



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

Shelach - 5779

Parasha Summary:

As the B'nei Yisrael (Children of Israel) got closer to entering the land of Cana'an, they asked Moshe (Moses) to send Meraglim (spies) into Cana'an to see what it was like. Moshe (Moses) asks God if he should indeed listen to the people and send spies into Cana'an and God responded 'Shelach Lecha' (send for yourself). God did not specifically command the B'nei Yisrael (Children of Israel) to send spies, but did not stop them from going ahead of the B'nei Yisrael to see what the land was like.



Twelve spies were sent, one from each tribe and after travelling through the land for 40 days, ten of the spies returned with a negative report about what they had seen. Only Yehoshua (Joshua) and Calev (Caleb) returned with a good report, but the people chose to listen to the majority of the spies. The B'nei Yisrael (Children of Israel) began to cry and rebel against Moshe (Moses), asking for a new leader to be appointed who would lead them back to Egypt.

Angry at their lack of faith, God told the B'nei Yisrael (Children of Israel) that they would wander in the Midbar (wilderness) for 40 years before entering Cana'an. One year for each day the spies were in the land.

- The B'nei Yisrael (Children of Israel) reached a place called Kadesh, in the wilderness of Paran and the people asked Moshe to send Meraglim (spies) to go ahead of the people to see what the land of Cana'an was like.
- God did not stop the people from sending spies, but didn't specifically command Moshe (Moses) to do so. In the 18th month after leaving Egypt and on the brink of entering the Promised land, twelve men (one from each tribe) were sent ahead to look at the land and report back to the B'nei Yisrael (Children of Israel).
- The twelve spies all reported the same thing, but ten of them put a very negative slant on their report. They were extremely pessimistic about what they saw in Cana'an.
- However, two of the twelve spies, Yehoshua (Joshua) and Calev (Caleb) put a very positive slant on the report (see this week's Tribe Scribe).

- The B'nei Yisrael (Children of Israel) chose to believe the negative report, that it was impossible for them to conquer the land and demanded to go back to Egypt.
- God was angered by their lack of faith in Him and He told Moshe (Moses) that he would wipe this people out and start a new nation from Moshe's (Moses') descendants.
- Moshe (Moses) nevertheless pleaded with God, not to destroy his people and whilst his pleas were successful, Moshe (Moses) was told that the B'nei Yisrael (Children of Israel) would have to spend forty years in the Midbar (wilderness), one year for each day the Meraglim (spies) were in the land of Canaan and the entire generation who left Egypt would not enter the land (except for Joshua and Caleb).
- The ten tribes who had been so negative were punished, yet some of the people wanted to go in to the land having been explicitly told not to, as they wanted to show how very sorry they were. They were soundly defeated by the tribes of Amalek and Canaan.
- The Parasha concludes with the well-known third paragraph of the Shema, in which God commands the Jewish men (and boys) to wear Tzitzit on a four-cornered garment. By doing so, the Jewish people would remember the Mitzvot (commandments) of the Torah. The concluding paragraph of the Parasha also reminds us to remember that God took the Jewish people out of Egypt.

Children's Service: Tot's – Year 3

Game – Pass the Diamond

Explain to the children that one of the reasons why the 10 spies came back from Cana'an with bad reports about the land was because they were arguing so much and couldn't work together. This game requires everyone to work together.



Ask all the players to sit in a circle with their legs straight out. Put an object that represents a diamond (it could be a tennis ball) on one of the children's feet. Explain that they are working in a diamond factory and need to get the diamond all the way around the circle and into the 'polishing machine'. However, they must work together and use only their feet to pass the diamond around the circle. If the 'diamond' falls, they have to start from the beginning.

Use the story in this week's Tribe Scribe to highlight the importance of being positive about situations which arise in our lives. Half fill a glass with water and ask the children to describe it in a positive way (good way). Is it better to say 'empty' or 'full'? What sounds better? Then try playing this game to enhance that positivity.

Story – A Human Ladder

There was once a king who had lots of pets. He had dogs, cats, goldfish, hamsters and mice, but his favourite pet was a parrot whose feathers were made up of bright colours. The king loved his parrot and would often talk to it!



One day, when the king was riding through the forest with his trusted servants, his pet parrot suddenly flew away and rested at the top of one of the tallest trees in the forest. The king was so upset and asked his trusted servants to bring the bird down from the tree.

The servants did exactly what the king had asked, but because the tree was so tall and the parrot was right at the top, they needed a ladder. But there was no ladder in sight! 'I know', said one of the servants. 'let's form a human ladder and if we stand on each other's shoulders we will definitely reach the parrot'.

So, that's exactly what they did. Very carefully the first person stood on the shoulders of the person underneath and so on until they had almost reached the parrot. SUDDENLY, the person at the bottom of the human ladder had a terrible itch on his head and he just couldn't wait to scratch it. So, he moved ever so slightly and when he did, the human ladder came crashing down and of course, the parrot flew away.

Ask the children why the ladder broke! Everyone needed to work together and when just one individual moved slightly, it affected everyone.

The Value of Tzitzit

Remind children that the very last part of the Parasha is about Tzitzit and we say it in the Shema twice every day.

You can give a group of children as many Tallitot (Prayer shawls) as you have spare and ask them to count the number of strings on each corner (there should be 8). Then ask them to count the number of double knots on each corner (there should be 5). Ask the children to work out the sum $8 + 5 = 13$. Then tell the children that the word Tzitzit in Hebrew (the word is at the foot of this week's Tribe Spark) adds up to 600 (each letter represents a number and added together equal 613).



Ask the children if they know what is special about the number 613. There are 613 Mitzvot (Commandments) in the Torah and by looking at the Tzitzit it reminds us of all these wonderful and special Mitzvot like Kiddush, Challah, Succah, Matzah, being kind to people, respecting our parents etc.

Children's Service: Years 3- 6

Game - A blessing in disguise

Describe a situation to the children, where you are really looking forward to a dance class after school, a play-date with a good friend in your class or a sleep-over at the weekend and when you leave school you are told, "Sorry, your dance class was cancelled today" or "sorry, unfortunately your play-date has been cancelled" or "sorry, your sleep-over at the weekend has had to be postponed". Tell the children that they can do one of two things. They can be really upset or they can try to see what else they can do instead of going to the dance class or having a play date (these are simple examples and you could give your own examples). Go around the group and ask each child to find benefits that can be reaped from such an event occurring. For example, "I'll have time to play my favourite game" or, "I can go for a walk with my mum when she walks the dog" instead of dance or a playdate, perhaps I can ask my grandparents if they need any help.



This will show the children that no problem is too bad if they are positive.

The Value of Tzitzit – for older children

Remind children that the very last part of the Parasha is about Tzitzit and we say it in the Shema twice every day.

You can give a group of children as many Tallitot (Prayer shawls) as you have spare and ask them to count the number of strings on each corner (there should be 8). Then ask them to count the number of double knots on each corner (there should be 5).

Ask the children to work out the sum $8 + 5 = 13$. At this point, use the letters at the foot of the Tribe Spark and ask the children if they can work out the numerical values of all or some of the letters. After they have had a go, tell them that the word Tzitzit equals 600, add the 13 from the knots and strings and you get the number of Mitzvot (commandments) in the Torah, 613.

Discussion Points

Having read the Tribe Scribe to the children and having discussed its message about positivity, discuss the following points;



- Why do you think the B'nei Yisrael (Children of Israel) received such a harsh punishment of having to stay in the Midbar (wilderness) for 40 years?
- The B'nei Yisrael (Children of Israel) didn't have to worry about food in the wilderness because it fell from heaven. They didn't have to worry about water, because it flowed from a special rock. They were protected by a cloud during the day and a pillar of fire at night. So why was thirty eight and a half more years in the wilderness such a harsh punishment?
- When Moshe (Moses) asked God if he should indeed send spies in to Cana'an and God said, 'yes, if you want to, but I'm not telling you that you have to', why did Moshe (Moses) feel that he had to send spies?
- (This is quite a challenging discussion point) When the people were told they would have to stay in the wilderness for 40 years in total, a group of people decided that in order to say sorry to God and try to make amends, they would go in to Cana'an all by themselves. However, they were not successful. If they wanted to show how sorry they were, why didn't God help them?
- (Following on from 'Discussion') When you look at Tzitzit on either your own or someone else's Tallit, what does it make you think about.

Songs – The links have been included for you to watch before Shabbat and if

you so wish, to teach the children these songs.

‘Hashem is here, Hashem is there’ – Hashem literally means ‘The Name’ and refers to God whose name cannot be said in full. So we refer to Him as ‘The Name’.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d6bXRmRFG4Y>

Hashem is here, Hashem is there,
Hashem is truly everywhere
Up up, down down, right left and all around
Here, there and everywhere,
That’s where He can be found

‘Esah Einai el Heharim – ‘I lift my eyes to the Mountains...’

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W5g8mY3L L8>

אשא עיני אל ההרים

מאין יבא עזרי

עזרי מעם הי

עושה שמים וארץ

Essa einai el heharim

Me'ayin yavo ezri

Ezri me-im Hashem

Osse shamaim va'arets

Value	Letter	Value	Letter	Value	Letter
100	ק	10	י	1	א
200	ר	20	כ	2	ב
300	ש	30	ל	3	ג
400	ת	40	מ	4	ד
		50	נ	5	ה
		60	ס	6	ו
		70	ע	7	ז
		80	פ	8	ח
		90	צ	9	ט

ציצית = Tzitzit