



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

## Shofetim 5779



### Shofetim Summary:

At the start of Parashat Shoftim (the weekly Torah portion of Shoftim), Moshe (Moses) reviewed the regulations and laws necessary for a civilised society. Local judges were to be appointed in every city, but if the local judges found a case too difficult to decide, they would refer it to the Kohanim (Priests) or to the Supreme Court. In most cases the account of just one witness was not sufficient and there would need to be two witnesses. Moshe (Moses) told the people that a time would come when the B'nei Yisrael (Children of Israel) would want a king like the other nations around them.

The Parasha continues by explaining how all forms of magic practiced by a soothsayer were forbidden. The B'nei Yisrael (Children of Israel) would have no reason to resort to magic, as God would provide prophets from among the Jewish people. These prophets would communicate God's will to the people.

Moshe (Moses) reminded the B'nei Yisrael (Children of Israel) that they would have no reason to fear an enemy as God would be with them. He then continued by explaining the category of men who were not obliged to go to battle.

Furthermore, the B'nei Yisrael (Children of Israel) were to offer peace to the inhabitants of a hostile city and only once these peace efforts had failed, could war begin.

If the body of a murdered individual was found in a field and the murderer

could not be found, the responsibility rested on the nearest town. The judges and Elders of that town would bring an offering of a young calf as an atonement offering.



- Moshe (Moses) begins by telling the B'nei Yisrael (Children of Israel) that once they enter the Promised Land they are to appoint judges and officers in every city, so that justice can be administered righteously and impartially.
- A judge was therefore strictly forbidden to accept a bribe or display any kind of bias. If a local judge found a case too difficult, he could refer it to a higher authority, namely the Kohanim (Priests) and the Supreme Court which sat and judged in the Court of the Sanctuary. The decision of these judges was final and had to be acted upon. Refusal to do so, would have consequences.
- Moshe (Moses) noted that a time would come when the B'nei Yisrael (Children of Israel) would desire a king to rule over them, as was the case with other nations. When this occurred, the appointed ruler was to be a member of the B'nei Yisrael (Children of Israel) chosen by God. The chosen king must not misuse his power to amass horses, wives or accumulate great wealth. However, he was to write a copy of the Torah law so that he could be God-fearing and observant of the laws of the Torah.
- The Torah forbids all forms of superstition and magic particularly to be used to see the future, as the B'nei Yisrael (Children of Israel) had no need to rely on such powers. God would always provide prophets who, with God's help, would be able to see the future.
- Before anyone could be convicted of a crime, a person's criminality would have to be witnessed by at least two people. If a witness was found to be giving false testimony, that particular witness would receive the punishment intended for the person he falsely accused.

- When explaining some of the laws of battle, God highlighted three categories of men who were to be exempt from fighting; a man who had recently built a new house but had not yet dedicated it; a man who had planted a vineyard, but had not yet enjoyed its fruit and a man who had just become betrothed.
- Before the B'nei Yisrael (Children of Israel) attacked a hostile city, they should try to negotiate a peaceful entry and only if these peace overtures failed could war begin. The B'nei Yisrael (Children of Israel) were told that fruit trees were not allowed to be destroyed during a siege of a city.
- Finally, if the body of a murdered person was found in a field between 2 towns and the murderer could not be found, the judges and Elders of the nearest town had to bring an atonement offering on behalf of the people of that town. They would then tell the Kohanim (Priests) that they were in no way responsible for the murder.

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



**The No Rules Game – This game will highlight to the children, the need for rules and laws in society. A game without rules becomes boring and meaningless!**

Ask the children to begin by sitting in a circle. Explain the rules of the game and be sure the children know and understand these rules.

1. When you give an instruction by starting **with** the word 'Everybody', the children should carry out that instruction.
2. When you give an instruction **without** starting with the word 'everybody', the children should **NOT** carry out that instruction.
3. For example; 'everybody jump on the spot' – children should jump. While they are jumping you say, 'clap your hands in the air'. Some children will do this, but because you didn't say 'everybody' they should carry on jumping until you say, 'everybody...'. The children who do the actions when they shouldn't or vice-versa are out and should sit down.
4. Some suggested actions are;
  - a. Everybody do star jumps
  - b. Everybody walk on the spot
  - c. Stop
  - d. Wave your hands in the air
  - e. Pat your tummy
  - f. Everybody stop

An important part of the game is to play the same 'instruction' game but with no rules! The children will see that no children are 'out' and the Game

becomes a little boring. So, when you have completed this game, discuss the importance of having rules for a game, just like the Torah gives us different rules.

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



**One sunny Shabbat morning, the Little Red Rabbi got ready to leave for Shul (Synagogue), said goodbye and Shabbat Shalom to his family and shut the front door, kissing the Mezuzah. The sun was shining, the birds were happily singing in the trees and there was a slight breeze. This made the Little Red Rabbi feel amazing and he walked to Shul with a spring in his step!**

**When he got to Shul (Synagogue), he wished people Shabbat Shalom and sat down in his special seat right next to the Aron Hakodesh (The Holy Ark).**

**The Tefilla (Prayer service) started and the Shul (Synagogue) started to fill up with lots of people. Many of the people came up to the Little Red Rabbi and shook his hand, wishing him a Shabbat Shalom.**

**The Shabbat morning Tefilla (Prayer service) continued, the Sefer Torah (Torah Scroll) was taken out of the Ark and the Parasha (Weekly Torah portion) was read. After a while, the Sefer Torah (Torah Scroll) was put back into the Aron Hakodesh (The Holy Ark) and the service continued. There was even a big Kiddush after Adon Olam had been sung!**

**Now the Little Red Rabbi was usually the last one to leave the Shul (Synagogue). As he got ready to go, he stopped and looked around. He was shocked! There were Siddurim and Chumashim (Prayer books and 5 Books**

of Moses) left on the chairs, there were sweet wrappers all over the floor, the Tallitot (Prayer Shawls) were left draping over seats and all the windows had been left wide open.

Dear, dear, thought the Little Red Rabbi, it is time we made some very important rules for people to follow. So, after Shabbat, the Little Red Rabbi called his friend Michael. 'Hi Michael', said the Little Red Rabbi. 'would you be able to help me write some rules for the Shul (Synagogue) tomorrow, which we can display for everyone to see?' 'I'm so sorry' said Michael, 'I have got a guitar lesson booked and I won't be able to come to help you'. 'No problem' said the Little Red Rabbi, 'I'll just have to do it myself'.

So, the Little Red Rabbi called his friend Michaela. 'Hi Michaela', said the Little Red Rabbi. 'would you be able to help me write some rules for the Shul (Synagogue) tomorrow, which we can display for everyone to see?' 'I'm so sorry' said Michaela, 'I have got my mum and dad coming over and I won't be able to come to help you'. 'No problem' said the Little Red Rabbi, 'I'll just have to do it myself'.

So, the Little Red Rabbi called his friend Morris. 'Hi Morris', said the Little Red Rabbi. 'would you be able to help me write some rules for the Shul (Synagogue) tomorrow, which we can display for everyone to see?' 'I'm so sorry' said Morris, 'I promised my children that we'd go to the cinema and I won't be able to come to help you'. 'No problem' said the Little Red Rabbi, 'I'll just have to do it myself'.

So the Little Red Rabbi went to the shops to buy some card, some thick marker pens and some Blue-Tack. He sat down at his dining room table and wrote 4 big rules in his neatest handwriting. The rules were;

1. Please put any Siddurim (Prayer books) or Chumashim (5 Books of Moses) back on the shelves after the Tefilla (Prayer) service.
2. Please do not drop any litter on the floor and please use the dust bins provided.
3. If you use a Tallit (Prayer Shawl), please fold it up and place it back in the cupboard you took it from.
4. Please help to close all the windows when the Tefilla (Prayer) service has finished.

The next day, the Little Red Rabbi took the rules to the Shul (Synagogue)

**and using the Blue-Tack, he stuck them on the wall in the entrance hall for all to see.**

**The next Shabbat Michael, Michaela and Morris came to Shul (Synagogue) and saw how very neatly the rules had been written. 'Wow' said Michael, 'you have the most amazing handwriting Little Red Rabbi'. 'Wow' said Michaela, 'you chose such lovely card to write the rules on.' 'Wow' said Morris, 'you have stuck the rules on the wall so straight, that everybody will be able to see them clearly.' The Little Red Rabbi turned to his three friends and said a big 'THANK YOU!'**

**From that day on, no litter was ever left in the Shul (Synagogue), no Siddurim and Chumashim (Prayer books and 5 Books of Moses) were ever left on the seats, no Tallitot (Prayer Shawls) were ever left draped over the chairs and no windows were ever left open. The rules had worked!**



## Children's Service: Years 3- 6



**The Lemon Game** – This activity will highlight the importance of a judge not showing any bias to one particular person or party. It will teach the children that while we all look different on the outside, we are all the same inside and a judge must treat people equally and not show favouritism. You will need 6 lemons (preferably lemons which look quite different) and a knife for peeling the lemons. You can do this activity with each child having a lemon, but this may not be manageable in the allotted time.

Begin by asking the children to sit in a circle. Show the children 6 different lemons and pass these around the circle. At various points, stop the children passing the lemons and ask those children holding one to describe its shape. The idea is that all the lemons should be a different shape on the outside. Now, use the knife **(please do not let the children do this)** to peel the lemons and ask 6 children to stand up, each holding one of the lemons. Challenge any of the children to spot a difference. We may all look different, but on the inside we are the same and a Judge must treat everyone equally when judging a case in Court.

### **Discussion Points**

When Moshe (Moses) realised that the B'nei Yisrael (Children of Israel) would, one day, ask for a king to rule over them, he established clear rules about who that king could be and the things he should and should not own.



- Why do you think Moshe (Moses) set out these rules for a Jewish king?

- Why should a Jewish king not own lots and lots of horses or be tremendously wealthy?
- If Moshe (Moses) had set out clear rules for a Jewish king, why did the famous Prophet Shmuel (Samuel), many years later, criticise the people for wanting a king?
- How can we learn to respect and give honour to God from the way we show honour and respect to human kings and queens?
- When the king wrote a Sefer Torah (Torah Scroll) how do you think he felt as he was writing down all the laws of God?
- Which famous Jewish book did King David write? (Tehillim- Psalms)
- Which famous Jewish building did King Solomon build? (The Beit Mikdash – The Holy Temple)



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

**<https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=shabbat+songs+for+children&view=detail&mid=52649D233114D70E7C0F52649D233114D70E7C0F&FORM=VIRE>**

## **'It's Shabbat...' Sung by 'The Maccabeats'**

**It's Shabbat doo doo doo doo doo  
It's Shabbat doo doo doo doo doo  
It's Shabbat doo doo doo doo doo  
It's Shabbat**

**Light the candles doo doo doo doo  
Light the candles doo doo doo doo  
Light the candles doo doo doo doo  
Light the candles**

**Make Kiddush...**

**Eat Challah...**

**Yummy food...**

**Shabbat songs...**

**Family time...**

**Take a nap...**

**Havdalah...**

**It's the end!**

**Adon Olam** – This is quite a well-known ‘Adon Olam’  
tune which children can easily learn how to sing.

<https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=Easy+to+Sing+Adon+Olam&&view=detail&mid=82909E5A2A14003C02CB82909E5A2A14003C02CB&&FORM=VRD GAR>

אָדוֹן עוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר מֶלֶךְ, בְּטָרָם כָּל יְצִיר נִבְרָא. לְעֵת  
נַעֲשֶׂה בְּחִפְצוֹ

כָּל, אֲדִי מֶלֶךְ שְׁמוֹ נִקְרָא. וְאַחֲרֵי כָּכָל הַכֹּל, לְבִדּוֹ  
יִמְלֹךְ נֹרָא.

וְהוּא הָיָה, וְהוּא הוּא, וְהוּא יִהְיֶה, בְּתִפְאָרָה. וְהוּא  
אֶחָד וְאֵין שֵׁנִי,

לְהִמְשִׁיל לוֹ לְהַחְבִּירָה. בְּלִי יְרֵאָה בְּלִי תַכְלִית,  
וְלוֹ הָעֵז

וְהַמְשָׁרָה. וְהוּא אֵלִי וְחִי גְּאֻלִּי, וְצוּר חֲבִלִי בְּעֵת  
צָרָה. וְהוּא נֹסִי

וּמְנוּס לִי, מִנֶּת כּוֹסִי בְּיוֹם אֶקְרָא. בְּיָדוֹ אֶפְקִיד  
רוּחִי, בְּעֵת אִישָׁן

**וְאֶעֱיָרָהּ. וְעַם רוּחִי גִּזְתִּי, הֵ-י לִי וְלֹא אֵירָא.**

## **ADON OLAM**

**Adon olam, asher malach,  
b'terem kol y'tzir nivra.  
L'et na'asah v'cheftzo kol,  
azai melech sh'mo nikra.**

**V'acharey kichlot hakol,  
l'vado yimloch nora.  
V'hu haya, v'hu hoveh,  
v'hu yih'yeh b'tifara.**

**V'hu echad, v'eyn sheni  
l'hamshil lo, l'hachbira.  
B'li reishit, b'li tachlit,  
v'lo ha'oz v'hamisrah.**

**V'hu Eli, v'chai go'ali,  
v'tzur chevli b'et tzarah.  
V'hu nisi umanos li,  
m'nat kosi b'yom ekra.**

**B'yado afkid ruch  
b'et ishan v'a'irah.  
V'im ruch g'viyati,  
Adonai li v'lo ira.**

## **ADON OLAM**

**The Lord of the Universe who reigned  
before anything was created.**

**When all was made by His will  
He was acknowledged as King.**

**And when all shall end  
He still all alone shall reign.  
He was, He is,  
and He shall be in glory.**

**And He is one, and there's no other,  
to compare or join Him.  
Without beginning, without end  
and to Him belongs dominion and power.**

**And He is my God, my living God.  
to Him I flee in time of grief,  
and He is my miracle and my refuge,  
who answers the day I shall call.**

**To Him I commit my spirit,  
in the time of sleep and awakening,  
even if my spirit leaves,  
God is with me, I shall not fear**