.htm](https://www.chabad.org/kids/article_cdo/aid/528140/jewish/Lech-Lecha-II.htm)

**This song is an easy one to teach to both Infant and Junior children**

Lech lecha, from this land you'll go

Eretz Canan is the land I will show

I will make you great

Many children in the future is your fate

Lech lecha, a nation you will be

Yisrael will be yours, you will see

Your children will prosper in this land

They will be as many as the stars and sand

Hashem changed Avram's name

The father of B'nei Yisrael, he became.

