



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,  
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## Devarim

### **Parsha Summary:**

- This week starts the Book of Devarim the fifth and final book of the Torah. Moshe begins his last speech to the Children of Israel before his death, by recounting the story of the journey of the Jewish people in the desert.
- Moshe revisits the time when he appointed a hierarchy of judges to help him preside over the nation.
- Moshe gently rebukes the Jewish people for the episode of the spies and reminds them how that entire generation was punished by God and banned from entering Canaan.
- Moshe now fast forwards thirty eight years. The generation which left Egypt had died and their children were ready to enter Canaan. They are instructed by God not to touch the lands of Edom, Moav and Amon as these lands were the inheritance of the descendants of Lot and Esav.
- Moshe delineates the borders of the lands allotted to the tribes of Reuven, Gad and half of Menashe. He repeats the instructions he gave to these tribes to cross the Jordan together with their brethren. That they should participate in the battle against the Canaanites before returning to their land on the eastern bank of the Jordan.

- Joshua, who will lead the nation into Israel, is told not to be fearful of the battles which he will face, because, "It is the Lord, your God, Who is fighting for you."

## Children's Service: Tot's – Year 2

Explain to the children that after the Jewish people left slavery in Egypt and lived in the desert for forty years, they then entered Eretz Yisrael. When they were in Eretz Yisrael, King Shlomo built a beautiful building called the Bet Hamikdash. The Kohanim would serve God in the Bet Hamikdash and the Jewish people would come there three times a year.

Now we no longer have the Bet Hamikdash and each year in this Jewish month we have a special day called Tisha B'Av when we think about the Bet Hamikdash and are sad that we no longer have this special place.

Ask the children what they do when they are sad. Take suggestions.

The rabbis have told us what to do to show we are sad on Tisha B'Av. Adults above the age of Bar/Bat Mitzva do not eat or drink, we do not wear perfume, we do not wear leather shoes and we do not wash. This helps us think about the Bet Hamikdash and feel sad.

At this time of year we also try and be extra kind to each other, as we are told that at the time of the second Bet Hamkidash people were not treating each other respectfully. Below is a game all about kindness. It will promote friendship within the group.

### **Activity 1:**

Play the Beanbag Hello Game! It is nice to say hello to a friend. It shows them that you are thinking about them. The leader should throw a beanbag (or a soft object) to a child and say, "Hello" and something they like about that child. This child throws the beanbag to another child, says, "Hello" and something he likes

about that child. Play continues until every child in the circle has had a turn.

### **Activity 2:**

Finish the sentence:

- I can be a good friend by..... (Go around the circle.)

### **Children's Service: Years 3-6**

This Shabbat is also the Shabbat before Tisha B'Av and it has a special name – we call it Shabbat Chazon which means 'Shabbat of Vision'. It takes its name from the Haftara which is read from the first chapter of the Book of Isaiah. This begins with the words, 'Chazon Yerushalayim – the vision of Yerushalayim.' In it Isaiah prophesies about the destruction of Yerushalayim and the Bet Hamikdash.

Explain to the children that when the Jewish people had left slavery in Egypt and lived in the desert for forty years they then entered Eretz Yisrael. When they were in Eretz Yisrael, King Shlomo built a beautiful temple called the Bet Hamikdash. The Kohanim would serve God in the Bet Hamikdash and the Jewish people would come there three times a year.

Show the children pictures of the Bet Hamikdash and explain to them that the First Bet Hamikdash was destroyed by the Babylonians and the Second Bet Hamikdash by the Romans. Both of them were destroyed on Tisha B'Av – the ninth day of Av and each year on that date we think about these events and are sad.

Ask the children what they do when they are sad. Take suggestions. The rabbis have told us what to do to show we are sad on Tisha B'Av. Adults above the age of Bar/Bat Mitzva do not eat or drink, do not wear perfume, we do not wear leather shoes

and we do not wash. This helps us think about the Bet Hamikdash and feel sad.

In the parsha this week Moshe, knowing that his life is ending, realizes that it was his duty to speak to the nation and give them inspiration and guidance. He wanted to give them strength to face the future and at the same time remind them of their past mistakes so that they wouldn't repeat them. Moshe however, was very careful when he spoke not to mention any of these mistakes in a way that would embarrass anyone. Instead he tactfully hints to those events in order to get his message across.

The Torah, in the parsha this week, teaches us how important it is to treat others with respect and never to embarrass anyone. Our rabbis tell us that one of the reasons that the Second Bet Hamikdash was destroyed was because people were not being kind to one another. Below is a story from the Gemara that took place at the time of the Second Bet Hamikdash.

### **Activity 1:**

Read the story below to the children and discuss what the guests at the party could have done rather than sit in silence. You may also want to ask the children to act out the story.

### **The Story of Kamtza and bar Kamtza:**

The Gemara tells of a wealthy man who wanted to throw a party for all his friends. He drew up a guest list and instructed his servant to send out the invitations. One of the men on the guest list was named 'Kamtza' but the servant made a mistake and delivered an invitation to 'Bar Kamtza' instead. Unfortunately, Bar Kamtza was actually a sworn enemy of the host!

When Bar Kamtza received his invitation, he was very grateful to think that the host had finally made amends. He spent a long time getting ready for the party and was really excited about attending.

However, when Bar Kamtza showed up at the party, the host took one look at him and told his servant in front of all the guests, to immediately eject Bar Kamtza from the premises.

When asked to leave, Bar Kamtza said, "I understand the mistake. But it's embarrassing for me to leave the party. I'll gladly pay the cost of my meal if you'll allow me to stay." The host would hear nothing of this, and reiterated his demand to have Bar Kamtza removed.

Bar Kamtza appealed again, "I'd even be willing to pay half the cost of the entire party, if only I'd be allowed to stay." Again the request was denied. At which point, the distraught Bar Kamtza pleaded, "I'll pay for the entire party! Just please don't embarrass me in this way!"

The host, however, stuck to his guns and threw Bar Kamtza out. The Talmud tells us that the rabbanim at the party had observed this exchange but did not protest and neither did any of the other guests at the party. Bar Kamtza took this to mean that they approved of the host's behaviour.

The Talmud reports that Bar Kamtza was so hurt and upset, that he went straight to the Roman authorities and gave slanderous reports of disloyal behaviour among the Jews. The Romans wanted to verify that this was true and asked Bar Kamtza what they could do to prove he was correct.

Bar Kamtza told the Roman Emperor to send an animal as a gift to the Kohanim to be offered up in the Bet Hamikdash.

Bar Kamtza went on the journey to the Bet Hamikdash with the present and the servants of the Emperor. One day, as they were on their way, when no one was looking, Bar Kamtza took out a knife and gave the animal a wound. He knew that the Kohanim would reject any animal that had a mark or blemish.

Sure enough, when the animal was bought before the Kohanim it was rejected. When the Emperor heard news of this he was furious. He had sent a perfect present! How dare the Jews reject it! This fuelled the Romans' anger, and they proceeded to attack and destroy the Holy Temple.

We might think the Second Temple was destroyed because of a combination of complex reasons, a series of events out of our control. This is not so. It was simply due to the sin of *sinat chinam*, unwarranted hatred between Jews.

This is why we mourn on Tisha B'Av. We must work to repair the tragedy of the destruction of the Bet Hamikdash by building bridges and treating each other as we would like to be treated.

### **Discuss**

- Our rabbis tell us that embarrassing someone is like killing them. Why do you think this is?
- What should we do if we need to say something to someone that might potentially embarrass them? For example, if someone invites you out but you don't want to go.
- Do you think it is reasonable to humiliate someone if it is just as a joke?