



Welcome to Spark2, the Tribe weekly parsha activity sheet for Children's Service Leaders across the United Synagogue communities.

Thank you for offering to run a service. 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.

Spark2 gives you an overview of the weekly parsha, a song, activity or Dvar Torah linked to the parsha 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 hope you and the children at your service will benefit from Spark2. Please be in touch if you have any queries, feedback or if I can be of any help.

With best wishes,
Sharon Radley
sharonradley@tribeuk.com

Shemot

Parsha Summary:

Explain to the children that the parsha this week begins Shemot, the Book of Exodus.

- Joseph and all his brothers died. Their descendants in Egypt however, increased in numbers and became 'very strong'.
- A new Pharaoh arose who didn't know Joseph. He resolved to find a solution to the problem of the numerous amount of Israelites. Pharaoh turned the Israelites into slaves and forced them to construct storage cities for him.
- Pharaoh then summoned the Hebrew midwives and instructed them to kill all the Hebrew boys that they delivered. The midwives defied the decree of Pharaoh who then commanded that the Egyptians should cast all newborn males into the Nile.
- Moshe was born and his mother hid him in a waterproof basket which was floated on the Nile. His sister stood in the distance to watch what would become of her brother.
- The daughter of Pharaoh came down to the river to bathe and saw the basket among the reeds. Moshe's sister, Miriam, came forward and offered to bring a Hebrew nursemaid for the child. Pharaoh's daughter agreed to the suggestion and Miriam summoned her mother. Moshe's mother nursed him and when he was weaned she bought him back to Pharaoh's daughter.
- Moshe grew up in the royal palace and one day he went out and saw an Egyptian man striking a Hebrew man. Moshe

slew the Egyptian and when word of his deed reached Pharaoh he was forced to flee to Midian. In Midian he married Zipporah the daughter of Jethro. They gave birth to a son and named him Gershom. Meanwhile back in Egypt the plight of the Israelite slaves was worsening and they cried out to God.

- One day Moshe was shepherding the sheep of his father-in-law when he saw a bush burning yet it was not being consumed by the fire. Moshe approached the bush and God called out to him. God told Moshe that he should go to Pharaoh and take the Israelites out of Egypt.
- Moshe protested that he was not suitable to be the messenger of God. God gave Moshe three miracles to perform before the Israelites to prove that he had been sent by God. Moshe continued to protest that because of his speech impediment he was not suitable for the task. God assigned his brother Aaron to be his spokesman.
- Moshe returned to Egypt with his wife and two sons. Moshe met Aaron and together they went to the elders of the people and performed the signs that God had given Moshe.
- Moshe and Aaron had an audience with Pharaoh and they presented him with God's demand to send out His people. Pharaoh mocked this request and instructed the Egyptian taskmasters to increase the workload of the Hebrews. Moshe cried out to God that because of his mission the Hebrews were being forced to work harder. God replied that now Moshe will see what He will do to Pharaoh and that Pharaoh would drive the people out with a strong hand.

Children's Service: Tot's – Year 2:

In the parsha this week Moshe's mother was forced to hide him as Pharaoh had decreed that all baby boys be thrown in the Nile. After three months when she could no longer hide him his mother took a wicker basket and covered it to make it waterproof. The baby was put into the basket and placed amongst the reeds of the River Nile.

Activity:

Choose a volunteer to leave the room. Ask the remaining children to hide an object (if possible a small basket or doll to recreate the story of Moshe.) Call the volunteer back into the room and ask them to find the object. The other children should call out the words, 'hotter' or 'colder' depending on the proximity of the volunteer to the object.

* Please also see the activities in the service for years 3-6 as this week you may find them suitable for this age range. Some of them may need a small amount of adapting.

Children's Service: Year 3-6

Activity 1:

You will need several apples and a knife. Try to have apples that are different in size, colour and general outer appearance. It is fine if some of them are bruised or old and shriveled.

In the parsha this week God tells Moshe at the burning bush that he has been chosen to rescue the entire Jewish people from slavery to freedom. Moshe must go to Pharaoh and tell him that God wants him to free the Jewish people. Moshe objects saying, "I am not a man of words....for I am heavy of

mouth and heavy of speech.’ Moshe feels that he is not the man for the job since he has a speech impediment. God however reassures him and reminds him that He is the Creator, the One who made his mouth. God encourages Moshe and helps him see his true abilities.

Each one of us has the ability to accomplish much more than we realise, yet sometimes we doubt ourselves and think we are not good enough. We can learn from the parsha this week that just as Moshe finds his true potential so too can we learn to overcome the feelings that hold us back and find our true potential.

Show the children the apples and discuss their outer appearance. Cut one of the apples in half – not lengthways as one would usually do but across the apple. Ask the children what they notice about the seed pod. Explain that all apples have a seed pod that resembles a five pointed star. Cut up a few more apples and show that even though on the outside all the apples look different, on the inside they all have the same five pointed star.

Explain that people are the same! On the outside we all look different. We all come in different size, colours, shape and ages but inside of us are the same seeds of potential. We all have a ‘star’ inside of us that can grow. Each person has abilities and talents waiting to be developed. If we look after and nourish these abilities we will become extraordinary in some way. Just as the seeds inside the apple can grow and become a blossoming fruit tree so too can we blossom and grow.

We can also learn from this not to judge people by their outside appearance. We should learn to look at their inner strengths and goodness.

Activity 2:

Now, dress up as much as you can as a news reporter, (hat, overcoat, notepad, fake microphone...) Pretend to interview the children. Ask them questions (see below) and listen carefully pretending to take notes as you go. This is a simple activity but it is great for the children's self-esteem. They will enjoy the attention and the opportunity to think about their qualities and what makes them unique.

Possible questions:

What is your full name?

What is your favourite colour?

What is your favourite food?

If you had £100.00 what would you spend it on?

What scares you the most?

What makes you laugh?

What can you do really well?

What do you want to do when you are older?

What is special about you?

What would it take for one of the seeds to become a big apple tree? (Sun, water, air, soil)

What kind of nourishment would it take for you to develop one of your special qualities? (practise, lessons, belief in yourself, encouragement...)

Why is it important to feel good about yourself?