



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.

Shana Tova.

Ari Matityahu
Assistant Director

Sammy Schaechter
Youth Services Coordinator

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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.

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!	



CHAYEI SARAH REVIEW

This week's Parsha starts off with the passing of Sarah at age 127. Avraham buys a piece of land in Chevron called Maarat HaMachpelah for 400 shekel to bury her. This is the place where all of our avot and imahot will be buried. Yitzchak is now forty years old and not married. Avraham asks his servant Eliezer to go to Charan, where Avraham was born, to find a wife for Yitzchak. Eliezer brings lots of jewelry and gifts for the future wife. Eliezer asks Hashem for a sign to let him know which girl is the right one for Yitzchak. The sign is that when he will ask a girl for water to drink from the well, she will offer to give water to the camels also. Rivka came along and offered water to Eliezer and the camels and invited him to her father's house. When Eliezer asks for her to marry Yitzchak, she says yes. She was happy to marry a righteous and kind person like Yitzchak and get away from her family who were not very honest or righteous.

Rivka travels to Canaan with Eliezer and marries Yitzchak. When Sarah was alive there were three miracles that happened every week: the challah she baked for Shabbat stayed fresh from one week to the next; the candles she lit on Friday night stayed lit the whole week; and there was a cloud on her tent which was a sign that Hashem was present all the time. When she passed away these miracles stopped; after Yitzchak and Rivka got married they came back. That was Yitzchak's sign that she was the right one for him--that Rivka was righteous just like Sarah was. Avraham also remarries Keturah who is actually Hagar, the wife Avraham married before he and Sarah had Yitzchak. Why the new name? Because she repented from her not good ways and started a new life as a better person. At the end of the Parsha we learn that Avraham died at age 175 and is buried next to Sarah in Maarat HaMachpelah.

LEADER TIP: Give out water to everyone in honor our Rivka. Tell everyone that if they have camels then they are more than welcome to have some water too!

PARSHA QUESTIONS

Questions

1. How old was Sarah when she died?
2. Where was Sarah buried?
3. From where did Avraham buy the land, from who, and for how much?
4. Who else was buried there?
5. Who was Eliezer and what did Avraham tell him to do?
6. How did Eliezer know that Rivka was the one for Yitzchak?
7. What did Rivka do when she saw Yitzchak coming?
8. What miracles happened when Sarah was alive that returned when Rivka came?
9. Who did Avraham marry after Sarah died?
10. How old was Avraham when he died?

Answers

1. 127
2. Maarat HaMachpelah
3. Chevron, Efron, 400 shekel
4. Adam and Chavah, Avraham and Sarah, Yitzchak and Rivka, Yaakov and Leah (and some say Esav's head)
5. Avraham's servant. He was told to go to Charan to find Yitzchak a wife
6. She offered water not only to Eliezer, but to his camels as well
7. She covered her face
8. The candles she lit on Friday night stayed lit the whole week, there was a cloud on her tent which was a sign that Hashem was present all the time, and the challah she baked for Shabbat stayed fresh from one week to the next.
9. Keturah, who many say was really Hagar
10. 175

LEADER TIP: Eliezer went to go find the perfect match for Yitzchak, what kind of qualities would you look for in a friend?

PARSHA ACTIVITY

GOAL: To learn about the three special miracles that happened to Sarah and continued when Rivka moved in.

ACTIVITY: “Sarah and Rivka’s Miracles”

There were three miracles that happened to Sarah on a weekly basis- her challah stayed fresh all week long, her candles stayed lit from Shabbos to Shabbos, and Hashem’s *shechinah* always rested above her tent. These three games will represent each of the miracles.

Part 1- “Candle Horseshoe”

Create a candle like object using a baton/stick/paper towel roll/tin foil. Make it that it stands up and doesn’t fall down. You can also use soda bottles. You will also require “rings”. Take turns giving each kid seven rings to try and throw onto the “candles”. The idea behind the seven rings is to represent the seven days that the candles burned from Shabbos to Shabbos.

Part 2- “Hashem-Spys” (aka I-spy)

Have one kid pick an object in the room and whisper what it is into a group leader’s ear. They will then give a clue about what it is to the rest of the group. Each kid in the group will have a chance to guess what it is. For example, they will say something like “I-spy something that goes back and forth (a door)”. Each kid will have a chance to guess what it is and whoever gets it right will then become the next “spy”. The idea behind this game is that Hashem was always looking over Sarah’s tent just like the kids were looking over the room.

Part 3- “The Challah Braid Relay”

Set up cones (or random objects) spread out in a straight line across the room. Each kid must take turns running around the cones on the way to the other side where they must eat two small cookies/pretzels/ any other food you think would work well. Don’t forget a bracha! They must then run back around the cones and tag the next person in line. This game represents that Sarah’s challah would always stay fresh. The running through the cones is like the braiding of the challah and eating 2 pretzels represents *lechem mishnah*, always having two challahs at our meal on Shabbat.

DISCUSSION: We learned about the three special miracles that happened to Sarah. Unfortunately, when she passed away these miracles disappeared and no longer happened in Avraham's tent. Although, when Eliezer went to go find a wife for Yitzchak, he found Rivka who was the perfect fit. How do we know this? Because when Rivka came into Sarah's tent, all the miracles of Sarah returned as well- the candles lasted from week to week, the challah stayed nice and fresh, and Hashem's *shechinah* rested over the tent. We should learn from the ways of Sarah and Rivka and always keep and honor Shabbat and remember Hashem is always looking out for all of us.

LEADER TIP: You can also see who can balance things on their head for the longest to remember that Hashem is always and forever above us and looking over us.

PARSHA STORY

Before you read: There's no one like Mom. This week's Parsha (Ber. 23:1, see Rashi) tells us of the greatness of the mother of the entire Jewish people - Sarah. By learning to appreciate her, we can learn to appreciate the great things about our own mothers too.

MOTHER'S DAY

"Are you sure you're going to be able to manage?" Ted, Mindy and Erica's mom asked them with a concerned look.

"Sure, Mom," Mindy said. "Piece of cake! If I'm old enough to baby-sit for other people, I can certainly take care of us. You go enjoy your Mother's Day overnight vacation."

"Yeah," Ted added. "Everything's under control. You left us instructions and beside, we're big enough that you don't do much for us anymore anyway."

Their mother blinked, then smiled.

"Not me," said little Erica, thumb-in-mouth. "I'm not big enough. I'm going to miss you!"

"Shhh!" her two older siblings said in unison as the waiting car honked its horn outside.

"It's Mother's Day today. Let Mom go and have a good time. We'll give you some treats."

"Okay, bye-bye," she waved.

Their mother smiled, giving them each one last peck on the cheek before walking out the door.

A little while later, Ted walked into the kitchen, only to find Mindy and Erica already there. "It's lunch time," he announced, taking his usual seat at the kitchen table and pointing to the green and lavender clock on the wall.

"Yeah, I know," Mindy answered sheepishly.

"Well?" said Ted.

"Well, what?" she shot back.

"We always eat lunch at exactly 12 and I'm hungry."

"Me too!" said Erica.

"Me three," Mindy admitted. "But that's because Mom always makes sure there's lunch the table then. But Mom's not home - remember?"

"So what are we going to do?" Ted asked, a trace of panic in his voice.

"Not to worry. I sort of misplaced Mom's lunch instructions, so I put one of those frozen chickens in the oven almost a half an hour ago."

"I love chicken!" Erica clapped.

"Yeah ... but it's not exactly done yet," Mindy sighed, poking a fork at the oven pan. "It's actually still sorta frozen."

"We're gonna starve!" Ted called out, inciting Erica to whimper in panic.

"Calm down, both of you!" Mindy yelled. "Look," she said, pulling the first jumbo bag of snacks from the pantry she could find, "until it's done, we can all eat ... Pizza Pete's Sauce-O Chips!"

"Yay!" the kids yelled out.

But about a half an hour later, none of them were as enthusiastic - with junk food stomach aches and no real food in sight.

The rest of the afternoon was slow going, with Ted brooding about missing soccer practice, since their mom wasn't there to drive him, Mindy mad about not being able to study, since she was so busy baby-sitting, and Erica having turned the refrain 'I miss Mommy' into about 20 different tunes.

By the time it was bedtime, the kids were happy to call it a day. That was - until they tried to sleep.

"I want a story, like Mom always tells," Erica whimpered.

"I don't have any clean t-shirts for tomorrow," Ted fretted as Mindy sighed to herself, upset about not being able to have one of those heart-to-heart talks with her mother which she needed so much right now.

"I miss..."

"You miss Mommy - right?" Ted snapped at his younger sister - although in their hearts they all agreed.

The next day, after much anticipation, their mom walked through the door and was surprised to see the house filled with colorful balloons and a big hand-lettered banner saying 'HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY!'

"Um, this is really nice, guys..." she said "but yesterday was Mother's Day - not today."

"Uh, uh," Ted shook his head as his siblings agreed. "Now that we see how much we need you..."

"And miss you!" Erica shot in as Ted went on, "We decided to declare today - and every day - as Mother's Day!"

Discussion Questions:

Q. How did the older kids feel at first about their mom going away?

A. They felt like it would be easy to get by without her.

Q. How did they feel in the end?

A. They saw how much she did for them and were happy when she got back.

LEADER TIP: In honor of our ancestors Sarah and Avraham, go home and thank your family for everything they do for you!

JEWISH LEADER OF THE WEEK

Noam Gershony

(January 30, 1983-)



Noam Gershony served in the Israeli Defense Force as a pilot in an attack helicopter. During the 2006 Lebanon War his helicopter crashed with another helicopter, which killed his co-pilot and left Gershony injured. He had many bone fractures and injuries in his arms and legs. He went through lots of therapy and joined Beit Halochem sport center in Tel Aviv where he started playing wheelchair tennis and surfing. Besides his sports career, Gershony volunteers at "Makom Acher", a hostel for at-risk youth in Tel Aviv, and teaches math to teenagers. He's won many championships in tennis including participating in the 2012 Summer Paralympics and winning a gold medal. He was then chosen to hold his nation's flag at the 2012 Summer Paralympics closing ceremony.

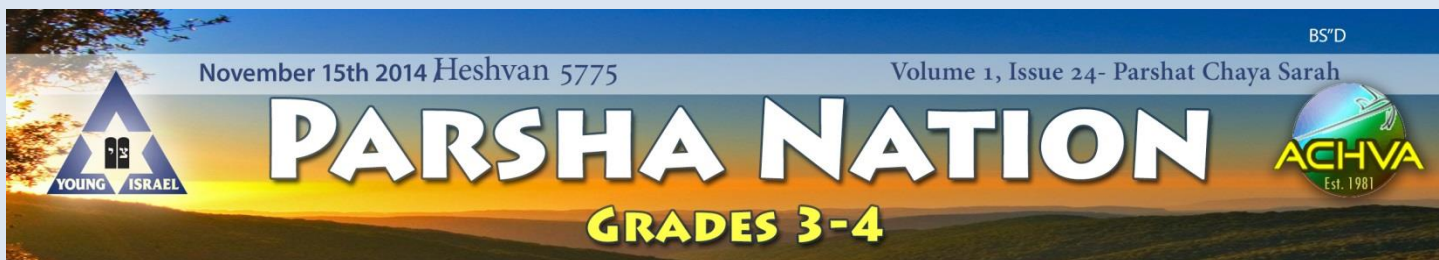
LEADER TIP: Have you ever gotten hurt but fought through it and found a way to succeed in other things?

TEFILLAH TREASURES

Birkat Kriyat Shema Part 2

In one of the brachot before Shema, it says that “Hashem’s kindness lasts forever”. This means that Hashem takes care of everyone and everything in the world with a constant and unlimited flow of *chessed*. Every single day Hashem refreshes the world and all of His creations. Each moment that the world continues to exist is a moment of *chessed* from Hashem. If even a half of a second went by without Hashem caring about the world and all of us in it, we wouldn’t last past that half a second. We should always try to believe that Hashem helps us every second of our day and without His help we would never be able to succeed in our daily lives. We must thank Hashem every day for everything He does for us because without Him we wouldn’t even be here. Thanks Hashem! You’re the greatest!

LEADER TIP: Review and “instant replay” of your day and see how Hashem helped in every step of it!



CHAYEI SARAH REVIEW

This week's Parsha starts off with the passing of Sarah at age 127. Avraham buys a piece of land in Chevron called Maarat HaMachpelah for 400 shekel to bury her. This is the place where all of our avot and imahot will be buried. Yitzchak is now forty years old and not married. Avraham asks his servant Eliezer to go to Charan, where Avraham was born, to find a wife for Yitzchak. Eliezer brings lots of jewelry and gifts for the future wife. Eliezer asks Hashem for a sign to let him know which girl is the right one for Yitzchak. The sign is that when he will ask a girl for water to drink from the well, she will offer to give water to the camels also. Rivka came along and offered water to Eliezer and the camels and invited him to her father's house. When Eliezer asks for her to marry Yitzchak, she says yes. She was happy to marry a righteous and kind person like Yitzchak and get away from her family who were not very honest or righteous.

Rivka travels to Canaan with Eliezer and marries Yitzchak. When Sarah was alive there were three miracles that happened every week: the challah she baked for Shabbat stayed fresh from one week to the next; the candles she lit on Friday night stayed lit the whole week; and there was a cloud on her tent which was a sign that Hashem was present all the time. When she passed away these miracles stopped; after Yitzchak and Rivka got married they came back. That was Yitzchak's sign that she was the right one for him--that Rivka was righteous just like Sarah was. Avraham also remarries Keturah who is actually Hagar, the wife Avraham married before he and Sarah had Yitzchak. Why the new name? Because she repented from her not good ways and started a new life as a better person. At the end of the Parsha we learn that Avraham died at age 175 and is buried next to Sarah in Maarat HaMachpelah.

LEADER TIP: Give out water to everyone in honor our Rivka. Tell everyone that if they have camels then they are more than welcome to have some water too!

PARSHA QUESTIONS

Questions

1. How old was Sarah when she died?
2. What did Sarah hear that caused her death?
3. Where was Sarah buried?
4. From where did Avraham buy the land, from who, and for how much?
5. Who else was buried there?
6. Who was Eliezer and what did Avraham tell him to do?
7. What did Avraham make Eliezer swear not to do?
8. How did Eliezer know that Rivka was the one for Yitzchak?
9. After giving Rivka gifts, what two questions did Eliezer ask her?
10. Who were Rivka's family members and what were they interested in?
11. What tefillah did Yitzchak establish?
12. What did Rivka do when she saw Yitzchak coming?
13. What miracles happened when Sarah was alive that returned when Rivka came?
14. Who did Avraham marry after Sarah died?
15. How old was Avraham when he died?

LEADER TIP: Eliezer went to go find the perfect match for Yitzchak, what kind of qualities would you look for in a friend?

Answers

1. 127
2. That Yitzchak was almost slaughtered
3. Maarat HaMachpelah
4. Chevron, Efron, 400 shekel
5. Adam and Chavah, Avraham and Sarah, Yitzchak and Rivka, Yaakov and Leah (and some say Esav's head)
6. Avraham's servant. He was told to go to Charan to find Yitzchak a wife
7. Find Yitzchak a wife from Canaan and take Yitzchak out of Canaan, since he had been a *korban*
8. She offered water not only to Eliezer, but to his camels as well
9. From whose family are you? And is there room for me to stay in your home?
10. Betuel was Rivka's father and Lavan was her brother, who cleaned their house of idols before inviting Eliezer in, since they wanted his riches.
11. Mincha
12. She covered her face
13. The candles she lit on Friday night stayed lit the whole week, there was a cloud on her tent which was a sign that Hashem was present all the time, and the challah she baked for Shabbat stayed fresh from one week to the next.
14. Keturah, who many say was really Hagar
15. 175

PARSHA ACTIVITY

GOAL: To learn about Yitzchak and Rivka were the perfect match from Hashem

ACTIVITY: “The Newlywed Game!”

Have the kids pair up with someone they think they really know well. Make sure you facilitate the pairing in order to make sure everyone has a pair and no one's feelings get hurt. Depending on how many kids there are in your group, you can either do the game with half of the group with the other half being the audience or do it with everyone at the same time. Set up some sort of stage in front of the room (if you have an actual stage that would be even better) with pairs of chairs all set up. Call up the pairs and introduce the game. You will be sending out one of the kids in each pair and send them outside. You will then ask them questions about their pair that left the room. Ask each of the representatives three questions about the other person and then call the other people back in. For example, A and B are a pair. B gets sent out and A is asked 3 questions about B such as “What is B's favorite color? What is B's favorite movie? What is B's favorite food?” Then B is called back in and asked to answer the same questions (What is YOUR favorite color? Etc.) The pair will get a point for each answer that matches correctly (aka A answered the same answer B did). Once you finish that round, the pair switches places (the person that was sent out first stays in and the person that stayed in is now sent out). The pair with the most correct/matching answers is declared the winner! Questions to ask can include...

What is your pair's favorite movie? Color? Food? Holiday?

When is your pair's birthday?

Where does your pair go to school? What grade are they in?

If your pair could have a super power what would it be?

Where would be your pair's dream vacation?

Feel free to add as many questions as you can think of! Make them as funny as possible!

DISCUSSION: In this game, we learn about how well we know our friends and how much we have in common. Sometimes we don't give much thought to the people we meet and we may think that the people in our lives just came about by chance; this week's parsha though tells us that there is a bigger plan in action whether we realize it or not. The Torah says, "And it was when he had not yet finished speaking that suddenly Rivka was coming out. . ." (Bereishit 24:15). Rabbeinu Bechaya explains that the Hebrew word for "he" used in the passuk is superfluous, and that instead of referring to Eliezer, "he" refers to Hashem. Thus, this passuk relates how Hashem intervened to make sure that Eliezer would "chance" upon Rivka at the perfect moment. Moreover, the commentary Toldot Yitzchak explains that because of Rivka's modesty, she rarely went out to the well, and that Hashem caused her to go specifically on that day. Now, were a similar scene to play itself out today, one would perhaps fail to take note of the heaven-sent direction of the event. Observers may see a meeting between two people as mere happenstance a casual incidence of "boy meets girl". It is important to realize, however, that in the larger scheme of things, such an incident cannot be viewed as being so simple; Yitckak and Rivka's shidduch (match) is an excellent example of Hashem working behind the scenes. Perhaps this Torah story most effectively represents the Jewish term "basheirt", commonly used in reference to one's future spouse who will be met at the "properly ordained" time, and more broadly referring to the concept that everything flows from Hashem's will. Thus, the description of the amazing meeting between two of the most important originators of the Jewish people should remind us to realize that at every turn in life, at every crossroad of uncertainty, and at every moment of interaction, there are events which may not be accidental, but rather examples of Hashem's active participation in our daily lives. Things do happen for a reason; it is just that with our limited spiritual intelligence, we are not always aware of their purpose.

LEADER TIP: If you see kids that don't have a pair, this is a perfect opportunity to make them feel special and ask them if you could be their pair!

PARSHA STORY

Before you read: There's no one like Mom. This week's Parsha (Ber. 23:1, see Rashi) tells us of the greatness of the mother of the entire Jewish people - Sarah. By learning to appreciate her, we can learn to appreciate the great things about our own mothers too.

MOTHER'S DAY

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"Sure, Mom," Mindy said. "Piece of cake! If I'm old enough to baby-sit for other people, I can certainly take care of us. You go enjoy your Mother's Day overnight vacation."

"Yeah," Ted added. "Everything's under control. You left us instructions and beside, we're big enough that you don't do much for us anymore anyway."

Their mother blinked, then smiled.

"Not me," said little Erica, thumb-in-mouth. "I'm not big enough. I'm going to miss you!"

"Shhh!" her two older siblings said in unison as the waiting car honked its horn outside.

"It's Mother's Day today. Let Mom go and have a good time. We'll give you some treats."

"Okay, bye-bye," she waved.

Their mother smiled, giving them each one last peck on the cheek before walking out the door.

A little while later, Ted walked into the kitchen, only to find Mindy and Erica already there. "It's lunch time," he announced, taking his usual seat at the kitchen table and pointing to the green and lavender clock on the wall.

"Yeah, I know," Mindy answered sheepishly.

"Well?" said Ted.

"Well, what?" she shot back.

"We always eat lunch at exactly 12 and I'm hungry."

"Me too!" said Erica.

"Me three," Mindy admitted. "But that's because Mom always makes sure there's lunch the table then. But Mom's not home - remember?"

"So what are we going to do?" Ted asked, a trace of panic in his voice.

"Not to worry. I sort of misplaced Mom's lunch instructions, so I put one of those frozen chickens in the oven almost a half an hour ago."

"I love chicken!" Erica clapped.

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"I don't have any clean t-shirts for tomorrow," Ted fretted as Mindy sighed to herself, upset about not being able to have one of those heart-to-heart talks with her mother which she needed so much right now.

"I miss..."

"You miss Mommy - right?" Ted snapped at his younger sister - although in their hearts they all agreed.

The next day, after much anticipation, their mom walked through the door and was surprised to see the house filled with colorful balloons and a big hand-lettered banner saying 'HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY!'

"Um, this is really nice, guys..." she said "but yesterday was Mother's Day - not today."

"Uh, uh," Ted shook his head as his siblings agreed. "Now that we see how much we need you..."

"And miss you!" Erica shot in as Ted went on, "We decided to declare today - and every day - as Mother's Day!"

Discussion Questions:

Q. What life-lesson do you think someone could learn from this story?

A. It's easy to take our mother for granted, but there is no one who does more - or cares more - for us than she does.

Q. How can we let our mom know we appreciate her?

A. Of course we can tell her - that's music to a mother's ears. But more than that we can make an effort to speak pleasantly and respectfully to her and do what we can to help out.

LEADER TIP: In honor of our ancestors Sarah and Avraham, go home and thank your family for everything they do for you!

JEWISH LEADER OF THE WEEK

Noam Gershony

(January 30, 1983-)



Noam Gershony served in the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) as a pilot in an attack helicopter. During the 2006 Lebanon War, Gershony's helicopter crashed into another helicopter. His copilot died on the spot and Gershony was injured and no one thought the then 23-year-old would survive his wounds. "His condition was very bad. He was bleeding from his nose, mouth and ears," the doctor from the IDF's elite search and rescue unit said. But Gershony did survive. After being airlifted to Rambam Medical Center in Haifa — with an emergency stop at a Safed hospital after a respiratory collapse, and a second one in an open field when his blood pressure dropped to zero — he began the long and difficult journey back to health. And wheelchair provided an opportunity to flourish. Four years after the crash, Gershony started playing tennis at Tel Aviv's center for disabled veterans, and not long after that — in 2010 — he was good enough to begin playing at international level. At his first Paralympics in London in 2012, he won the gold medal in tennis. "I never thought I'd represent the state in anything," Gershony told reporters on the court after his win, a blue-and-white flag draped over his shoulders. "You can't explain the feeling that runs through you when Hatikvah is played in front of so many people." Israeli leaders, including Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and President Shimon Peres, telephoned to congratulate and thank him. IDF Chief of General Staff Benny Gantz invited the former pilot to his office upon his return from London. "I salute you," Gantz said. He was also chosen to hold our nation's flag at the 2012 Summer Paralympics closing ceremony.

LEADER TIP: Have you ever gotten hurt but fought through it and found a way to succeed in other things?

TEFILLAH TREASURES

Birkat Kriyat Shema Part 2

In one of the brachot before Shema, it says that “Hashem’s kindness lasts forever”. This means that Hashem takes care of everyone and everything in the world with a constant and unlimited flow of *chessed*. In His kindness, Hashem renews every day constantly, the work of creation. Nefesh HaChaim teaches us that every single moment that the world continues to exist is a moment of *chessed* from Hashem. That is why this prayer says in the present tense, גדלים לעשה כאמור אורים, “As it is said,: ‘[Give thanks] to Him Who makes the great sun and moon.” Chazal teach us that we must totally rely on Hashem’s mercy to succeed in every part of our lives. The Gemara says that “it is as difficult for Hashem to match a man and woman for marriage as it was to accomplish the splitting of the Sea.” Similarly, “providing man’s sustenance is as difficult as the splitting of the Sea. Thus, one must pray for his sustenance, and not take it for granted.” Chazal also teach us that certain parts of keeping ourselves healthy are as difficult as the splitting of the Sea. Every moment in life is because of Hashem’s constant kindness.

LEADER TIP: Review and “instant replay” of your day and see how Hashem helped in every step of it!



CHAYEI SARAH REVIEW

This week's Parsha starts off with the passing of Sarah at age 127. Avraham buys a piece of land in Chevron called Maarat HaMachpelah for 400 shekel to bury her. This is the place where all of our avot and imahot will be buried. Yitzchak is now forty years old and not married. Avraham asks his servant Eliezer to go to Charan, where Avraham was born, to find a wife for Yitzchak. Eliezer brings lots of jewelry and gifts for the future wife. Eliezer asks Hashem for a sign to let him know which girl is the right one for Yitzchak. The sign is that when he will ask a girl for water to drink from the well, she will offer to give water to the camels also. Rivka came along and offered water to Eliezer and the camels and invited him to her father's house. When Eliezer asks for her to marry Yitzchak, she says yes. She was happy to marry a righteous and kind person like Yitzchak and get away from her family who were not very honest or righteous.

Rivka travels to Canaan with Eliezer and marries Yitzchak. When Sarah was alive there were three miracles that happened every week: the challah she baked for Shabbat stayed fresh from one week to the next; the candles she lit on Friday night stayed lit the whole week; and there was a cloud on her tent which was a sign that Hashem was present all the time. When she passed away these miracles stopped; after Yitzchak and Rivka got married they came back. That was Yitzchak's sign that she was the right one for him--that Rivka was righteous just like Sarah was. Avraham also remarries Keturah who is actually Hagar, the wife Avraham married before he and Sarah had Yitzchak. Why the new name? Because she repented from her not good ways and started a new life as a better person. At the end of the Parsha we learn that Avraham died at age 175 and is buried next to Sarah in Maarat HaMachpelah.

LEADER TIP: Give out water to everyone in honor our Rivka. Tell everyone that if they have camels then they are more than welcome to have some water too!

PARSHA QUESTIONS

1. Name the four couples buried in *Kiryat Arba*.

23:2 - Adam and Chava, Avraham and Sara, Yitzchak and Rivka, Yaakov and Leah.

2. What did Sara hear that caused her death?

23:2 - That Yitzchak was almost slaughtered.

3. What title of honor did the *B'nei Chet* bestow upon Avraham?

23:6 - Prince of G-d.

4. Where was Avraham born?

24:7 - Ur Kasdim.

5. How were Avraham's camels distinguished?

24:10 - They were muzzled, so they wouldn't graze in the fields of others.

6. What is meant by "all the good of his master in his hand?"

24:10 - Eliezer carried a document in which Avraham gave all he owned to Yitzchak so that people would want their daughter to marry him.

7. What special character trait did Eliezer seek when choosing a wife for Yitzchak?

24:14 - He sought someone who excelled in performing acts of kindness.

8. Why did Avraham's servant, Eliezer, run toward Rivka?

24:17 - He saw that the waters of the well rose when she approached.

9. Why did Lavan run to greet Eliezer?

24:29 - Lavan coveted his money.

10. When Lavan told Eliezer that the house was cleared out, what did he remove?

24:31 - Idols.

11. Who did Eliezer want Yitzchak to marry?

24:39 - His own daughter.

12. Aside from Eliezer, to which other people did Rivka offer to give water?

24:44 - To the men who accompanied Eliezer.

13. Lavan answered Eliezer before his father, Betuel, had a chance. What does this indicate about Lavan's character?

24:50 - That he was wicked.

14. What did Rivka mean when she said "I will go?"

24:58 - I will go even if you don't want me to go.

15. What blessing did Rivka's family give her before she departed?

24:60 - That the blessings given to Avraham would continue through her children.

16. Who was *Ketura*?

25:1 - Hagar.

17. What gift did Avraham give to Yitzchak?

25:5 - The power of blessing.

18. How old was Avraham when he died?

25:7 - 175 years old.

19. For how many years did Yaakov attend the Yeshiva of *Ever*?

25:17 - 14 years.

20. How many times is Eliezer's name mentioned in this week's Parsha?

None!

LEADER TIP: Eliezer went to go find the perfect match for Yitzchak, what kind of qualities would you look for in a friend?

PARSHA ACTIVITY

GOAL: To teach the group about the concept of “Eizehu Ashir? HaSameach B’Chelko”

ACTIVITY: “The Cucumber Game”

Prepare beforehand a bag of cut up pieces of cucumber. You can also use cookies, carrots, or anything else that can be put in a bag and are “grab-able”. Have everyone stand in one big circle. One person is chosen to stand in the middle. The point of the game is to pass around the bag of cucumbers and finish it without the person in the middle catching you either putting a cucumber in your mouth or passing the bag. Everyone will put their hands behind their back and as smooth and secretly as possible will pass the bag of cucumbers from person to person without getting caught by the person in the middle. As they pass the bag around, they should take out pieces of cucumber one by one and put it in their mouth again without getting seen by the person in the middle. If people don’t want to eat any of the cucumber that’s ok too, they can just keep passing the bag around. People can also take more than one piece at a time but they risk the person in the middle catching them! If the person in the middle catches someone putting a piece in their mouth or passing the bag they point to them and say “Show me your hands!” and that person must immediately show their hands. If they were caught correctly they must switch places with the person in the middle. The game keeps going until the entire bag of cucumber pieces is eaten. If the group finishes the whole thing without being caught, they win! Make sure to prepare a few bags so you can do a few rounds. Feel free to sing songs as the bag goes around to keep things exciting (and even distract the person in the middle)! If you’re really feeling gross, you can even use one big cucumber with everyone taking bites out of it instead of the cut up pieces in the bag! Have fun and don’t forget to say a bracha before you start

DISCUSSION: The Torah tells us: VAHASHEM BERACH ET AVRAHAM BAKOL, “...and Hashem blessed Avraham with everything.” (Gen. 24,1) What is meant by “everything”? This term can imply so many things. What exactly could it mean? The truth is that no one, no matter how wealthy he is, could have everything. The Talmud actually says he who has a hundred Manna (a monetary amount) wants two. The implication is that there is always another thing that a person could want and by human nature does actually covet. What then does the Pasuk mean? In Pirke Avot we learn that “who is rich? One who is satisfied with what he has.” A person can never be happy with his possessions unless he is by nature satisfied with whatever he has and does not keep dreaming of acquiring more. Only such a person

can be happy. Perhaps this what the Torah means. Avraham was a person who was satisfied with the gifts he had been given and was not looking to augment his wealth. That was the blessing he got. His blessing was that he was satisfied and therefore felt that he had everything. He did not have to seek more.

In this game, people could take one cucumber, a bunch of cucumbers, or even no cucumbers whatsoever. In order to win the game, all the cucumbers must be finished. If one person would just hold the bag the entire time and eat the whole thing by him/herself, they would for sure get caught and lose the game for their team. The idea is to work together as a team, finishing the bag passing it around all together. It's not about finishing it all by yourself as much as working together not getting caught. It doesn't matter how many pieces each individual takes, it's about recognizing what is necessary for the group to accomplish the goal. Everyone is a winner if the person in the middle doesn't catch anyone and the group finished the cucumber. Even though only one person may be eating the cucumber, everyone else is left with the action they did-helping the greater goal- and that's the true reward. You don't have to actually be eating the cucumber in order to be a winner or "ashir". This is not an easy trait to have but it should be a goal that we all seek.

LEADER TIP: Perfect chinuch opportunity! Don't forget to start of the game with brachot! Cut up a special "bracha bag" of cucumbers and pass that around so everyone can say brachot on them before you start the game!

PARSHA STORY

Before you read: There's no one like Mom. This week's Parsha (Ber. 23:1, see Rashi) tells us of the greatness of the mother of the entire Jewish people - Sarah. By learning to appreciate her, we can learn to appreciate the great things about our own mothers too.

MOTHER'S DAY

"Are you sure you're going to be able to manage?" Ted, Mindy and Erica's mom asked them with a concerned look.

"Sure, Mom," Mindy said. "Piece of cake! If I'm old enough to baby-sit for other people, I can certainly take care of us. You go enjoy your Mother's Day overnight vacation."

"Yeah," Ted added. "Everything's under control. You left us instructions and beside, we're big enough that you don't do much for us anymore anyway."

Their mother blinked, then smiled.

"Not me," said little Erica, thumb-in-mouth. "I'm not big enough. I'm going to miss you!"

"Shhh!" her two older siblings said in unison as the waiting car honked its horn outside. "It's Mother's Day today. Let Mom go and have a good time. We'll give you some treats."

"Okay, bye-bye," she waved.

Their mother smiled, giving them each one last peck on the cheek before walking out the door.

A little while later, Ted walked into the kitchen, only to find Mindy and Erica already there.

"It's lunch time," he announced, taking his usual seat at the kitchen table and pointing to the green and lavender clock on the wall.

"Yeah, I know," Mindy answered sheepishly.

"Well?" said Ted.

"Well, what?" she shot back.

"We always eat lunch at exactly 12 and I'm hungry."

"Me too!" said Erica.

"Me three," Mindy admitted. "But that's because Mom always makes sure there's lunch the table then. But Mom's not home - remember?"

"So what are we going to do?" Ted asked, a trace of panic in his voice.

"Not to worry. I sort of misplaced Mom's lunch instructions, so I put one of those frozen chickens in the oven almost a half an hour ago."

"I love chicken!" Erica clapped.

"Yeah ... but it's not exactly done yet," Mindy sighed, poking a fork at the oven pan. "It's actually still sorta frozen."

"We're gonna starve!" Ted called out, inciting Erica to whimper in panic.

"Calm down, both of you!" Mindy yelled. "Look," she said, pulling the first jumbo bag of snacks from the pantry she could find, "until it's done, we can all eat ... Pizza Pete's Sauce-O Chips!"

"Yay!" the kids yelled out.

But about a half an hour later, none of them were as enthusiastic - with junk food stomach aches and no real food in sight.

The rest of the afternoon was slow going, with Ted brooding about missing soccer practice, since their mom wasn't there to drive him, Mindy mad about not being able to study, since she

was so busy baby-sitting, and Erica having turned the refrain 'I miss Mommy' into about 20 different tunes.

By the time it was bedtime, the kids were happy to call it a day. That was - until they tried to sleep.

"I want a story, like Mom always tells," Erica whimpered.

"I don't have any clean t-shirts for tomorrow," Ted fretted as Mindy sighed to herself, upset about not being able to have one of those heart-to-heart talks with her mother which she needed so much right now.

"I miss..."

"You miss Mommy - right?" Ted snapped at his younger sister - although in their hearts they all agreed.

The next day, after much anticipation, their mom walked through the door and was surprised to see the house filled with colorful balloons and a big hand-lettered banner saying 'HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY!'

"Um, this is really nice, guys..." she said "but yesterday was Mother's Day - not today."

"Uh, uh," Ted shook his head as his siblings agreed. "Now that we see how much we need you..."

"And miss you!" Erica shot in as Ted went on, "We decided to declare today - and every day - as Mother's Day!"

Discussion Questions:

Q. Our sages teach that a mother's desire to feed her children is even greater than the children's desire to be fed. How do you understand this?

A. God put in a mother a special, deep and unceasing love for her children, to the point that she derives more pleasure from their happiness and success than even they do. Whether or not they are always able to show it, we should know that our mother loves us, in a certain sense, even more than we love ourselves.

Q. Who do you think was a greater prophet, Abraham or his wife, Sarah?

A. As great a prophet as Abraham was - the forefather of the Jewish people - Sarah was even greater and God instructed Abraham to listen to her, and follow her instructions.

LEADER TIP: In honor of our ancestors Sarah and Avraham, go home and thank your family for everything they do for you!

JEWISH LEADER OF THE WEEK

Noam Gershony

(January 30, 1983-)



Noam Gershony served in the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) as a pilot in an attack helicopter. During the 2006 Lebanon War, Gershony's helicopter crashed into another helicopter. His copilot died on the spot and Gershony was injured and no one thought the then 23-year-old would survive his wounds. "His condition was very bad. He was bleeding from his nose, mouth and ears," the doctor from the IDF's elite search and rescue unit said. But Gershony did survive. After being airlifted to Rambam Medical Center in Haifa — with an emergency stop at a Safed hospital after a respiratory collapse, and a second one in an open field when his blood pressure dropped to zero — he began the long and difficult journey back to health. And wheelchair provided an opportunity to flourish. Four years after the crash, Gershony started playing tennis at Tel Aviv's center for disabled veterans, and not long after that — in 2010 — he was good enough to begin playing at international level. At his first Paralympics in London in 2012, he won the gold medal in tennis. "I never thought I'd represent the state in anything," Gershony told reporters on the court after his win, a blue-and-white flag draped over his shoulders. "You can't explain the feeling that runs through you when Hatikvah is played in front of so many people." Israeli leaders, including Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and President Shimon Peres, telephoned to congratulate and thank him. IDF Chief of General Staff Benny Gantz invited the former pilot to his office upon his return from London. "I salute you," Gantz said. Gershony's mother, Pnina, compared her family's emotions to those they had experienced six years ago while her son was in the emergency room. "We said that no matter what happened on the court, he had already won," she told reporters after the victory. The former pilot's coach, Nimrod Bichlar, also burst into tears after Gershony beat the top-ranked wheelchair tennis player. Besides being a very talented tennis player, "Noam is also a special person and an Israeli hero," Bichlar said. "I'm proud to be his coach." It was Gershony's second medal of the games, after he and Shraga Weinberg won bronze in the doubles competition. The Israeli delegation announced he would carry the flag at the closing ceremony of the Games.

LEADER TIP: Have you ever gotten hurt but fought through it and found a way to succeed in other things?

TEFILLAH TREASURES

Birkat Kriyat Shema Part 2

In one of the brachot before Shema, it says that “Hashem’s kindness lasts forever”. This means that Hashem takes care of everyone and everything in the world with a constant and unlimited flow of *chessed*. 'חסדו לעולם כי' 'Hashem’s kindness lasts forever. *Chessed* is the central idea that all the other principles of Creation are based on, as the pasuk in Tehillim says, ‘Olam chesed yibaneh’ – ‘The world will be built upon *chessed*.’ All parts of *chessed* add to the well-being of the world; all forms of evil lead to its destruction. We are told to imitate Hashem’s ways by doing acts of *chessed* with our property and ourselves, even by feeling another’s pain. Judaism expects a complete stranger to always have compassion for his fellow Jew. The simple knowledge that someone is suffering should awaken a Jew’s heart, even if the sufferer has not specifically asked for anyone’s help. In 1895, a fire devastated the city of Brisk, and many people were left homeless. During this time, Rav Chaim Soleveitchik, the Rav of Brisk, slept on a bench for many nights. His house had not burned down. He had a bed and his family begged him to on it. Otherwise, they said that his health would suffer. But he refused. As long as some of the townspeople were homeless, forced to sleep on benches, he felt that he could not sleep in a bed. He had to share in their distress. He had to feel what they were feeling. It had to be real to him. In the same way, during the World War 1, when so many people were dislocated, the Chofetz Chaim’s Rebbetzin once found him sleeping on the floor in middle of the night. When asked for the reason, the Chofetz Chaim said that he had to share the burden of his fellow Jews. We should realize that we were all put on this world together in order to help each other through all of lifes trials and tribulations. The more we can help each other out and feel each other’s pains and troubles as well as happiness and excitements, the more meaning we will have in our lives and together make the world as great of a place as it can be.

LEADER TIP: Review and “instant replay” of your day and see how Hashem helped in every step of it!



PARSHA NATION

Teen Minyan Kol Haniarim



This Week in Jewish History

November 9, 1938

Kristallnacht

Kristallnacht also referred to as the Night of Broken Glass, was a pogrom (a series of organized attacks) against Jews throughout Nazi Germany and Austria on November 9-10 1938, carried out by SA paramilitary forces and non-Jewish civilians. German authorities looked on without intervening. The name *Kristallnacht* comes from the shards of broken glass that littered the streets after Jewish-owned stores, buildings, and synagogues had their windows smashed. At least 91 Jews were killed in the attacks, and 30,000 were arrested and imprisoned in concentration camps. Jewish homes, hospitals, and schools were vandalized, as the attackers destroyed buildings with sledgehammers. Over 1,000 synagogues were burned (95 in Vienna alone) and over 7,000 Jewish businesses destroyed or damaged. Martin Gilbert writes that no event in the history of



German Jews
between 1933 and

1945 was so widely reported as it was happening, and the accounts from the foreign journalists working in Germany sent shock waves around the world. *The Times* wrote at the time: "No foreign propagandist bent upon blackening Germany before the world could outdo the tale of burnings and beatings, of blackguardly assaults on defenseless and innocent people, which disgraced that country yesterday." The "excuse" for the attacks was the assassination of the German diplomat Ernst vom Rath by Herschel Grynszpan, a German-born Polish Jew living in Paris. *Kristallnacht* was followed by additional economic and political persecution of Jews, and is viewed by historians as part of Nazi Germany's broader racial policy, and the beginning of the Final Solution and The Holocaust.

FIND...

- **Chevron**
- **Efron**
- **Maarat HaMachpelah**
- **Eliezer**
- **Yitzchak**
- **Rivka**
- **Camels**
- **Water**

STAT LINE OF THE WEEK- CHAYEI SARAH

5th sedra of 54 (5th of 12 in Bereishit)

4 Parshiyot; 3 open, 1 closed

105 pesukim - ranks 32nd (tied with Devarim)

1402 words - ranks 37th

5314 letters - ranks 36th

Ranks 11th in Bereishit in all 3 categories

Shorter than average pesukim

Chayei Sarah does not contain any of the 613 mitzvot. However, we do learn halachic matters such as burial of the dead, eulogizing the dead, and - L'havdil - things related to marriage

TRIVIA QUESTION OF THE WEEK

WHAT PERCENTAGE OF ITS OWN FOOD REQUIREMENTS DOES ISRAEL PRODUCE?

Email your answers to SAMMYS@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!

- In 2009, a 10 year old British girl tried to sell her grandmother on eBay as a joke.
- There are currently more than 300 registered superheroes in the United States
- There is a city in Turkey called 'Batman'
- A fortune cookie company once got the lottery numbers right, resulting in 110 winners and an investigation.

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

Parsha Points to Ponder...

In this week's parsha we read that at the age of one hundred and twenty seven, Sarah Imeinu died. It seems strange that right after we read of her death, it is added that Sarah had a good life. One might think that though she had a long life, a life full of good deeds, it was anything but a good life. Anyone can see from reading the basic text, all the troubles Sarah had. First she had to travel far away, then there was a famine. She was kidnapped twice, and experienced years of childlessness. Finally Sarah gave birth to a boy. Not long after that however, Yishmael, the son of the concubine Hagar, began to have a bad influence on her son. Both Yishmael and Hagar had to be sent away. Now I would call that a hard and troublesome life, full of sadness and hardships. The reason why it says she had a good life, is because of the way **she**, Sarah, looked at life. Five years ago I was asked to help an elderly friend with a ride to the doctor to have some stitches removed. I noted my friend's pleasant demeanor and asked how she felt. "I'm fine, thank G-d" was her seemingly simple answer. Her reply was so calm that I ventured to ask what her surgery had been for. "Oh, I had a mastectomy" she said as if she was telling me how she had a splinter removed. Thankfully, I kept my eyes on the road. I was floored by her outlook on the whole thing. "I'm so sorry, I didn't know" was all I could say. Then, in her hallmark style she proceeded to comfort me! "That's alright" she said. "Don't take it so hard". "They found no indication that any further treatment is necessary". My friend had prepared a positive attitude before she was faced with adversity. She'll tell you herself that the strength to heal and go on with her (inspiring) life came from the knowledge that one's limited view of what it's all about is just that, limited and that there is a higher goal. The negative things that occur in ones life can be a devastation or an opportunity to grow. As one tries to believe that life has a higher purpose than the here and now, we can strive to cultivate a life like that of Sarah Imeinu as my friend did and continues to do, may she live and be well. This week we are being told the way Sarah saw her troubles, how she reacted to the hardships. In her perspective, everything was for the best, and it was a good life.

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

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