



TRIBE TISHREI RESOURCE PACK 5782/2021



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Dear Youth Directors,

We hope you enjoy using this Tribe Tishrei Resource Pack.

Huge thanks to everyone who contributed ideas and now it's over to each of you to use and adapt these in your own way.

In the opening selichot service, the piyut 'Bmotzei Menucha' has the refrain "lishmoa el harina v'el hatefillah ." We ask God to hear our song and our prayer. The fact that song is mentioned before prayer is intriguing. It demonstrates that even those who can't or don't connect with God through prayer, can at least do so with song.

Hopefully youth across Tribe communities will engage in tefillah during Yom Tov, but the programmes in this pack serve as the 'song' that expresses relevant topics and thought-provoking messages for everyone to access.

The overarching theme is '**Individuals & Community.**' This links all of the activities to the importance of empowering our youth to be confident individuals, while at the same time feeling that they are part of a Jewish community which supports them and through which they support others.

Wishing you a successful and enriching Tishrei season.

Ketiva v'chatima tova!

Rabbi Eli Levin,
Tribe Rabbi

&

Barry Colman,
Tribe Community Liaison Manager

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Topic Title:

Malchiot - Kingship, Duty and Responsibility

Summary:

This section links to God as our King, and how the appointment/acceptance of a leader has bearing on our duties and responsibilities. In contrast to other forms of hierarchy or employment, being subject to a king is generally not a temporary acceptance of subservience.

Source:

ברוך אתה ה' מלך על כל הארץ... ויום הזכרון

The rule with the closing of long blessings is that they must address the central theme of that blessing. Therefore, the closing of the first long blessing of the Rosh Hashanah amidah, which underlines God's role as a King, highlights its subject.

Activities:

Ice breaker - one end of the room is 'responsibility' the other end is 'duty'. You call out the words below and the youth need to decide if they have a duty or responsibility and place themselves on the spectrum.

- Parents providing supper for children
- Doctor operating on someone with appendicitis
- Teacher teaching about the First World War
- Tesco worker who stacks shelves cleaning up spilt milk
- Queen visiting ill people in hospitals
- Scientists researching a vaccine for AIDS

Between each statement, ask a few participants the reasoning for their choice. Feel free to add your own questions, relating to the voluntary or obligatory nature of these samples.

Ideas for discussion:

- Duty and responsibility - what do these terms mean and what is the difference between them?
- Can you have one without the other?
- Who can think of cases when we have both?

Wrap-up:

- Duties mean one has to be honest about one's performance and expectations.
- Much of life has responsibility and duty, though people focus on rights much more than responsibility or duty.
- Kingship is a unique form of leadership, not subject to resignation of the employee.

Rosh Hashanah Day 2

Toby Weinger and Bracha Lawrence,
SJW Tribe



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Topic Title:

Rise to the Challenge

Summary:

We have all had a challenging year. Rosh Hashanah is a wonderful opportunity to press the 'refresh' button and consider our dreams for the year ahead. How can we respond to the challenges posed by a global pandemic and the grief, isolation and uncertainty that we have experienced in different ways? Everybody will have their personal reflections on this question and it is important to explore those ideas. This activity looks to explore how two great Jewish leaders – Abraham and Rabbi Akiva – led the Jewish people's response to challenging situations in two different periods of our history.

What lessons could we learn from Abraham and Rabbi Akiva's responses to challenges that could inform our perspectives as we look to the year ahead?

What is the point of looking to past responses to challenges to learn how we could respond to Covid-19?

Sources:

Background

The city of Sodom was filled with evil practices. The story goes that the people were so unaccepting of any differences that they would cut off visitors' arms and legs to ensure that they all fit into the same sized bed! You can only imagine the stealing and immorality in the city. God wanted to destroy the city. But Abraham disagreed "will you sweep away the innocent with the guilty?"

Abraham challenged God's plan as being immoral. Abraham thought that if there were righteous people in the city then it should be saved.

How did Abraham deal with this challenge?

Genesis, Chapter 18 Verses 23-33

23: And Abraham approached and said, "Will You even destroy the righteous with the wicked?"

24: Perhaps there are fifty righteous men in the midst of the city; will You even destroy and not forgive the place for the sake of the fifty righteous men who are in its midst?

25: Far be it from You to do a thing such as this, to put to death the righteous with the wicked so that the righteous should be like the wicked. Far be it from You! Will the Judge of the entire earth not perform justice?"

26: And the Lord said, "If I find in Sodom fifty righteous men within the city, I will forgive the entire place for their sake."

27: And Abraham answered and said, "Behold now I have commenced to speak to the Lord, although I am dust and ashes."

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28: Perhaps the fifty righteous men will be missing five. Will You destroy the entire city because of five?" And He said, "I will not destroy if I find there forty-five."

29: And he continued further to speak to Him, and he said, "Perhaps forty will be found there." And He said, "I will not do it for the sake of the forty."

30: And he said, "Please, let the Lord's wrath not be kindled, and I will speak. Perhaps thirty will be found there." And He said, "I will not do it if I find thirty there."

31: And he said, "Behold now I have desired to speak to the Lord, perhaps twenty will be found there." And He said, "I will not destroy for the sake of the twenty."

32: And he said, "Please, let the Lord's wrath not be kindled, and I will speak yet this time, perhaps ten will be found there." And He said, "I will not destroy for the sake of the ten."

33: And the Lord departed when He finished speaking to Abraham, and Abraham returned to his place.

Background

The destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem, because of baseless hatred amongst the Jewish people, was one of our lowest moments as a nation. Our primary way to connect to God was violently destroyed and the Rabbis of the time had to adapt Jewish practice to a post-Temple world.

The Talmud records a story of the greatest rabbinic leaders of that era taking a walk on the site of the destruction of the temple. What is unique about the response of Rabbi Akiva to the challenge of destruction?

Talmud Bavli, Makkot 24b (adapted from the Sefaria translation)

On another occasion they were ascending to Jerusalem after the destruction of the Temple. When they arrived at Mount Scopus and saw the site of the Temple, they tore their garments in mourning. When they arrived at the Temple Mount, they saw a fox that emerged from the site of the Holy of Holies. They began weeping and Rabbi Akiva was laughing. They said to him: For what reason are you laughing? Rabbi Akiva said to them: For what reason are you weeping? They said to him: This is the place concerning which the Torah says is the holiest place in the world! Now foxes walk in it, of course we should we weeping!

Rabbi Akiva said to them: That is why I am laughing. The prophets said that the first temple will be destroyed "Therefore, for your sake Zion shall be ploughed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become rubble, and the Temple Mount as the high places of a forest" (Micah 3:12), where foxes are found. However, there is a further prophecy by Zechariah "There shall yet be elderly men and elderly women sitting in the streets of Jerusalem". Until the prophecy of Uriah with regard to the destruction of the city was fulfilled I was afraid that the prophecy of Zechariah would not be fulfilled, as the two prophecies are linked. Now that the prophecy of Uriah was fulfilled, it is evident that the prophecy of Zechariah remains valid. The Gemara adds: The Sages said to him, employing this formulation: Akiva, you have comforted us; Akiva, you have comforted us.

Rosh Hashanah Day 2

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Activities:

One side of the room is “I found this challenging”, and the other is “I found this easy”. All participants in the group start in the middle. Facilitator reads statements relevant to young people e.g. “uncertainty with exams / isolation from friends / more time at home for hobbies etc” and people move to different parts of the room depending on their experiences. Can then ask volunteers to justify why they moved where they did.

A variation on this is to make it ‘values based’. E.g. ‘it is important to me to socialise with friends’ / ‘GCSEs are important’ / Shabbat over lockdown has been better / I am more / less likely to want to go on camp / family time is important.

Can play two truths and one lie. People have had crazy and weird experiences over lockdown so this should be fun! Participants come up with three statements and one of which is a lie. All other members in the group ask leading questions to try and ascertain which statement is true and which is false.

Ideas for discussion:

- What do you think of Abraham and Rabbi Akiva’s response to challenges?
- Have there been moments over Covid-19 where we also feel helpless and want to challenge the situation?
- How have you stayed optimistic in the face of difficult scenarios?
- Did Abraham really have the right to fight with God and argue that God’s plan was immoral?
- Why was the prophecy of “There shall yet be elderly men and elderly women sitting in the streets of Jerusalem” so comforting for the Rabbis?

Wrap-up:

- How did Abraham have the right to contest God’s plan and moral standing?
- Rabbi Sacks explains that “Jews do not accept the world that is. They challenge it in the name of the world that ought to be.” This is a critical turning point in human history: the birth of the world’s first religion of protest – the emergence of a faith that challenges the world instead of accepting it.”
- What should Jews be protesting about in 2021? (Uyghur persecution?? Climate change??)
- Why was the prophecy of “There shall yet be elderly men and elderly women sitting in the streets of Jerusalem” so comforting for the Rabbis with Rabbi Akiva?
- Consider how this prophecy is about the return to normal life! There is something miraculous about the beauty and depth of day-to-day experiences being special, especially given the turbulent nature of Jewish history.
- Consider what we have missed about normal life. (See further in Rav Amital’s article as printed in ‘Shana Tova’ United Synagogue booklet).
- Who do we know that have responded to challenges? What can we learn from them? Consider Gilad Shalit and his recent wedding!!

(See more: www.timesofisrael.com/gilad-shalit-gets-married-10-years-after-release-from-hamas-captivity)

Topic Title:

Are we always responsible for our actions or can we blame others?

Motion:

This House believes that a young person brainwashed by a terrorist group is not responsible for their actions.

The notes below provide a springboard for debate, with Jewish ideas on the theme. Debate participants should be given time to prepare before the day of the debate so that they can include these points and develop their own.

Debate clips to share with participants before Yom Tov or for Youth Directors/Debate Presenters to utilise:

<https://www.facebook.com/TheTribeUK/videos/1819508094797320>

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=2134867416583662>

Notes for Moderator:

Our debate is triggered by the contemporary phenomenon of people being brainwashed to commit acts of terror, but its roots lie deep in the world of Jewish philosophy. Our religion is firmly focused on our responsibility to obey God, live good lives and make the world a better place. At the heart of this lies the idea that we have freewill and therefore we are responsible for our actions. But our very presence in synagogue today, on Yom Kippur testifies to the fact that even with the best intentions, all of us sometimes succumb to different temptations and get things wrong. As King Solomon said “There is no one on earth who is so righteous, who only does what is right and never sins” (Ecclesiastes 7:20).

If we repent, God is forgiving of our inconsistencies. But how far can we stretch this? If we blame others for leading us on a bad path, are we making an honest evaluation of our situation or simply trying to pass the buck. This debate therefore primarily focuses on the idea of free will in Judaism and its limits. However, please feel free to discuss and debate other issues around the motion. **Let the debate begin!**

In summing up the debate, the moderator may wish to invite the audience to examine its relevance to their own lives. Yom Kippur is the day for examining our actions. Hopefully, none of us are guilty of the appalling crimes of an Isis member and none of us are under the influence of a hate preacher. But how about the principles behind the debate?

Are our Jewish lives the result of independent thinking and decision making or are we just following the habits that we picked up from our surroundings, which have led us to observe or not observe various practices?

Have we made a real study of Kashrut, Shabbat and all the other laws to make informed decisions, or are we simply continuing to live the way we always have done?

Yom Kippur Debate

Rabbi Gideon Sylvester and Rabbi Eli Levin

Arguments for the motion:

While it is true that Judaism believes people are responsible for their behaviour, it also understands the pressures which mount up upon us. It understands that we are not all born with the same advantages and for some there are real struggles.

“Everything is in the hands of heaven, except for the fear of heaven¹” declared the Talmudic rabbis, by which they meant that we are not born with full control over our lives, much remains beyond our control. The area we grow up in, the teachers and personalities who come our way, the poverty and discrimination which might lead to bitterness. None of this is in our hands. And it’s a tall order to respond correctly every time.

The rabbis of the Talmud and after were sympathetic to the fact that a person might be swayed by the power of others. They even created the category of “Tinok she nishba bein hagoyim” the child who was taken captive among the gentiles. Just as someone kidnapped by non-Jews and brought up among them cannot be expected to practice Judaism properly, so anybody who did not receive an educational and meaningful Jewish education is not held responsible for his or her actions.

The great scholar, philosopher and physician, Maimonides (1135-1204) championed the idea of freewill. The very fact that the Torah and the Prophets describe times when God was happy with the Jewish people and other occasions when he was angered by their actions, illustrates that it was the people themselves who chose to behave in that way. Surely God would not have forced them to do something and then been angry. Yet, even Maimonides was forced to admit that there were moments in the Torah when that did not apply, such as Pharaoh who had his free will taken from him during the 10 plagues.

Similarly, according to the Talmud², the Jewish people could claim that they lost their free-will and only accepted the Torah under duress, because it was given to them by the most charismatic preacher of them all – God himself – so how could they refuse?

On the day that Adam and Eve were created, God instructed them not to eat the produce from the ‘Tree of Knowledge,’ a particular tree in the Garden of Eden. When they failed to adhere to this rule, it is true that they were held responsible for their actions but God also accepted that it was not entirely their fault. They were the victims of a brilliant, calculating snake and faced with enormous temptation. No wonder that God did not fulfil his promise that they would die that day, but instead gave them the opportunity to build new lives outside of Paradise.

Yom Kippur Debate

Rabbi Gideon Sylvester and Rabbi Eli Levin

Arguments against the motion:

Common sense and Judaism share the belief that a person who of their own volition goes to commit a terrorist offence either in this country or abroad is responsible for their actions.

One of our greatest philosophers, Maimonides (1135-1204) recognised this. He referred to our free will as a fundamental pillar of the Torah. His argument was very logical.

If we did not have the power to determine our own actions, what would be the point of God giving us laws?

And if we were powerless to decide whether we were going to keep the laws or not, why would God send prophets exhorting us to do the right thing?

And if all our actions were out of our own control, then why would God promise rewards for those who keep His laws and punishments for those who disobey them?

Having established that we have the freedom to choose how we act, it was clear to Maimonides that we are responsible for our actions. Incidentally, for Maimonides, this is fundamental to everything that we do on Yom Kippur. If we are all responsible for our actions, then when we do wrong, we must attempt to put things right by apologising both to those whom we have hurt and to God. While we can do that on any day of the year, Yom Kippur is a day which is dedicated to that purpose.

It's true that sometimes, it's very hard to exercise self-control. Judaism has no illusions about this. The very first human beings had only one command to obey; the prohibition of eating from the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, but temptation got in their way.

First of all, Eve was convinced by the snake who was a charismatic and persuasive advocate. Like a fanatical modern-day preacher, he argued at length that doing wrong would not bring punishment, but actually it would lead to eternal reward, "You will not certainly die," the serpent said to the woman. "For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil" (Bereishit 3:5).

When Eve tried to fend him off by suggesting that she was even forbidden from touching the tree, the snake pushed her against it demonstrating that no harm came to her. The wrongdoing was tempting. The fruit was aesthetically pleasing and appeared to be really tasty and healthy: "When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it" (Bereishit 3:6).

Under these circumstances, it was easy to sin, but it was still wrong and Adam and Eve had to face the consequences of their actions. God was merciful to Adam and Eve. They were not killed instantly for their crimes, but they were expelled from the Garden of Eden and suffered the price of having to work hard for their food and struggle in childbirth. Crimes must be punished.



Topic Title:

Sukkot: A Unifying Festival

Summary:

On sukkot there are three significant mitzvot:

- Taking and shaking the Arba Minim
- Sitting in the Sukkah
- To be happy! As one of the names of sukkot is 'Zman Simchateinu'- meaning 'the time of our rejoicing'.

Contained within these three elements is one central theme: 'unity'.

Let's look at each one and see how this plays out:

Arba Minim

We bring together the Arba Minim which each represent a different type of Jew, for example the Etrog, which has a pleasant aroma and taste, represents a Jew with both torah knowledge and good deeds, while the Arava (Willow branch) has no taste or smell, representing a Jew with no Torah nor good deeds. We shake them as one to show that our goal as a Jewish community is to accept everyone under the same canopy of our religion, no matter what community they are from or their ethnic origins. Further, it shows a need for there to be various types of people who serve God, tall or short, loud or quiet, they all have a place and a purpose in the grand project of God's world. As Chief Rabbi Mirvis writes about the Arava's (Willow's) interaction with the other minim: "Like people", he writes, "it is through togetherness that we are stronger, that we shine, and that our best comes forth."

The Sukkah

On Sukkot we are celebrating the fact that the Jews travelled together as one in the desert for forty years, under the protective clouds of glory. In Vayikra 23:42 we read: "In sukkot you shall dwell for seven days; all citizens of Israel shall dwell in sukkot." In this verse, the word sukkot, the plural of sukkah, is spelled without the letter vav. This means that the word can also be read as sukkat, "the sukkah [of]," and the verse can then be understood as saying that "all citizens of Israel shall dwell in the sukkah." Explains the Talmud: The Torah wishes to imply that the entire nation of Israel may, and ought to, dwell in a single sukkah! Not that this is physically possible, but the idea is there all the same; that one of the intentions a person should have while in the sukkah is that we are part of the entire great nation of Israel.

Joy in Giving

The Torah compels us to join up with "you, your son, your daughter, your servant, your maid, the Levite, the stranger, the orphan and the widow in your communities" (Devarim 16:14). Rejoicing in the sukkah is a great opportunity for charity, and much like we do at the Pesach seder, we are also encouraged to spend the chag together with family and

Sukkot Day 1

Yehuda and Evie Davidson, Edgware Tribe

friends from the community, inviting them into our sukkahs and providing them with food and drink.

Furthermore, eating alone out of choice is a selfish act and causes us to forget that eating together indiscriminately as a community, will help us to overcome any meaningless differences, such as wealth, status and religious observance.

Mental health and wellbeing

Sukkot is an exercise in mental rejuvenation. The sukkah represents the clouds of glory, which took care of everything for us in the desert. The Midrash tells us that not only did they act like today's Iron dome from enemies' arrows, but they even miraculously drove away snakes and scorpions, and kept our clothes fresh on our bodies. Similarly, on Sukkot we spend a week in a hut, shaded from the hot sun (or wet rain!) and we spend a week relaxing from our busy lives, taking time to contemplate and think a little deeper about our life in general and the direction it is headed.

Source:

Rambam (Maimonides) (The laws of Yom Tov 6:18)

When a person eats and drinks [as part of celebrating a holiday], they are obligated to feed "the stranger, the orphan, and the widow" (Devarim 16:11). But someone who locks the doors of their house, eating and drinking with their children and spouse [alone], and doesn't provide food or drink to the poor and depressed, is not participating in the joy of [God's] commandments but rather the joy of the stomach.

Activities:

Make a circle or form an order for the group. Each person should say a letter but no one can finish a word. Try and keep the words related to Sukkot.

Guess who - Split room in half, appoint two players from each group to guess. Send them out and choose one from each group. When they come back in, they must alternate asking questions to figure out who it is. The idea behind it is to recognize each other's qualities and individuality.

Ideas for discussion:

Why might it be that you can fulfil the mitzvah of sitting in a sukkah with any sukkah, but for the Arba Minim (four species), they must specifically belong to you? - What's the difference in the observance between these two mitzvot that makes it this way?

If the sukkah is meant to be a shady relaxing booth, wouldn't it make more sense to celebrate Sukkot in the summer months, when the sukkah would give us a peaceful refuge from the hot weather?

Sukkot Day 1

Yehuda and Evie Davidson, Edgware Tribe

What specific kind of 'good' activities could you do that shows that you care about the whole community?

Wrap-up:

Sukkot is a festival where 'achdut' (unity) is of paramount importance.

The mitzvot we do throughout sukkot are tailored to encourage us to come together. The Arba Minim which we tie together represent the four types of Jews, the sukkah is a tool for increasing hospitality, and simcha (joy) is something that can only be experienced with others.

Therefore, it is important to have all this in mind during the Sukkot celebrations, for the sake of the local and larger community as a whole.



Topic Title:

Mental Well-being: Taking the good and the bad

Summary:

Sukkot is a time of immense joy and happiness, as described by its name Zman Simachtanu (the time of our gladness). As we come out of the intense period of Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, we use Sukkot as a time to show our thanks and gratitude to Hashem. Unfortunately, unrestrained joy does not bring out the best in people. To help us retain our perspectives during the season of happiness, we read the book of Kohelet, written by King Solomon, the son of King David.

Kohelet struggles with the meaning of life in light of death. At a time of immense joy, we read the sobering Kohelet to give us perspective on life. Humans are meant to feel joy and pain, to feel happy and sad, and question the point of our endeavours. We are not supposed to put on a brave face of joy at all times, rather we are meant to question our actions and reflect. Kohelet hardly dampens the festivities on Sukkot; rather it deepens our enjoyment as it helps us focus on what our goals in life should be with clear knowledge.

Good mental well-being is critical to leading a happy life. Whilst many put on a brave face, we may be suffering with fundamental questions we are afraid to ask. Kohelet poignantly tells us that we should be asking these key questions, and speaking about our struggles in life. King Solomon wrote it in his later years and was a man who had everything, thus showing that mental well-being affects everyone in life.

Source:

Kohelet, Chapter 1, Verse 2:

הַבֵּל הַבְּלִים אָמַר קֹהֵלֵת הַבֵּל הַבְּלִים הַכֹּל הַבֵּל

“Utter futility! — said Kohelet— utter futility! All is futile!” - We find throughout Kohelet that King Solomon says the words ‘that too is futility.’ The Chofetz Chaim asks that surely it has been stated at the beginning that ‘all is futile’ so what do these words come to add? He answers that it is like a doctor who visits a patient and tells them to drink and drink and keep taking the medicine until they are healed. So too with the illness of the soul, one gets used to the futility in this world, therefore they have to learn and learn the words of Hashem until these matters have fully penetrated them and their soul is cured. We can say that everything is futile in life and not take the time to focus on our mental health. However, the Book of Kohelet says differently, that we must do the right thing in order to stay mentally and physically healthy.

Sukkot Day 2

Leora and Harry Salter, Kinloss Tribe

Activities:

- Choose one participant and blindfold them. Blindfolded, they need to try and catch the other participants in the room. This can be repeated several times and timed as well. Then un-blindfold them and get them to catch the other participants. Ask them what was easier to do. The goal is to get them to see that with an impediment we don't function to the best of our ability. This is the same with our mental health, if we don't look after it then we will not function to the best of our ability.
- Have a range of different objects (ie: ball, fruit, painting, shoe) and get two people to debate the positive and negatives of each object. (For example: positive of a shoe - gives you comfort on your foot and helps you to walk. Negative of a shoe - some shoe factories have bad carbon footprint and some are made out of non-recyclables which can harm the environment.) This gets them to see that everything has two sides and people can view things differently. It's not a one size fits all and people need to find the objects that can enhance their life.
- Looking in the mirror - Give everyone a small mirror. Ask them to look at it for a minute and then ask them if other people actually see the true person looking into the mirror? Do we actually see everything you stand for and believe in or do we just see a bit of each person? What more can we do to show people our true selves? If time allows, people can share a funny story about themselves.

Ideas for discussion:

- Does how you appear at school differ from how you really feel?
- How can we make ourselves feel better mentally?
- Is mental health just as important as physical health?
- Does Judaism speak enough about mental health?
- To what extent do you feel your public self-image matches your personal image?

Wrap-up:

- The book of Kohelet allows us to think about our mental health and see that we should have a period of reflection in our lives.
- We don't always have to be happy and put on a brave face. We should consider the big questions in life and take time to self-reflect.



Topic Title:

A Temporary Existence: “This world is like a corridor to the future world”

Summary:

The commentators say that our dwelling in a Sukkah is a temporary dwelling, symbolic of our stay in Galut (exile). This is alluded to in the laws of a Sukkah. For example, a plant which is attached to the ground is not allowed to make a covering of the Sukkah. Similarly, the Sukkah must be built a new each year for the purpose of the mitzvah.

As the Jewish people are in Galut (exile), we have been kicked out from place to place, making anew of our surroundings. Therefore, what we thought was a permanent dwelling was actually a temporary one. However, this doesn't mean that the Sukkah is unholy. The sechach which covers the Sukkah represents the Clouds of Glory, showing that even in a time of temporary dwelling, Hashem is there with us and for us. Moreover, it reminds us of the purpose of the Sukkah, and subsequently our roles in this life, to put in the effort to make the temporary holy and to allow Hashem into our lives.

We have a responsibility for our future generations to enable them to use this world as a hallway to the future world by preserving it to the best of our ability. We must recognise that this world has the presence of God and we should protect the world and its environment to reach our full potential in the world to come.

Source:

“Pirkei Avot, Chapter 4, Mishnah 16: Rabbi Jacob used to say: This world is like a corridor to the future world. Prepare yourself in the corridor that you may enter into the banquet hall.” A person must perform good deeds in this world to ensure themselves a place in the world to come. A person must ensure the world is kept in the best possible way in order to ensure others a place in the world to come. The responsibility we all have to protect the environment for future generations is huge.

A question arises: Why is it that Chazal instituted the saying of Mah Nishtana on Pesach and not on Sukkot, where we physically change our way of living? An answer is offered that for a child to see their parent at the Seder, dwelling in the permanence of their home is a cause to ask Mah Nishtana. However, Sukkot is representative of the fact that the Jew in Galut goes from one place to another, therefore there is no need to ask Mah Nishtana.

Activities:

- Hot Air Balloon Debate – People are in a hot air balloon, and they have to fight on an issue (ie: climate change, wildlife conservation, air pollution, deforestation, household waste) as to why they and their issue need to stay on the hot air balloon. They have 1 minute to say why their issue is more important than the others. The others in the room vote on whose issue is the most important.

Sukkot Bonus

Leora and Harry Salter, Kinloss Tribe

- Auction – See attached auction sheet. Each person is given 1 million Shekel and they need to create their perfect state. This can lead into a discussion about what are people's priorities in this world and what does a perfect state/world consist of: holy places, non-holy places or a hybrid?
- Get off my land with a twist – Each player has a chair and the participants spread out across the room/hall/outside area. Pick two people who don't have a chair, one person is the chaser, and one person is the runner. The runner must get to someone else's land before getting caught and swapping with someone for their land. If they get caught before getting to someone's land, then they swap roles. The twist comes that whilst this is happening each person who is also on their land has a mini maze (handheld party thing) which they need to complete. When one person completes it before the runner gets to someone's land, the runner and the chaser swap roles.

Ideas for discussion:

- How can we preserve this world to ensure future generations benefit from it in the correct manner?
- What does this world being a 'corridor for the future world' mean to you as a concept?
- Should we even care about the environment for future generations when we can prosper from it in our life time?
- How can we have increased belief and thanks in Hashem for everything he gives us in this world?
- Does preservation of the environment feature as a Jewish concept and idea?

Wrap-up:

- This world, the corridor, is to be used for holy things to enable us to reach the future world, the banquet hall, in our best shape. We can only do this by preserving the current world for future generations to enable them to have equal opportunity to serve Hashem.
- A room without a roof is incomplete. A Sukkah without the sechach is incomplete. The world without Hashem's presence is incomplete. We are the ones who can enable this to happen and ensure that the world is in the best shape for us and future generations.

Auction Sheet

Leora and Harry Salter, Kinloss Tribe

 ITEM	FACE VALUE	BUY
The Kotel	500,000 Shekel	
Hospital	300,000 Shekel	
Yeshiva/Seminary	200,000 Shekel	
Library	100,000 Shekel	
Airport	300,000 Shekel	
Shopping Centre	250,000 Shekel	
Hotel	150,000 Shekel	
The Knesset	300,000 Shekel	
Museum	50,000 Shekel	
The Supreme Court	150,000 Shekel	
Military Base	250,000 Shekel	
University	250,000 Shekel	
School	250,000 Shekel	
Petrol Station	50,000 Shekel	
Office Block	100,000 Shekel	
Residential Area	350,000 Shekel	
Central Bus Station	200,000 Shekel	
Theme Park	100,000 Shekel	
Ben Yehuda Street	150,000 Shekel	
Publishing House	50,000 Shekel	



Topic Title:

National Pride

Summary:

In contrast to Sukkot, Shemini Atzeret is a holiday only for the Jewish people rather than also being connected to the nations of the world.

This topic connects the theme of national pride of Shemini Atzeret to the contemporary discussion of religious/ethno-nationalism.

How do we strike the balance between 'national pride' and 'tolerance/pluralism'?

Source:

(a) שְׁבַעַת יָמִים תִּקְרְבוּ אֶשֶׁה לַיהוָה בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁמִינִי מִקְרֵא־קֹדֶשׁ יִהְיֶה לָכֶם וְהִקְרַבְתֶּם אֶשֶׁה לַיהוָה עֶצְרַת הוּא כָּל־מְלֹאכֶת עַבְדָּה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ:

Seven days you shall bring offerings by fire to the LORD. On the eighth day you shall observe a sacred occasion and bring an offering by fire to the LORD; it is a solemn gathering: you shall not work at your occupations.

Vayikra 26:36

(b) The word is derived from the root **עצר** "to hold back" and suggests I keep you back with Me one day more. It is similar to the case of a king who invited his children to a banquet for a certain number of days. When the time arrived for them to take their departure he said, "Children, I beg of you, stay one day more with me; it is so hard for me to part with you!"

Rashi ibd.

(The source essentially shows how Hashem showed preferential love to the Jewish people by giving them one more day. Calls into question the relationship between Jewish nation vs the world)

Activities:

- Just a Minute – Talk on a subject with no hesitation, deviation or repetition. For example, Israel, Jewish People, Zionism, Anti-Semitism. Throw in some random ones to make it fun.
- Get off my Land – Large room is needed. Spread chairs out. Everyone sits apart from two people. Player A is the chaser, Player B must avoid being caught by running up to a seated player and shouting "get off my land". Seated player must get up (player B takes their seat) and be chased until he/she too orders another player of their seat. When a player is caught, the player running away now has to catch. A tenuous link to how other nations may feel when we exert too much national pride.

Shemini Atzeret

Avishai Marcus, Barnet Tribe

- Spectrum Debate – The whole room is a spectrum. Read out statements and tell the children to go to the one side of the room if they agree, the other if they disagree. They can go anywhere along the spectrum depending on the extent to which they agree with the statement. Statements can include Jewish people are intrinsically better than people who are not Jewish. The Jewish nation has a higher purpose than other nations of the world. Shul should be a place where all people can come to pray. Call on people to explain why they are standing where they are standing.

Ideas for discussion:

Do Jewish people have a more important role in this world than people who are not Jewish?

Should we teach Torah to people who are not Jewish?

Should people who are not Jewish be able to fight in the Israeli army?

These discussions can be conducted via the spectrum debate, a 'court-room' style debate where there are two sides which need to be argued.

Wrap-up:

- We need to be able to express our pride of being Jewish and being part of a Jewish nation whilst showing tolerance to all other people and nations. These ideas are not mutually exclusive.
- Set the challenge: What can you do to be more tolerant of other people? How can you share Judaism with those who are not part of the Jewish nation?

A decorative border of golden honey drips arching over a central pink rectangular frame.

SHANA TOVA FROM TRIBE



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