



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
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Parshat Ki Tavo

Parsha Summary:

- The parsha begins by introducing us to the mitzvah of Bikurim, the commandment to bring one's first fruits to the Bet Hamikdash. The mitzvah applies to produce grown in Eretz Yisrael and only for produce that are from the Shivat Haminim for which the Land is praised: wheat, barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives and dates. The owner takes the fruits to the Bet Hamikdash and recites a blessing. The produce is then presented to the Kohanim.
- During the times of the Bet Hamikdash, Jewish farmers were required to separate different tithes (taxes) from their produce. These were given to the Kohanim, Leviim, the poor and one tithe was eaten in Jerusalem by the farmer. There was a three year cycle for this.
- The Jewish people are instructed to gather large stones when they cross the River Jordan and to engrave the entire Torah on them. A further set of stones was to be set on Mt. Eval.
- Moshe explains how the blessings and curses are to be proclaimed on Mts. Grizzim and Eval when the Jewish nation enters into Israel. He then details the blessings they will receive for following the commandments of the Torah, and the calamities which will result from disregarding them.

Children's Service: Tots-Year 2

The parsha this week tells us that at the time the Jewish people were all living in Eretz Yisrael, when they had the Bet Hamikdash, the farmers would need to watch their crops very carefully. When it was spring and the farmer saw his first fruit sprouting he would put a piece of red string around it. He would declare that piece of fruit as: Bikurim. This special mitzvah only applies to the seven special fruits of Eretz Yisrael.

Ask the children if they know the names of these seven special fruits, known as the Shivat Haminim.

Hold up pictures of the Shivat Haminim and explain that they are: wheat, barley, figs, pomegranates, olives, dates and grapes.

The fruits could be brought to Yerushalayim any time between Shavuot and Chanukah – although before Sukkot would be the best time.

The bringing of Bikurim was a very joyous event with a big procession of friends and family. At the front would be an ox with its horns covered in gold and an olive wreath around its neck. There would be music and crowds of people to welcome the procession as it approached Yerushalayim. Once in Yerushalayim there would be a ceremony where the basket of fruit would be waved in all four directions to show it belonged to God. The fruits were eaten by the Kohanim who had no land of their own.

Activity One:

Song to learn the Shivat Haminim. Sing the Shivat Haminim song to the tune of *Frere Jacques*.

Chitah – wheat

Se'orah – barley

Gefen – grapes

Te'edah – figs

Rimon – pomegranate

Zayit – olives

Devash – dates x 2

Give out the pictures of the Shivat Haminim to each child and have them stand up every time their picture is mentioned.

Activity Two:

Play the game 'Fruit Basket' using the Shivat Haminim.

Sit in a circle. Assign one of the Shivat Haminim to everyone in the circle. Call out one of the Shivat Haminim, e.g. 'grapes', each child that was a 'grape' has to get up and run and find another empty seat. When you say 'Shivat Haminim' everyone runs to find a new seat. Remove a chair each time Shivat Haminim is called. The child who doesn't have a chair is out.

Hebrew variation: if your group know the Shivat Haminim well then play this game using only the Hebrew names of the Shivat Haminim.

Children's Service: Years 3-6

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Activity One:

Explain to the children that one of the reasons it is important to know what the Shivat Haminim are, is because there is a special Grace After Meals that we say when we have eaten one of the Seven Species. Show the children the brachah in their Siddurim. (For those of you who have the Siddur Shevet Asher, The Tribe Siddur for Children and Families, this blessing is on page 248.)

Bring in a variety of different foods and lay them out in the middle of the circle. The children take turns to put on a blindfold, pick a food, identify it, (is it one of the Shivat Haminim?) and then say which after brachah is necessary. Explain to the children that if a food is not bread or one of the Shivat Haminim there is a third after brachah known as 'Borei Nefashot.' (Siddur Shevet Asher 250.)

Make sure that there is some food for the kids to eat so that you can practice saying Al Hamichya together.

NB: check allergy policies!

Activity Two:

Discuss how the parsha talks about the blessings and curses. The *tochacha* (rebuke) reminds us of the consequences of our actions. God tells us that if we do the mitzvot, we will be rewarded with all good things including, wealth with crops and cattle, rain in the right time, peace etc. However, if we do not keep the mitzvot, we will not merit to live in the land of Israel, there will be famine, poverty, illness etc.

In this parsha we clearly see the consequences of doing good or bad things. We encounter such choices every day in our lives. Ask the children to share a personal story to illustrate how a good choice can have a good consequence and a bad choice can have a bad consequence.