



tribe

igniting your shabbat services

spark²



נֶסֶחַ

Nasso

Hello and welcome to Spark!

Spark is aimed at facilitating the smooth running of Toddlers' Services, Children's Services and Youth Services across United Synagogue communities.

Firstly, thank you for offering to run a Children's Service in your local shul. The US is very proud of the numerous Children's services that are run every week across the UK. We would not be able to do this without you!

Spark has been designed in order to help you run your Children's Services. Obviously, every Children's Service is different, in terms of how many children there are; what their age range is; its length; and how knowledgeable the children are likely to be of this week's parasha.

Ideally, where possible, a Children's Service should consist of some time used to discuss the weekly parasha and some time devoted to davening. Spark gives you an overview of the weekly parasha, a song, activity, discussion or Dvar Torah linked to the parasha or any important event that week. It is separated into sections for different age groups but often you will find that an activity in one section will be suitable for children in another section. So, please take the time to read through it all - I know you are busy people but it will help you and ultimately the children. Please also try to read Spark during the week as sometimes some props will be needed. It will give you a chance to find them.

It is important to note that Spark should help you to run Children's Services, but it does not completely run it for you. It is not designed to give to one of the children to read out to the group for them to run themselves. You are running the Children's Service, and Spark is here to help you do it.

I hope that you and the children in your service will benefit from Spark2. As always your feedback would be welcomed.

Shabbat Shalom,

Sharon Radley

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Parasha Summary...

- In this weeks parasha we continue to read about the responsibilities of the Leviim. The Gershonites would work, and carry the curtains of the portable Sanctuary. The family of Merari were in charge of the planks, bars, pillars and sockets. Both groups were counted.
- The Torah repeats a mitzvah about stolen objects.
- The Torah talks about the importance of honesty in a relationship.
- We learn about the Nazir who takes an oath to abstain from wine, vinegar, grape products and does not cut his hair. He does this in order to concentrate on Torah thoughts.
- We are given the words of the prayer that the Kohanim use to bless the Jewish people.
- The parasha concludes with the Nesi''im /princes bringing gifts and korbanot for the inauguration of the Mishkan.



The parasha this week (Chap 5 V 6-8) tells us about how Hashem wants us to be honest and avoid stealing of any sort.

Activity

Play a game such as 'Happy families' or 'Go fish'. You may need to split the children into groups for this.

Start off by playing the game correctly but after a while challenge every player to play a round without telling the truth.

See what happens. The children will hopefully pretty quickly start complaining that things aren't fair!

They will learn that there is no winner when we lie.



Discuss

- What is a lie?
- Give me an example of a lie/truth.
- How do you feel when someone lies to you?
- What happened in the game when people started lying?
- Was the game better when everyone told the truth? (Yes! They all had fun and the game came to a proper conclusion with a winner.)

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Activity 2

Chose a child to be 'it'. The other children should sit in a circle. The person who is 'it' goes out of the room and a button/ring or other small object is passed from person to person until an amount of time has passed. When you decided time is up the person who is out of the room should be brought back in and the rest of the group says 'Button, button who has the button?' while pretending to hide the button in their hands. The person who is 'it' then has to guess who they think has the button. The person who has the button should now become 'it'.

While this game seems like simple fun there is a desire for some children to lie when they hold the button and the person who is 'it' guesses their name. It feels like they are getting caught even though the game is just for fun.

Link these two games to a discussion on telling the truth. (See below)

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Activity three

To illustrate the point that a lie is like a spiders web and just leads the person who has told the lie into telling more and more lies in order to cover up the first lie.

When no one is looking or before your service take a sensible child aside and tell them you will be playing a game later in your service in which you will need their help. You will ask them a question such as where they went on holiday last year and they should answer with a lie. You will continue to ask them questions and they should continue to answer with further lies.

When it is time to play the game pretend to randomly pick a child but actually choose the child with whom you had the discussion above. Stand the child in the middle of the circle and say that you are going to ask them a few questions. Ask the questions and each time an answer is given wrap some wool or string around the child. Continue asking the questions and wrapping more and more wool around the child. Please make sure it is not tight and not near their face.

When it is obvious that the child had a few rounds of string wrapped around their body ask the rest of the children what they think you were doing and if they thought the answers were true. Ask the wrapped up child if the answers were true and tell them to admit to the group that they were not.

Explain that you set the whole activity up as you wanted to show the children what happens when a lie is said. In order to continue making sure the lie is believed more and more lies have to be said. It entangles the liar up and is like being in a spiders web/wrapped in string and it becomes more and more difficult to extricate oneself from the situation.

(At the end help the 'wrapped up' child to become untangled carefully.)

Activity and discussion

If you have time before Shabbat copy in Hebrew and English the pessukim of the parasha that deal with the presents that the 'Nesiy'im/Princes' bought to the Mishkan. You will find them in Nasso, Chapter 7 Verses 11 to 83. If you have enough chumashim in shul that have Hebrew and English you can use these instead. You will need one copy per every two or three participants depending on how many are in your group. You will need twelve groups if possible. It is fine if you do not have enough participants to make twelve groups - give each participant copy or a chumash each.

Explain that you have given out the part of the parasha that deals with the presents that the Nesiy'im of each tribe/shevet bought to the Mishkan when it was inaugurated. Ask each participant/group to find the gifts of one of the shevatim (give out the a name of a shevet to each group). Give the participants a few minutes in their groups to find this out.

Ask one member of each group to stand up and say the name of their shevet and read out the gift of their shevet.

After a while it will probably become a bit humorous as all the gifts were identical. Continue until each shevet has been read aloud.

- Ask the participants what they noticed. (All the gifts were the same.)
- What is strange about this? (We know that the Torah does not waste one word, not even one letter! We can sometimes learn a legal principle from just one extra letter. Here however the Torah apparently, needlessly goes ahead repeating the same items twelve times. Couldn't the Torah have said the gifts of one shevet and then said that all the other 11 shevatim brought the same gifts. Why the repetition?)
- There is a beautiful answer to this from Rabbi Breur. He says that the Torah does not repeat the description of the offerings 12 times in order to teach us that each Prince brought exactly the same as every other Prince. On the contrary, the Torah is telling us just the opposite - they were 12 different offerings. They were 12 different offerings because what a person gives is not important, how a person gives is important.

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One can ask a person for a donation of £100.00 for tzedakah. For that person the £100.00 is a major contribution. On the other hand, one can ask another person for that same £100.00 and for him that sum is a mere pittance. We see that two people, who give the exact same amount, may, in truth, actually perform two different types of giving.

This is what the Torah is telling us. The fact that the Torah has to repeat 12 times what the Princes gave, means that these 12 gifts were not exactly alike. Each Prince put his own special stamp on his gift, making it unique and special. We all have something that makes us unique. It is up to us to find out what it is and to use it to make a difference.

- Ask the participants what is unique and special about them? If they don't want to answer they can think about it. How can they use their special gifts, talents, skills and abilities?



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We hope you find our guide to this week's Parsha useful.

I would be grateful for any feedback.

Please remind the children of the exciting Tribe programmes in your shul and also to look on the US website for current Tribe central events.

Shabbat Shalom

Sharon Radley

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