



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

Shemot – ‘The Parasha in a Nutshell’:

This week’s Parasha (Weekly Torah Portion) is Shemot which means ‘Names’ and at the very start of the Parasha (Weekly Torah Portion) the Torah tells us. ‘These are the names of the Children of Israel who were coming to Egypt.’ It is the first Parasha in the second Book of the Torah.



The descendants of Yaakov (Jacob) were now all in Egypt where they flourished. The new Pharaoh did not like this and reduced the Israelites to slaves. However, the Israelites continued to multiply. So, Pharaoh then ordered the Israelite midwives to kill the male infants as they were born.

Amram and Yocheved had a son and no longer able to hide him, Yocheved placed him into a basket which she floated among the reeds on the banks of the River Nile.

Pharaoh’s daughter (Batya) found him and took him to grow up in the royal palace. She called his name Moshe (Moses).

As Moshe (Moses) grew up, he noticed the suffering of his people. But, having killed a cruel Egyptian taskmaster and seeing 2 Jewish men arguing, he had to run away.

Arriving in Midian, Moshe (Moses) approached a well where he protected the 7 daughters of the priest of Midian, Yitro (Jethro) from unfriendly shepherds. Moshe (Moses) soon married Zippora who bore him 2 sons.

During Moshe’s (Moses’) stay in Midian, a new Pharaoh came to the throne and he continued to treat the Israelites badly. The Israelites cried out to God for help.

Whilst looking after the sheep of his father-in-law, Moshe (Moses) saw a bush which was on fire yet was not being consumed. God spoke to Moshe (Moses) through the bush and instructed him that he was to be God’s messenger in bringing the Israelites out of their slavery in Egypt and take them to the Promised Land. God told Moshe (Moses) that Pharaoh will refuse to let the Israelites leave Egypt and will be smitten with plagues, thereby forcing Pharaoh to relent.



Moshe (Moses) was told to perform three miracles and through these wonders, the Israelites would believe that Moshe (Moses) had been sent by God to free them from the exile of Egypt. Moshe (Moses) questioned his own speaking ability and God informed him that his brother Aharon (Aaron) would serve as his spokesman.

When Moshe (Moses) and Aharon (Aaron) came to Pharaoh, telling him to let the Israelites leave his land, he not only refused, but made the decrees against the people even harsher.

Moshe (Moses) became increasingly frustrated and questioned God's actions, asking Him why He had done 'evil' with this people. God responded by telling Moshe (Moses) that he would now witness the power by which God would take the Israelites out of Pharaoh's land.

The Parasha - In a Nutshell!

Parasha Overview – In a Little More Detail



- As the numbers of Israelites increased, Pharaoh feared that the people would join with Egypt's enemy forces to overthrow him. He therefore initiated a policy of severe oppression, reducing the Israelites to slaves.

Supervised by cruel task masters, the Israelites were forced to build the storage cities of Pithom and Rameses on Egypt's frontier. However, Pharaoh's attempts to reduce the number of Israelites proved ineffective and they continued to multiply. Therefore, taking a drastic approach, Pharaoh ordered the Israelite midwives to kill the male infants at birth. However, fearing only God, the midwives did not listen to Pharaoh's evil decree and let the babies live. Pharaoh therefore decreed that all male babies should be drowned in the River Nile.

- Amram and Yocheved, members of the Tribe of Levi, were parents of 2 children, Miriam and Aharon (Aaron). Soon after Pharaoh's decree, Yocheved gave birth to a second son. After a short time Yocheved was no longer able to keep his birth a secret and placed him in a basket which she hid amongst the reeds at the edge of the River Nile.
- Pharaoh's daughter came to bathe in the River Nile, saw the basket and sent one of her maidens to get it. The daughter of Pharaoh realised that it was an Israelite child, took pity on the child and decided to adopt him.
- Miriam came forward and receiving the princess' permission to find a nurse for the child, returned with Yocheved. The boy was taken to the royal palace where he grew up. Pharaoh's daughter named the child Moshe (Moses), because she said, 'For I drew him from the water.'
- Once Moshe (Moses) had grown up, he observed his fellow Israelites' suffering. He noticed an Egyptian taskmaster savagely beating one of the Israelite men. Moshe (Moses) looked all around and seeing no one in sight, killed the Egyptian taskmaster and buried his body in the sand. The next day, Moshe (Moses) intervened in a quarrel between two Israelite men. One of the men taunted Moshe (Moses) and asked him what right he had to judge other people and did he intend to kill them as he had already killed the Egyptian?
- From that moment it became clear to Moshe (Moses) that his deed was now known and his life was in danger. So, before Pharaoh could seize him, he fled to Midian in the south eastern region of the Sinai Peninsula.
- Moshe (Moses) came to a well and helping Yitro's (Jethro's) daughters, he was soon welcomed by Yitro (Jethro) and tended his sheep. Shortly after, Moshe (Moses) married Zippora and they had two sons, Gershom and Eliezer.
- During Moshe's (Moses') stay in Midian, Pharaoh died and his successor continued the oppression of the Israelites with an even greater severity.

- While tending Yitro's (Jethro's) flock at Chorev (Horeb), Moshe (Moses) saw an extraordinary sight; a bush that was on fire, but was not being consumed. As Moshe (Moses) turned to gaze at this wondrous sight, God addressed him for the first time and commanded him to remove his shoes, as he was standing on holy ground.
- God then informed Moshe (Moses) that he was to be His messenger in bringing the Israelites out of Egypt and into the Promised Land. Moshe (Moses) thought himself unworthy of this task, but God assured him that He would always be with him. Moshe (Moses) also asked God what he should reply when the Israelites ask what God's name is. God told Moses to tell the people that God says, 'I will be, what I will be.'
- Moshe (Moses) was then told to inform the Elders of the Israelites of God's appearance to him and they were to demand that Pharaoh allow the Israelites to give Offerings to God in the wilderness. Moshe (Moses) was then told that Pharaoh would refuse to send the people out of Egypt, but after God had send plagues, Pharaoh would be forced to relent, and the Israelites would leave Egypt laden with riches.
- Moshe (Moses) protested and said that he would not be believed. At that point God gave Moshe (Moses) the power to perform three miracles. First, when he threw his staff on to the ground, it turned into a snake. When he picked it up, it turned back into a stick. Second, Moshe (Moses) was told to put his hand on his chest. When he removed his hand, it was covered with Tzara'at (white blotches). However, when he placed his hand back onto his chest and pulled it away, it had returned to normal.
- God told Moshe (Moses) that if the Israelites still didn't believe him, then he should pour water from the Nile on to dry land and it will turn into blood. Despite these three miracles, Moshe (Moses) continued to protest, saying that he was not good at speaking. So, God reassured him that his brother, Aharon (Aaron) would accompany him to Pharaoh.
- Moshe (Moses) met Aharon (Aaron) at Mount Chorev (Horeb) and together, they went to Egypt. Once they arrived in Egypt, they assembled the Elders of the Israelites and showed them the three miracles.
- Moshe (Moses) and Aharon (Aaron) then appeared before Pharaoh, asking him to let the Israelites go to the wilderness to serve God. Not only did Pharaoh reject this request, but he made the work of the Israelite slaves even harder.
- In response to Moshe's (Moses') expressions of frustration, God assured him that Pharaoh would eventually be compelled by His Divine might to let the people go.

Children's Service: Tot's – Year 3



In this week's Parasha, the character trait of 'Kindness' is seen when Pharaoh's daughter goes to the River Nile to bathe and sees a basket. She takes the basket and sees that the baby is an Israelite child. But through her immense kindness, she doesn't hand him over to Pharaoh, but actually brings him up in the palace as her own child! This activity is all about kindness and

before you start the activity, explain to the children why you have focussed the activity on kindness this week.

Activity – 'Choose a Kindness'

For this activity you will need lolly-pop sticks which you can buy from most craft shops. They are used regularly in schools, so shops certainly do sell them. At the end of the Spark you will find different Kindness words. Prepare the lolly-pop sticks by writing the short statement on each stick and then place the sticks into a cup or pot. Pass the pot/cup around the circle and as each child receives it, they should pick out a lolly-pop stick. (Help the children read out what is on their stick). Once they have read out the simple statement, the child should tell everyone how they have put that particular kindness in to practice.

For example, if the child reads out, 'Caring' they could tell everyone about who they care for in their family (Mummy, daddy, brothers, sisters, grandma, grandpa etc). Or if they read out 'Helpful' they can talk about who they have recently helped and how they helped that person.



Poem About Kindness

One never knows
How far a word of kindness goes;
One never sees
How far a smile of friendship flees.
Down, through the years,
The deed forgotten reappears.

One kindly word
The souls of many here has stirred.
Man goes his way
And tells with every passing day,
Until life's end:
"Once unto me he played the friend."

We cannot say
What lips are praising us to-day.
We cannot tell
Whose prayers ask God to guard us well.
But kindness lives
Beyond the memory of him who gives.



Children's Service: Years 3- 6

In this week's Parasha (Weekly Torah Portion) Moshe (Moses) teaches us the character trait of humility. We are told in the Book of Bamidbar (Numbers – the 4th Book of the Torah)) that Moshe (Moses) was the most humble human being. We see in this week's Parasha (Weekly Torah Portion) that when God told Moshe (Moses) to go to Pharaoh, he initially said that he was unworthy of such a task. This is an activity which will encourage children to explore the character trait of humility.

Activity – 'Name Tag of Humility'

Before starting this activity, remind the children about the Humility and modesty of Moshe (Moses) and how it is displayed in this week's Parasha (Weekly Torah Portion). Place the children into groups of 3 or 4, then sit them in a circle. At the end of this week's Spark you will find character traits that exemplify humility, such as 'Mild', 'Helpful', 'Caring' etc. Go through these words with the children first to ensure they understand their meaning.

Then, place these character traits in the centre of a circle in which the children are sitting. Ask each group of children to come to the centre of the circle and choose a character trait, one group at a time. Give the groups of children a few minutes to prepare a role-play which demonstrates the character trait they have chosen. The children should come back to the circle and each group should act out their character trait. The other groups should try and guess the key character trait the group are displaying in their act.



What do Dan and Dina Teach us this Week?

In this week's Tribe Scribe at the back of the Daf Hashavua, you'll find another important lesson that we can learn from the Parasha (weekly Torah Portion) of Shemot.

Give out some copies of the Daf Hashavua with the Tribe Scribe on the back. You can ask the children to work together in pairs or in groups, to decide what they could do if they saw something bothering them.

Ask the children to retell the story of Yisrael Meir Kagan as a child. Then they should discuss these questions, either in a small group or as part of a larger discussion group.

Here are some target questions to help the children;

1. Why was the job of the 'Water Carrier' so important in the days before water pipes and plumbing?
2. What was so unkind about what the group of children did to the 'Water Carrier'?
3. What did Yisrael Meir do to help the 'Water Carrier'?
4. What would you have done in that situation?
5. Have you ever seen a similar situation that bothered you and what did you do to put things right

What does this Story Teach us – (For children of all ages)

XT-27 wasn't just any robot. His identification plate read "XT-27: The best, most modern robot". He was, indeed, the most up-to-date robot currently available, a product difficult to beat. Of course, this made him feel very proud. So much so, that when he saw other robots in the street, he would look at them with a certain air of superiority; he reserved his enthusiastic greetings for other XT-27s.

"All robots should be like us XT-27s", he thought to himself. He was convinced that no new robot would be able to improve on the XT-27 model, and that the world would be a much better place if all robots were like himself.



One day, he was walking along in Bionic City, when a big yellow door suddenly appeared, about an inch in front of his electric optical sensors (that's eyes to you and me, but XT-27 liked to use highly technical sounding words for everything). He had no idea where the door had come from, but thanks to

being an XT-27, his quick reactions allowed him to avoid walking straight into it.

Intrigued, he pulled it open and went through the doorway. The door led to a fantastic city. All the city's inhabitants were XT-27s, and everything he saw there was mind blowing!

Excited at having found his perfect city, he went exploring the whole place, stopping from time to time to talk to people, telling them what a great thing it was to be an XT-27.

Finally, he moved into his moulded fibreglass bubble (a house), on the outskirts of the city. The days passed, but he suddenly realised that there was something about that city that he didn't like. As all the robots were XT-27s, it meant that no one had any reason to feel better or more up-to-date than anyone else, and, in fact, nobody did. No one looked down on others, and, if truth be told, he found that with the passing of time not even he felt special anymore.

On top of that, things became very boring. Everyone could do things equally well, which made it impossible for anyone to stand out from the crowd. Whenever he did anything which he thought brilliant, it turned out that the other robots had done exactly the same thing and at the same time.



So, XT-27 started to miss those varied little robots in his previous world. Each one had had its good and bad points, but that made them different and fun. He realised that he would much prefer to meet a clumsy-but-fun TP-4, and spend a while chatting with it, than see yet another XT-27.

So, he started searching for that big yellow door. It took him several days to find it, but finally he did. Just like before, it was standing in the middle of a normal street. He put his hand on the door and looked behind him, as if saying farewell to the city that had at first seemed so perfect. Then, he gave the door a joyful push...

When he woke up, the XT-27 was on the ground, and some people were helping him to his feet. He looked around, and there was no yellow door at all. Instead there was an enormous shiny yellow robot. The XT-27 had bumped into it so violently that the jolt had made his circuits malfunction. The XT-27, surprised at not having managed to avoid the collision, looked carefully at that formidable-looking robot. He had never seen one like it. It seemed perfect in every way. It was taller and more powerful than any other, and its identification plate read: "XT-28, the best, most modern robot".

So they had done it. The seemingly impossible had happened. The XT-27s were no longer the best robots of all. Even so, our friend didn't feel the slightest sadness. Seconds earlier, when dreaming about the perfect city, he had learnt that he was very happy to be different, and that it was great to have hundreds of different robots; each one with its very own good and bad points.

What does this Story Teach Me?

Song – The link has been included for you to listen to before Shabbat and if you so wish, to teach the children this song.

Shemot Song

https://www.chabad.org/kids/article_cdo/aid/527097/jewish/Shemot-I.htm

Each man worked as a slave
The Jews were beaten but were brave
All boys born must be
Drowned, was Paroh's (Pharaoh's) decree

The Jews were sad, when this they heard
But they didn't listen to Paroh's (Pharaoh's) word
A boy was born and hidden for a while
Then in his basket, put into the Nile

Miriam stood nearby
As Paroh's (Pharaoh's) daughter heard a cry
She saw the basket and she knew
This lovely baby was a Jew

"Moshe (Moses) he'll be called," said Paroh's (Pharaoh's) daughter
For he was taken from the water
As Moshe (Moses) in the palace grew
Of B'nei Yisrael's (Children of Israel's) suffering he knew



Character traits that exemplify humility

MILD

CARING

HELPFUL

SENSITIVE

COMPASSIONATE

GENTLE

SHY

BASHFUL

RESERVED

SHEEPISH

MODEST

GRACEFUL



'Choose a Kindness' Activity

Helpful

Caring

Sharing

Charity

Thoughtful

Understanding

Loving

Kind-hearted

Gentle

Nice

Friendly

Respect

Good

Polite

Reliable