



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.

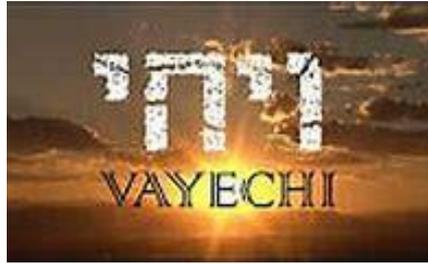
I am sure the children at your shul will benefit from Spark. Please be in touch if you have any queries, feedback or if we can be of any help. Thank you again for the work you do in enabling so many young Jews to access their heritage and traditions in such an exciting way.

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



This week's Parasha (Weekly Torah Portion) is Vayechi which means 'And he lived...' referring to Yaakov (Jacob) living in the land of Egypt for 17 years.

Yaakov (Jacob) had reached the age of 147 and the end of his days were approaching. Yoseph (Joseph) visited his father Yaakov (Jacob) with his 2 children Ephraim and Menashe and as he brought them closer, his father Yaakov (Jacob) hugged and kissed them, after which he gave blessings to both of Yoseph's (Joseph's) sons.

Yaakov (Jacob) now called each of his sons to his bedside and blessed them. These blessings are referred to as the 'Birchot Yaakov', 'The Blessings of Jacob'.

Yaakov (Jacob) then commanded all his sons to bury him in the Cave of Machpela, after which he passed away.

Yoseph (Joseph) cried over his father and all the Egyptians mourned the death of Yaakov (Jacob) for 70 days, after which they went to the Land of Canaan, to bury Yaakov (Jacob) in the Cave of Machpela as he had asked.

Upon their return to Egypt, the brothers were afraid that since their father Yaakov (Jacob) had died, Yoseph (Joseph) would now take revenge over what they had done to him years earlier. The brothers asked for Yoseph's (Joseph's) forgiveness. He calmed them and told them that he would support them and their children.

Yoseph (Joseph) then made the Children of Israel promise that they would take his remains with them when they left the Land of Egypt to go to the Promised Land.

Yoseph (Joseph) died at the age of 110 years and was placed in a coffin in Egypt.

- At the age of 147 Yaakov (Jacob) knew that he was going to die and so called his son Yoseph (Joseph), asking him to promise that he would take him to the Land of Canaan, the resting place of his ancestors, to be buried. Yaakov (Jacob) told his son Yoseph (Joseph) that he did not want to be buried in Egypt.
- Sometime later, Yoseph (Joseph) was informed that his father was ill and Yoseph (Joseph) visited him with his 2 sons Ephraim and Menashe. Yaakov (Jacob) told Yoseph (Joseph) that Ephraim and Menashe would be counted among Yaakov's (Jacob's) own sons, each being the head of a Tribe.
- As the 2 sons were brought closer to Yaakov (Jacob) he hugged and kissed them. Yaakov (Jacob) stretched out his right hand and placed it on Ephraim's (the younger one) head and his left hand, he placed on Menashe's (the older one) head. Yoseph (Joseph) saw that his father had placed his right hand on Ephraim's head and thought this was wrong. Yoseph (Joseph) lifted his father's hand and explained that Menashe was in fact the oldest and therefore his right hand should be on him. However, Yaakov (Jacob) refused to change the position of his hands, predicting that although Menashe would indeed become great, the Tribe of Ephraim would be even greater.
- Calling his sons to his bedside, he gave each of them specific blessings, each blessing full of prophecy about the future of that particular Tribe and each Tribe's special attributes and characteristics.
- Yaakov (Jacob) then commanded each of his sons that once he had died, they should bury him in the Cave of Machpela, which his grandfather Avraham (Abraham) had purchased. Yaakov (Jacob) finished commanding his sons, gathered his feet into the bed and returned to his people.
- Yoseph (Joseph) fell on his father's face and cried and kissed him. He commanded the Egyptians to embalm Yaakov (Jacob) and they mourned Yaakov's (Jacob's) death for a period of 70 days. Yoseph (Joseph) then received Pharaoh's permission and he, his brothers and their households, together with the elders of Egypt were able to go to Canaan to bury Yaakov (Jacob) in the Cave of Machpela.
- On their return to Egypt, Yoseph's (Joseph's) brothers, now afraid that Yoseph (Joseph) would seek vengeance against them, sought his pardon for their past misdeeds. However, Yoseph (Joseph) reassured them that he had no vengeance in mind.
- Yoseph (Joseph) died at the age of 110 and before he died he made his brothers promise (and then pass that promise on to future children) that when they would eventually be taken out of Egypt with Moshe (Moses) as the leader, they would take his coffin with them to the Land of Caanan.



In this week's Parasha (Weekly Torah Portion) there are a number of blessings mentioned. Firstly, Yaakov (Jacob) blessed his 2 grandsons Ephraim and Menashe and then we learn about the blessings which each one of the 12 children of Yaakov (Jacob) received just before their father died. This activity encourages the children to appreciate the blessings in their lives!

Children's Service: Tot's – Year 3

Activity – Blessings, Blessings, Everywhere!!

Start this activity by placing 2 jars/boxes in the middle of the circle in which the children are sitting. In one jar/box, place pieces of folded paper, each with a statement on it. **(The statements can be found at the end of the Spark)**. Each child should have a turn at picking out a statement and with the help of an adult, reading the statement aloud. If the children think that the statement is a blessing, the child who read it out should place it in to the 2nd jar/box.

Each child in the circle should have a turn at choosing and reading a statement, but in the end, the children should notice that all the statements are in fact blessings. Although we sometimes do not realise it, life is full of blessings; some big and some seemingly small!



Children's Service: Years 3- 6

The 2 sons of Yoseph (Joseph) trusted and respected each other. Their grandfather Yaakov (Jacob) placed his right hand on the head of Ephraim, the younger brother, although it was the custom to place the right hand on the head of the older brother Menashe. However, despite Yaakov's (Jacob's) right hand being placed on Ephraim's head, this did not cause any animosity whatsoever between the 2 brothers, Menashe and Ephraim.

Activity –

Talk to the Mirror – This activity will highlight the differences that make children special and the common features that make them similar.

You will need a mirror for this activity. Ask the children to sit in a circle and then go around the circle, asking the children to place the mirror in front of their face. They should describe what they see, sharing this with everyone in the circle. Encourage children to talk about their facial features, clothes, colours and characteristics. Then pass the mirror around the circle a second time, asking the children to share the differences between him/herself and someone else. The third time around the circle, each child should then share what s/he likes about the other person.

At the end of the activity, it is important to discuss with the children, why each person's differences make them special.



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 Vayechi.

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 how they could pool their resources and work together to get the best results, just like the two brothers, Yisachar and Zevulun.

Here are some target questions to help the children;

1. Why did Dan and Dina think that they could not win the design competition alone?
2. What are the advantages of working on a project in a pair or a team?
3. How do the two brothers Yisachar and Zevulun teach us this important lesson in this week's Parasha?
4. Have you ever worked on a project together with family or friends?
5. Were the results good?
6. Do you think the results would have been as good if you had worked on the project alone?



What does this Story Teach us – (For Younger Children)?

The day finally arrived. It was time for the great acrobatic balloon competition. Every insect in the garden had been training hard, and now they were preparing to begin their routines. The balloon competitions were always something really special, since they could only happen after the children of the house had some big party. There was only a short window of opportunity too, before the parents came around to collect up the balloons.

Each time, the flying insects were favourites to win, because they could grab the balloon strings and fly off in all directions, creating all sorts of patterns in the air. However, on this occasion there were some rather unusual insects taking part: a group of ants. Of course, no one expected that they'd do anything special. They were so light that no ant had ever bothered to take part, but it was quite impressive to see all the ants all perfectly organised and prepared.

So, the competition began, and the different insects took their turns, performing beautiful manoeuvres with the balloons. As always, the butterfly and the firefly left everyone amazed with their twists and turns, and their wonderful colours. When it was time for the ants to perform, it seemed like the winners of the competition had already been decided.

For the first time in living memory, the ants shared just one balloon between them, and one by one they climbed up the balloon string; forming a thin black thread of ants. When all the string was covered, the last ant climbed over his teammates to reach the balloon. Once there, he climbed onto the top of the balloon.

This strange spectacle attracted everyone's curiosity, and they were just about to witness the most important moment: the ant opened his jaws as wide as he could... and then he stabbed the balloon with all his might!

Pssshhhhhh!!!

The result was tremendous! The balloon began blowing out its air, flying madly about, here and there, doing a thousand pirouettes, while the perfectly synchronised ants, made all kinds of beautiful shapes out of the string.



Of course, that acrobatic flight ended with quite a hard landing, but it didn't matter. The originality and teamwork of the ant performance was so impressive that the crowd didn't even have to vote for there to be a winner.

From then on, in that garden, everyone understood how much could be achieved by working together. In the years to come, the balloon competitions were full of displays carried out by teams and they put on some wonderful routines; something those individual insects could never have achieved on their own.

What does this Story Teach us – (For Older Children)?



Steve Jobs: "Technology alone is not enough."

In 1986, shortly after he was forced out of Apple, Steve Jobs bought a small computer company named Pixar. Yes, the famous Pixar!

In 2000, he relocated the company to an old, disused factory. The original plan was to have three buildings, with separate offices for computer scientists, animators, and the Pixar bosses. Steve Jobs immediately scrapped it. Instead of three buildings, there was going to be one massive space, with a glamorous entrance at its centre.

But for Jobs, it was not just about creating a space. He needed to make the people working at Pixar go there. The primary challenge for Pixar, as he saw it, was getting its different workers to go to this big space together and collaborate.

Jobs saw the separated offices as a problem. He began with placing the mailboxes in the huge space he had created. He then moved the meeting rooms, the cafeteria, the coffee bar, and the gift shop to the centre of the building.

Brad Bird, the director of "The Incredibles" and "Ratatouille", said, that the huge space with its glamorous entrance, initially, might seem like a waste of space. But Steve realised that when people run into each other and make eye contact, things happen."

Even if this massive space and huge entrance was not so convenient, the emphasis on working together and agreeing on things has always been a defining trait of Steve Jobs.

Jobs insisted that the best creations occurred when people from different areas of work were connected.

Tefillah Treasures

ברוך שאמר Baruch Sheamar

ברוך שאמר והיה העולם, ברוך הוא

ברוך עשה בראשית

ברוך אומר ועושה

ברוך גוזר ומקים

ברוך מרחם על הארץ

ברוך מרחם על הבריות

ברוך משלם שכר טוב ליראיו

ברוך חי לעד וקיים לנצח

ברוך פודה ומציל

ברוך שמו

Baruch sheamar v'hayah ha'olam

Baruch hu.

Baruch omer v'oseh

Baruch gozer umka-yeim

Baruch oseh b'reishit

baruch m'racheim al ha-aretz

baruch m'racheim al ha-b'riot

baruch m'shaleim sachar tov lirei-av,

Baruch chai la'ad v'ka-yam la-netzach,

baruch podeh umatzil,

baruch sh'mo.

Baruch atah Adonai Eloheinu

Melech ha-Olam,

ha-eil Av rachaman ham'chulal b'peh

amo, m'shubach umfo-ar

bil'shon chasidav va'avadav

uvshirei David avdecha.

n'halel'cha Adonai Eloheinu,

bishvachot uvizmirot.

ungadel'cha unshabei-chacha

unfa-er'cha v'namlich'cha

v'nazkir shimcha Malcheinu Eloheinu





Blessed is the One Who spoke and brought the world into existence.

Blessed is God!

Blessed is the One Who maintains creation.

Blessed is the One Whose words are deeds;

Blessed is the One Who decrees are fulfilled.

Blessed is the One Who has compassion upon the world and all its creatures.

Blessed is the One Who rewards those who are reverent.

Blessed is the One Who lives forever and endures throughout eternity.

Blessed is the One Who redeems and rescues.

Blessed is God's name!

The prayer known as **Baruch Sheamar**, is said in Shacharit, the Morning Prayer Service.

The word 'Baruch' – בָּרוּךְ is said 10 times in the first half of the prayer. These 10 times the word 'Baruch – Blessing' is said, corresponds to the 10 times the words, 'And He (God) said' appear at the very beginning of the story of creation.

Our holy Rabbis of old teach us, 'With Ten Utterances the World was Created'!



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

Vayechi Song

https://www.chabad.org/kids/article_cdo/aid/519469/jewish/Vayechi.htm

(Please note: The words, 'Jewish Children' in the song have been written in place of the Yiddish words for 'Jewish Children', 'Yiddishe Kinderlech')

Chorus:

This Tefillah from Yaakov, at night is said

By all Jewish children, before going to bed

To Ephraim and Menashe, this bracha, Yaakov gave

"May the malach watch over you, for me he did save

In the name of my fathers, Avraham, Yitzchak too

May Hashem's bracha, forever be with you

Hamalach hagoel oti mikol ra

Y'varech et han'arim, vikarei bahem sh'mee

V'sheim avotai, Avraham v'Yitzchak

V'yidgu larov b'kerev Haaretz

May the Angel
Who has delivered me
May the Angel
Who has delivered me
From all harm,
Bless these children.

Let them be called by my name
And the names of my fathers,
Abraham and Isaac,
And may they increase greatly
Upon the Earth.

הַמַּלְאָךְ הַגָּאֵל אֶתִּי
הַמַּלְאָךְ הַגָּאֵל אֶתִּי מִכָּל-רָע,
יְבָרֵךְ אֶת-הַנְּעָרִים,
וַיְקַרְא בָהֶם שְׁמִי,
וְשֵׁם אֲבוֹתַי אַבְרָהָם וַיִּצְחָק;
וַיְדַגּוּ לְרַב, בְּקִרְבֵּי הָאָרֶץ

Statements for the activity, 'Blessings, Blessings, Everywhere'

- Every day I go to school
- In the cold winter, I have clothes to wear and these keep me warm
- I receive presents on my birthday
- If I ever feel sad at school, there is always a teacher I can go to
- I have some really good friends
- When I am in the playground, I can run or skip or even play football
- I can talk to friends and relatives using a telephone, a computer or even an ipad
- There is sometimes sunshine outside and the rain sometimes falls
- Brushing my teeth with toothpaste
- Going to see the doctor when I don't feel well
- Going to get my eyes tested at the opticians
- My pet makes me so happy and I look after him or her
- My daddy and mummy, grandma and grandpa give me hugs and kisses
- I have started to learn to play a musical instrument
- The flowers, the grass and the leaves on the trees
- The sunrise and the sunset



Poem About Getting on Well with your Siblings

My brother/sister is sweet,
My brother/sister is nice,

When I am upset,
I come for advice.

S/he teaches me new stuff
Almost all the time,

And I think that
Is really, really kind.

I love my brother/sister,
And s/he loves me.

Now that's the way
It's meant to be