

PARSHA GAMES

Ten Plagues Relay

by Sammy Schaechter

GOAL: To teach the kids all about the Ten Plagues.

TYPE: Moderate, indoor, group game.

HOW TO PLAY: When Paroh finally let the Jewish people go, they had to get out immediately and had not time to spare! In this game, the kids will go through the "Ten Plagues" as quickly as they can so that that can get out of Mitzrayim ASAP! The tasks/stations will take preparation before Shabbat. Split the kids up into two or three teams. Explain to them that they are about to be let out of Mitzrayim but they don't have that much time to get ready to go. Hand each of them a piece of cardboard and tell them that this is their Matzah lunch for the trip out of Mitzrayim and that you would've made them sandwiches but there wasn't enough time. Each of them must hold on to their piece of cardboard throughout the race. You can do the relay in a few ways- each member of the team doing each station, the whole team doing each station together, or each station having one team member doing the task and then tagging the next person on their team to do the next task. There are 10 tasks (one for each plague) and the first team to accomplish them all is the winner! The tasks are as follows...

1. You must drink a cup of fruit punch (Blood/Dam) 2. Three teammates must leapfrog from one point of the room to

the other (Frogs/Tzfardeya) 3. You must jump up and down scratching your head for 10 seconds (Lice/Kinim) 4. You must flip over cards/papers that have a name and/or picture of an animal and make that animals' sound (Wild Animals/Arov) 5. You must eat 5 animal crackers (Pestilence/Dever) 6. You must "Connect 4" red pieces in Connect Four (Boils/Shechin) 7. You must throw and catch 5 cotton balls in a cup (Hail/Barad) 8. You must eat 5 pretzels (Locusts/Arbeh) 9. One teammate must be blindfolded and another teammate must guide them from point A to point B (Darkness/Choshech) 10. The whole team must get in order from oldest to youngest (Death of the Firstborn/Makat Bechorot)

DISCUSSION: Explain to the kids how getting out of Mitzrayim was extremely exciting so much so that the Jewish people didn't have much time to get out. They had to pack up their stuff as quickly as possible and leave Mitzrayim before Paroh changed his mind. Even though we went through all the Ten Plagues today, the Mitzrim were the only ones who were affected by the plagues, the Jewish people weren't affected at all. A Jew and an Egyptian could drink water from the same cup and the Jew would drink water and the Egyptian would drink blood. Review with the kids the Ten Plagues and talk to them about how Hashem performed these miracles to both punish the Egyptians and show them that Hashem is the real true God.

TEFILAH TREASURES

Shemona Esrei - Refaenu

In this bracha we ask Hashem to help anyone who is sick and give them a full and speedy recovery. When someone we know is sick and need our tefillot, this is the bracha where we ask Hashem to heal them. Not only do we ask Hashem to help anyone who is sick to get better, but we also ask Hashem that for everyone who is not sick or who is healthy they He keep them all healthy and strong. It is a big mitzvah to daven for people who are sick. Even though we

go to doctors, and we take medicine to help us feel better, Hashem is really the one who makes people better. Not only that, but He give the doctors the knowledge and skills to be able to help us and He gives medicine the power to make us feel better. Unfortunately, we all know people who are sick and sometimes it's even people really close to us or maybe even ourselves. This bracha is really important and we should always try our best to give it our full attention.

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The Last Request

This month shall be unto you the first of months (12:2)

A merchant was faced with a difficult decision. He had been away since early that morning and longed to be home already, after a long day of business. It was dark now and he stood at a crossroads. One road led through a thick forest, a short cut that would bring him home two or three hours earlier. The other was longer.

He hesitated at taking the shorter route; the forest was the known lair of thieves. And yet, he longed to be home already, seated comfortably in front of the hearth with a warm glass of tea cradled in his hands.

Home! Home! He tugged the reins to the right, to the forest path. It was spooky and frightening, but he comforted himself with the thought of that glass of tea.

Soon he would be home. Suddenly, there was a burst of noise. Horses snorted and men whooped. Armed robbers surrounded the coach.

"What a find! What an excellent fish we have caught!" They shouted with glee at the sight of his fine carriage.

The leader ordered his men to tie up the merchant. The robbers swarmed all over the carriage, pouncing upon everything they found inside. There were all kinds of food which he was bringing home from the big city for his family. They snatched at them and sat down to a large feast. They would take care of him later. But first — food! After his men had gorged themselves, the leader turned to the victim. "It is an accepted custom that a man be given one last request before he dies. What do you want?"

"I don't want to die! I want to live!" the merchant sobbed.

"Don't be a fool! We cannot let you escape. Ask for something reasonable."

The Jew thought. Looking up at the heavens, he saw the new moon and suddenly remembered that he had not blessed it yet this month. "I would like to say a short prayer," he begged.

The leader agreed. He told his men to loosen the captive's bonds so that he might stand up and pray. The merchant prayed as he had never prayed before. He put all of his feelings into the words, the last mitzvah that he would be performing on earth. When he came to the phrase "Just as I dance before you but cannot touch you, so shall my enemies be unable to touch me to do me harm," he burst into heartrending sobs. He stood there, his cheeks wet with tears when, suddenly, a mighty wind began blowing. It lifted him up and away from the forest, to safety!

"Take the Scroll With You!"

This month shall be unto you the first of months (12:2)

The name Rothschild represents Jewish philanthropy. One of the Rothschilds, Baron Shimon Wolf Rothschild, was a truly devout, worthy Jew.

There was one commandment that Reb Shimon Wolf wished to observe in the best possible way. The Torah tells us that each person is required to write a Sefer Torah.

Reb Shimon Wolf was determined to have his own Torah scroll. He did not rely on the local scribes of Germany. He felt that they were not well-versed enough in the intricate laws involved in writing a Sefer Torah. Instead he imported a sofer from Russia who enjoyed an excellent reputation as a mas-

ter craftsman and a learned and holy Jew. The Baron commissioned him to write his personal Sefer Torah and he lodged with the Baron, Reb Shimon Wolf, during the months that it took to complete this serious undertaking. Every now and then the sofer would receive some money on account to send home to his family and cover expenses.

[The Sefer Torah was finally completed. The scribe went in to Reb Shimon to tell him the good news and to ask for the balance of his fee. Reb Shimon was overjoyed.

"How much have I already paid you on account?" he asked.

The scribe took out a small notebook and began reading: "In April I received this amount... In May so much and so

much... In June..."

The Baron cut him short. "Really!" he thundered at him. "Is that how a sofer reckons the months? According to their Christian names?! Could you not have recorded the same information according to the Jewish months or at least according to the weekly parashiyos? You, a person who labors in holy work all day long, who has no need for Christian notations, a so-called learned man, don't you know that the Torah forbids even mention of these gentile and heathen names?!"

Red with rage, the Baron counted out the remainder of the sum he owed and paid it to the Russian scribe. Then, in anger he said, "Go! And when you leave, take your Sefer Torah along with you! I don't want it!"

Even a Dog Knows

"But against all the Children of Israel, a dog will not sharpen its tongue" (Shemos 11:7)

There lived in Vilna a family whose sons were pious and especially diligent in the mitzvah of giving tzedakah. The family was wealthy, and in order to protect their home from robbers they had acquired fierce guard dogs.

During the day, these dogs were chained up. But at night, they had free rein to wander the yard that surrounded the house. Should a stranger try to approach the house, the dogs would come close to the fence and bark furiously. Upon hearing the barking, someone from the house would emerge to see who was coming.

One night, after midnight, the household was awakened by the sound of knocking at the door. The family was frightened, certain that if the dogs had not barked to give them warning, they must certainly have been poisoned by robbers. They jumped out of bed, grabbed whatever weapons were at hand, and called out, "Who's there?"

To their shock, they heard a familiar voice answer, "It's me, Elazar Moshe!"

It was R' Elazar Moshe Horowitz, the Rabbi of Pinsk! They hurried to receive the tzaddik with proper respect. As the door opened, they witnessed an amazing spectacle: R' Elazar Moshe stood in the doorway with the dogs standing docilely behind him, not uttering a sound!

Unaware of the sensation he was causing, R' Elazar Moshe said, "I apologize for waking you, but this urgent matter can't wait. I am involved in the mitzvah of pidyon shevuyim, redeeming a Jewish prisoner. It is a case of pikuach nefesh — and I have come to include you in this mitzvah!"

The members of the household contributed generously, and the Rabbi continued on his way.

During the years that he lived in the Soviet Union, R' Yechezkel Abramsky

wrote his commentary on the Tosefta. He once explained the reason why he had chosen those times in which to write his work: Had he opted to write a commentary on another subject, he would have written it and been done with it. But this commentary would keep him bound to the study of Torah all his life.

With great labor, the work progressed. When R' Yechezkel was thrown into a Soviet prison, he was permitted to take only two books with him. He chose a Tanach — and a Tosefta.

There, in jail, he wrote his commentary on Maseches Kereisos. He had no paper with him, but managed, with great personal sacrifice, to get hold of some in jail. The prisoners would roll a bit of tobacco into thin squares of paper to make cigarettes. R' Yechezkel often went hungry in order to buy these papers from his fellow prisoners. It was on these squares of paper that R' Yechezkel wrote down his comments, revisions, and thoughts on the Tosefta, without a single sefer to help him!

Years passed. The entire manuscript was ready, and R' Yechezkel wanted to have it printed. One day, a woman appeared at his door. She introduced herself as the niece of R' Baruch Ber of Kaminitz.

"I am getting ready to escape. I'm going to cross over the border," she confided. "It's very dangerous, and I'm asking for your blessing!"

"I am prepared to give you a beraachah," R' Yechezkel said, "on one condition. Take this manuscript out of the country with you."

The woman agreed to do as he asked. Several weeks later, R' Yechezkel received word that his precious manuscript had made it safely out of the Soviet Union.

Decades passed by. One day, a woman entered R' Yechezkel's room. "Perhaps the Rav does not remember me. I am R' Baruch Ber's niece —"

"Of course I remember! It is thanks to you that I have the printed Tosefta on

Seder Zera'im!"

The woman told her story. "There were about thirty of us who tried to cross the border secretly. I had taken the manuscript you gave me and sewed it into a long roll, which I wrapped around my body, under my clothes. We walked through desolate fields and climbed steep hills, until we finally reached the border. My heart was pounding.

"Suddenly, our guide said, 'I see a troop of Russian soldiers with dogs. Scatter! Run!'

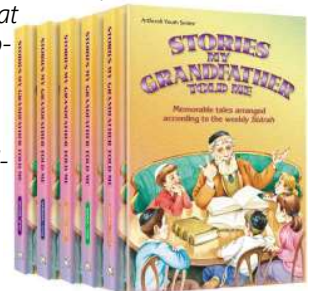
"I turned around at once and hid inside a haystack. I sat motionless, hardly breathing. The soldiers and dogs came closer. I saw a fierce-looking dog approach the haystack where I lay hidden. It barked and circled the haystack, while my heart pounded even harder. In another moment I was going to be in the hands of the authorities.

"The dog circled a few more times, then suddenly switched to the adjoining haystack, its barks growing louder. Just minutes later, the soldiers hauled out a member of my group.

"In all, most of the group was discovered. Only through Heaven's kindness did I and four others manage to cross the border!"

She concluded her story emotionally. Then she added, "When I arrived in Vilna and told my story to R' Chaim Ozer Grodzinski, he said, 'Dogs are trained to sniff out people but they don't smell the Torah.' And then I knew that I owed my life to your manuscript on the Tosefta!"

Stories My Grandfather Told Me by Zev Greenwald (Author) Libby Lazewnik (Translator) and Tova Katz (Illustrator) is packed with short pleasant stories that teach children important life lessons from the weekly Parsha. The five-volume set is available from your favorite Jewish book store, or at artscroll.com.



The Uninvited Sage

continued from page 3

said, "Sit down, my son. Really, you are worthy enough to determine all future leap years, but our Sages have already ruled that only those who have been asked can sit on such a beis din."

Shmuel Hakatan was in fact not the eighth one, who had not been invited. He had been asked to come, but in order to protect the man who had really not been invited and to spare him em-

barrassment, he had said that he was the one!

(According to Tractate Sanhedrin 11a)

PARSHA PUZZLERS

TEST YOUR PARSHA KNOWLEDGE

*by Sammy Schaechter
and Dovid Saleman
Answers on page 7.*

EASY Qs

1. The Bnei Yisrael left Egypt in order to receive the Torah and ultimately go to a land flowing with milk and honey. Which land is this?
2. How many makkot are there in Parshat Bo?
3. What was the eighth makkah?
4. Describe what this makkah did.
5. What was the ninth makkah?
6. Why do we eat matzah on Pesach?
7. In which parsha are all of the dinim of Pesach written in the Torah?
8. Who was the only Egyptian firstborn to not die from Makkatbechorot?

MEDIUM Qs

9. How many makkos (plagues) are in Parshat Bo? What did Pharaoh's servants tell him because of the makkah of locusts?
10. How many days did it last?
11. How did the first three days of darkness differ from the last three days?
12. When the Jews asked the Egyptians for gold and silver vessels, the Egyptians were unable to deny ownership of such vessels. Why?
13. Which month is counted as the first month of the year?
14. Makkat Bechorot took place at

EXACTLY midnight. Why did Moshe say it would take place at APPROXIMATELY midnight?

15. How many adult Jewish males left Egypt?
16. What did Pharaoh's servants tell him because of the makkah of locusts?

HARD Qs

17. What did Hashem do to the Jewish sinners during choshech?
18. What did the Bnei Yisrael do during Choshech?
19. When did the Bnei Yisrael shecht the Karbon pesach?
20. Where did the Bnei Yisrael put the blood of the Karbon Pesach?
21. Prior to the Exodus from Egypt, what two mitzvot involving blood did Hashem give the Bnei Yisrael?

SUPER HARD Qs

22. What additional Mitzvos is Moshe given at the end of the Parsha?
23. "What does one do to a firstborn donkey if they cannot redeem it?"
24. What additional Mitzvos is Moshe given at the end of the Parsha?
25. "What does one do to a firstborn donkey if they cannot redeem it?"

DISCUSSION Qs

26. Were all the Israelites in Goshen? Why is the blood necessary?

CRACK THE PARSHA CODE

*by Rabbi Yaakov Levine
Answers on page 7.*

1. The P of L was the 8th M
2. a W came and B the L into the Y S
3. not one L R'ed in M after the M
4. during the P of D, no M could S or M
5. after D, P said to M to never S his F again
6. before M B, all the J B G and S from the M
7. at exactly M, H K'ed the F B of M
8. R C was the first M given to the J after they were F
9. Each J was supposed to T a L on the 10th D of N to T to their B
10. The J took the B from the K P, and P it on their DP
11. The K P was only able to be R and not C
12. P is 7 D that only M may be eaten
13. The J didn't have T to B their D, so it turned into M
14. We wear T to R us of Y M

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