

Shemini Wrap-Up

by Sammy Schaechter

In last week's Parshah we spoke about the seven days in which Moses and Aaron inaugurated the Mishkan. In this Parshah, we learn about the following day, which is what Shemini means—the eighth.

The Eighth Day in the Mishkan

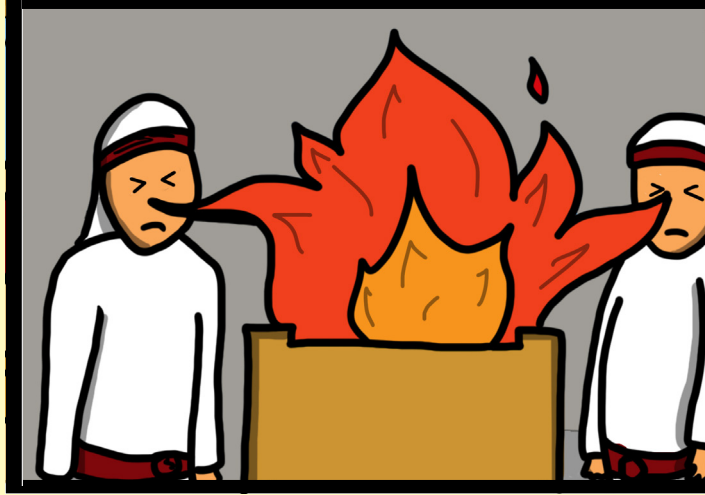
Aaron and his sons officially begin their jobs as Kohanim—priests serving in the Mishkan. First they prepare a sacrifice, and then all the Jews come to the entranceway of the Mishkan to watch as they bring the sacrifice up on the altar. Then, Moses and Aaron bless the people and everyone sees as a fire came down from heaven and consume the sacrifice. The people are so overwhelmed--and overjoyed--by this amazing sight that everyone begins to sing praises to G-d.

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TORAH COMICS

Aharon's oldest sons offer a strange fire that Hashem didn't tell them to offer, so they die.



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But then, in middle of all the celebration and excitement, something terrible happens. Two of Aaron's sons, Nadav and Avihu, light a fire to bring a sacrifice that they aren't supposed to bring, and as punishment, they die. You can imagine how sad this tragedy makes Aaron, but he does not say anything, he remains quiet and accepts G-d's judgment. Moses tells Aaron and his remaining sons, Eleazar and Itamar, to continue doing the service in the Mishkan, and they do, while the rest of the People of Israel mourn the death of Nadav and Avihu.

Next we learn about a law that G-d

tells Aaron: Whenever they will be serving in the Mishkan, Aaron and his sons, the Kohanim, are not allowed to drink wine and become drunk.

The Kosher Laws

G-d tells Moses to tell them about the animals that may be eaten and those that may not be eaten. Kosher animals—those that are permissible--have two signs: they chew

their cud and have split hooves. Kosher fish must have fins and scales. We are given a list of the non-kosher birds, and a list of four types of locusts which are kosher; the Torah tells us that all other insects are not kosher.

We also learn about the idea of purity, which is like a spiritual type of cleanliness. If something becomes impure, by touching something impure, for example, the dead body of a non-kosher animal, than it must be immersed in a special body of water called a mikvah. The mikvah has a special power to restore purity to things (like vessels and dishes) and people that have become impure.

The Wrong Conclusion

You shall not drink wine or liquor (10:9)

There was once a scholar of note who had the ill fortune of having a drunkard in the family who caused him no end of embarrassment. The drunkard would drink until he collapsed in the gutter. Street urchins would sling mud at him, poke him with sticks, mess up his clothing and ridicule him.

Each time he saw this, the talmid chacham would die a thousand deaths from shame and hurry away, as quickly as he could, so as not to be identified with his relative.

Once, when he saw his relative at his worst, the scholar decided that this must stop. When the drunk sobered up, the scholar offered to supply him with all the wine he needed on the condition that he drink it at home and not make a public disgrace of himself

and shame the family.

The scholar kept his cousin well stocked with wine and liquor at considerable expense. Still, he was spared the embarrassment of seeing the drunkard sprawled out on the pavement, the butt of every passerby.

Once, on his way to a wine shop, the scholar was caught in a sudden downpour. Within minutes the ground was flooded. Rain washed mud and dirt into the streets. Water flowed rapidly into already overflowing sewers. The scholar gingerly making his way through the streets, came upon a drunkard, lying in the gutter. Some young boys had already discovered him and were splattering him with mud, and filling his mouth with dirt. As soon as he saw this terrible sight, the scholar thought of his cousin.

"I must show him this man," he thought. "This picture of a drunk may cure him of his drunkenness altogether." He rushed home to fetch his relative.

When the drunkard beheld the lolling, begrimed figure, he bent over the man and whispered in his ear, "Tell me, where did you get liquor so strong as to make you this drunk?"

The scholar was furious! His plan had backfired. "Was this my purpose in bringing you here?" he asked in dismay and anger. "I hoped to cure you by showing you how disgusting this man looks. And instead, all you can think of is the liquor that made him drunk!"

(According to Midrash Tanchuma, Parashas Shemini 11)

TALES OF TZADIKIM

As Long as They Still Sacrifice

The camel . . . is impure for you (11:4)

The yearly fair was taking place in the big city. The fairgrounds were filled with makeshift stands and tables, which hardly left room for the hundreds of buyers and sellers, who had come to make a quick penny. Wares of all kinds and colors were brilliantly displayed and the customers passed from stand to stand seeking bargains. They had to shout to make themselves heard over the deafening din. The air throbbed with life and excitement.

Some people did their business on the fairgrounds themselves, others in nearby eating houses and the like. A group of Jewish merchants had gathered in a coffeehouse to see if they could make a mutual profit.

They had just settled down around a large table when a waiter came by to take their orders.

"What will you gentlemen have,

please?" he asked, his pencil poised above a small pad.

"I'll have some coffee with milk," said one.

"Make that two."

"Three."

"Four."

The waiter looked around and counted, "Six coffees with milk." He noticed a seventh man who had not yet ordered. "And what will you have, sir?" he asked.

"I'll have my coffee black, if you don't mind," he replied quietly.

"Hey! What's this?! Are you on a diet?" the others laughed. "You can't really prefer black coffee to coffee with milk! And on an empty stomach, no less. Come on, join us. There is nothing like a really good cup of coffee first thing in the morning. Just what you need to help mellow you to make a good business deal."

Meanwhile the waiter had returned with their orders.

"Mmmmm. There is something special about this coffee today, don't you think?" one of them said. They all nodded in agreement. He now turned to the man with the black coffee and said, "Tell us, is there any special reason why you are drinking your coffee black today? I once visited your home and joined you in a cup of coffee with cream. You could not have eaten meat yet, could you?"

The men laughed, then looked at the seventh, waiting for his explanation. The latter lowered his eyes, as if ashamed, and said, "Perhaps, they have mixed some treife milk with the cow's milk."

"What!" all six pounced upon his words. "Did you not see the herd of healthy cows grazing in the back yard of this coffee house? What else would

PARSHA STORIES

they be using but cow's milk! What a ridiculous presumption!"

Nevertheless, the seventh man continued sipping his black coffee, disregarding all the ridiculing remarks.

The waiter had been circulating among the other customers and could not help overhearing the word 'milk' repeated, over and over. He turned to their table and beamed, "I see that you are enjoying your morning coffee. It has a special flavor today, don't you think?" They nodded. "Shall I tell you

why?" the waiter confided. "It is because this morning we mixed some camel's milk together with the cow's milk. This is a great delicacy, very rich and creamy. You can tell the difference, can't you?"

The six men turned pale. They had been so certain, so complacent, so convinced that they had been drinking kosher milk; yet, they had been mistaken after all and had committed a terrible sin! Only their companion, who had taken his coffee black, was spared

that transgression. After begging forgiveness for having teased him, they said, "You must have had special heavenly protection to prevent you from sinning!"

"How does the verse go?" one of them added, "A tzaddik will come to no harm."

That tzaddik was Simchah Bunim the merchant, who later left business and became the famous R' Simchah Bunim of Pshischa.

TALES OF TZADIKIM

Shnaps Can Also Help

And you shall sanctify yourselves and you shall be holy (11:44)

After the death of their leader and shepherd, R' Elimelech of Lizensk, his chasidim were left bereft. They mourned the passing of their beloved rebbe, but knew that they must find a worthy successor. They could not remain without a guide to show them the way which they should follow. After much deliberation, they decided to turn to the saintly brother of their late rebbe, R' Zusha, who lived in Anipoli. Immediately, two men were chosen to convey their wishes to R' Zusha.

It was early spring and the ground was soft with the melting snows. Their famished, bony horses floundered in the thick, high mud, while their rickety wagon broke down several times along the way.

During the course of their journey, they reached an inn close by a hamlet. They were weary and decided to spend the night there. Upon entering, they discovered that the innkeeper was a gentile, but he received them warmly and gave them a clean room for the night.

They were about to go to sleep, exhausted from that day's traveling, when one of them looked around and noticed that there was no water in the room.

"How will we wash our hands tomorrow morning?" he asked. "I'll go to the innkeeper and ask him if he can spare a basin of water."

With great effort he got up and went to the gentile landlord and asked for some water. The latter apologized, "We finished all the water we had. We have a well but it is quite a distance and the approach to it is too dangerous at night. Tomorrow morning, you will have as much water as you wish." The chasid returned to the room disappointed.

"I am dead tired," said his friend. "Tomorrow I'll think about washing my hands. Anyways, we are really exempt from the mitzvah." And he fell asleep as soon as his head touched the pillow.

But his companion did not sleep. True, they were not required to fulfill the mitzvah, but his heart would not be still. His eyelids drooped, his head dropped and still he drove sleep away.

Finally, he had an idea. He left his room quickly and sought out the innkeeper. It was already late and he was sleeping. However, the chasid woke him up and said that he wished to buy a bottle of schnaps.

"What do you mean, waking me up at such an inconvenient hour?" said the landlord angrily. "I had already fallen asleep. Well, if you really want me to get up for you, you will have to pay double!"

The chasid agreed and got his bottle of schnaps. He put it by his bedside and with a sigh of relief, dropped off to sleep.

The next morning, he washed his hands with the liquor and said his

prayers. His friend decided to delay washing his hands until they reached a source of water. They were already delayed and had to be on their way.

That very afternoon, they arrived at their journey's end, Anipoli.

They went directly to R' Zusha's humble home, knocked on the door and were told to enter.

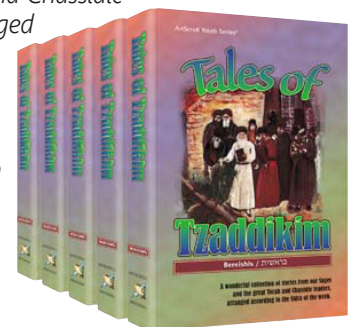
"Shalom, Rebbe!" they said. R' Zusha looked at them, then concentrated his gaze upon the chasid who had not washed his hands in the morning.

"Do you know," he said to him, "that all of the impurity and grime which my holy brother succeeded in cleansing away throughout all of his years in Lizensk has returned overnight, just because you did not wash your hands this morning?"

The guilty chasid burst into tears and his friend trembled. Truly, this was a man worthy of replacing their departed rebbe.

Tales of Tzadikim by G. Matov is a wonderful collection of stories from our Sages and the great Torah and Chassidic leaders, arranged according to the Sidra.

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PARSHA PUZZLERS

TEST YOUR PARSHA KNOWLEDGE

by Sammy Schaechter
and Dovid Saleman
Answers on page 7.

EASY Qs

1. When was the Mishkan finally set up?
2. What did Aharon do after he brought all the karbanot?
3. What did Nadav and Avihu do wrong on the eighth day?
4. What happened to them?
5. What was Aharon's response when Hashem punished his two sons?
6. What was his reward for remaining quiet?
7. How do we know which birds are kosher?
8. What are the signs of a kosher fish?
9. Why can't the Bnei Yisrael eat non-kosher food?
10. What are the signs of a kosher animal?

MEDIUM Qs

11. Aharon was commanded to bring an egel as a karbon chatas on the eighth day. Why?
12. Who were Nadav and Avihu?
13. What must be done to a kosher animal or bird before we eat it?
14. Why can't we eat a camel?
15. Why can't we eat a pig?

HARD Qs

16. The parsha starts vayehi bayom hashmini. What was it the eighth day of?
17. What Parsha did Hashem command Aharon directly?
18. What prohibitions apply to a person who is intoxicated?
19. How many animals display only one sign of kashrut? What are they?
20. What did the kohanim do with the dam (blood) of the karbon?

DISCUSSION Qs

21. If you were Aharon at this point. You messed up by the sin of the golden calf and were told by your brother that if you follow all of these steps, Hashem will forgive you. Yet, after doing all that, Hashem doesn't appear. How would you feel?
22. Follow up of previous question. Now how do you feel when only with Moshe's help are they able to bring down the Shechinah?
23. Why aren't we given the words of Birchas Kohenim here?
24. ARE NADAV AND AVIHU CRAZY! What would compel them to bring this foreign fire? Why would they think this is a good idea? HINT: Think about their names. Names tell us a lot about a person and may hint to their motivation/s.
25. Did Nadav and Avihu bring this Eish Zara for the same reason or did

CRACK THE PARSHA CODE

by Rabbi Yaakov Levine
Answers on page 7.

1. M A A as the K G in the M
2. A T M to be K G, but M was H for A that A was K G
3. The SH R on the M on the 8th D after it was S U
4. The F B used to bring K, but now it was the K J
5. N and A, 2 S of A D when they B a K in the M
6. M and E took the B of N and A out of the K H K
7. A was S when he H his 2 S D
8. H T A that a K cannot D W when S in the M
9. a K A has S H and C its C
10. a K F has F and S
11. all C C A are N K
12. a P has S H, but does not C its C

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they have different motivations?

26. We will learn later that regular Kohenim can become Tamei for their 7 close relatives (which includes brothers). Why couldn't Elazar and Ithamar take the bodies of Nadav and Avihu out?
27. What connection is there to the story said previously and the Kashrus rules that follow?
28. Discuss all the symbolism of Kashrus. Why is it important to follow these rules?

PARSHA PUZZLERS

TORAH RHYMES & RIDDLES

Answers on page 7.

1. We were very righteous men
And we truly loved Hashem.—
But we did something wrong today
And we were punished right away.
Some say that we did a crime
To enter the Mikdash drunk with
wine;
And some say the cause of our
disaster
Was speaking the law before our
master.
_____ and _____,
sons
2. I gave my brother comfort
On the death of his two sons,

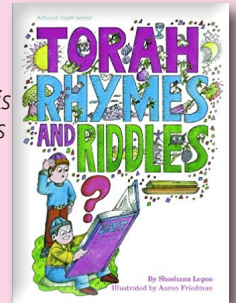
Saying G-d had chosen them
To be His holy ones.
Their deaths would be a lesson
For all those after them
To be so very careful
In the Mikdash of Hashem.

3. I kept still and did not complain
Although my heart was filled with
pain. -----
4. Our two brothers passed away;
Only we are left, today.
----- and -----
5. The camel and the rabbit
May both have tasty meat;

But still they do not have this sign
And so you may not eat.

6. What's the Hebrew word for earth?
I'm sure you know it's Eretz
And the creepy crawling bugs on it
Are called, in Hebrew, -----

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PARSHA STORIES

STORIES MY GRANDFATHER TOLD ME

A Strange Gift

"And they went out and they blessed the people" (Vayikra 9:23)

A young man received orders to appear before a military medical committee, which would determine if he was fit to serve in the army. In a panic, the young man ran to see R' Chaim of Sanz. The Sanzer Rebbe blessed him with success in avoiding military service, and gave him a box of cigarettes, "for the road." Though surprised at this strange gift, the young man dared not ask for an explanation. It was time for him to go.

It was near midnight when he arrived at the city where he was to have his examination the next morning. He entered an inn and sat down at a table. He was so exhausted that he fell asleep with his head on the table.

There were several other men seated around the large table. Two of them were playing chess while the others watched. As they concentrated intently on the game, all of them smoked con-

tinuously. They played and smoked — until the cigarettes ran out.

The men were at a loss. Smoking, they firmly believed, was an aid to concentration. To continue the complex game without cigarettes was impossible. But where could they find more cigarettes so late at night?

One of them pointed to the sleeping figure beside them. "Maybe he has some cigarettes."

They woke the young man, and asked, "Do you have any cigarettes >?"

Yes, he had cigarettes — the ones the Rebbe had given him! He handed them to the players and went back to sleep. As for the others, their joy knew no bounds; they could now continue their game.

In the morning, the young man awoke, davened, and ate breakfast. Then, with a heavy heart, he made his way to his appointment. The doctors began to examine him, when suddenly, one of them exclaimed, "Hey! This is

the guy who gave us those cigarettes last night, and saved our game!"

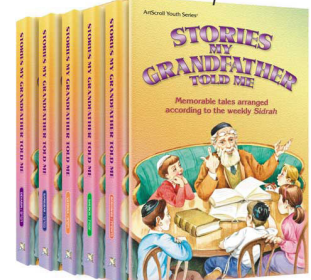
As a token of their appreciation, those chess-loving doctors signed a certificate exempting that young man from army service!

The Chofetz Chaim sat learning in the beis midrash one day, when a local blacksmith approached him, requesting a blessing for his sick daughter.

"I will do as you ask," the Chofetz

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lessons from the weekly Parsha. The five-volume set is available from your favorite Jewish book store, or at artscroll.com.



PARSHA STORIES

Chaim said, "provided you give me ten rubles." |

This astonished the blacksmith greatly, as he knew the Chofetz Chaim never took payment from anybody. However, he took ten rubles from his pocket and handed them over in return for the tzaddik's blessing for his daughter's speedy recovery.

Just a few days later, the daughter recovered from her illness. At the same time, the blacksmith's surprise over the Chofetz Chaim's request vanished when he received a letter from his son. This boy had left Radin, at the

Chofetz Chaim's urging, to learn Torah in a distant yeshivah.

In his letter, the boy thanked his father for the ten rubles he had sent.

An uneducated Jew who made his living as a water-carrier decided one day that he wished to study the Torah. He went to R' Zalman Sender Shapiro and asked for a berachah to help him learn.

R' Zalman Sender listened, and then said, "You are a water-carrier, healthy and strong. Scream out with all your

might, three times: 'I want to learn how to learn!'"

The water-carrier, who was indeed healthy and strong, did as R' Zalman Sender told him. In a mighty voice, he roared out three times, "I WANT TO LEARN HOW TO LEARN!" By the third time, the walls were trembling. Then R' Zalman Sender blessed him that he would indeed know how to learn. And, wonder of wonders, in a short time, that water-carrier, who had been ignorant and uneducated, achieved incredible levels in Torah learning and became an outstanding talmid chacham!

STORIES MY GRANDFATHER TOLD ME

The Seeds of Greatness

"The people saw and sang glad song and fell upon their faces." (Vayikra 9:24)

A resident of Tomashov who had known R' Menachem Mendel of Kotzk as a child was amazed at the fame that his childhood friend had garnered. "We learned together in cheder," he marveled. "How can it be that he's a Rebbe now?" |

Hearing this, R' Menachem Mendel's chassidim began to question the man on the Rebbe's behavior as a child.

"I don't remember anything in par-

ticular about him," the man admitted. "He behaved like all the other children."

But the chassidim pressed him to try hard to remember if there had been anything special at all. And then the man recalled one incident:

"One Lag B'Omer, our melamed took us all on a trip to a mountain outside the town. We were surrounded by tall, majestic mountains. When the teacher and students returned home, someone noticed that Menachem Mendel

was missing. A search party went back to the mountain to look for him.

At the tip of the mountain, they found him lying on his back, arms and legs outspread. When they came close, they heard him murmuring the pasuk, 'Libi u'vesari yeranenu el Kel chai — My heart and my flesh will rejoice in the living G-d.'"

He was not such an average child, after all.

STORIES MY GRANDFATHER TOLD ME

R' Chaim and the Fire

"And they brought before Hashem an alien fire that he had not commanded them." (Vayikra 10:1)

When R' Chaim of Sanz was a small boy, a fire broke out in the city of Brody, where R' Chaim lived. The fire was large enough to force the family to flee to the neighboring city of Sassov. R' Chaim's mother took him — a boy not yet 3 years old — to see R' Moshe Leib Sassover. The boy had been very frightened by what had happened, and his mother asked the Rebbe to comfort him.

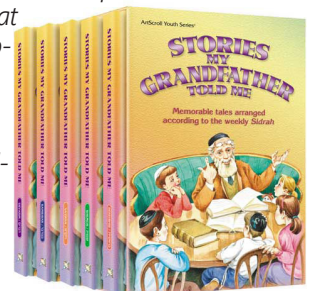
"Chaim," said the Rebbe, "tell me what you saw in that fire."

"On one side, I saw the Jews standing and putting out the fire," young Chaim answered, "and on the other side, I saw evil non-Jews who were standing and igniting the flames. It was hard for me to understand why we needed all that effort to set fires and put them out.

Wouldn't it be better to just chase away the evil people who were setting the fires? Then there wouldn't be any

flames to put out at all!" A very powerful mussar message indeed!

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An Early Seder

"Do not drink intoxicating wine, you and your sons with you, when you come to the Tent of Meeting" (Vayikra 10:9)

It was Pesach night, and several residents of Jerusalem came to the home of R' Shmuel Salant at a fairly early hour, thinking that they would be able to observe the Rav in the middle of his Seder. To their surprise, they found R' Shmuel sitting over his Gemara and learning. His Seder was over and done with.

The visitors were unable to conceal their astonishment and they asked the Rav how he was able to finish the Seder so early.

"This has always been my custom," R' Shmuel replied. And he went on to explain: "Baruch Hashem, Yerushalayim is a big city, and many people come to me with questions about chameiz and matzah on this particular night. All the teachers, dayanim, and halachic authorities in the city are unable to

rule tonight, as all of them drink four cups of wine at the Seder — and the halachah is that a drunk man may not instruct others. If so, to whom can the people come with their questions?

"I devised a solution to this dilemma. Each year, I finish my Seder quickly, and, immediately afterwards I sleep a little in order to dispel the effects of the four cups of wine that I drank. Then I am ready to rule and instruct anyone who comes to me with a question!"

JEWISH LEADER OF THE WEEK

Golda Meir

May 3, 1898—December 8, 1978

Golda Meir was a Zionist leader who dedicated her life to helping build the Jewish state. She helped Israel before and after it became a state. She was the first woman to be Israel's Prime Minister, and the world's third woman to hold such a position. She courageously led the country during the 1973 Yom Kippur War. Golda passed away in December 1978 and was bur-

ied on Mount Herzl in Jerusalem, which is where Israeli soldiers and leaders are buried. Golda Meir is an inspiration to all. She showed the world that age and gender do not define a leader. Former Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion used to call Meir "the best man in the government"; she was often portrayed as the "strong-willed, straight-talking, grey-bunned grandmother of the Jewish people". Born in Kiev, Russia, she and her family immigrated to Milwau-

kee, Wisconsin, where she became an active Zionist. The two biggest things to happen during her time as prime minister were; the murder of eleven Israeli athletes at the 1972 Summer Olympic Games by the terrorist group Black September, and the twenty day war called the Yom Kippur War between Israel and the Arab states led by Egypt and Syria in October 1973. Yitzhak Rabin became prime minister after her on June 3, 1974.

PUZZLERS ANSWERS

PARSHA CODE

1. MOSHE APPOINTED AHARON as the KOHEN GADOL in the MISHKAN
2. AHARON TOLD MOSHE to be KOHEN GADOL, but MOSHE was HAPPY for AHARON that AHARON was KOHEN GADOL
3. The SHECHINA RESTED on the MISHKAN on the 8th DAY after it was SET UP
4. The FIRST BORNs used to bring KORBANOS, but now it was the KOHEN's JOB
5. NADAV and AVIHU, 2 SON's of AHARON DIED when they BROUGHT a KORBAN in the MISHKAN
6. MISHA'EL and ELTZAFAN took the BODIES of NADAV and AVIHU out of the KODESH HAKADASHIM
7. AHARON was SILENT when he HEARD his 2 SONS DIED
8. HASHEM TOLD AHARON that a KOHEN cannot DRINK WINE when SERVING in the MISHKAN
9. a KOSHER AHIMAL has SPLIT HOOVES and CHEWS its CUD
10. a KOSHER FISH has FINS and SCALES

11. all CREEPING CRAWLING ANIMALS are NOT KOSHER
12. a PIG has SPLIT HOOVES, but does not CHEW its CUD

TEST YOUR PARSHA KNOWLEDGE

1. On Rosh Chodesh Nisan.
2. He blessed the Bnei Yisrael. We call this birkat kohanim.
3. They brought a foreign fire into the Mishkan
4. A fire consumed them
5. He kept quiet and accepted the decree of Hashem
6. Hashem spoke to Aharon and taught him new halachos.
7. The Torah lists all the non-kosher birds.
8. Fins and scales.
9. They are holy.
10. Animals that have split hooves and chew their cud.
11. So that Hashem would forgive Aharon for the

- aveirah of the egel hzavah.
12. The two oldest sons of Aharon.
13. Shechitah (slaughtering it).
14. It doesn't have split hooves.
15. It doesn't chew its cud
16. The milu'im. (dedication of the Mishkan).
17. Not to drink intoxicating beverages when they go to the Ohel Mo'ed.
18. He may not give a halachic ruling. Also, a kohen may not enter the Ohel Mo'ed, approach the mizbe'ach, or perform the avodah.
19. Four-camel, shafan, arnevet (hare), and pig
20. They sprinkled it onto the corners of the mizbe'ach.

TORAH RHYMES & RIDDLES

1. Nadav & Avihu, Aharon's sons.
2. Moshe
3. Aharon.
4. Eleazar and Isamar.
5. Split hooves.
6. Sheretz

PARSHA GAMES

Puzzle

LEADER TIP:

Although these games seem simple for this age group, they involve a lot of communication. We are leaving it up to the leaders to make the jigsaw puzzle a smashing hit. Maybe use words to spell a sentence out. A riddle or an adventure hunt with themes from the parsha can also work. BE CREATIVE!

by Sammy Schaechter

GOAL: When is it right to get involved in other people's business? When we can help them. In this week's Torah portion, (Lev. 10:16-20) although Moses is criticizing the actions of Elazar and Itamar -and not his own - Aaron steps in and speaks up in their defense. So too, we should be willing to speak up and defend others.

TYPE: Moderate, indoor, group game.

HOW TO PLAY: Split the group into teams of about 5. Have 10 colored sheets of paper, each cut into 10 pieces, all in the same way - i.e. a simple jigsaw. Mix up the pieces and give one to each

kid. Each person must make a jigsaw and the first group to have all their (5) members sitting next to the completed jigsaws (of all one color) is the winning group. To succeed the kids will have to give and help each other. The team with the best cooperation will win.

DISCUSSION: The person falling is at a disadvantage - they don't know if they're going to be OK or not. It's up to the other members of the group. If those members show that they can be trusted by not letting down that individual he will feel safe. If not, there is no one to stop him from being in physical danger. Our aim as people is not to let anyone feel in danger or not wanted. We should all be able to trust that others will help us when it is required. If we let someone fall over we go and see if we can help. The idea in this activity is to explain to the kids that when someone is down, it's important to stand up for them and help them in a time of need. Especially when you have a special gift, skill, or quality that they don't have and by helping out it can really save them from trouble.

TEFILAH TREASURES

Birkat Hashachar

"Blessed are You....Who gave the heart understanding to distinguish between day and night."

Sleeping and awakening is like the difference between day and night -- literally! The Talmud teaches us that sleep is an experience like death. When we awaken in the morning, Hashem has brought us back to life. In

Hebrew, the word "Sechvee" means both "rooster" and "heart". When the rooster "cock-a-doodles" like an alarm clock, it is the heart that understands that it is time to wake up and serve the Creator. Therefore we thank Hashem, who gave our hearts (and the rooster too!) the understanding to distinguish between day and night.

LEADER TIP:

This is one of the most important sections in Parsha nation. After davening has taken place in your group and you are up to this section have all the kids take a siddur and open it. Show them which page the brachot are on. Be confident, and don't mumble when reading the brachot in Hebrew. Ask for participation from the kids. I'm sure they know how to read some of the words. And of course always ask follow up questions.

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