



Dear Youth Directors, Youth chairs, and Youth Leaders,

NCYI is excited to continue our very successful Parsha Nation Guides. I hope you're enjoying and learning from Parsha Nation as much as we are. Putting together Parsha Nation every week is indeed no easy task. It takes a lot of time and effort to ensure that each section, as well as each age group, receives the attention and dedication it deserves.

We inspire and mold future leaders. The youth leaders of Young Israel have the distinct honor and privilege to teach and develop the youth of Young Israel. Children today are constantly looking for role models and inspirations to latch on to and learn from. Whether it is actual sit down learning sessions, exciting Parsha trivia games, or even just walking down the hall to the Kiddush room, our youth look to us and watch our every move.

It's not always about the things we say, it's about the things we do. Our children hear and see everything we do whether we realize it or not. This year we are taking our Youth Services to new heights as we introduce our Leadership Training Shabbaton. This engaging, interactive shabbaton led by our Youth Services Coordinator, Sammy, will give youth leader's hands on experience and practical solutions to effectively guide your youth department.

Informal education is key. What the summer shows us as educators is that informal education can deliver better results and help increase our youth's connection to Hashem. More and more shuls are revamping their youth program to give their children a better connection to shul and to Hashem. The NCYI is here to help you reconnect with your youth departments and bring more participation.

Thank you for being a light to future generations. You are doing incredible work that should not be taken lightly. You should be proud to call yourself a Young Israel Youth Leader as you have the unique opportunity to make a real difference in so many young people's lives. Keep up the amazing work.

We are looking forward to hearing great things from everyone.

Our doors are always open.

National Council of Young Israel Department of Synagogue Services

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Program Guide Breakdown

Theme- Each year our curriculum will focus on a theme. By centering the entire year around one overarching theme, our youth group participants will understand different characteristics and concepts that will help them achieve this lofty goal. This year's theme is Manhigut (leadership). Our goal is for our children to view themselves as leaders and to inspire them to play a leadership role every day.

Parsha Review- Each week group leaders will have the opportunity to roundup the parsha in two or three paragraphs. By giving over the parsha in a short and simple way, group participants will be able to grasp the parsha as a whole and to get them to think globally and conceptually.

Parsha Questions- No Shabbat morning group is complete without a list of parsha questions. These questions allow group participants the opportunity to win fun prizes while increasing their Torah knowledge. Questions vary from basic understanding of story line to challenging source-based material. The answers are provided as well.

Tefillah Treasure- Many youth directors have asked for help when it comes to teaching tefillah to children. This is a problem that not only shuls are dealing with. Schools, camps, and youth organizations are having trouble developing creative ideas to help children understand tefillah. Over the course of the year, this section will highlight one aspect of davening by providing both the Hebrew and English text, and one explanatory idea. The older the age group, the more we delve into the idea. This section is designed to help group participants follow the flow of tefillah while understanding what they are saying.

Group Activity- Now the fun begins! We start off with a GOAL. Each game has a purpose. The youth leaders should familiarize themselves with the goal before implementing the game.

Discussion Portion- After the game is over and the participants are settled down, the youth leaders should facilitate a discussion. The guidelines for this discussion are broken down into easy to use instructions. Youth leaders should review the discussion topics and goals before the start of morning groups.

Story- Each week we will include a story that addresses a modern day concern with lesson taken from that week's parsha.

Jewish Leader of the Week- In keeping with our theme of Manhigut, every week a different Jewish Leader from modern Jewish history will be highlighted. This will allow group participants to expand their knowledge of history and to learn how they can be a Jewish leader in today's society.

Teen Minyan Packet- This packet is filled with stories, riddles, points to ponder, and more.

Leader Tip- Each section has some great tips for leaders and how they should conduct that section.



PARSHA NATION



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Shabbat Morning Groups Lesson Plan

Time Duration	Activity	Notes
5 min	Registration	Welcome parents and children in to the group room.
10-35 min	Davening	Depending on your group size and level.
5 min	Introduction to Yearly Theme (Manhigut)	Refer to Handout
5 min	Parsha Review	Prep participants for parsha questions.
10 min	Parsha Questions	Prizes and awards should also be given out if participants answer correctly
2 min	Understanding the Goal	Leaders should start prepping for Shabbat activity
30 min	Activities	Your choice of two games to play
10 min	Follow Up Discussion	Refer to materials
10 min	Parsha Song	This is for younger groups only.
20 min	Free Game Play	Groups can break for free game play or continue their own programing.
5 min	Story	Assemble in a circle and have participants read sections of the story out loud.
5-10 min	Discussion	Refer to handout
4 min	Jewish Leader of the Week	Refer to handout
4 min	Tefillah Treasures	Refer to Handout
5 min	Parent Pick up/Dismissal	Parents pick up their children.
Total Time:	2 hours & 40 min of programing!	



LECH LECHA REVIEW

Avram was the first person to realize that Hashem is the greatest of beings. One day Hashem tells him to leave his city and his father's home and to go to the land which Hashem will show him. So Avram and his wife Sarai together with his nephew Lot leave Charan and travel to the Land of Canaan where Hashem reveals Himself to him and tells him that He will give this land to Avram's children. Avram builds a mizbeach there. Avram and Sarai love having guests. Their tent is open from all four sides so that people could come in from whichever direction they're traveling. Avram and Sarai feed and take care of all their guests and teach them about Hashem.

A short while later a famine comes onto the Land of Canaan so Avram and Sarai have to go to Egypt to get food. When they get there, they say that they are brother and sister so that the officers of Paroh don't kill Avram in order to give Sarai to Paroh since she is so beautiful. Sarai turns out to be taken prisoner of the palace, but overnight Hashem sends a plague to Paroh, who frees Sarai. He also gives many gifts of animals, gold, and silver to Avram and Sarai and sends them away.

Back in Canaan, Lot goes to live in the city of Sodom. He is captured during a local war and Avram goes to save him with the help of a small army and by miracle beats the bigger army of four kings. Hashem makes a brit (covenant) with Avram and tells him that his children will suffer in galut (exile) but will then be freed and brought to Israel which will be theirs forever.

Sarai encourages Avram to marry her maid Hagar, who was a converted Egyptian princess to give Avram the chance to have a child since Sarai could not. Hagar becomes pregnant and has a child called Yishmael. Hagar is disrespectful to Sarai and runs away, but then comes back after an angel convinces her to.

Finally, Hashem promises Avram that he will have as many children as the stars in the sky and the dust of the earth. Hashem makes a brit with Avram and commands him to give himself a brit milah as a sign of the covenant. From then on, all Jewish boys must get a brit milah at 8 days old. Hashem changes Avram's name to Avraham and Sarai's to Sarah and tells Avraham that they will have a child who they should name Yitzchak and that from Yitzchak will come the nation that Hashem promised the Land to. At this time, Avraham is 99 years old and Sarah is 89.

LEADER TIP: In honor of the special brit Hashem made with Avraham, make a special group handshake to resemble the brit!

PARSHA QUESTIONS

Questions

1. Where did Hashem tell Avram to go? From did he leave from?
2. Who went with Avram?
3. Why did Avram have to leave Canaan? Where did they go because of that?
4. Where did Lot live?
5. Who was Avram's second wife?
6. What was Hagar's son's name?
7. What does Hashem compare Avram's many future children to?
8. What promise does Hashem make with Avram?
9. What does Hashem tell Avram to do to remind himself about the covenant?
10. What does Hashem change Avram and Sarai's names to?

Answers

1. Avram went from Charan to Canaan
2. His wife Sarai and his nephew Lot
3. Because there was a famine. They went to Mitzrayim
4. Sodom
5. Hagar
6. Yishmael
7. To the stars of the sky and the dust of the earth
8. That the land of Israel will belong to Avram and his descendants forever
9. Give himself a brit milah
10. Avraham and Sarah

LEADER TIP: If kids get lots of questions right or do a good job, change their name or add the letter H to their name just like Hashem did to Avram/Avraham

PARSHA ACTIVITY

GOAL: To learn about that greatness of following in Hashem's ways even if we don't know where or what we're doing

ACTIVITY: "Who Was My Guide Anyways?"

The group divides in half. One half is blindfolded. The other half chooses a partner who is blindfolded, but may not talk to them at any time, they can only make noises. They take their blindfolded person on a trust walk by allowing them to hold their arm. Only the blindfolded person may initiate conversation. They can ask yes or no questions to their mystery guide but the guide can only make noises such as a groan or a grunt. At the end of the walk, the guide returns to their group. The blindfolded person then removes the blindfold and the roles are reversed. The guides then choose a blindfolded partner. Before taking off blindfolds, they separate. At the end of the game each person tries to identify their guide and say how they knew!! Play this game a few rounds adding different rules such as two guides leading two people blindfolded, only leading using their voices, feeding them pieces of candy along the way, etc.

DISCUSSION: In this week's Parsha, Hashem tells Avraham to "Get up and GO!" He tells Avraham to leave his land, his father's house, and go somewhere that He will show him." Uh, hello... I don't remember Hashem specifying any particular location, do you? But check out Avraham's unyielding loyalty to Hashem. I've never seen someone pack up so quickly! And it's not just him, it's the entire household that obediently hits the trail. Avraham, his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, and his servant Eliezer, head out the door. Then there are all of Avraham's followers. Let's not forget that Avraham is a very persuasive person. He's got thousands of students who will follow him wherever he goes. With heaven-sent clouds as their guide, they soon arrive in the beautiful land of Canaan. Just getting up and leaving your home is an extremely difficult task to do, nevertheless not even knowing where you're going. But Avraham believes fully in Hashem and does what Hashem wants of him no matter what. Avraham knows that Hashem will protect him and look after him and take him to the place he's supposed to be. In this game we didn't know where to go or which places would be safe, but we trusted our instincts and went believing that wherever we end up it will be where we're supposed to be. We should all get to the point where everything we do in life is with full *emunah* and trust in Hashem, just like Avraham.

LEADER TIP: Play along with the kids. If you see that they're figuring out who their guides are too easily, make it more difficult for them!

PARSHA STORY

Before you read: This week's Parsha teaches us about our Avraham. When Avraham was a child, nearly the entire world was worshipping idols. It was almost impossible not to join them and practice idolatry, but Abraham didn't. He saw that the way they were living was a lie and he wasn't willing to go along with them. He passed on this ability - to stand up for truth - to us, his descendants, forever.

TRUE CONFESSIONS

"We're having a SUB!"

"How do you know?"

"I just walked by the office and heard the principal telling the secretary that Mr. Johnson had to go to some conference and wasn't coming in today."

The word that the class would be having a substitute teacher spread faster than butter on hot toast. Hearing the news, the class's mood went from dark and cloudy to warm and sunny in an instant.

"Great! Now we can play 'sink the sub!' "

They weren't bad kids - but who wouldn't be excited to miss a day of the hardest class in the whole school - Mr. Johnson's geometry. Mr. Johnson was a good but strict and no-nonsense teacher who gave them tons of homework *every* night and made them take a quiz *every* day.

Dave looked up in time to see Tim snatch the neat assignment and lesson plan book Mr. Johnson had left on his desk for the substitute. Tim made the daily lesson disappear as he stuffed it into his own desk where the sub had no chance of finding it. Some of the kids had started a crushed-up-paper ball volleyball game in the back of the classroom and a few more had started a water fight. The noise level was over the top.

Just then a friendly, but sort of scared looking young man walked into the room. He had a big smile on his face, which quickly vanished when he took in the zoo-like scene before his eyes.

"Um, okay class. Time to settle down, okay?" Nobody paid him any attention.

"Okay - class is beginning *now*." he said more strongly, getting the kids to finally look his way. He walked over to the desk, shifted around some papers like he was looking for something, and frowned: "There is supposed to be an assignment book here, but I can't seem to find it..." Dave saw Tim break into a big smile. "Um, until we find it," the substitute went on, do you have homework from yesterday to go over?" he asked, hopefully.

"No, teacher. We *never* have homework on Mondays!" Kenny lied with a sweet smile on his face.

"Yeah, Mr. Johnson lets us kind of have the day off," Tim added. "If you don't have an assignment for us, maybe you can let us too, okay?" Before he could answer, the class had already started going back to their rowdy fun and games.

The substitute looked totally bewildered. Dave felt really sorry for him. How was he ever going to get through the next hour without the assignment book?

Dave noticed that Tim, the kid who had taken the book, had joined the volleyball game. He looked over at Tim's desk. *Should he do it? It would be easier just to go along with everyone...but it was just plain wrong of them to hide the assignment book, to act so rowdy and to lie...* Quickly, Dave slipped his hand into Tim's desk, grabbed the assignment book and slipped it back into its place on the teacher's desk while the sub wasn't looking.

"Excuse me," Dave said to the man, who looked really upset. "Isn't that the assignment book right there on your desk?" he asked, pointing.

"Huh? Why, yes it is." His face brightened. "Hmm. Okay class - everyone will now take their seats, turn in your homework which the book says you *did* have last night. In a few minutes I will pass out the quiz that your teacher has left for you to take today..."

Tim and the rest of the kids, realizing they couldn't fake it and play innocent anymore, grudgingly took their seats and began to work.

"Dave! You jerk! You idiot! I saw what you did," Tim hissed, "WHY did you give him back the assignment book? We finally had one day free from that slave driver, Mister....M-MISTER JOHNSON!?!" Dave saw that the boy's eyes had just grown about three times as big as usual, so he turned around to see Mr. Johnson walking into the classroom! The teacher took a quick glance around the room, saw the kids doing their proper assignment and smiled.

"I forgot something I needed for the conference and had to pop in and get it. Glad to see everything's under control." He gave the class and the substitute a satisfied nod, grabbed some papers he'd forgotten and dashed out.

Boy would that scene have been different if he had found the class the way it had been a few minutes ago. Mr. Johnson would have hit the roof and given us a big punishment... thought Dave, together with just about every kid in the room. He was glad he'd saved the class and the poor substitute from getting into trouble, but he was even gladder he'd stood up for the truth.

Discussion Questions:

Q. How did Dave feel when he saw how the class was acting?

A. He felt like they were doing something wrong and he didn't want to go along.

Q. How do you think it feels to do the right thing when everyone around you is doing something wrong?

A. It might not be easy, but it feels really great after you do it.

LEADER TIP: Have you ever stood up for the truth? What happened? Is it easy or hard?

JEWISH LEADER OF THE WEEK

Sally Becker

(March 29, 1962-)



Sally Becker, an artist, was 33 years old when she decided to go to Bosnia and try to help. She began by delivering medical aid and food to the small Jewish community in Mostar and through them, she was given permission by Croat commanders to evacuate wounded Bosnian children and their families from the attacked city. Following this evacuation she was named 'The Angel of Mostar. Sally Becker saved hundreds of Jews in Bosnia and Kosovo during the 1990's and was chosen as one of the 8 people to carry the Olympic flag during the opening ceremony at the London Olympics in 2012. Becker was the first Jewish woman to ever carry the Olympic flag during the opening ceremonies. "I couldn't believe they had chosen me," she said. "We carried the flag up to Mohammad Ali, and he was holding the flag with us. As they played the Olympic anthem, I said a little silent prayer for the athletes who died in Munich."

LEADER TIP: What is a way you can help give food and aid to people in need? Are there any organizations in your neighborhood that you can volunteer for?

TEFILLAH TREASURES

Yishtabach

In Yishtabach, there are fifteen expressions of praise beginning with the words *shir u'shvacha*, and there are fifteen words in the ending bracha. The number fifteen hints to the numerical value of the Name of Hashem (*yud* and then *hey*) and to the fifteen *Shir HaMaalots* that David wrote in Tehillim. The idea of Yishtabach is that Hashem is “chai olamim”. Hashem brings everything in the universe into being, and keeps it going and looks after His creations every second by second. Hashem is the life-giver of the world since at every moment Hashem is creating and renewing a person by “breathing” life into him. We thank Hashem for creating an amazing world for us and for every little thing He does, whether we always see it or not.

LEADER TIP: Take upon yourselves to take Yishtabach more seriously and try to say it all together during davening. Think of something you can thank Hashem for while saying it.



LECH LECHA REVIEW

Avram was the first person to realize that Hashem is the greatest of beings. One day Hashem tells him to leave his city and his father's home and to go to the land which Hashem will show him. So Avram and his wife Sarai together with his nephew Lot leave Charan and travel to the Land of Canaan where Hashem reveals Himself to him and tells him that He will give this land to Avram's children. Avram builds a mizbeach there. Avram and Sarai love having guests. Their tent is open from all four sides so that people could come in from whichever direction they're traveling. Avram and Sarai feed and take care of all their guests and teach them about Hashem.

A short while later a famine comes onto the Land of Canaan so Avram and Sarai have to go to Egypt to get food. When they get there, they say that they are brother and sister so that the officers of Paroh don't kill Avram in order to give Sarai to Paroh since she is so beautiful. Sarai turns out to be taken prisoner of the palace, but overnight Hashem sends a plague to Paroh, who frees Sarai. He also gives many gifts of animals, gold, and silver to Avram and Sarai and sends them away.

Back in Canaan, Lot goes to live in the city of Sodom. He is captured during a local war and Avram goes to save him with the help of a small army and by miracle beats the bigger army of four kings. Hashem makes a brit (covenant) with Avram and tells him that his children will suffer in galut (exile) but will then be freed and brought to Israel which will be theirs forever.

Sarai encourages Avram to marry her maid Hagar, who was a converted Egyptian princess to give Avram the chance to have a child since Sarai could not. Hagar becomes pregnant and has a child called Yishmael. Hagar is disrespectful to Sarai and runs away, but then comes back after an angel convinces her to.

Finally, Hashem promises Avram that he will have as many children as the stars in the sky and the dust of the earth. Hashem makes a brit with Avram and commands him to give himself a brit milah as a sign of the covenant. From then on, all Jewish boys must get a brit milah at 8 days old. Hashem changes Avram's name to Avraham and Sarai's to Sarah and tells Avraham that they will have a child who they should name Yitzchak and that from Yitzchak will come the nation that Hashem promised the Land to. At this time, Avraham is 99 years old and Sarah is 89.

LEADER TIP: In honor of the special brit Hashem made with Avraham, make a special group handshake to resemble the brit!

PARSHA QUESTIONS

Questions

1. Where did Hashem tell Avram to go?
2. Who came along with Avram?
3. Why did Avram have to leave Canaan, and where did he go?
4. Why did Avram have Sarai say she was his “sister”?
5. How did Avram settle the dispute between his shepherds and Lot’s?
6. What did Hashem promise to Avram?
7. Lot was captured and Avram went to war to save him. How many people did Avram go to war with?
8. What did Hashem bless Avram’s future children with?
9. Who was Avram’s other wife?
10. Why did Hagar run away?
11. Who met Hagar as she ran away, and what did he tell her?
12. What were Avram and Sarai’s names changed to?
13. What did Hashem ask Avraham to do to remind himself of the promise Hashem made him?
14. How old was Avraham at his Bris Milah?
15. Why did Hashem compare the children of Avram specifically to stars?

LEADER TIP: If kids get lots of questions right or do a good job, change their name or add the letter H to their name just like Hashem did to Avram/Avraham

Answers

1. Where Hashem would show him. He did not tell him to what place. Hashem took him to Canaan.
2. His wife Sarai and his nephew Lot. (And also others he had taught about Hashem)
3. There was a famine, which forced them to go down to Mitzrayim
4. He was afraid that if they knew she was his wife, they’d kill him and take her.
5. He had them each choose lands in different parts of Canaan, and they stayed apart.
6. That all the land he sees would be his and his children’s forever.
7. 318
8. That his children would be compared in number to the sand of the earth and the stars of the sky.
9. Hagar
10. Sarai upset her after she was offended by Hagar who mocked her, saying that she was good enough to give Avram children, while Sarai was not.
11. An angel came and told her that her son Yishmael would be a wild hunter and a robber who would found a nation and be hated.
12. Avraham and Sarai
13. Brit Milah
14. 99
15. Stars look small from the earth but in reality, if we could get closer to them, we would see that they are really huge. To the people of this world, we look very small, as the Jews are such a small percentage of the world’s population.

PARSHA ACTIVITY

GOAL: To learn about that greatness of following in Hashem's ways even if we don't know where or what we're doing

ACTIVITY: "Four Corner Roulette"

This is best played in a big open area. Place four markers (shoes work well) in four corners of the area with everyone else standing in the middle. Pick one person to be the "spinning picker". The game starts off by everyone standing in the middle together. The "spinning picker" closes his/her eyes and stretches out his arm pointing out as they spin around counting to ten. What everyone else must do is pick a corner to stand at and must get there before the person in the middle finishes counting. It's not one person per corner; there will be as many people on each corner that choose to be there. Sometimes corners will be evenly split, sometimes, heavily weighted on some more than others, and sometimes no one will stand on a corner, it's whatever each player decides! When the person in the middle finishes counting to ten, they will stop spinning and whichever corner they're pointing to when they stop, everyone standing on that corner is out. They will then start counting, spinning, and pointing again. As soon as they start, everyone else must run to a different corner hoping not to be picked! This keeps going until the spinner gets everyone out. The last player standing not being picked is the winner! They can then become the spinner and start up a new game! It's a ton of fun!

DISCUSSION: In this week's Parsha, Hashem tells Avraham to "Get up and GO!" He tells Avraham to leave his land, his father's house, and go somewhere that He will show him." Uh, hello... I don't remember Hashem specifying any particular location, do you? But check out Avraham's unyielding loyalty to Hashem. I've never seen someone pack up so quickly! And it's not just him, it's the entire household that obediently hits the trail. Avraham, his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, and his servant Eliezer, head out the door. Then there are all of Avraham's followers. Let's not forget that Avraham is a very persuasive person. He's got thousands of students who will follow him wherever he goes. With heaven-sent clouds as their guide, they soon arrive in the beautiful land of Canaan. Just getting up and leaving your home is an extremely difficult task to do, nevertheless not even knowing where you're going. But Avraham believes fully in Hashem and does what Hashem wants of him no matter what. Avraham knows that Hashem will protect him and look after him and take him to the place he's supposed to be. In this game we didn't know where to go or which places would be safe, but we

trusted our instincts and went believing that wherever we end up it will be where we're supposed to be. We should all get to the point where everything we do in life is with full *emunah* and trust in Hashem, just like Avraham.

LEADER TIP: If you see there's too many people, feel free to add more corners! And if you feel there aren't enough people, feel free to take a way corners and play with only two or three.

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Boy would that scene have been different if he had found the class the way it had been a few minutes ago. Mr. Johnson would have hit the roof and given us a big punishment... thought Dave, together with just about every kid in the room. He was glad he'd saved the class and the poor substitute from getting into trouble, but he was even gladder he'd stood up for the truth.

Discussion Questions:

Q. Why do you think Dave did what he did?

A. He saw that something wrong and unjust was happening and he decided to stand up for truth. This is a trait we inherited from Abraham, to stand for truth even if it's unpopular.

Q. What do you think can help a person to do the right thing even when those around him are not?

A. The best thing is to try to stay around people whose values you can respect - but if you find yourself with people who are doing the wrong thing, then it can help to remember that it's more important to live for the truth than to go along with the crowd. Though it might not be easy, nearly always we ultimately feel glad that we did.

LEADER TIP: Have you ever stood up for the truth? What happened? Is it easy or hard?

JEWISH LEADER OF THE WEEK

Sally Becker

(March 29, 1962-)



Sally Becker, an artist, was 33 years old when she decided to go to Bosnia and try to help. She began by delivering medical aid and food to the small Jewish community in Mostar and through them, she was given permission by Croat commanders to evacuate wounded Bosnian children and their families from the attacked city. Following this evacuation she was named 'The Angel of Mostar. Sally Becker saved hundreds of Jews in Bosnia and Kosovo during the 1990's and was chosen as one of the 8 people to carry the Olympic flag during the opening ceremony at the London Olympics in 2012. Becker was the first Jewish woman to ever carry the Olympic flag during the opening ceremonies. "I couldn't believe they had chosen me," she said. "We carried the flag up to Mohammad Ali, and he was holding the flag with us. As they played the Olympic anthem, I said a little silent prayer for the athletes who died in Munich." She managed to secure permission for the delivery of humanitarian aid to all sides of the war and for the evacuation of wounded civilians. She led a group of 50 vehicles and two hundred volunteers from Britain carrying many tons of medical aid and food and evacuated 98 wounded. Two months later all aid organizations were grounded due to snow. She borrowed a helicopter and flew into central Bosnia alone to bring out 55 wounded children and their families.

LEADER TIP: What is a way you can help give food and aid to people in need? Are there any organizations in your neighborhood that you can volunteer for?

TEFILLAH TREASURES

Yishtabach

In Yishtabach, there are fifteen expressions of praise beginning with the words *shir u'shvacha*, and there are fifteen words in the ending bracha. The number fifteen hints to the numerical value of the Name of Hashem (*yud* and then *hey*) and to the fifteen *Shir HaMaalots* that David wrote in Tehillim. The idea of Yishtabach is that Hashem is “chai olamim”. Hashem brings everything in the universe into being, and keeps it going and looks after His creations every second by second. Hashem is the life-giver of the world since at every moment Hashem is creating and renewing a person by “breathing” life into him. We thank Hashem for creating an amazing world for us and for every little things He does, whether we always see it or not. In discussing this basic element of emunah, the Rambam says that the basis and pillar of wisdom is to know that there is a Primary Being Who brought everything into existence. Everything in the world came to be only from Hashem. More than just believing in Hashem as the only Creator, emunah requires us recognizing Hashem’s continuous role in every single thing that happens in the world, from big historical events to seemingly insignificant personal incidents. This is the idea of Hashgachah Pratit— that Hashem watched His creations every moment and that nothing happens by chance, but only because He constantly wills it.

LEADER TIP: Take upon yourselves to take Yishtabach more seriously and try to say it all together during davening.



LECH LECHA REVIEW

Avram was the first person to realize that Hashem is the greatest of beings. One day Hashem tells him to leave his city and his father's home and to go to the land which Hashem will show him. So Avram and his wife Sarai together with his nephew Lot leave Charan and travel to the Land of Canaan where Hashem reveals Himself to him and tells him that He will give this land to Avram's children. Avram builds a mizbeach there. Avram and Sarai love having guests. Their tent is open from all four sides so that people could come in from whichever direction they're traveling. Avram and Sarai feed and take care of all their guests and teach them about Hashem.

A short while later a famine comes onto the Land of Canaan so Avram and Sarai have to go to Egypt to get food. When they get there, they say that they are brother and sister so that the officers of Paroh don't kill Avram in order to give Sarai to Paroh since she is so beautiful. Sarai turns out to be taken prisoner of the palace, but overnight Hashem sends a plague to Paroh, who frees Sarai. He also gives many gifts of animals, gold, and silver to Avram and Sarai and sends them away.

Back in Canaan, Lot goes to live in the city of Sodom. He is captured during a local war and Avram goes to save him with the help of a small army and by miracle beats the bigger army of four kings. Hashem makes a brit (covenant) with Avram and tells him that his children will suffer in galut (exile) but will then be freed and brought to Israel which will be theirs forever.

Sarai encourages Avram to marry her maid Hagar, who was a converted Egyptian princess to give Avram the chance to have a child since Sarai could not. Hagar becomes pregnant and has a child called Yishmael. Hagar is disrespectful to Sarai and runs away, but then comes back after an angel convinces her to.

Finally, Hashem promises Avram that he will have as many children as the stars in the sky and the dust of the earth. Hashem makes a brit with Avram and commands him to give himself a brit milah as a sign of the covenant. From then on, all Jewish boys must get a brit milah at 8 days old. Hashem changes Avram's name to Avraham and Sarai's to Sarah and tells Avraham that they will have a child who they should name Yitzchak and that from Yitzchak will come the nation that Hashem promised the Land to. At this time, Avraham is 99 years old and Sarah is 89.

LEADER TIP: In honor of the special brit Hashem made with Avraham, make a special group handshake to resemble the brit!

PARSHA QUESTIONS

Questions

1. What benefits did Hashem promise Avraham if he would leave his home?
2. "And all the families of the earth will be blessed through you." What does this mean?
3. Who were the souls that Avraham and Sarah "made?"
4. What were the Canaanites doing in the Land of Canaan when Avraham arrived?
5. Why did Avraham build an altar at Ai?
6. What two results did Avraham hope to achieve by saying that Sarah was his sister?
7. Why did Avrahams shepherds rebuke Lot's shepherds?
8. Who was Amrafel and why was he called that?
9. Verse 14:7 states that the four kings "smote all the country of the Amalekites." How is this possible, since Amalek had not yet been born?
10. Why did the "*palit*" tell Avraham of Lots capture?
11. Who accompanied Avraham in battle against the four kings?
12. Why couldnt Avraham chase the four kings past Dan?
13. Why did Avraham give "*ma'aser*" specifically to Malki-Tzedek?
14. Why didnt Avraham accept any money from Sodom's king?
15. When did the decree of 400 years of exile begin?
16. What did Hashem indicate with His promise that Avraham would "come to his ancestors in peace?"
17. How did Hashem fulfill His promise that Avraham would be buried in "a good old age?"
18. Why did the Jewish People need to wait until the fourth generation until they returned to Eretz Canaan?
19. Who was Hagar's father?
20. Why did Avraham fall on his face when Hashem appeared to him?

Answers

1. 12:1 - He would become a great nation, his excellence would become known to the world, and he would be blessed with wealth.
2. 12:3 - A person will say to his child, "You should be like Avraham."
3. 12:5 - People they converted to the worship of Hashem.
4. 12:6 - They were in the process of conquering the land from the descendants of Shem.
5. 12:8 - He foresaw the Jewish People's defeat there in the days of Yehoshua due to Achans sin. He built an altar to protect them.
6. 12:13 - That the Egyptians would not kill him, and would give him presents.

7. 13:7 Lots shepherds grazed their flocks in privately owned fields.
8. 14:1 - Amrafel was Nimrod. He said (*amar*) to Avraham to fall (*fel*) into the fiery furnace.
9. 14:7 - The Torah uses the name that the place would bear in the future.
10. 14:13- He wanted Avraham to die trying to save Lot so that he himself could marry Sarah.
11. 14:14 - His servant, Eliezer.
12. 4:14 - He saw prophetically that his descendants would make a golden calf there, and as a result his strength failed.
13. 14:20 - Because Malki-Tzedek was a *kohen*.
14. 14:23 - Hashem had promised Avraham wealth, and Avraham didn't want Sodom's King to say, "I made Avraham wealthy."
15. 15:13 - With the birth of Yitzchak.
16. 15:15 - That his father, Terach, would repent and become righteous.
17. 15:15 - Avraham lived to see his son Yishmael repent and become righteous, and he died before his grandson Esav became wicked.
18. 15:16 - They needed to wait until the Amorites had sinned sufficiently to deserve expulsion.
19. 16:1 - Pharaoh.
20. 17:3 - Because he was as yet uncircumcised.

LEADER TIP: If kids get lots of questions right or do a good job, change their name or add the letter H to their name just like Hashem did to Avram/Avraham

PARSHA ACTIVITY

GOAL: To recognize how great the Jewish people are and the ways we have contributed to the world.

ACTIVITY: “The Greatest Inventor Debate”

Print out pictures of a bunch of different objects from the list below. Split the group up into a few different smaller groups. Pass out a set of pictures to each team. The list of objects is as follows...

Jeans, lipstick, ballpoint pen, atomic bomb, polaroid camera, record player, remote control, pacemaker, videotape, laser, virtual reality, traffic light, microphone, teddy bear, stainless steel, hot dog bun, flexi-straws, telephone, model train, disc record, medicine.

What each group must do is put together a skit using all (if not most) of their objects presenting why they think the world would not exist without them. They can also try to combine all their objects into one “Mega-Object” and try to come up with an idea of a cool new invention using the objects they have.

After each group presents their skit and/or “Mega-Objects”, have the groups discuss together how important each object is and what kind of impact they’ve had on the world. Try to get the discussion going in the direction of the kids realizing that all of those objects are important and have had an effect on the world.

What do all of these objects have in common? They were all invented by Jews! Talk to the kids about how much an impact the Jewish people have had on the world. You can also mention Jewish athletes such as Sandy Koufax, Jewish scientists such as Albert Einstein, or even Jewish actors such as Adam Sandler! No matter how you look at it, the Jewish people have contributed to the world more than anyone could imagine!

DISCUSSION: Hashem speaks to Avraham and tells him to leave his land, his birthplace and his father’s house and He directs him to Israel. As a reward for observing this command Avraham is promised: VE’ESCHA LEGOY GADOL VA’AVARECHECHA VA’AGADLAH SHEMECHA VEHEYEH BERACHAH, “And I will make of you a great nation, I will bless you, and make your name great, and you shall be a blessing.” The Talmud and the Midrashim, and Rashi quoting them, give many interpretations to the meaning of these blessings. In light of historical hind-sight and in view of modern events, it occurs that additional understandings of these blessing may be explained. The first

blessing was that Avraham will be made a great nation. Recognizing that the number of Jewish people today is so small how can we comprehend the fulfillment of this blessing? Perhaps the answer can be in a slightly different appreciation of its meaning. It does not intend to say that the Jews at any time will be counted in great numbers. Rather the meaning is that throughout the centuries, if you add up all the Jews that had existed, we out-number all other people who came and disappeared. The Jewish population, if added up during all the centuries of their survival, has been enormous. This fulfills the blessing. The next blessing was to make the name of Avraham and his descendants great. When you look at history and see the position that Jews have held in almost every country in the world, you can appreciate that their name has been great. Wherever they went they contributed greatly to the host country. They were accepted and appreciated until jealousy took hold and they were chased out. The final promise was that they will be a blessing. In spite of the great negative approach of the world to Israel and despite Israel's constant battle with its enemies for survival, it has contributed to the progress of the modern world far above its proportion in population. No other country has made as many contributions to mankind per capita as the Jews of the world and of Israel have made.

LEADER TIP: Feel free to look up more awesome Jewish inventors and their inventions and add them to the list!

PARSHA STORY

Before you read: This week's Parsha teaches us about our Avraham. When Avraham was a child, nearly the entire world was worshipping idols. It was almost impossible not to join them and practice idolatry, but Abraham didn't. He saw that the way they were living was a lie and he wasn't willing to go along with them. He passed on this ability - to stand up for truth - to us, his descendants, forever.

TRUE CONFESSIONS

"We're having a SUB!"

"How do you know?"

"I just walked by the office and heard the principal telling the secretary that Mr. Johnson had to go to some conference and wasn't coming in today."

The word that the class would be having a substitute teacher spread faster than butter on hot toast. Hearing the news, the class's mood went from dark and cloudy to warm and sunny in an instant.

"Great! Now we can play 'sink the sub!' "

They weren't bad kids - but who wouldn't be excited to miss a day of the hardest class in the whole school - Mr. Johnson's geometry. Mr. Johnson was a good but strict and no-nonsense teacher who gave them tons of homework *every* night and made them take a quiz *every* day.

Dave looked up in time to see Tim snatch the neat assignment and lesson plan book Mr. Johnson had left on his desk for the substitute. Tim made the daily lesson disappear as he stuffed it into his

own desk where the sub had no chance of finding it. Some of the kids had started a crushed-up-paper ball volleyball game in the back of the classroom and a few more had started a water fight. The noise level was over the top.

Just then a friendly, but sort of scared looking young man walked into the room. He had a big smile on his face, which quickly vanished when he took in the zoo-like scene before his eyes.

"Um, okay class. Time to settle down, okay?" Nobody paid him any attention.

"Okay - class is beginning *now*." he said more strongly, getting the kids to finally look his way. He walked over to the desk, shifted around some papers like he was looking for something, and frowned: "There is supposed to be an assignment book here, but I can't seem to find it..." Dave saw Tim break into a big smile. "Um, until we find it," the substitute went on, do you have homework from yesterday to go over?" he asked, hopefully.

"No, teacher. We *never* have homework on Mondays!" Kenny lied with a sweet smile on his face.

"Yeah, Mr. Johnson lets us kind of have the day off," Tim added. "If you don't have an assignment for us, maybe you can let us too, okay?" Before he could answer, the class had already started going back to their rowdy fun and games.

The substitute looked totally bewildered. Dave felt really sorry for him. How was he ever going to get through the next hour without the assignment book?

Dave noticed that Tim, the kid who had taken the book, had joined the volleyball game. He looked over at Tim's desk. *Should he do it? It would be easier just to go along with everyone...but it was just plain wrong of them to hide the assignment book, to act so rowdy and to lie...* Quickly, Dave slipped his hand into Tim's desk, grabbed the assignment book and slipped it back into its place on the teacher's desk while the sub wasn't looking.

"Excuse me," Dave said to the man, who looked really upset. "Isn't that the assignment book right there on your desk?" he asked, pointing.

"Huh? Why, yes it is." His face brightened. "Hmm. Okay class - everyone will now take their seats, turn in your homework which the book says you *did* have last night. In a few minutes I will pass out the quiz that your teacher has left for you to take today..."

Tim and the rest of the kids, realizing they couldn't fake it and play innocent anymore, grudgingly took their seats and began to work.

"Dave! You jerk! You idiot! I saw what you did," Tim hissed, "WHY did you give him back the assignment book? We finally had one day free from that slave driver, Mister....M-MISTER JOHNSON!?!". Dave saw that the boy's eyes had just grown about three times as big as usual, so he turned around to see Mr. Johnson walking into the classroom! The teacher took a quick glance around the room, saw the kids doing their proper assignment and smiled.

"I forgot something I needed for the conference and had to pop in and get it. Glad to see everything's under control." He gave the class and the substitute a satisfied nod, grabbed some papers he'd forgotten and dashed out.

Boy would that scene have been different if he had found the class the way it had been a few minutes ago. Mr. Johnson would have hit the roof and given us a big punishment... thought Dave,

together with just about every kid in the room. He was glad he'd saved the class and the poor substitute from getting into trouble, but he was even gladder he'd stood up for the truth.

Discussion Questions:

Q. What do you think it means to be a truth-seeker?

A. A genuine truth seeker is willing to let go of his preconceptions, objectively evaluate the ideas and, most importantly, change his opinions and even his life if he finds another way to be more true and real.

Q. Do you think there is such a thing as an absolute truth?

A. While many things in life are indeed relative and subjective, there are certain absolute and unchanging truths. A person who finds and taps into these will live a spiritual and deeply satisfying life.

LEADER TIP: Have you ever stood up for the truth? What happened? Is it easy or hard?

JEWISH LEADER OF THE WEEK

Sally Becker

(March 29, 1962-)

Sally Becker, an artist, was 33 years old when she decided to go to Bosnia and try to help. She began by delivering medical aid and food to the small Jewish community in Mostar and through them, she was given permission by Croat commanders to evacuate wounded Bosnian children and their families from the attacked city. Following this evacuation she was named 'The Angel of Mostar. Sally Becker saved hundreds of Jews in Bosnia and Kosovo during the 1990's and was chosen as one of the 8 people to carry the Olympic flag during the opening ceremony at the London Olympics in 2012. Becker was the first Jewish woman to ever carry the Olympic flag during the opening ceremonies. "I couldn't believe they had chosen me," she said. "We carried the flag up to Mohammad Ali, and he was holding the flag with us. As they played the Olympic anthem, I said a little silent prayer for the athletes who died in Munich."



She managed to secure permission for the delivery of humanitarian aid to all sides of the war and for the evacuation of wounded civilians. She led a group of 50 vehicles and two hundred volunteers from Britain carrying many tons of medical aid and food and evacuated 98 wounded. Two months later all aid organizations were grounded due to snow. She borrowed a helicopter and flew into central Bosnia alone to bring out 55 wounded children and their families.

When the war spread to Kosovo she crossed the mountains on foot carrying pediatric medicines to Junik, a town surrounded by war forces. She was asked by the parents of many sick and wounded children to try and evacuate them but as they reached the Albanian border they were ambushed. Fortunately the rest of the group made it safely across but remaining behind to help a woman and her two young children, Sally was captured, interrogated, abused and imprisoned by Serb paramilitaries. Due to intervention by the British government she was eventually pardoned and released, whereupon she returned to the border of Kosovo. She traced the children (and found almost 100 others also in need of help) The US accepted half of the evacuees, but while she was trying to secure places abroad for the remaining 50 she was shot by masked gunmen. Although the President of Albania sent a helicopter to evacuate her, she refused to abandon the children, remaining there for several weeks, until they had been accepted abroad for medical treatment.

LEADER TIP: What is a way you can help give food and aid to people in need? Are there any organizations in your neighborhood that you can volunteer for?

TEFILLAH TREASURES

Yishtabach

The idea of Yishtabach is that Hashem is “chai olamim”. Hashem brings everything in the universe into being, and keeps it going and looks after His creations every second by second. Hashem is the life-giver of the world since at every moment Hashem is creating and renewing a person by “breathing” life into him. In discussing this basic element of emunah, the Rambam says that the basis and pillar of wisdom is to know that there is a Primary Being Who brought everything into existence. Everything in the world came to be only from Hashem. More than just believing in Hashem as the only Creator, emunah requires us recognizing Hashem’s continuous role in every single thing that happens in the world, from big historical events to seemingly insignificant personal incidents. This is the idea of Hashgachah Pratit— that Hashem watched His creations every moment and that nothing happens by chance, but only because He constantly wills it. Despite the idea that Hashem is always looking out for us, it may sometimes, be a difficult concept for us to fully understand. The world seems to run on a system of cause and effect, training people to understand the events in their lives and in the world as results of human actions or nature. Hashem controls the world from behind the scenes, using the amazing natural laws He crafted in order

to fulfill His will on earth. This understanding that nothing in Creation can exist without Hashem is strengthened every time we daven. By coming to Hashem for our needs, we continually remove the small belief in cause and effect, reinforcing in our hearts that there is no “cause” but Hashem’s constant will.



PARSHA NATION

Teen Minyan Kol Haniarim



This Week in Jewish History

October 29, 1956

The Sinai-Suez Campaign (Operation Kadesh)

On October 29, 1956 Britain, France and Israel launched a military operation against Egypt. In a swift, sweeping operation of 100 hours, under the leadership of then Chief of the General Staff, Moshe Dayan, the entire Sinai peninsula fell into Israeli hands, at a cost of 231 soldiers killed. This operation was held in response to the closing of the Suez Canal by the Egyptians and terrorist attacks on Israel that violated the armistice agreement between the two countries. When the decision was made to go to war in 1956, more than 100,000 soldiers were mobilized in less than 72 hours and the air force was fully operational within 43 hours. Paratroopers landed in the Sinai and Israeli forces quickly advanced unopposed toward the Suez Canal before halting in compliance with the demands of England and France. As expected, the Egyptians ignored the Anglo-French ultimatum to withdraw to the west bank of the Canal. On October 30, the United States sponsored a Security Council resolution calling for an immediate Israeli withdrawal,

but England and France vetoed it. The following day, the two allies launched air



operations, bombing Egyptian airfields near Suez. Given the pretext to continue fighting, the Israeli forces routed the Egyptians. The IDF's armored corps swept across the desert, capturing virtually the entire Sinai by November 5. That day, British and French paratroops landed near Port Said and amphibious ships dropped commandos on shore. British troops captured Port Said and advanced to within 25 miles of Suez City before the British government abruptly agreed to a cease-fire. Though their allies had failed to accomplish their goals, the Israelis were satisfied at having reached theirs in an operation that took only 100 hours. By the end of the fighting, Israel held the Gaza Strip and had advanced as far as Sharm al-Sheikh along the Red Sea. A total of 231 Israeli soldiers died in the fighting.

FIND...

- Avraham
- Sarah
- Lot
- Hagar
- Yishmael
- Brit Milah
- Canaan
- Charan

STAT LINE OF THE WEEK- LECH LECHA

The 3rd sedra of 54; 3rd of 12 in Bereishit

7 Parshiyot; 3 open, 4 closed

126 pesukim - ranks 13th - tied with R'ei

1686 words - ranks 18th

6336 letters - ranks 19th

Ranks 7 in Bereishit in all categories

Slightly below average for Bereishit Its pesukim are shorter than average for the Torah; this explains the drop in ranking for words and letters

Lech Lecha contains one of the 613 mitzvot viz. circumcision - Brit Milah

TRIVIA QUESTION OF THE WEEK

HOW MANY GATES ARE THERE IN YERUSHALAYIM AND WHAT ARE THEIR NAMES?

Email your answers to RABBIS@YOUNGISRAEL.ORG along with your **NAME** and **AGE** for a chance to win **AWESOME PRIZES!** Each correct answer will enter your name into a raffle that will happen once a month. Behatzlacha!

THIS JUST IN!

- The name **Jeep** came from the abbreviation used in the army for the "General Purpose" vehicle, **G.P.**
- The term "whole 9 yards" came from WWII fighter pilots in the South Pacific. When arming their airplanes on the ground, the .50 caliber machine gun ammo belts measured exactly 27 feet. If the pilots fired all their ammo at a target, it got the "whole 9 yards."
- The US Interstate road system was designed so that one mile in every five must be straight. These straight sections are usable as airstrips in times of war or other emergencies.

For more info please feel free to contact us at Rabbis@youngisrael.org

T	P	M	A	H	A	R	V	A	C
H	C	A	N	A	A	N	G	L	I
P	A	S	R	I	Q	V	R	E	G
S	F	L	L	O	T	V	C	A	B
R	A	C	I	N	H	J	A	M	B
A	A	R	H	M	E	O	K	H	A
G	U	I	A	A	T	K	A	S	X
A	S	D	W	H	R	I	D	I	S
H	Y	X	P	G	C	A	R	Y	H
Q	A	Q	F	N	L	B	N	B	H

Parsha Points to Ponder...

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