

- 1) How do you think Avraham had the strength to agree to sacrifice Yitzchak – the child who he had been waiting for, for so many years?
- 2) How would Rosh HaShannah be different, had there not been a ram stuck in the bushes?
- 3) How does the word, child, link to the Parasha?

Torah Reading for Day 2

Summary

Hashem (G-d) commanded Avraham (Abraham) to sacrifice his son, Yitzchak (Isaac) on Har (Mt) Moriah in Yerushalayim (Jerusalem). He took Yishmael (Ishmael), who was his son from his second wife, Hagar, along with him and he also took his trusted servant, Eliezer. When they reached the base of the mountain, Avraham asked Yishmael and Eliezer to wait and he carried on with Yitzchak. Yitzchak asked where the animal was for the sacrifice and Avraham told Yitzchak that he was the sacrifice. Yitzchak asked for his hands and feet to be tied (bound together) so that he doesn't squirm and ruin the sacrifice. Yitzchak was bound and placed on the altar. As Avraham was about to slaughter his son, a voice of a malach (angel) from heaven called to stop him, saying that it was a test and Avraham had passed it. Avraham still wanted to give a gift to Hashem and spotted a ram, whose horns were caught in the bushes. Avraham offered the ram in Yitzchak's place.

Discovery

Did you know that one of the reasons we blow the shofar on Rosh HaShannah is because Avraham passed the test of listening to Hashem and the horn of the ram reminds us of the good deed of Avraham?

Did you know that a this story is known as Akedat Yitzchak - the *binding* of Isaac, not the *sacrificing* of Yitzchak?

Did you know that Har HaMoriya is also the place where Ya'akov had his dream with the ladder starting on Earth and reaching the heavens and was also the spot where the Beit HaMikdash was built?

Rosh HaShannah Information (this box also appears in yesterday's Children's service guide)

Rosh HaShannah means "Head of the Year" and lasts for two days. It is the anniversary of the day when Hashem created Adam and Chava (Eve).

On Rosh HaShannah Hashem decides what blessings will come our way throughout the coming year.

A very important mitzvah is the blowing of the shofar (the ram's horn). We do this to Coronate Hashem as King and to do teshuva (repentance) We also remember the story of the Binding of Yitzchak in which a ram took his place as an offering to G-d. We hope that Avraham's good deed will put us in good stead. We listen to one hundred shofar blasts on Rosh HaShannah.

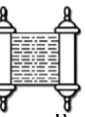
On Rosh Hashanah we have some customs; 1) We eat a piece of apple dipped in honey, symbolising a sweet new year 2) we eat foods that have special significance, such as, a pomegranate has lots of seeds and we want to fill our year with lots of mitzvot. 3) we wish each other a happy new year. 4) Tashlich, a special prayer said near the sea, a river, a pond, etc.), where we think about any wrong things we have done during the year and we symbolically throw away the desire to do them again.

Aseret Y'mei Teshuva

The ten days from Rosh Hashanah to Yom Kippur are known as the Aseret Y'mei Teshuvah – the Ten Days of Repentance but a better translation is the Ten Days of Returning (to Hashem).

The Rabbis tell us that Hashem is especially close to us at this time and "the gates of heaven are open, and I will listen to your prayers." It's a custom for us to give tzedaka (charity) and perform many mitzvot (good deeds / biblical commandments) during these days.

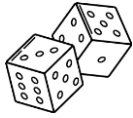
The coming year is decided on Rosh Hashanah but not sealed until Yom Kippur so we use this time to really improve ourselves, so we are deserving of a good year.



Who has done something special for you this week and what did they do? (If they are present, go up to them and say thank you!)

Games

1) Quiz Time



Quiz the children on the Parasha summary on sheet 1. In order to signify that they know an answer, the children have to do a karate chop noise (hi ya). The first person to say hi ya each time gets to answer first.

2) Limbo

Resources: bring a skipping rope to shul before Yom Tov starts

Link: Yitzchak asked for his hands and feet to be tied with a rope.

Two people hold the ends of the rope, up high and everyone has to walk under it. They lower it slightly and everyone walks underneath again. If they touch the rope as they pass from one side to the next, they are out. Each round, the rope gets lower.

3) Blast or Bleet

All children stand in a circle. If the children's service leader calls out, "Blast," all the children make the shofar sound and jump once into the middle. If they call out, "bleet," they jump out of the circle and bleet like a ram. If they are already in the middle and the leader calls out blast, the children must stay still. Anyone who jumps inwards or outwards is out of the game. This is also true for when they're out of the circle and the leader calls out bleet.

Story (One of the children can read this out loud – encourage them to use expression.)



Georgia was so excited. She had just found out that she was going to be in Manchester for Rosh HaShannah and her favourite cousins lived there. She wasn't staying in their house but her family would be renting a flat nearby. They'd buy all the kosher food they needed once they got there and then start cooking, so everything would be ready. She also liked the shul there and the children's service was always fun.

Georgia's friend from school, Samantha, was also going to be there because she had grandparents in Manchester and spent every chag (festival) with them. Georgia asked her mum if they could invite Samantha for lunch on the second day of Rosh HaShannah and mum said, "Of course!" Luckily, Samantha's mum also agreed and they both squealed with excitement.

Each time they chatted, they spoke about how excited they were for Manchester and they made a countdown chart. They were considerate of their other classmates and didn't brag but if anyone asked them what they were doing for Rosh HaShannah, they both said they were going to Manchester, just they didn't mention that they were going to be spending time together as that could come across as a little cliquy and they didn't want to upset anyone.

The next day a different classmate, Shirley, came into school and slowly walked up to Georgia. "Guess what?" she said, in a very calm tone! "I'm also going to Manchester for Rosh HaShannah. "That's lovely!" smiled Georgia. Where are you staying? Perhaps we'll bump into each other at shul or in the street?" Shirley didn't know where they were staying but said she'd find out and let Georgia know.

There was nothing wrong with Shirley's personality – she wasn't rude, mean, bossy, defiant, untrustworthy or greedy, she was just ... a little bland. For example, Georgia and Samantha were sooo excited about Manchester and Shirley was calm. Whenever the whole class got a reward, Shirley would, of course, smile a little but everyone else would be cheering and almost dancing with excitement. Sometimes this made Georgia feel bad for being excited about things in life. Georgia decided that she wasn't going to invite Shirley for lunch – not because there was anything so wrong with her, just that she was too bland for her and Samantha and they were both pumped.

All week, Georgia had a niggling feeling that she was doing something wrong – she was excluding Shirley but she calmed her mind by telling herself that she didn't have to hang out with her if she didn't want to and she won't be feeling excluded as she doesn't know that Samantha had been invited. Each day, the feeling got worse, until Wednesday, and it was twenty minutes before Rosh HaShannah started. She said to her mum, "I just can't do it – I can't leave her out!" Mum agreed and gave her phone to Georgia so she could call Shirley's mum and ask if Shirley would like to join them for lunch. Shirley softly said, "yes please, I'd love to!" and they swapped timings and details. Georgia suddenly felt like a weight had been lifted from her shoulders – she knew she'd done the right thing.

1) What can we learn from this story and how does it connect to the Parasha?

2) Was Georgia right to invite Shirley in the end?

3) Have you every had a test like this and done the right thing? (please don't use names when you share your answer)