

PARSHA GAMES

Memory

by Sammy Schaechter

GOAL: In this week's parsha, Hashem tells Moshe to count all of Bnei Yisrael. Each of the 12 shvatim had a leader. In this game the kids will try and learn about each shevet and their leaders.

TYPE: Moderate, indoor, group game.

PREPARE IN ADVANCE: Before Shabbat, prepare cards or papers with the names of the shvatim and the leader of each shevet.

Reuven- Elitzur Binyamin- Avidan Shimon- Shelumiel Dan- Achiezer Yehudah- Nachshon Asher- Pagiel Yissachar- Netanel Gad- Eliasaph Zevulun- Eliav Naftali- Achirah Menasheh- Gamliel Efraim- Achirah.

Make some sort of visual connection between the shevet and its leader (ex: same color font, put the shevet's symbol on each card, etc.) You can use index cards, pieces of paper, or even cut out bigger pieces from poster board depending on how big you want it to be. You can do it in small groups as well as one big group.

HOW TO PLAY: Before you start playing, show the kids all of the

cards and introduce them to the shvatim and their leaders. Discuss with them who the shvatim are and why they're so important. If you'd like, you can even discuss what each of their symbols mean. Once the kids are somewhat familiar with the names, place all the cards face down on the floor. Switch off between people flipping over two cards at a time and seeing if they are a match. If they're not, it goes to the next person's turn. If it is a match, that person gets to keep the cards and go again.

DISCUSSION: The 12 tribes are Yaakov Avinus sons. They are all different and each have their own special talents and qualities. We all come from the 12 tribes. We learn from the 12 tribes that everyone has their own unique things that make them special. We wouldn't be able to have a world if everyone was great at sports but not smart, or if everyone was really strong physically but not emotionally. They teach us that we can all help each other out because we're all good at different things. Everyone has a chance to be a leader in a different way. Either being a team captain playing sports, or helping friends with homework, or carrying something heavy, we're all good at something and should be proud of the people we are.

TEFILAH TREASURES

Birkat Hashachar

Boruch... Oiter Yisroel B'tif-ara.

"Blessed are You... Who crowns Israel with splendor."

Wearing a hat goes in and out of style for the rest of the world (an Indiana Jones movie will always boost

the industry!), but for a Jew, wearing a keepa is a sign of respect towards Hashem. A Jewish male mustn't walk "Dalet Amot" (about three feet) or make a Bracha without a Yarmulkaon his head.

Further discussion for older kids

Hashem has crowned us with a special gift. We should always wear our "crowns" with pride and remember who we are.



Bamidbar Wrap-Up

by Sammy Schaechter

Moshe counts all males over the age of 20 and registers them according to their paternal ancestry. The total, not including Shevet Levi, was 603,550. The total number of Jews was around 3 million. The tribes are each assigned their position within the camp, and in the order of the traveling.

Bnei Yisrael was arranged as follows...

In the middle was the mishkan. Around the mishkan were the Levi'im split up with Kehat, the carriers of the vessels (mizbeah, menorah, aron, etc.) being to the south of the Mishkan, Gershon, the carriers of the curtains and roofings, being to the west, and Merrari, the carriers of the walls and pillars, being to the north. Moshe and Aharon's families were to the

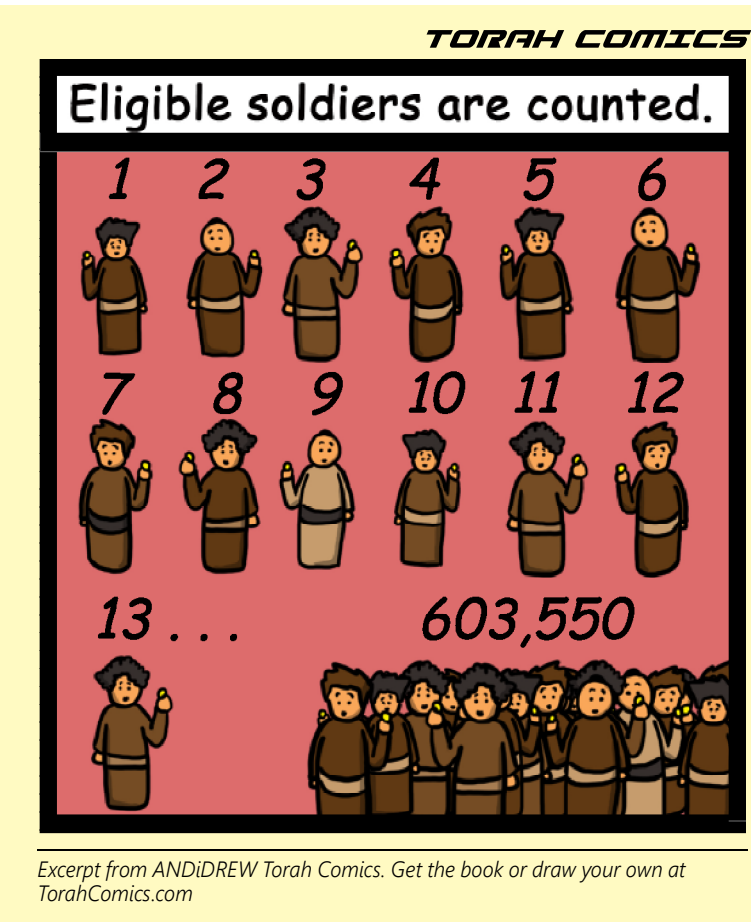
east. Around the Mishkan and the Levi'im were the rest of the Shevatim. Yehudah, Yissachar, and Zevulum to the east, Reuven, Shimon and Gad to the south, Efraim, Menashe, and Binyamin to the west, and Dan, Asher, and Naftali to the north.

In preparation for separating the tribe of Levi, the Torah establishes Aharon's genealogy. Although the Kohanim were also from Shevet

Levi, they were counted by themselves.

Moshe counts the Levi'im according to their three basic families: Gershon, Kehat, and Merarri. Their individual responsibilities in transporting the Mishkan is stated, and their total was 22,000.

Being that the Levi'im were to be in direct exchange for the first born, Moshe counts all the first born in the rest of the nation. Their total was 22,273. The extra 273 first born are instructed to redeem themselves from



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Aharon the Kohen for 5 silver shekels.

The Parsha concludes with detailed instructions for the family of Kehat. Their primary responsibility was to transport the vessels of the Mishkan. Only Aharon and his sons were allowed to cover the vessels in preparation for transport. Once covered, the family of Kehat did the actual carrying.

LEADER TIP:

While explaining about the parsha, instead of having everyone sit regularly, set them up like Bnei Yisrael were set up in the desert.



The Miser Changes

That there be no That there will be no wrath against the congregation of the Children of Israel (1:53)

Reb David, a wealthy carpenter of Slutzk, had a very successful trade. Yet, he persistently refused to give anything to charity. He became known as "Reb David the Miser."

Strangely enough, he was not a stingy person by nature. Indeed, his business associates got along well with him and even praised his generosity and easy-going nature. Reb David, they insisted, never haggled over prices and kept his word like a gentleman, even though this occasionally meant incurring a serious loss. His workers were also satisfied with the treatment they received. They considered him a fine employer; Reb David paid well and granted them generous seasonal bonuses.

This double standard of behavior confused and irked the trustees of the community and its charity treasurers. For each time they approached Reb David for a donation to some worthy cause or another, he invariably turned them away emptyhanded with angry words.

The Yeshivah of Volozhin was in desperate financial straits. Its founder, R' Chaim, had appealed to Jews throughout the country to come to its aid.

The Slutzk community rallied to the call of distress. Its rabbi, R' Yosef Feimer, one of the yeshivah's outstanding products, set aside Chanukah, Shavuot and the three days preceding, expressly, to raise money for the Volozhin Yeshivah and appointed men to organize the appeal and the collection of the pledges. All of the aliyos to the Torah during those days would be sold for the yeshivah's benefit. R' Yosef urged people to respond, conferring his personal blessing upon those who promised to give generously for this cause.

Reb David attended the synagogue

where R' Yosef prayed and was honored with an aliyah upon one of these days. When the gabbai perfunctorily asked what sum he was pledging for the cause, so that he could announce it, he was sure he was wasting his breath, knowing as he did about Reb David's notorious tight fist. But, as gabbai, he had to go through the motions.

Reb David announced that he was giving chai — eighteen — rubles for the yeshivah. The gabbai became so flustered at this unexpected reply — eighteen rubles was a considerable sum — that his tongue twisted in getting the words out and he burst out with "eighteen kopeks" instead, a paltry sum.

"I said eighteen rubles," Reb David corrected him angrily, "not eighteen kopeks." The gabbai duly announced the correction. And to his added surprise, Reb David, then, asked him to make another mi sheberach, a blessing for the welfare of his wife, for which he would double his donation by contributing another eighteen rubles.

The Jews of Slutzk gaped in wonder. They could not believe their ears. Some, having heard Reb David make his pledge, did not think that he would honor it. Others suggested that he must have drunk some schnaps before the prayers and had made his pledge under its influence.

R' Yosef knew differently. He had no doubts that Reb David would pay up the full thirty-six rubles. The Reb David that the rabbi knew was an entirely different person from the image he projected. Reb David frequently visited the rabbi in the privacy of his study and would give him large sums of money to be distributed anonymously among the poor of the city.

Reb David did not disappoint him, either. As soon as the first three stars made their appearance in the sky, Reb David said the havdalah and went to redeem his pledge to the Volozhin Yeshivah.

From that moment on, he was allowed no rest. As soon as word got around that Reb David had opened his hand and had given money for tzedakah, the charity treasurers descended upon him. They pestered him day and night in the hope that they, too, might benefit from his newly exhibited generosity. But Reb David reverted to his usual miserliness and would not give a kopek away. And when they thrust the fact of his thirty-six ruble donation under his nose, he answered that the yeshivah of Volozhin was an exception to his rule. It was an institution worth giving to, especially since their esteemed rabbi had studied there. And at that point, he revealed the reason behind his stubborn refusal:

"I am a native of Slutzk, born and bred in this city," he began. "My childhood was one long chapter of suffering and deprivation. My father, a tin-smith, never earned enough to put sufficient bread on the table to satisfy our empty stomachs. He died young, leaving us, his starving orphans, behind, to struggle as best we could. My mother had no choice but to assume the responsibility of supporting the family and she did so inadequately, too. The burden was too much for her and, when I was merely ten, she died. I was shuttled back and forth between kind relatives; life was not easy for me. Before reaching bar mitzvah age, I was forced to abandon my studies and go to work. I helped my uncle, who was a porter."

All the bitterness of his difficult youth poured out of him in a heart-breaking account of his youthful suffering. Reb David bore the communal trustees a grudge for not having come to the aid of his widowed mother and of her starving orphans.

His salvation came from another source, from a relative on his mother's side who gathered the homeless waif into his home. This relative, who lived far from Slutzk, apprenticed him to a carpenter during the week and

Eli Cohen

December 16, 1924 – May 18, 1965

Eli Cohen was an Israeli spy. He is best known for his spying work in 1961-1965 in Syria, where he created close relationships with people high up in the military and politics. He became the chief advisor to the Minister of Defense. He moved to Damascus in February 1962 using the name Kamel Amin Thaabet. When Syrian intelligence uncovered that he was a spy, he was taken to trial and found guilty of spying and sentenced to death. On 18 May 1965, Cohen was publicly hanged in the Marjeh Square in Damascus. On the day of his execution, Cohen's 'last wish' to see a Rabbi was respected by the prison authorities. While on his way in a truck to the Marjeh Square, he was accompanied by Nissim Andabo, the 80-year-old Chief Rabbi of Syria. In 2005, he was voted the 26th-greatest Israeli of all time, in a poll by the Israeli news website Ynet to determine whom the general public considered the 200 Greatest Israelis. Cohen

provided an incredible amount of intelligence data to the Israeli Army over a period of four years (1961-1965).

Cohen sent intelligence to Israel by radio, secret letters, and occasionally in person, he secretly traveled to Israel three times. His most famous achievement was when he toured the Golan Heights, and collected intelligence on the Syrian fortifications there. Pretending sympathy for the soldiers exposed to the sun, Cohen had trees planted at every position. The trees were used as targeting markers by the Israeli military during the Six-Day War and enabled Israel to easily capture the Golan Heights in two days.

Cohen made repeated visits to the southern frontier zone, providing photographs and sketches of Syrian positions. Cohen learned of an important secret plan by Syria to create three successive lines of bunkers and mortars; the Israel Defense Forces would otherwise have expected to encounter only a single line.

Newly appointed Syrian Intelligence, Colonel Ahmed Su'edani trusted no one and disliked Cohen. Because of this, Cohen expressed his fear and wish to terminate his assignment in Syria during his last secret visit to Israel in November 1964 to pass intelligence and for the birth of his third child. Still, Israeli Intelligence asked him to return to Syria one more time.

Before leaving, Cohen assured his wife that there would only be one more trip before he returned permanently.

In January 1965, Syrian efforts to find a high-level mole were stepped up. Using Soviet-made tracking equipment and assisted by hired Soviet experts, a period of radio silence was observed, and it was hoped that any illegal transmissions could be identified. After large amounts of radio interference were detected and traced to their source, on Jan 24th Syrian security officers broke into Cohen's apartment where he was caught in the middle of transmission to Israel.

PUZZLERS ANSWERS

PARSHA CODE

- HASHEM TOLD MOSHE to COUNT the BNEI YISROEL
- On ROSH CHODESH of MONTH 2, BNEI YSROEL were COUNTED
- Only MALES between 20 and 60 YEARS OLD were COUNTED
- HSHEM wanted to COUNT BNEI YISROEL to show his LOVE for them
- only SHEVET LEVI were not COUNTED with BNEI YSROEL
- SHEVET LEVI were COUNTED from 1 MONTH OLD
- the MISHKAN and SHEVET LEVI were in the MIDDLE of the CAMP
- SHEVET LEVI has JOBS to SERVE in the MISHKAN
- Because of the AVEIRA of the EIGEL, the FIRST BORNs were replaced with SHEVET LEVI

TORAH RHYMES & RIDDLES

- The tribe of Levi
- The tribe of Yehuda
- Yehuda, Yissachar & Zevulun

- Reuvain, Shimon & Gad
- Binyamin, Menashe & Ephraim
- Dan, Asher & Naftali
- First-born sons
- Merari

TEST YOUR PARSHA KNOWLEDGE

- Its own degel (flag), symbolizing each shevat
- The bechorim (first born), since they weren't killed during makat bechorot (plague of the first born)
- The firstborn bowed to the egel (golden calf), losing their privilege, while the Leviim did not
- Since the leviim served in the Mishkan in place of everyone else, they received tithes as "payment."
- Each firstborn had to be redeemed with five shekels from the kohen. Nowadays, any firstborn son whose parent isn't a kohen or Levi must have one. The father should do it, but if he doesn't, the son must
- The Mishkan
- HaShem wanted to show the Bnei Yisrael how much He loves them

- Moshe, Aharon, and the twelve Nesiim
- The shevatim that did slave labor in mitzrayim were blessed by HaShem and had six babies at a time. Since Shevat Levi never did slave labor, they didn't get this berachah from HaShem
- To count the Bnei Yisrael
- To sing during the avodah; to carry all the pieces and keilim of the mishkan; and to stand guard around the mishkan to make sure only kohanim entered the kodesh section of the mishkan
- The men who were between twenty and sixty years old
- Each person who was to be counted gave a machzit hashekel. Then the coins were counted
- Shevat Levi
- All males from one month old and older
- He went near their tents and a bat kol (voice from heaven) told him
- Between 30 and 50 years old
- Aharon and his sons
- They carried them by themselves
- Before Yaakov died, he arranged the order that his children should carry his body back to Eretz Yisrael. This is the same order that the Bnei Yisrael camped in the midbar

An Illustrious Lineage

“And they established their genealogy according to their families, according to their fathers’ house”(Bamidbar 1:18)

When the tzaddik, R’ Yisrael of Ruzhin, wrote the tena'im (contract of engagement) for his grandson, R’ Shlomo son of R’ Avraham Yaakov of Sadigur, to the daughter of R’ Tzvi Hirsch of Riminov, he mentioned their elevated yichus. According to family tradition, the Ruzhiner Rebbe could trace his lineage back to David Hamel-

ech.

When the Rebbe finished speaking, he turned to the Riminover Rebbe and said, “And now, honored mechutan, tell us about your family lineage!”

R’ Tzvi Hirsch surprised the assembled guests by saying, “I hereby admit before you all that I have no noble lineage of rabbis and tzaddikim. My parents were simple and pious people who earned their meager living

through backbreaking work. When they departed this world, I was only a 10-year-old boy. Because of our dire financial situation, I was apprenticed to a tailor. And,” R’ Tzvi Hirsch finished emotionally, “I learned two things from that tailor — things that have served to light my way all my life: not to ruin new things, and to try one’s best to repair old things.”

STORIES MY GRANDFATHER TOLD ME

Scorched Souls

“Do not cut off the tribe of the Kohathite families from among the Levites”(Bamidbar 4:18)

The graduation ceremony of the Bais Yaakov in Vizhnitz was graced by the personal presence of the Vizhnitzer Rebbe, author of Damesek Eliezer. The Rebbe explained this remarkable and rare departure from his usual practice.

“I will tell you a story that happened to my grandfather, the Tzemach Tzedek. A fire once broke out in Vizhnitz, and all the wooden houses began to burn. In the midst of the terror and confusion, the household discovered that the Rebbe had disappeared from his home and could not be found anywhere. They went out into the streets to search for him — until, at last, they found the Rebbe helping a destitute widow save her meager possessions from the flames, dragging them along in a wagon for her.

“When his family caught up with him, the Rebbe apologized. ‘I’m sorry. But when there’s a fire, you don’t stop

to see who’s doing the dragging and what he’s dragging. You just offer help wherever it’s needed.’

“I, too,” the Vizhnitzer Rebbe told the graduating class and assembled guests, “tell you the same thing. Right now, the religious situation in our country is comparable to a blazing fire. Souls are being scorched. There is a vital need to cling to every thread of our faith. Founding a school for girls falls into the category of “eis la’asos,” a timely necessity — and it is to demonstrate my support for this school that I am here today!”

One Chanukah night, the Vizhnitzer Rebbe, the Imrei Chaim, went to light his menorah. Due to his frailty and ill health at the time, and because of the press of people who had come to watch the Rebbe light, all the children were asked to leave the room.

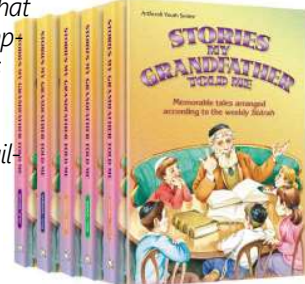
As the Rebbe was beginning to recite the berachah, he gestured to his aides. They assumed the Rebbe’s gesture had something to do with the menorah, and they answered that all

was halachically correct, and that the Rebbe could light. The Rebbe lowered his hand and again made a motion. This time his meaning was clear: Where are the children?

His gabbaim explained that they had been forced to send the children out because there were too many people in the room.

The Rebbe put down his siddur and his candle and waited until the children were brought back into the room. Afterwards, he asked, “How is it possible to light when the children are not present? After all, the essence of Chanukah is for chinuch — to teach the children!”

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.



taught him Torah, for hours on end, every Shabbos and Yom Tov, so that he would not grow up an ignoramus. Being a capable boy, he soon acquired great skill in carpentry and was advanced enough to be able to study Torah on his own. While under his uncle’s roof, he managed to save up some money. After his marriage, he returned to Slutzk and invested his savings in establishing a carpentry workshop.

The people of Slutzk, who remembered David as a neglected urchin, did not trust his skill and would not patronize him. Business was poor; orders were few and far between and Reb David eked out a bare existence through inconsequential repairs. His bitter resentment against the people of Slutzk festered within him.

Thus did the months and years go by until that fateful day when R’ Yosef Feimer, the rabbi of Slutzk, approached him and asked him to build a few bookshelves for some new books he had recently acquired. The rabbi’s kind manner and gentle respect melted some of the hardened bitterness in the carpenter’s heart. That very afternoon, Reb David hurried over to the rabbi’s house to take measurements.

While he was designing and measuring the new shelves, the rebbetzin came in and offered the carpenter a glass of tea. R’ Yosef engaged him in conversation which veered from the work project itself to Reb David’s personal life. His tone was genial and considerate towards the carpenter; Reb David thawed and warmed to the rabbi, resolving to repay the kindness by serving him to the best of his ability. When R’ Yosef asked for an estimate for the work, he put him off, saying that he had to make some calculations first, but would quote him a price later that week.

A few days later, after prayers, the carpenter informed the rabbi that his bookshelves were completed and that he would be bringing them over later on in the day. When he delivered the finished product, the rabbi marveled at its beauty. Here was a bookcase to

enhance the finest study and to do credit to the most skilled craftsman. He had expected a shelf or two but had received a magnificent piece of furniture! But much as he admired it, R’ Yosef’s heart sank; he did not have the money to pay for such an expensive item; this was not at all what he had ordered!

As soon as he saw the hint of dismay on the rabbi’s face, the carpenter hurried to assure him that he did not expect any fee whatsoever. All he wanted was the rabbi’s blessing, which meant more to him than the cost and labor which he had invested in the bookcase. R’ Yosef demurred, at first, from giving a blessing to the carpenter. He felt that it was a misguided, simplistic faith which made him turn down payment in lieu of a blessing. There was something naive and strange about it, the rabbi thought, but, in the end, agreed. He placed both his hands upon Reb David’s head and wished him success in his future endeavors.

This was the turning point in his life. From that day on, the carpenter’s business began thriving. Visitors to the rabbi’s house could not help noticing the magnificent bookcase and the skill that had gone into making it. When they found out who had made it, they began placing their orders with Reb David. The richest, most prominent men in Slutzk began to patronize the carpenter, but this did not soften Reb David’s bitterness against them. When, in time, he became a wealthy householder himself, a respected member of the community, he refused to give any charity. He did not trust the charity treasurers; he suspected them of pocketing charity funds themselves.

One day, right before Pesach, he was approached to contribute to the Slutzk maos chittin fund, but refused. That same day, however, he went to the rabbi and laid a considerable sum upon his desk to be distributed among the poor. He stipulated certain conditions, however: the rabbi must not reveal to a soul the source or size of his donation; he must dole out the money himself and not transmit it to the charity

treasurers, and, thirdly, the rabbi must bless him for continued prosperity and well being.

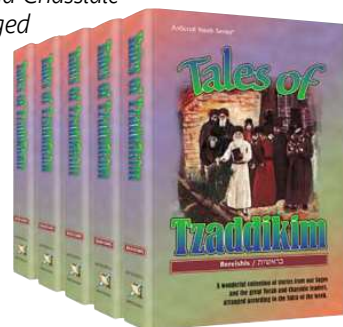
Reb David’s hostile attitude towards the charity treasurers of Slutzk antagonized the rest of the people of the community and they stopped placing their orders with him. Reb David knew that the people of Slutzk were not the source of his livelihood; he believed with all his heart that his success was a direct result of the rabbi’s blessing and that this blessing would accompany him throughout his life. This faith did, in fact, withstand the test of time.

Reb David’s skill became famous throughout the city. Even the gentiles began streaming to his shop to order furniture, and business boomed. From time to time, Reb David would visit the rabbi and lay down a substantial sum for charity on his desk in return for the rabbi’s blessing. The mayor was also among his clients. After he became duly impressed with the carpenter’s work, he issued a directive that all municipal orders be placed only with Reb David. This included all wooden school equipment and furniture for the municipal offices. And so, Reb David was assured of plentiful work to last him to the end of his days.

This was the tale that he finally revealed to the charity collectors. And when they heard his story, their eyes were opened. They understood the power of their rabbi’s blessing, and how effective it could be, if one believed in it with simple, wholehearted faith.

(HaRishon LeShalshelles Brisk, p. 206)

Tales of Tzaddikim by G. Matov is a wonderful collection of stories from our Sages and the great Torah and Chassidic leaders, arranged according to the Sidra. The five-volume set is available from your favorite Jewish book store, or online at artscroll.com.



PARSHA PUZZLERS

TEST YOUR PARSHA KNOWLEDGE

by Sammy Schaechter & Dovid Saleman
Answers on page 7.

EASY Qs

1. What did each shevat display at its camp?
2. Who were originally supposed to work in the mishkan? Why?
3. Why were the Leviim chosen to replace them in their Avodah (Holy work)?
4. Why did the levi'im receive ma'aser rishon?
5. What is a Pidyon Haben, and who makes one today?
6. What was in the center of the camp?
7. Since HaShem knows everything, why did the Bnei Yisrael have to be counted?
8. Who counted the Bnei Yisrael?
9. What is one reason why shevat Levi was so much smaller than the other shevatim?

10. What did HaShem tell Moshe to do at the beginning of Parshat Bamidbar?

MEDIUM Qs

11. What was shevat Levi's job?
12. Who were counted?
13. How were they counted?
14. Which shevat was counted alone?
15. Who was counted from shevat Levi?
16. How did Moshe count shevat Levi? (Hint: what nes occurred)?

HARD Qs

17. Is a Jew allowed to collect interest? How old were the Leviim that carried the Mishkan?
18. Who covered all the keilim of the Mishkan before the Leviim were allowed to carry them?
19. The Bnei kehath transported the aron Hakodesh, shulchan, menorah, mizbach hazahav, and mizbach hanechoshet. Did they carry these keilim by themselves or were the

CRACK THE PARSHA CODE

by Rabbi Yaakov Levine
Answers on page 7.

1. H T M to C the B Y
2. On R C of M 2, B Y were C
3. Only M between 20 and 60 Y O were C
4. H wanted to C B Y to show his L for them
5. only S L were not C with B Y
6. S L were C from 1 M O
7. the M and S L were in the M of the C
8. S L has J to S in the M
9. Because of the A of the E, the F B were replaced with S L

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keilim placed on wagons?

20. What does the funeral of Yaakov have to do with the order in which Bnei Yisrael camped in the Midbar?

PARSHA PUZZLERS

TORAH RHYMES & RIDDLES

Answers on page 7.

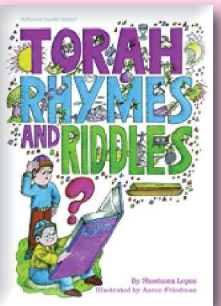
1. Moshe counted every tribe
This was Hashem's command
All males over twenty years,
Six hundred thousand.
But we were counted separately,
Much different from the others
All boys over one month old
Were counted with their brothers
The _____ of _____
2. Our leader is Nachshon ben Aminadav
And we are thankful to Hashem above.
The largest tribe, we stand up tall
Over seventy thousand men in all!

3. We three camp on the eastern side.
We march first and march with pride
_____ / _____
and _____
4. We three think the south is fine.
We're the second ones in the line.
_____ / _____ and _____
5. Our place to camp is in the west.
We march third and like it best.
_____ / _____ and _____
6. The three of us camp in the north.
We're the last ones to march forth.
____ / _____ and _____

7. If not for the sin of the Golden Calf
We would be serving on Israel's behalf.
But the Leviim are now the chosen ones,
Who are we? The _____ sons?

8. We are the three sons of Levi:
Gershon, Kehas and _____

Torah Rhymes and Riddles by Shoshana Lepon (Author) and Aaron Friedman (Illustrator) is filled with rhyming riddles that test young children's comprehension of the weekly Parsha. For more great children's Torah books, visit artscroll.com



PARSHA STORIES

STORIES MY GRANDFATHER TOLD ME

Out of the Dust

"Take a census of the entire assembly of the Children of Israel" (Bamidbar 1:2)

R' Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev once saw a wagon driver, in the midst of davening Shacharis, stoop to spread tar on the wheels of his wagon — all the while murmuring the words of his tefillah. R' Levi Yitzchak lifted his hands Heavenward and cried, "Master of the Universe, who is like Your nation of Israel? Even while tarring their wheels, they daven to You!"

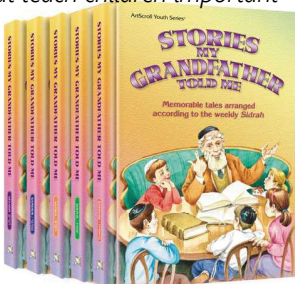
When bending over, the wagon driver's tefillin slipped off his head. He has-

tened to pick them up and kissed them fervently, tears welling up in his eyes. Once again, R' Levi Yitzchak found a reason to praise the Jewish people:

"Master of the Universe, see how this Jew deals with his tefillin. When they slip to the ground he picks them up, kisses and caresses them, and cries over them with all his heart. You, too, Master of the Universe, have tefillin — our Sages say that Hakadosh Baruch Hu puts on tefillin every day. And what do Your tefillin say? 'Who is like Your nation, one people in the land!'"

"We, the Jewish nation, are Your tefillin. We are thrown to the ground and trampled. Please, hurry and lift us up out of the dust and restore us to our former place of glory."

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.



PARSHA STORIES

TALES OF TZADIKIM

The Good Soldier

All that were able to go forth to war in Israel (1:45)

When R' Chaim of Sanz was only four years old he could recite from memory all the 613 commandments, the taryag mitzvos, in the order given by the Rambam.

People asked, "Why did you choose to memorize this material in particular?"

He replied, "Soldiers are required to know all of the orders which their commander gives. We Jews are also soldiers, in the army of Hashem, and

must, therefore, thoroughly know all of His orders and His orders are the commandments of the Torah, the taryag mitzvos!" The child paused, then added, "I yearn with all my heart to be a good soldier in Hashem's army. That is why I chose to learn the mitzvos by heart."