



Dear Youth Directors, Youth chairs, and Youth Leaders,

Chanukah is one of the most looked forward holidays of the year. Between color war breakouts in school, trips, and the excitement of winter vacation just around the corner, this time of years is one filled with joy.

This week's Chanukah Nation edition of Parsha Nation will capture all those exciting emotions, while continuing our theme of *manhigut*, leadership. There is much to learn about leadership in the story of Chanukah. As youth leaders it is our job to educate the younger generation while pulling lessons and themes from our history.

Everyone loves an underdog. The story of the Maccabees is no exception. A 20 year battle to rid the land of Israel of the tyranny by the Greeks was no easy task. They were out gunned, and out maneuvered, but with faith in Hashem the Jews reclaimed the land of Israel. Expressing great gratitude and love for Hashem, the Maccabees rushed to the temple to immediately show the people of Israel that this period of bloodshed and darkness was over. By lighting the Menorah flame the Jewish people re-claimed their status in the world as an *Ohr Gadol*, a great light.

May this Chag bring much inspiration and light to our youth during these dark times. May the time you spend with your youth groups be filled with leadership, and trust, just as Judah the Maccabee had while leading the Jews into battle.

Chag Sameach and Shabbat Shalom!

NCYI 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.

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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 | Chanukah Review | Prep participants for parsha questions. |
| 10 min | Chanukah 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 | Chanukah 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! | |



CHANUKAH REVIEW

Alexander the Great, the conqueror of the world, was a good friend of the Jewish people. After he died, his Empire was split among his generals. Israel was added to the Empire of Antiochus III. When Antiochus became king of the Syrian-Greeks, he wanted the Jews to stop learning and following the Torah and instead follow the Greek ways. He defiled the Beit Hamikdash filling it with idols and pigs. He didn't allow the Jews to follow the commandments of Brit Milah, Rosh Chodesh, and Shabbat. Matityahu was the Kohen of the time and decided that enough was enough. He gathered all the people of Modi'in shouting, "*Mi La'Hashem Ay-li* (Whoever is for *Hashem*, let him come to me)," and led the people to rebellion. Only a small number of people responded at first but Matityahu's five sons (Yehudah, Eliezer, Shimon, Yochanan, and Yonatan) led the way. Matityahu passed on the leadership to his second son, Yehudah the Maccabee, who was a mighty warrior and a captivating leader. Many miracles happened during the war. Outnumbered a hundred to one, Yehudah and his men won many battles. The Jews came to join him and together they defeated the armies of Syria. Despite being so much smaller in number and power compared to the Greeks, the Maccabim came out on top. On the twenty fifth day of Kislev, they marched into Yerushalayim and immediately made their way to the Beit Hamikdash where they saw a sight that left them shocked and angered. Idols, filth, impurity were everywhere. They searched through the ruins looking for at least one flask of pure olive oil so that they could light the menorah they quickly put together. They finally found one small jug with enough oil for only one day. They poured it into the menorah and lit it. Miraculously it lasted for eight days long. Those eight miraculous days were chosen as the everlasting symbol to commemorate the miracle of Chanukah publicizing the miracles Hashem performed.

LEADER TIP: Costumes make everything more fun! Have a few group leaders come dressed as Maccabim and some dressed as Greeks!

CHANUKAH QUESTIONS

Questions

1. What is the date of Chanukah?
2. How many days do we celebrate Chanukah?
3. Who was the Greek ruler who tried to pull the Jews away from Judaism?
4. What did Antiochus not allow the Jewish people to do?
5. What were Matityahu HaKohen's five sons' names? Which one was the leader of the Maccabim?
6. What were the two miracles of Chanukah?
7. What did the Jewish people do to try and hide their Torah studying from the Greeks?
8. What do the letters on the dreidel stand for?
9. Why do we light Chanukah candles?
10. What are some popular foods we eat over Chanukah? Why?

Answers

1. 25th of Kislev
2. 8
3. Antiochus
4. Learn and follow the ways of the Torah, specifically- Brit Milah, Rosh Chodesh, and Shabbat
5. Shimon, Yehudah, Eliezer, Yochanan, and Yonatan. Yehuda was the leader
6. The small and weaker Jewish army defeating the bigger and stronger Greek army. That the oil that was only supposed to last one day lasted for eight
7. They played dreidel
8. Nun, Gimel, Hey, Shin/Pey= Nes, Gadol, Haya Sham/Po
9. To publicize the miracles of Chanukah
10. Latkes, sufganiyot, and other oily foods in honor of the miracle of the oil

LEADER TIP: Give out dreidels and gelt as presents and a nice sufganiya as a grand prize!

CHANUKAH ACTIVITY

GOAL: To play some fun Chanukah themed games

ACTIVITY:

1. Rabbim Beyad Me'atim (many against few)- Split the group up into two uneven groups (ie. One with three kids and another with eight). Have both groups make human pyramids and see which group can make a pyramid faster. Obviously the smaller group should be able to do it quicker and thus the me'atim win above the rabbim!
2. Mi Lahashem Elai Red Light Green Light- have the kids stand in a line and one person be Yehuda/dit Hamakabee/bea who faces his back to them. They call out "Me La'Hashem Elai" and turns around, at which point the other kids run as fast as they can towards him/her but must freeze when s/he turns around. Anyone found not frozen at that point is out. Whoever reaches Yehuda first is the prized Macabee and wins the station game.
3. Pirsumei Nissah charades- write up cards that have various events that have occurred recently and hand them out to different kids who in turn act them out without the use of words and a limited amount of materials (ie. A shirt, a soccer ball, and a cup). See if the other kids can guess what it is and if pirsumei nissah has been successful.
4. Dreidel Dare- a game of dreidel, but the dreidel cannot be spun in a conventional way.
5. Macabee Maze- set up a maze on the floor with tape. The person must walk backward through the maze, using only a mirror as a guide. Label the end the Beit Hamikdash
4. Search for a jug of oil scavenger hunt!
5. Latke Flip Pan Heads- Split kids up into groups of 2-4. Have one of them stand a few feet apart from them facing the others. Have that person hold a pan on top of their head. The other 1-3 kids will have spatulas and a bunch of "cardboard latkes". What they must do is try to flip as many latkes into the frying pan as possible. The "pan head" must try and catch as many as possible. The team with the most latkes in their pan at the end of a given time wins!

DISCUSSION: The question then arises, since the oil was adequate for one night, only seven days were miraculous. Why, then, wasn't *Chanukah* made a seven day festival? Many answers have been given over the years. Here are a few:

- One extra day of celebration was proclaimed to commemorate the miracle of the military victory.
- The Syrian-Greeks did such a thorough job of defiling the *Beit Hamikdash*, that it was a miracle to find even that one jug of oil. So the first night's lighting, too, was miraculous.
- Knowing that it would take eight days to secure new oil, the *Maccabees* decided to ration the oil they found. They used only one eighth each night - yet that little bit of oil burned until dawn every single night.
- After pouring the oil into the cups of the *menorah*, the *Maccabees* saw to their amazement that the oil jug was still full. A miracle - even on the first day!
- After burning all night, the cups of the *menorah* were still full the next morning.
- On each night, the *Maccabees* made very thin wicks in order to conserve oil. Nevertheless, the *menorah* burned with bright and hearty flames just as if the wicks had been of normal size.

LEADER TIP: Everyone loves Chanukah songs! Sing as many as you can! Teach the kids your own favorites from when you were their age!

CHANUKAH STORY

The Holiday Card

A small Chanukah miracle for a lonely Jewish soldier in Iraq.

It was our first big celebration as a family since our son's bris, eight years earlier. Our daughter Aliza was becoming a Bat Mitzvah. We had a fun idea for how to celebrate it: We had been married years earlier on a boat in Manhattan, and since Aliza was born on our first anniversary, we thought we would do it again.

So we hired a boat and invited a small group of mostly relatives and classmates. In planning the food and the flowers and the music, there seemed to be something missing. We had the "bar," but where was the "mitzvah"? Aside from my daughter's Dvar Torah ("the speech"), what could we do to elevate this gathering from being just another birthday party?

Providentially, there was a request in our synagogue to pray for a local soldier who was being deployed to Iraq. The idea was born; let's have all the kids at our simcha (celebration) make Chanukah cards to send to Jewish soldiers overseas. Nothing earth-shattering, just a way to inject some meaning into the festivities.

The date arrived and our ship sailed. God granted us a picture perfect September day and when Aliza's carefully prepared speech blew overboard, she adlibbed admirably. The Chanukah cards were written and colored and decorated. A lovely time was had by all. And the next day, the cards were mailed out with heartfelt wishes and love to our Jewish brothers and sisters. End of story.

Or so we thought.

Six months later, when the bat mitzvah was a fond, distant memory, there was a knock on my door in the middle of the day. Bravely, I unlocked the door, even though I didn't recognize the voice on the other side. A pleasant twenty-something man greeted me:

"I'm Lt. Steinberg, and your daughter sent me a Chanukah card when I was in Iraq."

Well, you could've blown me over with a feather.

But wait -- it gets better.

Apparently our few dozen cards had been thrown in with the hundreds and thousands of cards sent to celebrate that other December holiday. The chaplain showed up one day at the army base with an enormous sack, filled to the brim with cards and letters. As he passed out handfuls of cards to the grateful troops, Lt. Steinberg was hanging back, feeling pretty left out and lonely.

Suddenly amidst the celebratory crowd, the company captain noticed our soldier. "Steinberg, why are you so quiet? How come you're not opening any cards?"

Oh brother, Steinberg thought, *don't they get it?* "Captain, I'm Jewish, remember?"

"C'mon, Steinberg, don't be a spoilsport. Take a card."

Steinberg tried to shrink himself into invisibility. But the captain wasn't having it. "Let's go, Steinberg. These people were nice enough to write to us. NOW TAKE A CARD!"

By now the captain had everyone's attention and Steinberg was getting pretty uncomfortable in the spotlight. *Quick*, he told himself, *just grab a Christmas card and you'll stop being the center of attention.*

Steinberg reached deep into the sack, pulled out a card and looked at it. To his complete and utter shock the return address said Wesley Hills, New York. Steinberg is from Wesley Hills.

Hands shaking, he tore it open and found a beautiful hand-made Chanukah card, signed by my daughter Aliza, the Bat Mitzvah girl herself. Steinberg was dumbfounded by the providence of it all. He broke out in a huge grin and proudly showed the card to the captain and the entire platoon. Everyone understood the small miracle they had just witnessed.

Standing there in my Wesley Hills home, with my mouth gaping open and tears in my eyes, I begged Steinberg to come back and retell the story when my children were home. Indeed, he returned the following week with a friend and a camera. For our family, it was an incredible inspiration to see so clearly the power of our "little" mitzvah.

But that's not the end of the story. Just this past September one of the chaplains I had contacted about sending those cards asked if I could help arrange kosher meals and snacks for troops in Afghanistan for the High Holidays and Sukkot. I organized some people in my community and we sent 144 kosher meals to Afghanistan. Aish HaTorah's Project Inspire got involved and sent dozens of personal cards and honey sticks for Rosh Hashanah and then chocolates for Chanukah to troops in Afghanistan, Iraq, Italy and Kuwait.

LEADER TIP: What light can you share this Chanukah? Spread the light by doing good things for others.

JEWISH LEADER OF THE WEEK



Yehudit

A Jewish woman named Yehudit has become a very important part of the story of Chanukah. A Greek commander led his army to take down a revolt that was starting in Yerushalayim. The Greek army camped around the walls of the city and began a strong siege. Even though Yerushalayim was a very strong and united city, the persistent siege by a stronger army began to take a toll on the people of Yerushalayim. A widow named Yehudit left the city and requested to talk with the commander. Her plan was to try and get him to like her and then kill him. Her plan was successful. The commander gave a feast in honor of Yehudit and he became very drunk. That night the commander and Yehudit went back to his private tent where he fell into a deep sleep. While he was asleep Yehudit took his sword and killed him. Yehudit then brought the commander's head back to Yerushalayim where it was hung on the city walls for everyone to see. The Jews were inspired by the daring heroism of Yehudit, and the Greek forces fled. It was a key turning point in the Jewish revolt against the Greeks.

LEADER TIP: Drink an extra cup of milk in honor of Yehudit! An extra chocolate bar works too 😊

TEFILLAH TREASURES

Chanukah Tefillot

After lighting the first candle while the others are being lit, the tefillah of Hanerot Hallalu is said. It affirms that we light these candles in memory of the miracles Hashem performed for the Jewish people in the Chanukah story. It ends by saying that throughout the eight days of Chanukah, the lights are holy - and we should only use them as an expression of gratitude and praise to Hashem for his miracles.

Maoz Tzur is the universal song of Chanukah. It goes through years of persecution - Egypt, Babylon, Haman, the Syrian-Greeks, the nineteen centuries since the Second Beit Hamikdash was destroyed and praises Hashem for redeeming Bnei Yisrael after each of them. A song of hope, it gives the Jews the courage to face the future and emphasizes the desire to return of the Beit Hamikdash and the coming of Moshiach.

Al Hanissim is a tefillah that is added on Chanukah to Birkat Hamazon and Shmoneh Esrei. It starts by saying thank you to Hashem for the miracles of Chanukah. Al Hanissim doesn't talk about the miracle of the oil, but rather more about the miracle of the war. Al Hanissim focuses on both the physical and spiritual victories of the small group of Jews over the Syrian-Greek enemies, and the role of Hashem in the history of the Jews protecting us every step of the way. Al Hanissim talks about the miracles that happened "bayamim hahem bazman hazeh, (in those days, at this time)." Some say that it only refers to the miracles Hashem performed for our ancestors; others say that it also hints to the countless hidden miracles that Hashem does for us every day.

LEADER TIP: Almost everyone sings the same tune for Maoz Tzur, Hanerot Hallalu on the other hand is a different story. See how many Hanerot Hallalu tunes you have in your group!



CHANUKAH REVIEW

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LEADER TIP: Costumes make everything more fun! Have a few group leaders come dressed as Maccabim and some dressed as Greeks!

CHANUKAH QUESTIONS

Questions

11. What is the date of Chanukah?
12. How many days do we celebrate Chanukah?
13. Who was the Greek ruler who tried to pull the Jews away from Judaism?
14. What did Antiochus not allow the Jewish people to do?
15. What were Matityahu HaKohen's five sons' names? Which one was the leader of the Maccabim?
16. What were the two miracles of Chanukah?
17. What did the Jewish people do to try and hide their Torah studying from the Greeks?
18. What do the letters on the dreidel stand for?
19. What special addition do we add in our davening and benching over Chanukah?
20. What brachot and special tefillot do we say when we light Chanukah candles?
21. At least how long do the candles have to burn for?
22. When should we light the candles?
23. Why do we light Chanukah candles?
24. What is the debate about lighting candles between Hillel and Shamai about? Who do we follow?
25. What are some popular foods we eat over Chanukah? Why?

Answers

11. 25th of Kislev
12. 8
13. Antiochus
14. Learn and follow the ways of the Torah, specifically- Brit Milah, Rosh Chodesh, and Shabbat
15. Shimon, Yehudah, Eliezer, Yochanan, and Yonatan. Yehuda was the leader
16. The small and weaker Jewish army defeating the bigger and stronger Greek army. That the oil that was only supposed to last one day lasted for eight
17. They played dreidel
18. Nun, Gimel, Hey, Shin/Pey= Nes, Gadol, Haya Sham/Po
19. Al Hanisim
20. Lehadlik ner shel Chanukah, She'asa nisim, (shehechyanu on the first night), HaNerot Halalu, and Maoz Tzur
21. Half hour
22. Nightfall
23. To publicize the miracles of Chanukah
24. Whether we start with 8 candles and subtract one each night (Shamai) or we start with 1 candle and add one each night (Hillel). We follow Hillel.
25. Latkes, sufganiyot, and other oily foods in honor of the miracle of the oil

LEADER TIP: Give out dreidels and gelt as presents and a nice sufganiya as a grand prize!

CHANUKAH ACTIVITY

GOAL: To teach about the Gevura of the Maccabim, as well as about the story of Chanukah.

ACTIVITY: “Gevurat HaMaccabim”

Though the Chanukah story is well known, here is a little background just in case:

During the time when the Greeks controlled Israel, Jews began hellenizing, or trying to become more like the Greeks. Many adopted Greek names, stopped keeping Shabbat and Kashrut, and idol worship was taking place in the Beit HaMikdash. In the year 169 BCE, Antiochus decreed that anyone caught observing Shabbat, Chagim and receiving a Brit Mila would be punished by death. Nevertheless, many of the Jews, especially in private, continued to believe in Hashem. Jews who were known as Metyavnim, (were sitting on the fence between being a Jew and a Greek) often told the palace of those Jews who were not following the orders of Antiochus. Soon after, Mattityahu and his sons led a rebellion whose purpose was to fight the Greeks and rid them from Israel and to teach the non-observant Jews a lesson. Eventually the rebellion became a full fledged war against the Greeks, and after many clashes, the few defeated the many. The Chashmonaim reclaimed and purified Yerushalayim, and smashed the image of the Greek god Zeus, thus returning the holy city back to its original splendor and glory.

Game 1: Running Bases

Choose two kids to be the two infielders. All other kids should be divided between two bases on either side of the room. Make the bases away from the wall so that kids don't run into the walls... The goal is to run back and forth between the two bases. Anyone tagged while not touching a base is out. Everyone must run at least every three throws. The two fielders throw the ball back and forth and try to tag anyone moving from base to base. Play for a bit, a few rounds, but make sure to change the fielders often.

Game 2: Celebrate

This game won't last very long, but it'll help to illustrate the same point as Running Bases. Have all the kids stand in a circle. Choose one kid to go into the middle and say something that s/he thinks is cause for celebration. Everyone who also enjoys that thing (ie. Getting 100% on a test, eating ice cream, having pizza at your favorite

restaurant....) has to go into the middle and celebrate. When the group leader says so, everyone must return to his or her spots, and the person initially in the middle tries to get someone's spot. Whoever remains has to give the next cause of celebration.

DISCUSSION: So, how are these two games related? Most likely in running bases, the game proceeded as a few people would run a lot and others would eventually follow their lead. In Celebrate as well, people probably were very reluctant to go and celebrate in the middle. But when other people start doing it, they will follow their lead. Similarly, the Maccabim began their revolt without much help. Very few people joined them, and they were incredibly outnumbered. However, after winning a few battles, other Jews joined the rebellion. As the Maccabim had more victories and captured more weapons, even more people joined, and eventually they were able to defeat the Greeks entirely. It is often the hardest thing to be the first person to do something, to lead the way and not know if people will follow you or not. You need a certain amount of bravery to do so, which clearly the Maccabim had. The root of Chanukah was that the Chashmonaim needed to convince the other Jews to support Judaism and not to join the Greeks. Once you begin, others will join you. Which is exactly what happened in Chanukah. Be that leader and lead by example!

LEADER TIP: Everyone loves Chanukah songs! Sing as many as you can! Teach the kids your own favorites from when you were their age!

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JEWISH LEADER OF THE WEEK

Yehudit



A Jewish woman named Yehudit has become a very important part of the story of Chanukah. A Greek commander led his army to take down a revolt that was starting in Yerushalayim. The Greek army camped around the walls of the city and began a strong siege. Even though Yerushalayim was a very strong and united city, the persistent siege by a stronger army began to take a toll on the people of Yerushalayim. A widow named Yehudit left the city and requested to talk with the commander. Her plan was to try and get him to like her and then kill him. Her plan was successful. The commander gave a feast in honor of Yehudit and he became very drunk. That night the commander and Yehudit went back to his private tent where he fell into a deep sleep. While he was asleep Yehudit took his sword and killed him. Yehudit then brought the commander's head back to Yerushalayim where it was hung on the city walls for everyone to see. The Jews were inspired by the daring heroism of Yehudit, and the Greek forces fled. It was a key turning point in the Jewish revolt against the Greeks. Therefore, Yehudit's courageous deed is viewed as part of the miracle of Chanukah. There is also a custom to eat fried foods like Latkes and jelly-filled doughnuts on Chanukah. Women have special value during Chanukah, for the miracle began because of the courage of Yehudit.

LEADER TIP: Drink an extra cup of milk in honor of Yehudit! An extra chocolate bar works too 😊

TEFILLAH TREASURES

Chanukah Tefillot

After lighting the first candle while the others are being lit, the tefillah of Hanerot Hallalu is said. It affirms that we light these candles in memory of the miracles Hashem performed for the Jewish people in the Chanukah story. It ends by saying that throughout the eight days of Chanukah, the lights are holy - and we should only use them as an expression of gratitude and praise to Hashem for his miracles.

Maoz Tzur is the universal song of Chanukah. It goes through years of persecution - Egypt, Babylon, Haman, the Syrian-Greeks, the nineteen centuries since the Second Beit Hamikdash was destroyed and praises Hashem for redeeming Bnei Yisrael after each of them. A song of hope, it gives the Jews the courage to face the future and emphasizes the desire to return of the Beit Hamikdash and the coming of Moshiach.

Al Hanissim is a tefillah that is added on Chanukah to Birkat Hamazon and Shmoneh Esrei. It starts by saying thank you to Hashem for the miracles of Chanukah. Al Hanissim doesn't talk about the miracle of the oil, but rather more about the miracle of the war. Al Hanissim focuses on both the physical and spiritual victories of the small group of Jews over the Syrian-Greek enemies, and the role of Hashem in the history of the Jews protecting us every step of the way. Al Hanissim talks about the miracles that happened "bayamim hahem bazman hazeh, (in those days, at this time)." Some say that it only refers to the miracles Hashem performed for our ancestors; others say that it also hints to the countless hidden miracles that Hashem does for us every day.

LEADER TIP: Almost everyone sings the same tune for Maoz Tzur, Hanerot Hallalu on the other hand is a different story. See how many Hanerot Hallalu tunes you have in your group!



CHANUKAH REVIEW

Alexander the Great, the conqueror of the world, was a good friend of the Jewish people. After he died, his Empire was split among his generals. Israel was added to the Empire of Antiochus III. When Antiochus became king of the Syrian-Greeks, he wanted the Jews to stop learning and following the Torah and instead follow the Greek ways. He defiled the Beit Hamikdash filling it with idols and pigs. He didn't allow the Jews to follow the commandments of Brit Milah, Rosh Chodesh, and Shabbat. Matityahu was the Kohen of the time and decided that enough was enough. He gathered all the people of Modi'in shouting, "*Mi La'Hashem Ay-li* (Whoever is for *Hashem*, let him come to me)," and led the people to rebellion. Only a small number of people responded at first but Matityahu's five sons (Yehudah, Eliezer, Shimon, Yochanan, and Yonatan) led the way. Matityahu passed on the leadership to his second son, Yehudah the Maccabee, who was a mighty warrior and a captivating leader. Many miracles happened during the war. Outnumbered a hundred to one, Yehudah and his men won many battles. The Jews came to join him and together they defeated the armies of Syria. Despite being so much smaller in number and power compared to the Greeks, the Maccabim came out on top. On the twenty fifth day of Kislev, they marched into Yerushalayim and immediately made their way to the Beit Hamikdash where they saw a sight that left them shocked and angered. Idols, filth, impurity were everywhere. They searched through the ruins looking for at least one flask of pure olive oil so that they could light the menorah they quickly put together. They finally found one small jug with enough oil for only one day. They poured it into the menorah and lit it. Miraculously it lasted for eight days long. Those eight miraculous days were chosen as the everlasting symbol to commemorate the miracle of Chanukah publicizing the miracles Hashem performed.

LEADER TIP: Costumes make everything more fun! Have a few group leaders come dressed as Maccabim and some dressed as Greeks!

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CHANUKAH QUESTIONS

Questions

1. Which miracle do we celebrate with the lighting of candles?
2. How did they know that the oil found was uncontaminated?
3. Who led the battle against the Hellenites?
4. During which of the "four exiles" did the miracle of Chanukah take place?
5. Name two non-halachic customs connected with Chanukah.
6. How many blessings are made before lighting candles?
7. Why do we light the extra candle known as the "*shamash*"?
8. What is added to our regular prayers at least three times a day?
9. What is the special reading of the Torah each day?
10. Is it obligatory to eat a meal like on Purim?
11. When do we have occasion to use three Sifrei Torah on Chanukah?
12. What three *mitzvot* did the Hellenites decree against?
13. What damage did the Hellenites do to the Beit Hamikdash?
14. What two military advantages did the Hellenite army have over the Jews?
15. Is it permissible to do work on Chanukah?
16. Why is there no Mussaf prayer on Chanukah except for Shabbat and Rosh Chodesh?
17. How does the name Chanukah indicate the date when this holiday begins?
18. What special prayer do we add to the morning services?
19. What did the Jews do after victory that explains the name Chanukah?
20. Which regular prayers in the morning service do we omit on Chanukah?

Answers

1. The oil for lighting the menorah in the Beit Hamikdash after the victory over the Hellenites was only enough for one day and it miraculously lasted for eight days until a new supply of pure oil was available. (Rambam, Laws of Chanukah 1:1)
2. Its container had the seal of the *kohen gadol*. (*Mesechta Shabbat* 21b)
3. Matityahu, the *kohen gadol* and his sons. (Rambam, Laws of Chanukah 1:1, and the "*Al Hanissim*" prayer in the Siddur)
4. The third exile under Hellenite oppression during the era of the second Beit Hamikdash. (Rambam, Laws of Chanukah 1:1)
5. Eating either donuts or potato pancakes made with oil and playing with the *sivivon* (dreidel).
6. Three blessings the first night and two the other nights. (Rambam, Laws of Chanukah 1:4)

7. Since it is forbidden to benefit from the light of the candles we light an extra one so that if we do benefit it will be from that one called the *shamash* because it is sometimes used to serve as the lighting agent. (*Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim* 673:1)
8. The prayer "*Al Hanissim*" (Ibid. 682:1)
9. The gifts of the *nesi'im* (heads of the twelve tribes at the inauguration of the Sanctuary as recorded in *Bamidbar* 7:1-8). (Ibid. 684:1)
10. No. But if the meal is accompanied by songs of praise to Heaven it is considered a *seudat mitzvah*. (Ibid. 670:2)
11. When Rosh Chodesh Tevet is on Shabbat and we read selections for Shabbat, Rosh Chodesh and Chanukah. (Ibid. 684:3)
12. Shabbat, circumcision and Rosh Chodesh. (*Midrash*)
13. They made breaks in the walls and contaminated the sacred items. (Rambam, Laws of Chanukah 1:1)
14. They were stronger and more numerous. ("*Al Hanissim*" Prayer)
15. It is permissible to work but women have a custom of refraining from work for the first half hour that the candles are burning. (*Mishna Berurah* 670:1)
16. Because there were no additional sacrifices in the Beit Hamikdash during Chanukah. (*Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim* 682:2)
17. If we break up the word into two parts — *Chanu*, and the letters *chaf* and *hei*, we read that they rested from the war on the 25th day of the month.
18. Hallel (*Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim* 683:1)
19. They rededicated the altar in the Beit Hamikdash, which the Hellenites had defiled. ("Chanukah" means inauguration.)
20. Tachanun and Psalm 20 before *Uva Letzion*. (*Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim* 683:1)

LEADER TIP: Give out dreidels and gelt as presents and a nice sufganiya as a grand prize!

CHANUKAH ACTIVITY

GOAL: For the kids to talk about the idea of miracles and how they could be happening everyday.

ACTIVITY: "There can be Miracles?"

Introduction:

Ask the kids what is a miracle. Do you believe in miracles? Has a miracle ever happened to you? If so, let them share their experience.

Game:

Split the kids into five groups. Every group must make a skit that will show a miracle from the Tanach. (Give them the source sheet as well as help them out if they need)

The five miracles are:

1. The burning bush
2. The ten plagues
3. Kriyat yam suf
4. Man in the desert
5. David and Goliath

After ten minutes, each group should present its skit, and the other kids should guess the miracle. One kid from the group that presented will read from the source.

The burning bush: Shmot 3

"ומשה, הנה רעה את-צאן יתרו חתנו--כהן מדן; וינהג את-הצאן אחר המדבר, ויבא אל-הר האלהים חרבה. **ג,ב** וירא מלאך יהוה אליו, בלבת-אש--מתוך הסנה; וירא, והנה הסנה בער באש, והסנה, איננו אכל. **ג,ג** ויאמר משה--אסרה-נא ואראך, את-המראה הגדל הנה: מדוע, לא-יבער הסנה. **ג,ד** וירא יהוה, כי סר לראות; ויקרא אליו אלהים מתוך הסנה, ויאמר משה משה--ויאמר הנני. **ג,ה** ויאמר, אל-תקרב הלם; של-ועלך, מעל רגליך--כי המקום אשר אתה עומד עליו, אדמת-קדש הוא. **ג,ו** ויאמר, אנכי אלהי אביך, אלהי אברהם אלהי יצחק, ואלהי יעקב; ויסתר משה, פניו, כי ירא, מהביט אל-האלהים"

1 Now Moses was keeping the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian; and he led the flock to the farthest end of the wilderness, and came to the mountain of God, unto Horeb. **2** And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush; and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. **3** And Moses said: 'I will turn aside now, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt.' **4** And when the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said: 'Moses, Moses.' And he said: 'Here am I.' **5** And He said: 'Draw not nigh hither; put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.' **6** Moreover He said: 'I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God.

The ten plagues- Shmot 7

"ויאמר יהוה אל-משה, אמר אל-אחרון קח מטף ונטה-ךך על-מימי מצרים על-נהרותם על-אריהם ועל-אגמיהם ועל-כל-מקנה מימיהם--ויהיו-דם; ויהיה דם בכל-ארץ מצרים, ובעצים ובאבנים. **ז,ב** ויעשו-כן משה ואהרן כאשר צוה יהוה, וירם במטה ונד את-המים אשר בנאר, לעיני פרעה, ולעיני עבדיו; ויהפכו כל-המים אשר-בנאר, לדם. **ז,כא** והדגה אשר-בנאר מתה, ויבאש הנאר, ולא-יכלו מצרים, לשתות מים מן-הנאר"

19 And the LORD said unto Moses: 'Say unto Aaron: Take thy rod, and stretch out thy hand over the waters of Egypt, over their rivers, over their streams, and over their pools, and over all their ponds of water, that they may become blood; and there shall be blood throughout all the land of Egypt, both in vessels of wood and in vessels of stone.' **20** And Moses and Aaron did so, as the LORD commanded; and he lifted up the rod, and smote the waters that were in the river, in the sight of Pharaoh, and in the sight of his servants; and all the waters that were in the river were turned to blood. **21** And the fish that were in the river died; and the river became foul, and the Egyptians could not drink water from the river; and the blood was throughout all the land of Egypt.

Kriyat Yam Suf- Shmot 14

"וַיֹּט מֹשֶׁה אֶת-יָדוֹ, עַל-הַיָּם, וַיּוֹלֶךְ יְהוָה אֶת-הַיָּם בְּרוּחַ קָדִים עֲזָה כָּל-הַלַּיְלָה, וַיִּשָּׂם אֶת-הַיָּם לְחִרְבָּה; וַיִּפְקְעוּ, הַמַּיִם. **יז, כב** וַיָּבֵאוּ בְנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּתוֹךְ הַיָּם, בַּיַּבֶּשֶׁה; וְהַמַּיִם לָקֵם חוֹמָה, מִיַּמִּינָם וּמִשְׂמָאלָם. **יז, כג** וַיִּרְדְּפוּ מִצְרַיִם, וַיָּבֵאוּ אַחֲרֵיהֶם--כָּל סוּס פָּרָעָה, רֶכָבוֹ וּפָרָשָׁיו: אֶל-תּוֹךְ, הַיָּם. **יז, כד** וַיְהִי, בְּאַשְׁמֶרֶת הַבֹּקֶר, וַיִּשְׁקַף יְהוָה אֶל-מַחֲנֵה מִצְרַיִם, בַּעֲמֹד אֵשׁ וָעָנָן; וַיַּהֲרֵם, אֶת מַחֲנֵה מִצְרַיִם. **יז, כה** וַיֹּסֶר, אֶת אִפְנֵי מַרְכָּבֹתָיו, וַיִּנְהַגְהוּ, בַּכְּבֵּדָת; וַיֹּאמֶר מִצְרַיִם, אֲנוֹסָה מִפְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל--כִּי יְהוָה, נִלְחָם לָקֵם בְּמִצְרַיִם הַדֵּם, בְּכָל-אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם"

21 And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all the night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. **22** And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground; and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left. **23** And the Egyptians pursued, and went in after them into the midst of the sea, all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. **24** And it came to pass in the morning watch, that the LORD looked forth upon the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of cloud, and discomfited the host of the Egyptians. **25** And He took off their chariot wheels, and made them to drive heavily; so that the Egyptians said: 'Let us flee from the face of Israel; for the LORD fighteth for them against the Egyptians.

Man in the desert- Bamidbar- 11

וְלִקְטוּ וַיִּטְחְנוּ בְּרַחֲמֵים, אוֹ דָכוּ בַמְדֻכָּה, וּבִשְׁלוֹ בַפְּרוּר, וַעֲשׂוּ אֹתוֹ עֲגוֹת; וַהֲיָה טַעְמוֹ, "אֶל-הַמָּן עֵינַיִנוּ. **יא, ז** וְהָמָן גַּד הוּא; וְעֵינֵנוּ, כְּעֵינֵי הַבְּדֹלַח. **יא, ח** שָׁטוּ הַעַם כְּטַעַם לֶשֶׁד הַשָּׁמֶן. **יא, ט** וַיִּבְרְדַת הַטַּל עַל-הַמַּחֲנֵה, לַיְלָה, יָרַד הַמָּן, עָלָיו."

6 but now our soul is dried away; there is nothing at all; we have nought save this manna to look to.'-- **7** Now the manna was like coriander seed, and the appearance thereof as the appearance of bdellium. **8** The people went about, and gathered it, and ground it in mills, or beat it in mortars, and seethed it in pots, and made cakes of it; and the taste of it was as the taste of a cake baked with oil. **9** And when the dew fell upon the camp in the night, the manna fell upon it.

David and Goliath- Shmuel 17

"וַהֲיָה כִּי-קָם הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי, וַיִּלָּךְ וַיִּקְרַב לְקִרְאֵת דָּוִד; וַיִּמְהַר דָּוִד, וַיִּרַץ הַמַּעְרָבָה לְקִרְאֵת הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי. **מט** וַיִּשְׁלַח דָּוִד אֶת-יָדוֹ אֶל-הַכְּלִי, וַיִּקַּח מִשָּׁם אֶבֶן וַיִּקְלַע, וַיַּךְ אֶת-הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי, אֶל-מִצְחוֹ; וַתִּטְבַּע הָאֶבֶן בְּמִצְחוֹ, וַיִּפֹּל עַל-פָּנָיו אֶרְצָה. **נ** וַיִּחַזַק דָּוִד מִן-הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי בַקֶּלַע וּבָאֶבֶן, וַיַּךְ אֶת-הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי וַיִּמְתְּהוּ; וַתִּרְב, אִין בְּיַד-דָּוִד. **נא** וַיִּרַץ דָּוִד וַיַּעֲמֵד אֶל-הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי וַיִּקַּח אֶת-חַרְבּוֹ וַיִּשְׁלֹפֶה מִתַּעֲרָה, וַיִּמְתְּתְהוּ, וַיִּכְרַת-בָּהּ, אֶת-רֹאשׁוֹ; וַיִּרְאוּ הַפְּלִשְׁתִּים כִּי-מַת גְּבוּרָם, וַיִּנְסוּ. **נב** וַיִּקְמוּ אֲנָשֵׁי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיַּהוּדָה וַיִּרְעוּ, וַיִּרְדְּפוּ אֶת-הַפְּלִשְׁתִּים, עַד-בּוֹאֵף גַּיָּא, וְעַד שַׁעְרֵי עֶקְרוֹן; וַיִּפְלוּ חֲלָלִי פְלִשְׁתִּים, בְּדָרַף שַׁעְרֵימ, וְעַד-גַּת, וְעַד-עֶקְרוֹן. **נג** וַיָּשָׁבוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, מִדָּלֵק אַחֲרֵי פְלִשְׁתִּים; וַיִּשְׁפּוּ, אֶת-מַחֲנֵיהֶם. **נד** וַיִּקַּח דָּוִד אֶת-רֹאשׁ הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי, וַיָּבֵאֵהוּ יְרוּשָׁלַם; וְאֶת-כְּלָיו, שָׁם בְּאֵהָלוֹ."

48 And it came to pass, when the Philistine arose, and came and drew nigh to meet David, that David hastened, and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine. **49** And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slung it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead; and the stone sank into his forehead, and he fell upon his face to the earth. **50** So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone, and smote the Philistine, and slew him; but there was no sword in the hand of David. **51** And David ran, and stood over the Philistine, and took his sword, and drew it out of the sheath thereof, and slew him, and cut off his head therewith. And when the Philistines saw that their mighty man was dead, they fled. **52** And the men of Israel and of Judah arose, and shouted, and pursued the Philistines, until thou comest to Gai, and to the gates of Ekron. And the wounded of the Philistines fell down by the way to Shaaraim, even unto Gath, and unto Ekron. **53** And the children of Israel returned from chasing after the Philistines, and they spoiled their camp. **54** And David took the head of the philistine, and brought it to Jerusalem; but he put his armour in his tent.

After everyone presents, teach all the kids the song "There Can Be Miracles" (from the Prince of Egypt)

Many night's we've prayed
With no proof anyone could hear
In our hearts a hopeful song
We barely understood,
Now we are not afraid
Although we know there's much to fear
We were moving mountains
long before we knew we could

There can be miracles
When you believe
Though hope is frail
It's hard to kill
Who knows what miracles
You can achieve
When you believe

Somehow you will
You will when you believe

In this time of fear
When prayer so often proved in vain
Hope seemed like the summer birds
Too swiftly flown away
Yet now I'm standing here
With heart so full I can't explain
Seeking faith and speaking words
I never thought I'd say

There can be miracles
When you believe
All hope is frail
Its hard to kill
Who knows what miracles
You can achieve
When you believe
Somehow you will
You will when you believe

A-shir-ra la-do-shem, ki ga-oh ga-oh
A-shir-ra la-do-shem ki ga-oh ga-oh
Mi-cha-mo-cha ba-elim Hashem
Mi-ka-mo-cha ne-dar-ba-ko-desh
Na-chi-tah v'-chas-d'-cha am zu ga-al-ta
Na-chi-tah v'-chas-d'-cha am zu ga-al-ta
A-shi-ra, a-shi-ra, A-shi-ra.....

There can be miracles
When you believe
Though hope is frail
Its hard to kill
Who knows what miracles
You can achieve
When you believe
Somehow you will
Now you will
You will when you believe.....
You will when you believe

DISCUSSION: Do you think it's good that there are miracles in the world? Do you think that it makes people put less effort, because they just rely on miracles? Why when people talk about miracles they refer to huge things? Maybe it could be a small everyday occurrence. So how it is connected to Chanukah? In Chanukah the Chashmonaim won the Greeks although they were the weak and with less people. The victory was a huge miracle! We learned that miracles happen everyday, all around us, and maybe we just need to pay closer attention to these miracles, and not just think about the large miracles of the Tanach. Maybe we all need to appreciate the small things a little bit more.

LEADER TIP: Everyone loves Chanukah songs! Sing as many as you can!
Teach the kids your own favorites from when you were their age!

CHANUKAH STORY

The Holiday Card

A small Chanukah miracle for a lonely Jewish soldier in Iraq.

It was our first big celebration as a family since our son's bris, eight years earlier. Our daughter Aliza was becoming a Bat Mitzvah. We had a fun idea for how to celebrate it: We had been married years earlier on a boat in Manhattan, and since Aliza was born on our first anniversary, we thought we would do it again.

So we hired a boat and invited a small group of mostly relatives and classmates. In planning the food and the flowers and the music, there seemed to be something missing. We had the "bar," but where was the "mitzvah"? Aside from my daughter's Dvar Torah ("the speech"), what could we do to elevate this gathering from being just another birthday party?

Providentially, there was a request in our synagogue to pray for a local soldier who was being deployed to Iraq. The idea was born; let's have all the kids at our simcha (celebration) make Chanukah cards to send to Jewish soldiers overseas. Nothing earth-shattering, just a way to inject some meaning into the festivities.

The date arrived and our ship sailed. God granted us a picture perfect September day and when Aliza's carefully prepared speech blew overboard, she adlibbed admirably. The Chanukah cards were written and colored and decorated. A lovely time was had by all. And the next day, the cards were mailed out with heartfelt wishes and love to our Jewish brothers and sisters. End of story.

Or so we thought.

Six months later, when the bat mitzvah was a fond, distant memory, there was a knock on my door in the middle of the day. Bravely, I unlocked the door, even though I didn't recognize the voice on the other side. A pleasant twenty-something man greeted me:

"I'm Lt. Steinberg, and your daughter sent me a Chanukah card when I was in Iraq."

Well, you could've blown me over with a feather.

But wait -- it gets better.

Apparently our few dozen cards had been thrown in with the hundreds and thousands of cards sent to celebrate that other December holiday. The chaplain showed up one day at the army base with an enormous sack, filled to the brim with cards and letters. As he passed out handfuls of cards to the grateful troops, Lt. Steinberg was hanging back, feeling pretty left out and lonely.

Suddenly amidst the celebratory crowd, the company captain noticed our soldier. "Steinberg, why are you so quiet? How come you're not opening any cards?"

Oh brother, Steinberg thought, *don't they get it?* "Captain, I'm Jewish, remember?"

"C'mon, Steinberg, don't be a spoilsport. Take a card."

Steinberg tried to shrink himself into invisibility. But the captain wasn't having it. "Let's go, Steinberg. These people were nice enough to write to us. NOW TAKE A CARD!"

By now the captain had everyone's attention and Steinberg was getting pretty uncomfortable in the spotlight. *Quick*, he told himself, *just grab a Christmas card and you'll stop being the center of attention.*

Steinberg reached deep into the sack, pulled out a card and looked at it. To his complete and utter shock the return address said Wesley Hills, New York. Steinberg is from Wesley Hills.

Hands shaking, he tore it open and found a beautiful hand-made Chanukah card, signed by my daughter Aliza, the Bat Mitzvah girl herself. Steinberg was dumbfounded by the providence of it all. He broke out in a huge grin and proudly showed the card to the captain and the entire platoon. Everyone understood the small miracle they had just witnessed.

Standing there in my Wesley Hills home, with my mouth gaping open and tears in my eyes, I begged Steinberg to come back and retell the story when my children were home. Indeed, he returned the following week with a friend and a camera. For our family, it was an incredible inspiration to see so clearly the power of our "little" mitzvah.

But that's not the end of the story. Just this past September one of the chaplains I had contacted about sending those cards asked if I could help arrange kosher meals and snacks for troops in Afghanistan for the High Holidays and Sukkot. I organized some people in my community and we sent 144 kosher meals to Afghanistan. Aish HaTorah's Project Inspire got involved and sent dozens of personal cards and honey sticks for Rosh Hashanah and then chocolates for Chanukah to troops in Afghanistan, Iraq, Italy and Kuwait.

LEADER TIP: What light can you share this Chanukah?
Spread the light by doing good things for others.

JEWISH LEADER OF THE WEEK



Yehudit

A Jewish woman named Yehudit has become a very important part of the story of Chanukah. A Greek commander led his army to take down a revolt that was starting in Yerushalayim. The Greek army camped around the walls of the city and began a strong siege. Even though Yerushalayim was a very strong and united city, the persistent siege by a stronger army began to take a toll on the people of Yerushalayim. A widow named Yehudit left the city and requested to talk with the commander. Her plan was to try and get him to like her and then kill him. Her plan was successful. The commander gave a feast in honor of Yehudit and he became very drunk. That night the commander and Yehudit went back to his private tent where he fell into a deep sleep. While he was asleep Yehudit took his sword and killed him. Yehudit then brought the commander's head back to Yerushalayim where it was hung on the city walls for everyone to see. The Jews were inspired by the daring heroism of Yehudit, and the Greek forces fled. It was a key turning point in the Jewish revolt against the Greeks. There is a custom to eat dairy products on Chanukah to commemorate the miracle that was produced through Yehudit, the daughter of Yochanan the Kohen Gadol. Even though this happened before Chanukah, the memory of this act of courage gave the Chashmonaim the strength and bravery needed to rebel against the Greeks. Therefore, Yehudit's courageous deed is viewed as part of the miracle of Chanukah. There is also a custom to eat fried foods like Latkes and jelly-filled doughnuts on Chanukah. Women have special value during Chanukah, for the miracle began because of the courage of Yehudit.

LEADER TIP: Drink an extra cup of milk in honor of Yehudit! An extra chocolate bar works too 😊

TEFILLAH TREASURES

Chanukah Tefillot

After lighting the first candle while the others are being lit, the tefillah of Hanerot Hallalu is said. It affirms that we light these candles in memory of the miracles Hashem performed for the Jewish people in the Chanukah story. It ends by saying that throughout the eight days of Chanukah, the lights are holy - and we should only use them as an expression of gratitude and praise to Hashem for his miracles.

Maoz Tzur is the universal song of Chanukah. It goes through years of persecution - Egypt, Babylon, Haman, the Syrian-Greeks, the nineteen centuries since the Second Beit Hamikdash was destroyed and praises Hashem for redeeming Bnei Yisrael after each of them. A song of hope, it gives the Jews the courage to face the future and emphasizes the desire to return of the Beit Hamikdash and the coming of Moshiach.

Al Hanissim is a tefillah that is added on Chanukah to Birkat Hamazon and Shmoneh Esrei. It starts by saying thank you to Hashem for the miracles of Chanukah. Al Hanissim doesn't talk about the miracle of the oil, but rather more about the miracle of the war. Al Hanissim focuses on both the physical and spiritual victories of the small group of Jews over the Syrian-Greek enemies, and the role of Hashem in the history of the Jews protecting us every step of the way. Al Hanissim talks about the miracles that happened "bayamim hahem bazman hazeh, (in those days, at this time)." Some say that it only refers to the miracles Hashem performed for our ancestors; others say that it also hints to the countless hidden miracles that Hashem does for us every day.

LEADER TIP: Almost everyone sings the same tune for Maoz Tzur, Hanerot Hallalu on the other hand is a different story. See how many Hanerot Hallalu tunes you have in your group!



This Week in Jewish History

25th of Kislev

The Chanukah Story

Alexander the Great, the conqueror of the world, was a good friend of the Jewish people. After he died, his Empire was split among his generals. Israel was added to the Empire of Antiochus III. When Antiochus became king of the Syrian-Greeks, he wanted the Jews to stop learning and following the Torah and instead follow the Greek ways. He defiled the Beit Hamikdash filling it with idols and pigs. He didn't allow the Jews to follow the commandments of Brit Milah, Rosh Chodesh, and Shabbat. Matityahu was the Kohen of the time and decided that enough was enough. He gathered all the people of Modi'in shouting, "*Mi La'Hashem Ay-li* (Whoever is for Hashem, let him come to me)," and led the people to rebellion. Only a small number of people responded at first but Matityahu's five sons (Yehudah, Eliezer, Shimon, Yochanan, and Yonatan) led the way. Matityahu passed on the leadership to his second son, Yehudah the Maccabee, who was a mighty warrior and a

captivating leader. Many miracles

happened during the war. Outnumbered a hundred to one, Yehudah and his men won many battles. The Jews came to join him and together they defeated the armies of Syria. Despite being so much smaller in number and power compared to the Greeks, the Maccabim came out on top. On the twenty fifth day of Kislev, they marched into Yerushalayim and immediately made their way to the Beit Hamikdash where they saw a sight that left them shocked and angered. Idols, filth, impurity were everywhere. They searched through the ruins looking for at least one flask of pure olive oil so that they could light the menorah they quickly put together. They finally found one small jug with enough oil for only



one day. They poured it into the menorah and lit it.



Miraculously it lasted for eight days long. Those eight miraculous days were chosen as the everlasting symbol to commemorate the miracle of Chanukah publicizing the miracles Hashem performed.



FIND...

- Antiochus
- Matityahu
- Yehudah
- Maccabim
- Miracle
- Olive Oil
- Al Hanisim
- Maoz Tzur

TRIVIA QUESTION OF THE WEEK

ON BACK OF WHICH ISRAELI COIN IS A PICTURE OF THE MENORAH?

Email your answers to YOUTH@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!

- **Cats can't taste sweets.**
- **Some wild turkeys run up to 25 miles an hour.**
- **Only male turkeys gobble, female turkeys click.**
- **An inch of rain is equal to 10 inches of snow.**
- **Chionophobia is the fear of snow**

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

Chanukah Points to Ponder...

- The word for candles, **NER**, Nun-Reish, stands for Nefesh (soul) and Ruach (spirit). The numerical value of **NER** is 250 which equals the 248 limbs dedicated to the 248 positive action Mitzvos plus Ahava-Love and Yira- fear.
- Torah is light as we mentioned earlier. Light continues to expel darkness at 186,000 miles per second forever. It never tires. Light is forever! So too the Torah we have learned is a ray of eternity that never ceases. (Maharal)
- In the Talmud's account of Chanukah it is recorded that the Greeks contaminated all the oil in the sanctuary. After the victory of the holy Jewish army it says that they searched and only found one jar of oil that still had the seal of Kohen Gadol. If they contaminated all the oil then how did they find a jar? There is an indestructible jar in the heart of our people that can never be sullied or compromised. From that point of purity everyone and everything can be rebuilt. It requires, however an honest search to find it. (Sefat Emet)
- Eight is not just another single step after seven. Seven is the stuff of this world which was completed in seven days. It's no mistake the letters for the word – Shemona - 8 is the same as the letters for Neshama-soul which has the same letters for Mishneh - which is the building block of the Oral Torah. The eight floats like oil over nature - Teva (literally - sink).The word oil, Shemen uses these letters too. Eight is beyond. Once we hit eight we keep on “going up in holiness and not going down” (Shabbat 21B) Chanukah never ends! It only begins! On Chanukah we all strive for the world of **8 - the symbol of infinity!**

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

NCYI Department of Synagogue Services

Youth@YoungIsrael.org

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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



Published by the National Council of Young Israel

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! | |



MIKEITZ REVIEW

Paroh had two dreams. In the first dream, there were seven fat cows that came out from the Nile, followed by seven skinny cows. The skinny cows then ate the fat cows. In his second dream, seven healthy stalks of grain were eaten by seven thin stalks. In the morning, none of Paroh's wise men were able to interpret the dreams to Paroh's liking. Paroh's butler came over to him and told him that while he was in jail there was a man named Yosef who was able to interpret dreams. Paroh ordered for Yosef's release, and he told Yosef about his dreams. Yosef told Paroh that both dreams were relaying the same message that there would be seven years of plenty, followed by seven years of famine. Yosef told Paroh to save the extra food from the years of plenty to be prepared for the years of famine. Paroh made Yosef as second in command of Egypt, and put him in charge of collecting all the food. Yosef married Osnat, the daughter of Poti-phaera, and they had two sons: Menashe and Efraim. When the years of famine started, Yosef had enough stored food that he sold to anyone who needed. Meanwhile, in nearby Canaan, Yaakov sent his sons – all of them except Binyamin – to Egypt to buy food. The brothers came to Egypt and stood before Yosef, but didn't recognize him after the many years of being apart. When the brothers asked to buy food, Yosef was very harsh with them accusing them of being spies and sent them to jail for three days. On the third day, Yosef released them all, except for Shimon, who he held hostage. He told the rest of the brothers to go back to Canaan and come back with their youngest brother, Binyamin. The brothers realized that they were being punished for selling Yosef years ago and regretted it tremendously. Yosef told his servants to put money in the sacks of grain the brothers were given. The brothers got back to Canaan and told the entire story of what happened to Yaakov. Yaakov was very bothered by what happened and refused to send Binyamin, reluctant to consider the possibility of losing Rachel's only other son. Eventually, though, after they were getting low on food, and Yehudah personally guaranteed Binyamin's safe return and Yaakov agreed to send him. The brothers arrived back in Egypt and Yosef invited the brothers to join him for a meal where they were reunited with Shimon. When Yosef saw Binyamin, he was so overwhelmed with emotion, but he kept it in. In the morning the brothers left, but not before Yosef had his royal goblet put in Binyamin's sack of food. Yosef then sent his guards to catch the brothers and "find" the planted goblet. The brothers were all brought back to Yosef, who demanded that the "thief," Binyamin alone, stay back as his slave.

LEADER TIP: As soon as the kids come into groups, pretend to be suspicious of them being spies just like the brothers

PARSHA QUESTIONS

Questions

1. What were Paroh's two dreams?
2. Who suggested to Paroh that Yosef interpret his dreams?
3. What was the message of Paroh's dreams?
4. What did Yosef recommend that they do in response to Paroh's dreams?
5. Who did Yosef marry and what were their sons' names?
6. What honor did Paroh bestow upon Yosef?
7. Which of the brothers originally came to Mitzrayim to buy food?
8. Did the brothers recognize Yosef? Did Yosef recognize the brothers?
9. What did Yosef accuse the brothers of doing when they got to Mitzrayim?
10. What did Yosef make the brothers do to prove they weren't spies?
11. Who does Yosef take as a hostage?
12. When does Yaakov agree to send Binyamin to Mitzrayim?
13. When the brothers return back to Mitzrayim, how does Yosef greet them?
14. When the brothers leave, what do they find in Binyamins bag? How did it get there?
15. What does Yosef do in response to finding the goblet?

Answers

1. In the first dream, there were seven fat cows that came out from the Nile, followed by seven skinny cows. The skinny cows then ate the fat cows. In his second dream, seven healthy stalks of grain were eaten by seven thin stalks.
2. Paroh's butler that met Yosef in jail
3. That there would be seven years of plenty of food followed by seven years of famine.
4. That Paroh should store food during the plentiful years to prepare for the years of famine.
5. Yosef married Osnat and their sons were Menashe and Efraim
6. He made him governor and second in command of Mitzrayim
7. Everyone except for Binyamin
8. The brothers didn't recognize Yosef but Yosef recognized them.
9. Yosef accused the brothers of being spies
10. Go back to Canaan and bring back their other brother Binyamin
11. Shimon
12. When Yehudah takes personal responsibility for him
13. He invites them to a big meal in his home
14. Yosef's silver goblet. Yosef put it there before they left
15. He sends his guards after the brothers to find the goblet and keeps Binyamin as a slave

LEADER TIP: As a joke, warn the kids that next Shabbat there may be a shortage of candy and the group must save some during this week.

PARSHA ACTIVITY

GOAL: In this week's Parsha we again see the importance of dreams. We really need to stop, think and ask ourselves, what does it mean to dream? Not just the strange things that go on inside our heads when we sleep, but the kind of dreams Martin Luther King spoke of when he uttered those immortal words, "I have a dream". To be able to honestly assess our situation and ourselves and develop real goals for the future is an amazing thing to be able to do.

ACTIVITY: "Mad Libs"

Create a funny, crazy, and silly story and write it out either on a big poster board to show the rest of the group or just read it to them. You can also search online for readymade "Mad Libs" stories as well. Make sure to leave random spaces throughout your story for the kids to fill in the blanks. Print out a bunch of different words or pictures and spread them all over the room for the kids to choose from. You can either put them right in front of them or hide them around the room. Make a list of all the blanks you left in your story so that the kids can fill them in. For example: (boy's name) was super (adjective) when he got home and saw his favorite celebrity (famous person's name) sitting on his (noun). The kids must fill in the words before you read the story to them. You will help them come up with different nouns, verbs, adjectives, names, etc. to help complete the story. This is where the printed out words and pictures will come in handy. When all the needed words are chosen, place them into the given slots in the story and read it aloud to the kids. Needless to say, hilarity will most definitely ensue. Come up with a few stories as the kids will have a great time making up their own stories!

DISCUSSION: Everyone has dreams but the question is, how many of us remember them every day? There are the dreams we have when we sleep at night which sometimes it's hard to remember. There are also dreams that we have every day that remind us to keep working hard and become better people. Having dreams means having goals and aspirations. There are smaller dreams such as doing well playing a board game or making it on time to the movies. There are also bigger dreams such as doing well in school, winning an award, or becoming a professional basketball player. We see between this week's parsha and last week's parsha the importance that dreams play. Dreams come true with the help of Hashem but not without our own personal work and effort as well. In these games, we had a certain goal in mind that we wanted to accomplish. Even if it may not have been the biggest of goals or dreams, it was something that we really wanted to accomplish. We couldn't do it on our own and we used the help of our fellow teammates to help us succeed and fulfill our "dreams". Dreams don't take much work or effort to think of, what does take work is accomplishing them. But that being said, the feeling of accomplishing dreams, especially the ones that you work hard for, is incomparable to anything. It means you've taken a step higher in the ladder of becoming the best you can. Keep dreaming, and keep working hard to accomplish as much as you can and become the person your dreams remind you you can be.

LEADER TIP: Try to think of a dream that you have that you've always been too nervous to try and work hard for. No matter if it's big or small, any goal you accomplish is a big deal.

PARSHA STORY

Before you read: In this week's Parsha, the Torah takes us into the world of dreams. We see Yosef's childhood dreams coming to fruition after many years. We learn of Paroh's prophetic dreams, and how Yosef's skilled interpretations of them averted a worldwide famine. There are many types of dreams. We all have dreams and sincere yearnings of how we would like to see our lives in the future. Others may try to tell us to forget about them, and settle for something less. But Hashem knows and understands our deepest yearnings, and leads us in the direction that we truly want to go. So if we trust in Hashem, and hold on to our dreams, many times He will make them come true!

"ANIMAL CRACKERS"

"If it's furry, four-legged, flies, or has fins, it's a friend of Mike Walder's", his pals would joke. And it was true - the boy just seemed to have a natural, and deep love for animals.

Mike would spend whatever spare time he had, taking in stray baby birds, squirrels, or any other creature in need. His greatest dream, ever since he could remember, was to one day be able to spend all day doing what he loved - helping animals. He would share his dream with anyone who would listen. Many of his friends really encouraged him about his dream, but others were less enthusiastic, and some guys would even make fun of him.

One day, Mike and his best friend, Randy were walking home from school, when he heard his name being called. He turned around.

"Hey Walder!" called out Tim, a kid from the neighborhood to whom he had recently told of his dream. "Here's your big chance! There's a sick ant over here on the sidewalk. Come on over here and give him C.P.R. before it's too late!"

He let out a loud laugh, as if it was the funniest joke in the world. But to Mike it really hurt.

The boys kept walking. "What a mean thing to say!" said Randy indignantly.

Mike sighed. "But maybe he's right," he said to Randy. "Maybe I do go too overboard about animals, and my desire to spend my life taking care of them is just a foolish dream."

Randy shook his head. "No way, Mike." he said, "Don't pay any attention to guys like that. They've probably just given up on their own dreams, and want to kill other people's dreams too. If your dream is worthwhile, and it's important to you, God's gonna make it happen some day. Just don't give it up, buddy, and you'll see."

Mike smiled and appreciated his friend's encouraging words. Then and there, he told himself, that he would hold onto his dream until it came true, no matter what.

A number of years passed, and the boys got older and busier. Mike tried to stay focused on his dream even though sometimes he felt tempted just to let it fade away. Now as the school year was almost over, Mike and his friends, who would be starting high school next year, were all trying to make plans for summer vacation. Mike was hoping to line up an interesting summer job that would give him some extra pocket money. He had applied several weeks ago to a local nature park for a job as a guide, and was waiting to hear back.

One afternoon, he decided to go visit his old friend, Randy, who had moved across town, and he hadn't seen for a long time. As the boys reminisced, Randy said with a sincere smile, "I hope you're still holding on to your special dream of helping animals."

Mike smiled back and nodded pensively. He hadn't thought about it for a while, but Randy's comment brought back old memories, and made him realize just how much his dream still meant to him. Mike recalled his friend's inspiring words from long ago, "...If it's worthwhile, and important to you, God's gonna make it happen" But when? thought Mike, But how?

At that very moment, his cell-phone rang, and brought him out of his reverie. It was the park authority. Mike held his breath, hoping he got the job. "We can see from your application that you really appreciate nature, and would be great for the job," said the voice on the other end of the line. Mike perked up. "But," the voice went on, "we're really sorry - all the guide jobs are filled."

The boy felt really disappointed, but as a last attempt, blurted out, "Are you sure? Isn't there *any* kind of a job?"

The man on the phone was silent for a moment. "Well, there *is* one job that just became available, but I don't know if you'll want it." Mike listened, and silently prayed. "It happens to be that we're opening up a new petting zoo at the park, and the head veterinarian needs an assistant to help him take care of the animals. It doesn't pay that much, and you will be busy all day with the animals... You interested?"

The boy nearly dropped the phone, but not before he blurted out a hearty "Yes!"

As he hung up, his friend looked at him and said, "What's up, Mike? You look like you're walking on a cloud."

Mike just shook his head in amazement. He was so grateful that he had never given up dreaming. He turned to his friend, smiling ear-to-ear, and said, "Well Randy, what can I tell you? How else should someone look who just heard his dream come true?"

Discussion Questions: Q. How did Mike feel after Tim teased him about his dream of taking care of animals?

A. The boy's scoffing made him feel deflated, and he wanted to abandon his dream.

Q. How did he feel after he got offered the job?

A. He felt great, and was glad that he never gave up on his dream.

Q. What's one of your dreams?

LEADER TIP: In order to accomplish our goals and dreams, it's important to have people we know we can count on. Who are those people for you?

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JEWISH LEADER OF THE WEEK

Chaim Weizmann

(November 27, 1874- November 9, 1952)



Chaim Weizmann was born in Motol, Russia in 1874. He studied biochemistry in Switzerland and Germany. Already in Geneva, he became active in the Zionist movement. In 1905 he moved to England, and was elected to the General Zionist Council. Weizmann helped forces in World War I which brought him in contact with British leaders, allowing him to play a key role in the creating the Balfour Declaration on November 2, 1917 where Britain dedicated itself to the establishment of a Jewish home in Palestine. Chaim Weizmann again served as President of the WZO from 1935-1946. During the years that led up to World War II, he worked extremely hard in creating the Jewish Brigade. After the end of World War II, Weizmann was vital in the approval of the Partition Plan by the United Nations on November 29, 1947, and in the recognition of Israel by the United States. With the declaration of the State of Israel, Weizmann was chosen to serve as the first President of Israel. This role he filled until his death in 1952.

LEADER TIP: Some people dream of bigger things not only for themselves, but for the greater Jewish people or community as a whole. What does that mean to you?

TEFILLAH TREASURES

Shemoneh Esrei- Ata Kadosh

The idea of the third bracha is Hashem's holiness. We know that the Torah is holy, Israel is holy and Hashem is holy, but what exactly is "holiness?" Kadosh, which means "holy," more specifically means that something is special and set apart from the rest. Something being "special" means unique as well. Being that Hashem is the most unique being, since He is One of a kind, He is the Most Holy and the source of all holiness. The bracha talks to Hashem, saying that "Your holy ones will praise You every day, forever." On one level, this is talking about Hashem's supporting angels, who praise Him constantly. On another level, it can be talking about the Jewish people who praise Hashem daily with davening. During chazarat hashatz, this bracha is where Kedusha is said. In this prayer, we follow the ways that the angels praise Hashem. For example, this is why we stand with our feet together, since angels are described as having a single "straight leg" (Ezekiel 1:7). We say pesukim praising Hashem's qualities of holiness. During the Aseret Yamei Teshuvah from Rosh Hashana through Yom Kippur, the end of this bracha, normally "ha(k)El haKadosh" ("the holy God") is replaced by "haMelech haKadosh" ("the holy King"). This hints to the time of year's greater attribute of justice (as opposed to that of mercy, which has more influence the rest of the year).

LEADER TIP: What does it mean to be holy? As the Jewish people, we are considered holy people. Remind yourself that every day and never forget how unique, special, and holy you are.



MIKEITZ REVIEW

Paroh had two dreams. In the first dream, there were seven fat cows that came out from the Nile, followed by seven skinny cows. The skinny cows then ate the fat cows. In his second dream, seven healthy stalks of grain were eaten by seven thin stalks. In the morning, none of Paroh's wise men were able to interpret the dreams to Paroh's liking. Paroh's butler came over to him and told him that while he was in jail there was a man named Yosef who was able to interpret dreams. Paroh ordered for Yosef's release, and he told Yosef about his dreams. Yosef told Paroh that both dreams were relaying the same message that there would be seven years of plenty, followed by seven years of famine. Yosef told Paroh to save the extra food from the years of plenty to be prepared for the years of famine. Paroh made Yosef as second in command of Egypt, and put him in charge of collecting all the food. Yosef married Osnat, the daughter of Poti-phaera, and they had two sons: Menashe and Efraim. When the years of famine started, Yosef had enough stored food that he sold to anyone who needed. Meanwhile, in nearby Canaan, Yaakov sent his sons – all of them except Binyamin – to Egypt to buy food. The brothers came to Egypt and stood before Yosef, but didn't recognize him after the many years of being apart. When the brothers asked to buy food, Yosef was very harsh with them accusing them of being spies and sent them to jail for three days. On the third day, Yosef released them all, except for Shimon, who he held hostage. He told the rest of the brothers to go back to Canaan and come back with their youngest brother, Binyamin. The brothers realized that they were being punished for selling Yosef years ago and regretted it tremendously. Yosef told his servants to put money in the sacks of grain the brothers were given. The brothers got back to Canaan and told the entire story of what happened to Yaakov. Yaakov was very bothered by what happened and refused to send Binyamin, reluctant to consider the possibility of losing Rachel's only other son. Eventually, though, after they were getting low on food, and Yehudah personally guaranteed Binyamin's safe return and Yaakov agreed to send him. The brothers arrived back in Egypt and Yosef invited the brothers to join him for a meal where they were reunited with Shimon. When Yosef saw Binyamin, he was so overwhelmed with emotion, but he kept it in. In the morning the brothers left, but not before Yosef had his royal goblet put in Binyamin's sack of food. Yosef then sent his guards to catch the brothers and "find" the planted goblet. The brothers were all brought back to Yosef, who demanded that the "thief," Binyamin alone, stay back as his slave.

LEADER TIP: As soon as the kids come into groups, pretend to be suspicious of them being spies just like the brothers

PARSHA QUESTIONS

Questions

16. What were Paroh's two dreams?
17. Who suggested to Paroh that Yosef interpret his dreams?
18. What was the message of Paroh's dreams?
19. What did Yosef recommend that they do in response to Paroh's dreams?
20. Who did Yosef marry and what were their sons' names?
21. What honor did Paroh bestow upon Yosef?
22. Which of the brothers originally came to Mitzrayim to buy food?
23. Did the brothers recognize Yosef? Did Yosef recognize the brothers?
24. What did Yosef accuse the brothers of doing when they got to Mitzrayim?
25. What did Yosef make the brothers do to prove they weren't spies?
26. Who does Yosef take as a hostage?
27. When does Yaakov agree to send Binyamin to Mitzrayim?
28. When the brothers return back to Mitzrayim, how does Yosef greet them?
29. When the brothers leave, what do they find in Binyamins bag? How did it get there?
30. What does Yosef do in response to finding the goblet?

Answers

16. In the first dream, there were seven fat cows that came out from the Nile, followed by seven skinny cows. The skinny cows then ate the fat cows. In his second dream, seven healthy stalks of grain were eaten by seven thin stalks.
17. Paroh's butler that met Yosef in jail
18. That there would be seven years of plenty of food followed by seven years of famine.
19. That Paroh should store food during the plentiful years to prepare for the years of famine.
20. Yosef married Osnat and their sons were Menashe and Efraim
21. He made him governor and second in command of Mitzrayim
22. Everyone except for Binyamin
23. The brothers didn't recognize Yosef but Yosef recognized them.
24. Yosef accused the brothers of being spies
25. Go back to Canaan and bring back their other brother Binyamin
26. Shimon
27. When Yehudah takes personal responsibility for him
28. He invites them to a big meal in his home
29. Yosef's silver goblet. Yosef put it there before they left
30. He sends his guards after the brothers to find the goblet and keeps Binyamin as a slave

LEADER TIP: As a joke, warn the kids that next Shabbat there may be a shortage of candy and the group must save some during this week.

PARSHA ACTIVITY

GOAL: In this week's Parsha we again see the importance of dreams. We really need to stop, think and ask ourselves, what does it mean to dream? Not just the strange things that go on inside our heads when we sleep, but the kind of dreams Martin Luther King spoke of when he uttered those immortal words, "I have a dream". To be able to honestly assess our situation and ourselves and develop real goals for the future is an amazing thing to be able to do.

ACTIVITY: "Mad Libs"

Create a funny, crazy, and silly story and write it out either on a big poster board to show the rest of the group or just read it to them. You can also search online for readymade "Mad Libs" stories as well. Make sure to leave random spaces throughout your story for the kids to fill in the blanks. Print out a bunch of different words or pictures and spread them all over the room for the kids to choose from. You can either put them right in front of them or hide them around the room. Make a list of all the blanks you left in your story so that the kids can fill them in. For example: (boy's name) was super (adjective) when he got home and saw his favorite celebrity (famous person's name) sitting on his (noun). The kids must fill in the words before you read the story to them. You will help them come up with different nouns, verbs, adjectives, names, etc. to help complete the story. This is where the printed out words and pictures will come in handy. When all the needed words are chosen, place them into the given slots in the story and read it aloud to the kids. Needless to say, hilarity will most definitely ensue. Come up with a few stories as the kids will have a great time making up their own stories!

"Team Story"

The idea of this game is to say one big connected story all together as a group. Sit in one big circle all together. Have a group leader start off the story such as "Once upon a time" or "In a small town in the middle of Wisconsin" or anything else they can come up with. Then pass it to the next person in the circle and have them say one sentence to continue the story and then pass it to the person next to them. They must continue the story using one sentence at a time. The story should definitely get pretty funny, but it may take some group leader help to make sure things stay somewhat making sense and end help end the story when you see it getting out of control. Once you say a couple stories using one sentence at a time, see if you can do it only one word at a time! If you want, you can also start off the game with each person saying a few sentences at a time to get their feet wet a little bit.

DISCUSSION: Everyone has dreams but the question is, how many of us remember them every day? There are the dreams we have when we sleep at night which

sometimes it's hard to remember. There are also dreams that we have every day that remind us to keep working hard and become better people. Having dreams means having goals and aspirations. There are smaller dreams such as doing well playing a board game or making it on time to the movies. There are also bigger dreams such as doing well in school, winning an award, or becoming a professional basketball player. We see between this week's parsha and last week's parsha the importance that dreams play. Dreams come true with the help of Hashem but not without our own personal work and effort as well. In these games, we had a certain goal in mind that we wanted to accomplish. Even if it may not have been the biggest of goals or dreams, it was something that we really wanted to accomplish. We couldn't do it on our own and we used the help of our fellow teammates to help us succeed and fulfill our "dreams". Dreams don't take much work or effort to think of, what does take work is accomplishing them. But that being said, the feeling of accomplishing dreams, especially the ones that you work hard for, is incomparable to anything. It means you've taken a step higher in the ladder of becoming the best you can. Keep dreaming, and keep working hard to accomplish as much as you can and become the person your dreams remind you you can be.

LEADER TIP: Try to think of a dream that you have that you've always been too nervous to try and work hard for. No matter if it's big or small, any goal you accomplish is a big deal.

PARSHA STORY

Before you read: In this week's Parsha, the Torah takes us into the world of dreams. We see Yosef's childhood dreams coming to fruition after many years. We learn of Paroh's prophetic dreams, and how Yosef's skilled interpretations of them averted a worldwide famine. There are many types of dreams. We all have dreams and sincere yearnings of how we would like to see our lives in the future. Others may try to tell us to forget about them, and settle for something less. But Hashem knows and understands our deepest yearnings, and leads us in the direction that we truly want to go. So if we trust in Hashem, and hold on to our dreams, many times He will make them come true!

"ANIMAL CRACKERS"

"If it's furry, four-legged, flies, or has fins, it's a friend of Mike Walder's", his pals would joke. And it was true - the boy just seemed to have a natural, and deep love for animals.

Mike would spend whatever spare time he had, taking in stray baby birds, squirrels, or any other creature in need. His greatest dream, ever since he could remember, was to one day be able to spend all day doing what he loved - helping animals. He would share his dream with anyone who would listen. Many of his friends really encouraged him about his dream, but others were less enthusiastic, and some guys would even make fun of him.

One day, Mike and his best friend, Randy were walking home from school, when he heard his name being called. He turned around.

"Hey Walder!" called out Tim, a kid from the neighborhood to whom he had recently told of his dream. "Here's your big chance! There's a sick ant over here on the sidewalk. Come on over here and give him C.P.R. before it's too late!"

He let out a loud laugh, as if it was the funniest joke in the world. But to Mike it really hurt.

The boys kept walking. "What a mean thing to say!" said Randy indignantly.

Mike sighed. "But maybe he's right," he said to Randy. "Maybe I do go too overboard about animals, and my desire to spend my life taking care of them is just a foolish dream."

Randy shook his head. "No way, Mike." he said, "Don't pay any attention to guys like that. They've probably just given up on their own dreams, and want to kill other people's dreams too. If your dream is worthwhile, and it's important to you, God's gonna make it happen some day. Just don't give it up, buddy, and you'll see."

Mike smiled and appreciated his friend's encouraging words. Then and there, he told himself, that he would hold onto his dream until it came true, no matter what.

A number of years passed, and the boys got older and busier. Mike tried to stay focused on his dream even though sometimes he felt tempted just to let it fade away. Now as the school year was almost over, Mike and his friends, who would be starting high school next year, were all trying to make plans for summer vacation. Mike was hoping to line up an interesting summer job that would give him some extra pocket money. He had applied several weeks ago to a local nature park for a job as a guide, and was waiting to hear back.

One afternoon, he decided to go visit his old friend, Randy, who had moved across town, and he hadn't seen for a long time. As the boys reminisced, Randy said with a sincere smile, "I hope you're still holding on to your special dream of helping animals."

Mike smiled back and nodded pensively. He hadn't thought about it for a while, but Randy's comment brought back old memories, and made him realize just how much his dream still meant to him. Mike recalled his friend's inspiring words from long ago, "...If it's worthwhile, and important to you, God's gonna make it happen" But when? thought Mike, But how?

At that very moment, his cell-phone rang, and brought him out of his reverie. It was the park authority. Mike held his breath, hoping he got the job. "We can see from your application that you

really appreciate nature, and would be great for the job," said the voice on the other end of the line. Mike perked up. "But," the voice went on, "we're really sorry - all the guide jobs are filled."

The boy felt really disappointed, but as a last attempt, blurted out, "Are you sure? Isn't there *any* kind of a job?"

The man on the phone was silent for a moment. "Well, there *is* one job that just became available, but I don't know if you'll want it." Mike listened, and silently prayed. "It happens to be that we're opening up a new petting zoo at the park, and the head veterinarian needs an assistant to help him take care of the animals. It doesn't pay that much, and you will be busy all day with the animals... You interested?"

The boy nearly dropped the phone, but not before he blurted out a hearty "Yes!"

As he hung up, his friend looked at him and said, "What's up, Mike? You look like you're walking on a cloud."

Mike just shook his head in amazement. He was so grateful that he had never given up dreaming. He turned to his friend, smiling ear-to-ear, and said, "Well Randy, what can I tell you? How else should someone look who just heard his dream come true?"

Discussion Questions: Q. Why do you think that holding on to our dreams helps them to come true?

A. When we maintain a commitment to our goal, or dream, we are in a sense asking God to make it happen, and showing Him how important it is to us. God listens to our sincere prayers, and sees how badly we're trying to fulfill our dreams. Out of His love for us, many times He sets up circumstances that will help us to make our dream a reality.

Q. Is every dream worthwhile? How can we know whether our dream is worth hanging on to?

A. It's great to dream. Just to have that feeling of wanting to reach beyond our present selves is valuable. However some dreams are more worthwhile than others. Dreams that will lead us to become better people and enable us to give something of value to the world are especially worthwhile and we should make an extra effort to try to see them through.

Q. What's one of your dreams?

LEADER TIP: In order to accomplish our goals and dreams, it's important to have people we know we can count on. Who are those people for you?

JEWISH LEADER OF THE WEEK

Chaim Weizmann

(November 27, 1874- November 9, 1952)



Chaim Weizmann was born in Motol, Russia in 1874. He studied biochemistry in Switzerland and Germany. Already in Geneva, he became active in the Zionist movement. In 1905 he moved to England, and was elected to the General Zionist Council. Weizmann helped forces in World War I which brought him in contact with British leaders, allowing him to play a key role in the creating the Balfour Declaration on November 2, 1917 where Britain dedicated itself to the establishment of a Jewish home in Palestine. In 1918, Weizmann was chosen as the head of the Zionist Commission sent to Palestine by the British government to guide the future development of the country. There, he set the foundation of Hebrew University. That same year Weizmann met in Aqaba with Emir Feisal, the leader of the Arab movement, to discuss visions of reaching an understanding on the establishment of independent Arab and Jewish states. Chaim Weizmann again served as President of the WZO from 1935-1946. During the years that led up to World War II, he worked extremely hard in creating the Jewish Brigade. After the end of World War II, Weizmann was vital in the approval of the Partition Plan by the United Nations on November 29, 1947, and in the recognition of Israel by the United States. With the declaration of the State of Israel, Weizmann was chosen to serve as the first President of Israel. This role he filled until his death in 1952.

LEADER TIP: Some people dream of bigger things not only for themselves, but for the greater Jewish people or community as a whole. What does that mean to you?

TEFILLAH TREASURES

Shemoneh Esrei- Ata Kadosh

The idea of the third bracha is Hashem's holiness. We know that the Torah is holy, Israel is holy and Hashem is holy, but what exactly is "holiness?" Kadosh, which means "holy," more specifically means that something is special and set apart from the rest. Something being "special" means unique as well. Being that Hashem is the most unique being, since He is One of a kind, He is the Most Holy and the source of all holiness. In this prayer, we follow the ways that the angels praise Hashem. For example, this is why we stand with our feet together, since angels are described as having a single "straight leg" (Ezekiel 1:7). We end the third bracha of Shemoneh Esrei by praising Hashem for being Holy, "Blessed are You, Hashem, the holy G-d." By praising Hashem's holiness, we show that despite the overwhelming presence of materialism in our world, we accept our mission to recognize Hashem functioning behind the scenes. When we accomplish that mission, we incorporate Hashem's presence with the physical world. We thereby fulfill the purpose of this world, which is to connect everything physical with its spiritual meaning. This bracha of Ata Kadosh teaches us the true purpose of our material physical world. The idea of Hashem's holiness and our own holiness has a useful, concrete effect on how we live our lives. The Torah says, "Kedoshim ti'hiu - You shall be holy, for I, Hashem your G-d, am holy." Kedushah is the way we focus our thoughts of spiritual missions and holiness. Rav Yisrael Salanter, the great originator of the mussar movement, teaches that holiness does not apply only to spirituality and holy tasks. What makes a Jew holy? The Torah says, "Don't steal; pay your workers on time; don't lie; deal honestly with others..." Hashem stresses that we be holy down here on earth, sanctifying our lives through our connections with others. The more we understand Hashem's holiness, the more we recognize our own potential holiness as individuals; we are made "b'tzelem Elokim," and as nation, we are Hashem's messengers to the world.

LEADER TIP: What does it mean to be holy? As the Jewish people, we are considered holy people. Remind yourself that every day and never forget how unique, special, and holy you are.



MIKEITZ REVIEW

Paroh had two dreams. In the first dream, there were seven fat cows that came out from the Nile, followed by seven skinny cows. The skinny cows then ate the fat cows. In his second dream, seven healthy stalks of grain were eaten by seven thin stalks. In the morning, none of Paroh's wise men were able to interpret the dreams to Paroh's liking. Paroh's butler came over to him and told him that while he was in jail there was a man named Yosef who was able to interpret dreams. Paroh ordered for Yosef's release, and he told Yosef about his dreams. Yosef told Paroh that both dreams were relaying the same message that there would be seven years of plenty, followed by seven years of famine. Yosef told Paroh to save the extra food from the years of plenty to be prepared for the years of famine. Paroh made Yosef as second in command of Egypt, and put him in charge of collecting all the food. Yosef married Osnat, the daughter of Poti-phaera, and they had two sons: Menashe and Efraim. When the years of famine started, Yosef had enough stored food that he sold to anyone who needed. Meanwhile, in nearby Canaan, Yaakov sent his sons – all of them except Binyamin – to Egypt to buy food. The brothers came to Egypt and stood before Yosef, but didn't recognize him after the many years of being apart. When the brothers asked to buy food, Yosef was very harsh with them accusing them of being spies and sent them to jail for three days. On the third day, Yosef released them all, except for Shimon, who he held hostage. He told the rest of the brothers to go back to Canaan and come back with their youngest brother, Binyamin. The brothers realized that they were being punished for selling Yosef years ago and regretted it tremendously. Yosef told his servants to put money in the sacks of grain the brothers were given. The brothers got back to Canaan and told the entire story of what happened to Yaakov. Yaakov was very bothered by what happened and refused to send Binyamin, reluctant to consider the possibility of losing Rachel's only other son. Eventually, though, after they were getting low on food, and Yehudah personally guaranteed Binyamin's safe return and Yaakov agreed to send him. The brothers arrived back in Egypt and Yosef invited the brothers to join him for a meal where they were reunited with Shimon. When Yosef saw Binyamin, he was so overwhelmed with emotion, but he kept it in. In the morning the brothers left, but not before Yosef had his royal goblet put in Binyamin's sack of food. Yosef then sent his guards to catch the brothers and "find" the planted goblet. The brothers were all brought back to Yosef, who demanded that the "thief," Binyamin alone, stay back as his slave.

LEADER TIP: As soon as the kids come into groups, pretend to be suspicious of them being spies just like the brothers

PARSHA QUESTIONS

Taken from Ohr.edu

1. What did the fat cows being eaten symbolize?
41:4 - That all the joy of the plentiful years would be forgotten. (Not that the good years would provide food for the bad years.)
2. How did Pharaoh's recollection of his dream differ from Nevuchadnetzar's recollection of his dream?
41:8 - Pharaoh remembered the contents of his dream but didn't know its meaning. Nevuchadnetzar forgot even the contents of his dream.
3. What was significant about the fact that Pharaoh dreamed repeatedly?
41:32 - It showed that the seven good years would start immediately.
4. What does "*Tsafnat Panayach*" mean?
41:45 - He who explains things that are hidden and obscure.
5. What happened to the Egyptians' grain that was stored in anticipation of the famine?
41:55 - It rotted.
6. What did Yosef require the Egyptians to do before he would sell them grain?
41:55 - Become circumcised.
7. Did Yaakov and his family still have food when he sent his sons to Egypt? If yes, why did he send them?
42:1 - Yes, but he sent them because he did not want to cause envy in the eyes of those who did not have food.
8. What prophetic significance lay in Yaakov's choice of the word "*redu*" – "descend" (and not "*lechu*" – "go")?
42:2 - It hinted to the 210 years that the Jewish people would be in Egypt: The word "*redu*" has the numerical value of 210.
9. Why does the verse say "Yosef's brothers" went down to Egypt (and not "Yaakov's sons")?
42:3 - Because they regretted selling Yosef and planned to act as brothers by trying to find him and ransom him at any cost.
10. When did Yosef know that his dreams were being fulfilled?
42:9 - When his brothers bowed to him.
11. Under what pretext did Yosef accuse his brothers of being spies?
42:12 - They entered the city through 10 gates rather than through one gate.
12. Why did the brothers enter the city through different gates?
42:13 - To search for Yosef throughout the city.
13. Who was the interpreter between Yosef and his brothers?
42:23 - His son Menashe.
14. Why did Yosef specifically choose Shimon to put in prison?
42:24 - Because he was the one who cast Yosef into the pit and the one who said,

"Here comes the dreamer." Alternatively, to separate him from Levi, as together they posed a danger to him.

15. How does the verse indicate that Shimon was released from prison after his brothers left?
42:24 - The verse says Shimon was bound "in front of their eyes," implying that he was bound only while in their sight.
16. What was Yaakov implying when he said to his sons: "I am the one whom you bereaved"?
42:36 - That he suspected them of having slain or sold Shimon, and that they may have done the same to Yosef.
17. How did Reuven try to persuade Yaakov to send Binyamin to Egypt?
42:37 - He said, "Kill my two sons if I fail to bring back Binyamin."
18. How long did it take for Yaakov and family to eat all the food that the brothers brought back from Egypt? Give the answer in terms of travel time.
43:2,10 - Twice the travel time to and from Egypt.
19. How much more money did the brothers bring on their second journey than they brought on the first journey? Why?
43:12 - Three times as much, in order to repay the money they found in their sacks and to buy more even if the price had doubled.
20. How did the brothers defend themselves against the accusation of theft?
44:8 - They said, "We returned the money we found in our sacks; can it be that we would steal?"

LEADER TIP: As a joke, warn the kids that next Shabbat there may be a shortage of candy and the group must save some during this week.

PARSHA ACTIVITY

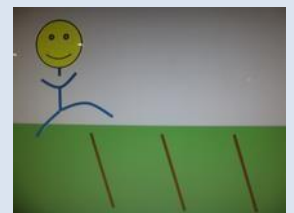
GOAL: In this week's Parsha we again see the importance of dreams. We really need to stop, think and ask ourselves, what does it mean to dream? Not just the strange things that go on inside our heads when we sleep, but the kind of dreams Martin Luther King spoke of when he uttered those immortal words, "I have a dream". To be able to honestly assess our situation and ourselves and develop real goals for the future is an amazing thing to be able to do.

ACTIVITY: "Mad Libs"

Create a funny, crazy, and silly story and write it out either on a big poster board to show the rest of the group or just read it to them. You can also search online for readymade "Mad Libs" stories as well. Make sure to leave random spaces throughout your story for the kids to fill in the blanks. Print out a bunch of different words or pictures and spread them all over the room for the kids to choose from. You can either put them right in front of them or hide them around the room. Make a list of all the blanks you left in your story so that the kids can fill them in. For example: (boy's name) was super (adjective) when he got home and saw his favorite celebrity (famous person's name) sitting on his (noun). The kids must fill in the words before you read the story to them. You will help them come up with different nouns, verbs, adjectives, names, etc. to help complete the story. This is where the printed out words and pictures will come in handy. When all the needed words are chosen, place them into the given slots in the story and read it aloud to the kids. Needless to say, hilarity will most definitely ensue. Come up with a few stories as the kids will have a great time making up their own stories!

"Three Sticks"

For this game, you'll need a big open space and three "stick like" objects. Place the three sticks on the ground, an equal and small distance away from each other. Have the group line up a few feet behind the first stick. Take turns one person at a time trying to jump in the spaces between the sticks without touching the sticks or jumping in the same space twice. Once you go through an entire round of people and everyone gets a turn, whoever succeeded moves on to the next round. Space the sticks farther away from each other, creating a bigger space between them. Keep repeating these steps until you have only one person left who is declared the winner!



DISCUSSION: Everyone has dreams but the question is, how many of us remember them every day? There are the dreams we have when we sleep at night which sometimes it's hard to remember. There are also dreams that we have every day that remind us to keep working hard and become better people. Having dreams means having goals and aspirations. There are smaller dreams such as doing well playing a

board game or making it on time to the movies. There are also bigger dreams such as doing well in school, winning an award, or becoming a professional basketball player. We see between this week's parsha and last week's parsha the importance that dreams play. Dreams come true with the help of Hashem but not without our own personal work and effort as well. In these games, we had a certain goal in mind that we wanted to accomplish. Even if it may not have been the biggest of goals or dreams, it was something that we really wanted to accomplish. We couldn't do it on our own and we used the help of our fellow teammates to help us succeed and fulfill our "dreams". Dreams don't take much work or effort to think of, what does take work is accomplishing them. But that being said, the feeling of accomplishing dreams, especially the ones that you work hard for, is incomparable to anything. It means you've taken a step higher in the ladder of becoming the best you can. Keep dreaming, and keep working hard to accomplish as much as you can and become the person your dreams remind you you can be.

LEADER TIP: Try to think of a dream that you have that you've always been too nervous to try and work hard for. No matter if it's big or small, any goal you accomplish is a big deal.

PARSHA STORY

Before you read: In this week's Parsha, the Torah takes us into the world of dreams. We see Yosef's childhood dreams coming to fruition after many years. We learn of Paroh's prophetic dreams, and how Yosef's skilled interpretations of them averted a worldwide famine. There are many types of dreams. We all have dreams and sincere yearnings of how we would like to see our lives in the future. Others may try to tell us to forget about them, and settle for something less. But Hashem knows and understands our deepest yearnings, and leads us in the direction that we truly want to go. So if we trust in Hashem, and hold on to our dreams, many times He will make them come true!

"ANIMAL CRACKERS"

"If it's furry, four-legged, flies, or has fins, it's a friend of Mike Walder's", his pals would joke. And it was true - the boy just seemed to have a natural, and deep love for animals.

Mike would spend whatever spare time he had, taking in stray baby birds, squirrels, or any other creature in need. His greatest dream, ever since he could remember, was to one day be able to spend all day doing what he loved - helping animals. He would share his dream with anyone who would listen. Many of his friends really encouraged him about his dream, but others were less enthusiastic, and some guys would even make fun of him.

One day, Mike and his best friend, Randy were walking home from school, when he heard his name being called. He turned around.

"Hey Walder!" called out Tim, a kid from the neighborhood to whom he had recently told of his dream. "Here's your big chance! There's a sick ant over here on the sidewalk. Come on over here and give him C.P.R. before it's too late!"

He let out a loud laugh, as if it was the funniest joke in the world. But to Mike it really hurt.

The boys kept walking. "What a mean thing to say!" said Randy indignantly.

Mike sighed. "But maybe he's right," he said to Randy. "Maybe I do go too overboard about animals, and my desire to spend my life taking care of them is just a foolish dream."

Randy shook his head. "No way, Mike," he said, "Don't pay any attention to guys like that. They've probably just given up on their own dreams, and want to kill other people's dreams too. If your dream is worthwhile, and it's important to you, God's gonna make it happen some day. Just don't give it up, buddy, and you'll see."

Mike smiled and appreciated his friend's encouraging words. Then and there, he told himself, that he would hold onto his dream until it came true, no matter what.

A number of years passed, and the boys got older and busier. Mike tried to stay focused on his dream even though sometimes he felt tempted just to let it fade away. Now as the school year was almost over, Mike and his friends, who would be starting high school next year, were all trying to make plans for summer vacation. Mike was hoping to line up an interesting summer job that would give him some extra pocket money. He had applied several weeks ago to a local nature park for a job as a guide, and was waiting to hear back.

One afternoon, he decided to go visit his old friend, Randy, who had moved across town, and he hadn't seen for a long time. As the boys reminisced, Randy said with a sincere smile, "I hope you're still holding on to your special dream of helping animals."

Mike smiled back and nodded pensively. He hadn't thought about it for a while, but Randy's comment brought back old memories, and made him realize just how much his dream still meant to him. Mike recalled his friend's inspiring words from long ago, "...If it's worthwhile, and important to you, God's gonna make it happen" But when? thought Mike, But how?

At that very moment, his cell-phone rang, and brought him out of his reverie. It was the park authority. Mike held his breath, hoping he got the job. "We can see from your application that you really appreciate nature, and would be great for the job," said the voice on the other end of the line. Mike perked up. "But," the voice went on, "we're really sorry - all the guide jobs are filled."

The boy felt really disappointed, but as a last attempt, blurted out, "Are you sure? Isn't there *any* kind of a job?"

The man on the phone was silent for a moment. "Well, there *is* one job that just became available, but I don't know if you'll want it." Mike listened, and silently prayed. "It happens to be that we're opening up a new petting zoo at the park, and the head veterinarian needs an assistant to help him take care of the animals. It doesn't pay that much, and you will be busy all day with the animals... You interested?"

The boy nearly dropped the phone, but not before he blurted out a hearty "Yes!"

As he hung up, his friend looked at him and said, "What's up, Mike? You look like you're walking on a cloud."

Mike just shook his head in amazement. He was so grateful that he had never given up dreaming. He turned to his friend, smiling ear-to-ear, and said, "Well Randy, what can I tell you? How else should someone look who just heard his dream come true?"

Discussion Questions: Q. What do our sages mean when they say that "God leads a person in a direction he wants to go"?

A. God has given each of us free choice, and allowed us to build ourselves into the type of people we will become on the basis of these choices. He doesn't push us in one way or another, but rather facilitates us to reach where we want to go, and allows us to experience the natural consequences of that decision. For this reason, our dreams and goals, if sincere and persistent, are likely to be realized. We can maximize this opportunity by trying to set for ourselves the most positive and spiritual dreams possible.

Q. Why do you think some people scoff at the dreams of others?

A. Much of it comes from misunderstanding. Since each of us is unique, with a special spiritual mission to accomplish in this lifetime, it only follows that one person's soul will inspire him to have a different dream, or life goal, than that of another. No one except ourselves will ever be able to fully understand why we dream as we do. Nor will we ever fully understand the dreams of another. The challenge is to try to respect the dreams of others, while remaining true to our own, unique calling.

Q. What's one of your dreams?

LEADER TIP: In order to accomplish our goals and dreams, it's important to have people we know we can count on. Who are those people for you?

JEWISH LEADER OF THE WEEK

Chaim Weizmann

(November 27, 1874- November 9, 1952)



Chaim Weizmann was born in Motol, Russia in 1874. He studied biochemistry in Switzerland and Germany. Already in Geneva, he became active in the Zionist movement. In 1905 he moved to England, and was elected to the General Zionist Council. Weizmann helped forces in World War I which brought him in contact with British leaders, allowing him to play a key role in the creating the Balfour Declaration on November 2, 1917 where Britain dedicated itself to the establishment of a Jewish home in Palestine. In 1918, Weizmann was chosen as the head of the Zionist Commission sent to Palestine by the British government to guide the future development of the country. There, he set the foundation of Hebrew University. That same year Weizmann met in Aqaba with Emir Feisal, the leader of the Arab movement, to discuss visions of reaching an understanding on the establishment of independent Arab and Jewish states. Shortly after, Weizmann led the Zionist delegation to the Peace Conference at Versailles, and in 1920 became the president of the World Zionist Organization (WZO). He was in charge of the Jewish Agency which was established in 1929. In the 1930's, Weizmann set the foundations of the Daniel Sieff Research Institute in Rehovot, later to become the Weizmann Institute, a huge part behind Israel's scientific research. In 1937, he made his home in Rehovot. Chaim Weizmann again served as President of the WZO from 1935-1946. During the years that led up to World War II, he worked extremely hard in creating the Jewish Brigade. After the end of World War II, Weizmann was vital in the approval of the Partition Plan by the United Nations on November 29, 1947, and in the recognition of Israel by the United States. With the declaration of the State of Israel, Weizmann was chosen to serve as the first President of Israel. This role he filled until his death in 1952.

LEADER TIP: Some people dream of bigger things not only for themselves, but for the greater Jewish people or community as a whole. What does that mean to you?

TEFILLAH TREASURES

Shemoneh Esrei- Ata Kadosh

We end the third bracha of Shemoneh Esrei by praising Hashem for being Holy, “Blessed are You, Hashem, the holy G-d.” By praising Hashem’s holiness, we show that despite the overwhelming presence of materialism in our world, we accept our mission to recognize Hashem functioning behind the scenes. When we accomplish that mission, we incorporate Hashem’s presence with the physical world. We thereby fulfill the purpose of this world, which is to connect everything physical with its spiritual meaning. This bracha of Ata Kadosh teaches us the true purpose of our material physical world. The idea of Hashem’s holiness and our own holiness has a useful, concrete effect on how we live our lives. The Torah says, “Kedoshim ti’hiu - You shall be holy, for I, Hashem your G-d, am holy.” Kedushah is the way we focus our thoughts of spiritual missions and holiness. Rav Yisrael Salanter, the great originator of the mussar movement, teaches that holiness does not apply only to spirituality and holy tasks. What makes a Jew holy? The Torah says, “Don’t steal; pay your workers on time; don’t lie; deal honestly with others...” Hashem stresses that we be holy down here on earth, sanctifying our lives through our connections with others. The more we understand Hashem’s holiness, the more we recognize our own potential holiness as individuals; we are made “b’tzelem Elokim,” and as a nation, we are Hashem’s messengers to the world. The idea of holiness is a very important one. The Torah commands us to be holy because Hashem is Holy. This is certainly our most important mission in life and from it flows all our other responsibilities toward mankind. The Sforno adds a unique element to the concept of kedushah as it applies to Hashem and Am Yisrael—that of eternity. In Vayikra, the Sforno says that “...holiness is everlasting and eternal.” Since Hashem says that the people of Israel shall be a “kingdom of priests and a holy people”, the nation will never perish; it holds the force of eternity, which is an integral part of kedushah. By declaring Hashem’s holiness, we recognize the holiness He has invested in the world and in us.

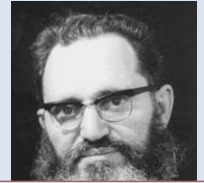
LEADER TIP: What does it mean to be holy? As the Jewish people, we are considered holy people. Remind yourself that every day and never forget how unique, special, and holy you are.



This Week in Jewish History

December 12, 1995

Yahrtzeit of Rav Moshe Zvi Neria



Rabbi Moshe Tzvi Neriah founded the first Bnei Akiva yeshiva at Kfar HaRoeh, near Chadera, nearly 60 years ago. Rabbi Neriah is known as the “father of the knit kippah generation,” in a reference to the type of kippah usually worn by religious Zionists from the Bnei Akiva stream. Rabbi Neriah was born in Poland and made Aliyah to the Land of Israel at an early age, where he studied under Rabbi Avraham Yitzchak HaCohen Kook at Mercaz HaRav Yeshiva in the great rabbi's final years. Years after Rabbi Kook's death, when he saw that the public recognized the rabbi as a Chief Rabbi and great Talmid Chacham but knew very little about his uniqueness and his approach to Torah, Rabbi Neriah published the books “Chayei HaReayah,” “Moadei HaReayah,” “Likutei HaReayah” and “Tal HaReayah,” which describe the rabbi's great personality, his just and holy nature, and his belief system regarding subjects of diaspora and redemption, the rebuilding of the land, Torah and tefillah. In the year 1940, Rabbi Neriah founded the first Bnei Akiva yeshiva at Kfar HaRoeh. It educated its students along the lines of Rabbi Kook's teachings. The graduates in the initial years went on

to study at Mercaz HaRav yeshiva which began gaining fame in those days, and thus did the yeshiva world of the followers of Rabbi Kook begin to form. Later on, as demand for Torah-based education grew stronger, additional Bnei Akiva yeshivas began to be created, and an entire generation was brought up on values of Torah and its mitzvot, love of nation and land, and a partnership in the institutions that make up the State. The date of Rabbi Neriah's death is symbolic in that Kislev 19 is celebrated as the "New Year of Hassidism." Rabbi Neriah was linked in spirit to the Hassidic movement and to the Chabad stream in particular, and the Lubavicher Rebbe expressed his appreciation for Rabbi Neriah's life work. Rabbi Neriah was a great educator who taught his students with great love. He would wake up the students in the morning with a song: “Children, children, wake up to the work of the Creator.” His final words before his passing were: “Give me holiness [kedushah], it is holiness that I seek. The holiness of the Land of Israel, the holiness of the love of Israel, the holiness of the Nation of Israel...”

FIND...

- Paroh
- Cows
- Grain
- Osnat
- Efraim
- Menashe
- Spies
- Goblet

STAT LINE OF THE WEEK- MIKEITZ

10th of 54 sedras;

10th of 12 in Bereishit

Written on 254.6 lines in a Torah, rank: 6th

**The sedra is a single Parsha Petucha (open)
(the LONGEST parsha in the whole Torah)**

146 p'sukim – ranks 8th (5th) tied with Bereishit

2022 words – ranks 3rd (2nd)

7914 letters – ranks 2nd (first)

MITZVOT

None of the 613 mitzvot are found in Mikeitz

TRIVIA QUESTION OF THE WEEK

WHAT IS THE LENGTH OF THE WALL SURROUNDING THE OLD CITY?

Email your answers to YOUTH@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!

- **Ketchup was sold in the 1830s as medicine.**
- **Degringolade means to fall and disintegrate.**
- **The Amazon is the world's largest river, 3,890 miles (6,259 km) long.**
- **Grapes explode when you put them in the microwave.**
- **A pound of houseflies contains more protein than a pound of beef**

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

Parsha Points to Ponder...

Yosef was summoned to interpret Pharaoh's dreams. He did so, as he says, with the help of Hashem. Then he advises Pharaoh how he should proceed having been informed of what lies ahead. Everyone asks the question, if he was called to merely interpret the dreams where did he get the temerity to also give uncalled for advice. A Rabbi once gave a convoluted answer to this question by telling a story. Two ministers, who were constantly seeking honors, came to the train station on the same day and found a band playing great music. Each of these ministers claimed the band was playing in his honor. There was a poor man standing there shaking from hunger. The ministers decided to approach him and ask him for whom the band was playing. He asked them for a hefty sum to answer the question and the ministers obliged. He then told them, "The band was not playing for either one of you but for me so that I should be able to earn some money to feed me and my family." Similarly, Yosef thought, Pharaoh's dreams were neither for Pharaoh nor for his Egyptian interpreters who could not solve the puzzle of the dreams. Hashem could have brought the famine without advising Pharaoh of what will happen. He realized that the dreams were for his own benefit to get him out of prison, so he offered his advice which he knew would result in placing him in charge. It is often difficult to understand why certain things happen. We must, however, believe that there is a good reason even if we cannot see it.

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