



# PARSHA NATION



Published by the National Council of Young Israel

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 will give youth leader's hands on experience and practical solutions to effectively guide your youth department.

**Informal education is key.** What the summer shows us as educators is that informal education can deliver better results and help increase our youth's connection to Hashem. More and more shuls are revamping their youth program to give their children a better connection to shul and to Hashem. The NCYI is here to help you reconnect with your youth departments and bring more participation.

**Thank you for being a light to future generations.** You are doing incredible work that should not be taken lightly. You should be proud to call yourself a Young Israel Youth Leader as you have the unique opportunity to make a real difference in so many young people's lives. Keep up the amazing work.

We are looking forward to hearing great things from everyone.

Our doors are always open.

**NCYI Department of Synagogue Services**  
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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 Roundup-** 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
<b>5 min</b>	Registration	Welcome parents and children in to the group room.
<b>10-35 min</b>	Davening	Depending on your group size and level.
<b>5 min</b>	Introduction to Yearly Theme (Manhigut)	Refer to Handout
<b>5 min</b>	Parsha Roundup	Prep participants for parsha questions.
<b>10 min</b>	Parsha Questions	Prizes and awards should also be given out if participants answer correctly
<b>2 min</b>	Understanding the Goal	Leaders should start prepping for Shabbat activity
<b>30 min</b>	Activities	Your choice of two games to play
<b>10 min</b>	Follow Up Discussion	Refer to materials
<b>10 min</b>	Parsha Song	This is for younger groups only.
<b>20 min</b>	Free Game Play	Groups can break for free game play or continue their own programing.
<b>5 min</b>	Story	Assemble in a circle and have participants read sections of the story out loud.
<b>5-10 min</b>	Discussion	Refer to handout
<b>4 min</b>	Jewish Leader of the Week	Refer to handout
<b>4 min</b>	Tefillah Treasures	Refer to Handout
<b>5 min</b>	Parent Pick up/Dismissal	Parents pick up their children.
<b>Total Time:</b>	<b>2 hours &amp; 40 min of programming!</b>	



# PARSHA NATION

## GRADES K-2

### BEHAR ROUNDUP

#### Behar Roundup

In this week's Parshah, **Behar**, we learn about some very important mitzvot that apply in the land of Israel.

First is **shemittah**. The same way the seventh day of the week is Shabbat, every seventh year is a Shabbat for the land when the land gets to "rest." This means that for six years, farmers may work on the land, **sowing** seeds so things should grow, **pruning** to help the plants grow better, and **harvesting** the fruit and vegetables so they can sell it and make money. But in the seventh year, the year of *shemittah*, the land must be allowed to rest, and there can be no planting or harvesting. Instead, anything that grows becomes free for anybody who wants to just pick and enjoy.

After seven cycles of *shemittah*, the fiftieth year ( $7 \times 7 = 49$ , it's the year following the 49th, so it's the 50th), is called *yovel* or the **jubilee**. It is also a year of rest for the land, but in addition to that, all servants go free, and all property returns to its original owner. That means that whenever somebody buys a plot of land he knows he will only keep it until the year of *yovel* when the land will go back to the original owner.

Then the Torah tells us that we shouldn't worry that we won't have enough to eat during *shemittah* and the following year because we can't plant and harvest. Because G-d promises that the year before *shemittah*--the sixth year--will produce enough food for three whole years--the sixth year, the year of *shemittah*, and the following year, when things won't grow because there was no planting during *shemittah*.

We also learn in this Parshah that it's forbidden to charge a Jew **interest**. That means that when we lend someone money, we can't take a little extra back as a thank you for doing them the favor and lending them the money. Rather, all loans must be free--the person only has to pay back exactly what you lent them.

**LEADER TIP:** Shmittah is a hard concept to understand, especially living outside of Eretz Yisrael. Try to relate it to the kids as best as possible. Be creative!

# PARSHA QUESTIONS

## Questions

1. Which year is shemitah?
2. Is a farmer living in Eretz Yisrael allowed to plow, plant, harvest, or do any work in his field during shemitah?
3. What happens if someone lends someone money before shemitah, and then shemitah comes before the loan is paid back?
4. When does a yovel year come?
5. How do we let everyone know when it is the Yovel year (50<sup>th</sup> year)?
6. What does keeping the laws of shemitah demonstrate?
7. Was one allowed to work his field during yovel?
8. What berachah does Hashem promise one who keeps shemittah and Yovel?
9. What should one do if his relative is sold as an eved to a non Jew?
10. What is the punishment for neglecting the laws of shmita?

## Answers

1. Every seventh year.
2. NO
3. The borrower doesn't have to pay back the loan.
4. Every fiftieth year.
5. The shofar is blown on Yom Kippur
6.
  - a. A great belief in Hashem, that He will provide for us
  - b. It shows that the true master of the land is Hashem, not us.
7. NO
8. The produce of the sixth year will last three years.
9. Redeem him
10. Exile

**LEADER TIP:** Give out a "FREE" question every seventh question as a shmittah year gift!

# PARSHA ACTIVITY

**GOAL:** In this week's parsha we discuss the laws of shmittah and yovel where in these years we cannot work our field and must leave whatever grows for anyone who wants to come and take it. In this activity we will be discussing the idea of tzedakah and giving to others and that sometimes even though it's hard to do, it's still important.

## **ACTIVITY:**

**Game 1:** Have the kids sit in a circle, and pick one person to sit in the middle of the circle with a box under his chair. This person is blindfolded. For this game, it is very important that everyone remain quiet. One at a time, pick kids in the circle to try and put a coin into the box. The person in the middle listens and tries to tag anyone he hears approaching. After one or two rounds this way, you may want to liven up the game by changing it around, and putting candies underneath the chair. Instead of putting coins underneath, the kids are then trying to take a candy out.

**Game 2:** Before Shabbat, make approximately 20 circles, preferably out of yellow construction paper. These will represent coins in the game. Take the coins and spread them out in your room/area. Put one or two chairs somewhere in the playing area to represent Tzedaka Boxes. Pick one person to be in the middle. Everyone else goes to one side of the room. When the person in the middle yells "Johnny Over," everyone else tries to run from one side of the room to the other, while the person in the middle tries to tag as many of them as s/he can. If s/he tags them, they join him/her in the middle and try to tag others as well. As an added twist, the coins are spread out in the room. As the people run across the room, they must try and pick up as many of the coins as possible, and deposit them in the tzedaka box. The game ends either when everyone is caught, or when all the coins are put into tzedaka.

**DISCUSSION:** In the first game, we started off putting money into the tzedaka, and later took candy out of it. In many cities, something called a G'mach is set up. This is a type of tzedaka that lends money to people. If you need money, you are allowed to take from the G'mach, but must pay it back when you have sufficient funds. When you give money to the G'mach, you make sure there is always enough money in it for people to borrow.

In the second game, it is a bit difficult to be able to give Tzedaka. First you have to get the coins, and then reach the tzedaka box to give them away. In real life, we often think about how hard we work to

earn our money, and question whether it is “fair” for us to give it to someone for free. Is this fair? Everything we have really comes from Hashem. The money we have isn’t really our own. Hashem commanded us to give tzedaka, so when we do so, we are what its real owner, Hashem, wants us to do with it.

In real life, it is not very difficult to find places to give tzedaka. What and who needs tzedaka in our city? Country? In the world? Which is the most important to give to? According to halacha, we must first look after our own city before giving tzedaka to other places.

We learn about the laws of shmittah in this week’s parsha, where in the 7<sup>th</sup> year, just like the 7<sup>th</sup> day (Shabbos), we don’t work our fields in Israel. We wouldn’t be allowed to take any of our fruits or things we’ve grown, but instead we’d have to leave them for anyone else to come and take. The Torah tells us not to worry about not having enough to eat during the shmittah year because we can’t plant and harvest. Hashem promises that the year before shmittah, the 6<sup>th</sup> year, will produce enough food for three whole years- the 6<sup>th</sup> year, the shmittah year, and the following year.

Sometimes when giving tzedakah or helping people we worry that we won’t have enough for ourselves or by helping other people we won’t be able to help ourselves. We learn that Hashem will always look after us and help us if we help other people and that when we give tzedakah to others, Hashem will give us “tzedakah” as well.

**LEADER TIP:** Putting others before ourselves can be very difficult at times. Try your best to talk it out with the kids. Where would we be if we didn’t have other people? What would the world be like if every person only cared about themselves? Even more so, what would it be like if Hashem didn’t always look out for us either?

# PARSHA STORY

**Before you read:** In this week's parsha, Hashem tells the Jewish people to let their fields rest and not to plant their crops every seventh year. He promised them that if they do, they wouldn't lose out - He would perform a miracle and bring a double crop. This was a huge test of trust for the people, since in those days no crops meant no food! Each person had to face that test, and his decision really showed just how much trust he did or didn't have in Hashem.

We can apply this idea to our lives as well. Whenever we find ourselves in a dilemma where doing what is ethical and right seems like an inconvenience or loss, we can choose to trust in Hashem, knowing that if we do the right thing, in the end we will never lose out.

## "THE LONG SHORTER WAY"

It was a boiling, hot day, and Nancy and her friends were wondering if their long walk home from the neighborhood pool was ever going to end.

"Good thing we remembered our water bottles," Nancy said to her sister, Dianne.

The kids continued their trek, when suddenly someone noticed a break in the link-fence, running along the other side of the road.

"Hey, we're in luck!" shouted Dianne. "Taking that shortcut will get us home in half the time."

"Let's go for it!" agreed the tired girls. They immediately started to cross the dusty street.

But as they got closer, their hearts sank.

"NO TRESPASSING" read the old, rusty sign hanging off one side of the broken fence.

The kids looked at each other. "C'mon," said Dianne. "That sign has probably been hanging there for ten years. Nobody pays it any attention, and neither should we."

"Dianne's right," piped up Sarah. "Just look at how many people have 'trespassed'! They've beaten a path across the empty field."

"Besides," added Dianne, "who's gonna know? Who's gonna care?"

The hot and tired kids didn't need much convincing, and they started to go through the fence. But as Nancy bent down to go in, something just didn't feel right. True, she was hot and tired, but did that make it okay to trespass?

She stopped short and called out to the others. "Hey wait a minute!" The girls turned around.

"Where do we get the right to cut through other people's property?" Nancy asked. "I know it's a long walk, but what's right is right, even when it's hard, isn't it?"

Dianne turned to her sister and said, "Listen, we've decided to take the shortcut. I'm sure it's not a problem. But if you want to sweat it out and take the long way around, be our guest. I'll be waiting for you, nice and cool, at home."

Nancy watched as Dianne and the others, laughing at their good fortune, disappeared through the hole in the fence, leaving her to continue on her own. Walking alone, the hike seemed even longer.

"Maybe I was dumb," she thought. "Those guys are probably all sitting in cool air-conditioned homes by now, and where am I?"

Once or twice she almost decided to go back and join them, or slip through the other openings that came up in the fence every so often. But each time she told herself, "Right is right, even when it's hard," reminding herself, as she often did, that by doing the right thing she would never lose out.

Nancy soon found her mind wandering into pleasant thoughts, and before she knew it, she was home. She walked through the door fully expecting to find Dianne lounging in air-conditioned comfort. But to her surprise, the house was empty. It was obvious that no one had been there since the morning.

"That's funny," she thought. "Maybe Dianne went over one of the kid's houses." After switching on the air conditioner, Nancy sat down with a pile of books to read for the afternoon.

A good while later, when Nancy went out to check the mail, she saw a strange sight. Coming down the road were Dianne and the other girls. They definitely didn't look happy. Huffing and puffing, a couple of the girls were scratching their legs, and Dianne was limping!

"Hey, what happened to you?" called out Nancy with a start.

The kids looked up, surprised, and a bit embarrassed. "Well," sighed Dianne, "it seems that shortcut wasn't such a good idea after all. The field was full of thorns..."

"And Poison Ivy!" added Sarah between scratches. "It took forever to get through. We thought we'd never get out."

"Were you ever lucky you didn't come with us," Dianne said.

Nancy looked at her sister and tattered friends and nodded with sympathy. "I was lucky," she thought to herself, "that I trusted enough to do the right thing."

## Discussion Questions

Q. How did Nancy feel when she first went to take the shortcut?

A. Even though she wanted to, she realized it wasn't right.

Q. How did she feel after she saw what happened to her friends?

A. She felt bad for them, but realized that she had been protected because she had chosen to do what was right.

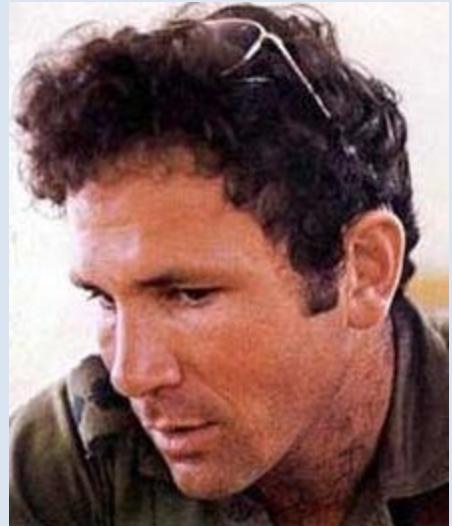
**LEADER TIP:** Trusting in Hashem is always a difficult concept to fully grasp. That being said, it's an incredible conversation starter. Take advantage!

# JEWISH LEADER OF THE WEEK

## **Yoni Netanyahu**

(March 13, 1946 - July 4, 1967)

Yoni Netanyahu was the commander of the elite Israeli army special forces unit Sayeret Matkal. He was the only Israeli soldier killed in action during Operation Entebbe in Uganda.



On July 4, 1976, Netanyahu led Operation Entebbe, a mission to free 105 Jewish hostages being held in Entebbe, Uganda by members of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine who had days earlier hijacked an Air France flight out of Athens headed for Tel Aviv. The mission was a huge success as the soldiers broke in and rescued 102 of the hostages and killed all the terrorists and dozens of Ugandan soldiers. Netanyahu, however, was killed during the raid - the only Israeli casualty. In honor of Netanyahu, the raid was posthumously renamed Mivtsa Yonatan (Operation Yonatan).

**LEADER TIP:** Yoni Netanyahu is one of the greatest of our heroes. He sacrificed everything in order to save other people. How much would you be willing to sacrifice for other people, your religion, or even yourself?

# TEFILLAH TREASURES

## Birchot HaShachar

***Boruch... Rokah Ha-aretz Al Hamayim.***

**"Blessed are You... Who spreads out the earth upon the waters."**

You've got two dominating surfaces in this world, water and earth. Water will spread out over the earth, if you let it. Earth has no problem sinking below the water if that's what water wants it to do. Of course, we wouldn't want to walk around wearing flippers all day! So the next time you take a solid step on the ground, thank *Hashem* for solid land!

***Boruch... Hamaichin Mitzadei Gaver.***

**"Blessed are You... Who firms man's footsteps."**

Time to take a couple of steps across the room. What a perfect time to thank *Hashem* for the ability to put one foot in front of the other!

**LEADER TIP:** Do a relay race with cups of water to tie the message of the two brachot together!



# PARSHA NATION

GRADES 3-4

## BEHAR ROUNDUP

### Behar Roundup

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After seven cycles of *shemittah*, the fiftieth year ( $7 \times 7 = 49$ , it's the year following the 49th, so it's the 50th), is called *yovel* or the **jubilee**. It is also a year of rest for the land, but in addition to that, all servants go free, and all property returns to its original owner. That means that whenever somebody buys a plot of land he knows he will only keep it until the year of *yovel* when the land will go back to the original owner.

Then the Torah tells us that we shouldn't worry that we won't have enough to eat during *shemittah* and the following year because we can't plant and harvest. Because G-d promises that the year before *shemittah*--the sixth year--will produce enough food for three whole years--the sixth year, the year of *shemittah*, and the following year, when things won't grow because there was no planting during *shemittah*.

We also learn in this Parshah that it's forbidden to charge a Jew **interest**. That means that when we lend someone money, we can't take a little extra back as a thank you for doing them the favor and lending them the money. Rather, all loans must be free--the person only has to pay back exactly what you lent them.

**LEADER TIP:** Shmittah is a hard concept to understand, especially living outside of Eretz Yisrael. Try to relate it to the kids as best as possible. Be creative!

# PARSHA QUESTIONS

## QUESTIONS

1. Which year is shemitah?
2. Is a farmer living in Eretz Yisrael allowed to plow, plant, harvest, or do any work in his field during shemitah?
3. May he lock his field up so that he is the only one that is able to eat the fruit?
4. Can the farmer take any food for himself?
5. What happens if someone lends someone money before shemitah, and then shemitah comes before the loan is paid back?
6. When does a yovel year come?
7. If someone who lived in Eretz Yisrael during the time of the Beit hamikdash sold his field, could he ever get it back for free?
8. How do we let everyone know when it is the Yovel year (50<sup>th</sup> year)?
9. What does keeping the laws of shemitah demonstrate?
10. Was one allowed to work his field during yovel?
11. What berachah does Hashem promise one who keeps shemittah and Yovel?
12. From whom may you buy avadim?
13. For how long do these avadim work?
14. What should one do if his relative is sold as an eved to a non jew?
15. What is the punishment for neglecting the laws of shemita?

## ANSWERS

1. Every seventh year.
2. NO
3. NO
4. YES. He may take as much as anyone else can.
5. The borrower doesn't have to pay back the loan.
6. Every fiftieth year.
7. YES! He got it back for free when Yovel came.
8. The shofar is blown on Yom Kippur
9.
  - a. A great belief in Hashem, that He will provide for us
  - b. It shows that the true master of the land is Hashem, not us.
10. NO
11. The produce of the sixth year will last three years.
12. Non-Jews
13. Forever
14. Redeem him
15. Exile

**LEADER TIP:** Give out a “FREE” question every seventh question as a shmittah year gift!

# PARSHA ACTIVITY

**GOAL:** In this week's parsha we discuss the laws of shmittah and yovel where in these years we cannot work our field and must leave whatever grows for anyone who wants to come and take it. In this activity we will be discussing the idea of tzedakah and giving to others and that sometimes even though it's hard to do, it's still important.

Each day we find people that don't care enough about things around them.

Your kids will understand, that we have to learn to take care about the people around us, and to think about them sometimes, like we want them to think about us. If we want a healthy and good society, we have to work on our Midot!

We need to pay attention not only for our self's, and family. We need to pay attention also for people that we don't know, and to take care for them, too.

The kids will understand, that to take care isn't only in the big things, it is also in the little things, during the day. If we take care of other people, other people, and more importantly Hashem, will continue to take care of us as well.

**ACTIVITY:** Ask each of your kids, to take something from his own (Watch, shoe....) and to put it inside the circle, on the floor.

You will start to tell a story, it doesn't matter which story, and while you are telling the story, you will walk between the things on the floor.

While you are telling the story, you will hear things like: "be careful on my watch! .... "

Don't pay attention to their yelling. You will pay attention, that no-one is listening to your story, because they are looking for their stuff.

After you finished your story, ask one of your kids, to repeat the story for every-one. You will see, that they may not remember anything.

Then, divide your kids to two groups.

The first group will give numbers from 1-10 to the things that important to do, when 1, is not important, and 10, is the important things to do.

The second group will decide to whom they would help if they won on 1,000,000\$ .

The sentences for the first group:

- To tide-up my room
- Clean the street, from garbage.
- To visit a sick friend.
- To visit old people in the hospital.
- To help someone with his heavy bags.
- Help my mother clean the house.
- Help my friend to study for a big test.
- Volunteering with children in risk.
- To give Tzdaka every-day.
- To listen to my little sister, when she has problems in school, or life.

To which people you will help, if you have won in 1,000,000\$ ?

- \*A friend that need to do a surgery.
- \*A cousin that don't have a house.
- \* To a place that helping to children with risk.
- \* For people that sick in cancer.
- \* For opening a big library in your area.
- \* For your father, that needs to go to the dentist.

You can discuss with your kids about their choices, and each group, can give their opinion about the other group choices.

**DISCUSSION:** In the first game, everyone put his or her things in the middle, and no-one paid any attention for the story. Did anyone pay attention for his friend's watch that was on the floor, or only for his shoe? In these games, we spoke about helping others, even though it may be difficult at times. We are our own people and it's important to look out for our best and we deserve what we work hard for. We try to be the best people we can and our hard work deserves recognition and even rewards. That being said though, Hashem put many other people on this world with us. Its important to look out for everyone around us and take a step back and recognize that were not the only people in the world. That works for people as well as every other object as well. Hashem created this world and everything in it deserves our respect and care.

**LEADER TIP:** Putting others before ourselves can be very difficult at times. Try your best to talk it out with the kids. Where would we be if we didn't have other people? What would the world be like if every person only cared about themselves? Even more so, what would it be like if Hashem didn't always look out for us either?

# PARSHA STORY

**Before you read:** In this week's parsha, Hashem tells the Jewish people to let their fields rest and not to plant their crops every seventh year. He promised them that if they do, they wouldn't lose out - He would perform a miracle and bring a double crop. This was a huge test of trust for the people, since in those days no crops meant no food! Each person had to face that test, and his decision really showed just how much trust he did or didn't have in Hashem.

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## "THE LONG SHORTER WAY"

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Dianne turned to her sister and said, "Listen, we've decided to take the shortcut. I'm sure it's not a problem. But if you want to sweat it out and take the long way around, be our guest. I'll be waiting for you, nice and cool, at home."

Nancy watched as Dianne and the others, laughing at their good fortune, disappeared through the hole in the fence, leaving her to continue on her own. Walking alone, the hike seemed even longer.

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"Hey, what happened to you?" called out Nancy with a start.

The kids looked up, surprised, and a bit embarrassed. "Well," sighed Dianne, "it seems that short-cut wasn't such a good idea after all. The field was full of thorns..."

"And Poison Ivy!" added Sarah between scratches. "It took forever to get through. We thought we'd never get out."

"Were you ever lucky you didn't come with us," Dianne said.

Nancy looked at her sister and tattered friends and nodded with sympathy. "I was lucky," she thought to herself, "that I trusted enough to do the right thing."

## Discussion Questions

Q. If instead Nancy's friend had gotten home quickly and easily, would that have proven that they were right and Nancy was wrong?

A. Not at all. A lot of times we do see how doing the right thing brings good into our lives, but sometimes we don't see it right away. The important thing is to keep on doing good, and trust that it always pays off in the end.

Q. It wasn't easy for Nancy to pass up a shortcut. How come doing the right thing can often seem so hard?

A. Part of it is that a person naturally likes to take the easy way out, and that isn't always the ethical choice. Also these choices are often sent our way to test our character and help us grow by choosing to do the right thing, even when it's hard.

Q. Can you think of a time you didn't lose out for doing the right thing?

**LEADER TIP:** Trusting in Hashem is always a difficult concept to fully grasp. That being said, it's an incredible conversation starter. Take advantage!

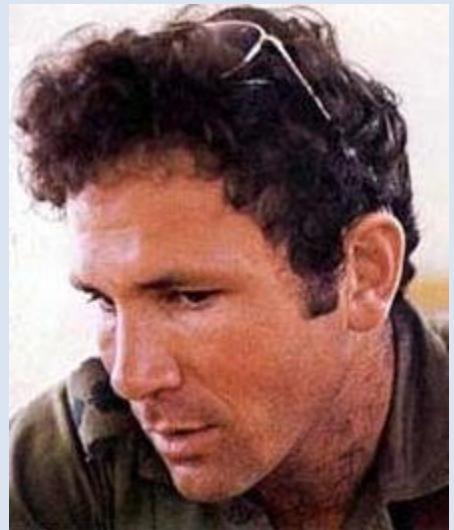
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**LEADER TIP:** Yoni Netanyahu is one of the greatest of our heroes. He sacrificed everything in order to save other people. How much would you be willing to sacrifice for other people, your religion, or even for yourself?

# TEFILLAH TREASURES

## Birchot HaShachar

***Boruch... Rokah Ha-aretz Al Hamayim.***

**"Blessed are You... Who spreads out the earth upon the waters."**

You've got two dominating surfaces in this world, water and earth. Water will spread out over the earth, if you let it. Earth has no problem sinking below the water if that's what water wants it to do. Of course, we wouldn't want to walk around wearing flippers all day! So the next time you take a solid step on the ground, thank *Hashem* for solid land!

***Boruch... Hamaichin Mitzadei Gaver.***

**"Blessed are You... Who firms man's footsteps."**

Time to take a couple of steps across the room. What a perfect time to thank *Hashem* for the ability to put one foot in front of the other! Not only that, but we thank *Hashem* for giving us the ability to continue life's journey that lies ahead and keep taking steps forward.

**LEADER TIP:** Do a relay race with cups of water to tie the message of the two brachot together!



# PARSHA NATION

GRADES 5-6



## BEHAR ROUNDUP

### Behar Roundup

In this week's Parshah, **Behar**, we learn about some very important mitzvot that apply in the land of Israel.

First is **shemittah**. The same way the seventh day of the week is Shabbat, every seventh year is a Shabbat for the land when the land gets to "rest." This means that for six years, farmers may work on the land, **sowing** seeds so things should grow, **pruning** to help the plants grow better, and **harvesting** the fruit and vegetables so they can sell it and make money. But in the seventh year, the year of *shemittah*, the land must be allowed to rest, and there can be no planting or harvesting. Instead, anything that grows becomes free for anybody who wants to just pick and enjoy.

After seven cycles of *shemittah*, the fiftieth year ( $7 \times 7 = 49$ , it's the year following the 49th, so it's the 50th), is called *yovel* or the **jubilee**. It is also a year of rest for the land, but in addition to that, all servants go free, and all property returns to its original owner. That means that whenever somebody buys a plot of land he knows he will only keep it until the year of *yovel* when the land will go back to the original owner.

Then the Torah tells us that we shouldn't worry that we won't have enough to eat during *shemittah* and the following year because we can't plant and harvest. Because G-d promises that the year before *shemittah*--the sixth year--will produce enough food for three whole years--the sixth year, the year of *shemittah*, and the following year, when things won't grow because there was no planting during *shemittah*.

We also learn in this Parshah that it's forbidden to charge a Jew **interest**. That means that when we lend someone money, we can't take a little extra back as a thank you for doing them the favor and lending them the money. Rather, all loans must be free--the person only has to pay back exactly what you lent them.

**LEADER TIP:** Shmittah is a hard concept to understand, especially living outside of Eretz Yisrael. Try to relate it to the kids as best as possible. Be creative!

# PARSHA QUESTIONS

## QUESTIONS

1. Which year is shemitah?
2. Is a farmer living in Eretz Yisrael allowed to plow, plant, harvest, or do any work in his field during shemitah?
3. May he lock his field up so that he is the only one that is able to eat the fruit?
4. Can the farmer take any food for himself?
5. Is a farmer living outside of Eretz Yisrael allowed to plow, plant, harvest, or do any work in his field during shemitah?
6. What happens if someone lends someone money before shemitah, and then shemitah comes before the loan is paid back?
7. When does a yovel year come?
8. If someone who lived in Eretz Yisrael during the time of the Beit hamikdash sold his field, could he ever get it back for free?
9. How could you figure out how much to sell the field for?
10. Is a Jew allowed to collect interest when he lends money to another Jew?
11. How do we let everyone know when it is the Yovel year (50<sup>th</sup> year)?
12. What does keeping the laws of shemitah demonstrate?
13. Was one allowed to work his field during yovel?
14. What berachah does Hashem promise one who keeps shemittah and Yovel?
15. From whom may you buy avadim?
16. For how long do these avadim work?
17. What should one do if his relative is sold as an eved to a non jew?
18. What is the punishment for neglecting the laws of shemita?
19. What is the definition of a "ger toshav"?
20. Where is it permitted to prostrate oneself on a stone floor?

## ANSWERS

1. Every seventh year.
2. NO
3. NO
4. YES. He may take as much as anyone else can.
5. YES
6. The borrower doesn't have to pay back the loan.
7. Every fiftieth year.
8. YES! He got it back for free when Yovel came.
9. The closer it was to the Yovel year, the less the field cost. The further it was from the Yovel year, the more the field cost.
10. NO
11. The shofar is blown on Yom Kippur
12.
  - a. A great belief in Hashem, that He will provide for us
  - b. It shows that the true master of the land is Hashem, not us.
13. NO
14. The produce of the sixth year will last three years.
15. Non-Jews
16. Forever
17. Redeem him
18. Exile
19. A non-Jew who lives in Eretz Yisrael and accepts upon himself not to worship idols.
20. In the Mikdash

**LEADER TIP:** Give out a "FREE" question every seventh question as a shmittah year gift!

# PARSHA ACTIVITY

**GOAL:** In this week's parsha we discuss the laws of shmittah and yovel where in these years we cannot work our field and must leave whatever grows for anyone who wants to come and take it. In this activity we will be discussing the idea of tzedakah and giving to others and that sometimes even though it's hard to do, it's still important. In this activity, the kids will understand the importance of giving to others not only when it's comfortable and easy for them but also when it's hard and they need to sacrifice of ourselves for others.

**ACTIVITY:** We tell the kids that they are residents of an apartment building; each person gets a card with his\hers personality (attached are 6 characters, you can add more or give each couple one character) in a different color and the owner of the building (the group leader) calls them all in for a meeting. He tells them that his sister, kate, with her three kids, had lived in New Orleans till not long ago, but the Hurricane Katrina destroyed they house and all she had. So according to the contract they all signed if any emergency happens to the owner or his family, if asked they must leave the house immediately. He asks them to take a minute and think of why they should and should not be the ones to leave the house.

## Characters

- You are an elderly women who has been living in the building for years, even before the owner came in. all your children and grand-children live away from you. Your husband died ten years ago and you are wheel-chair bound.

- You are a new immigrant from Russia, 20 year old. Left your house to go and make money in America and send it back home to your elderly parents. You go to college every day and work nights as a security guard of the building. You don't pay for the apartment because you work there and you know you can't find anything better.

- You are a young couple who just gave birth to a beautiful baby boy. He's four months old. Your wife is in college in her final year of learning medicine and you are a starting lawyer. You moved far away from home to start your life in the city.

- You are a family of two kids. A boy of 12 and a girl of 8. Your husband is a chef in a fancy restaurant and you work in real estate. You have other apartments in Miami and L.A but your main house is in the building. You help to keep the building clean and renovated and personally pay for any construction that needs to be done. You're very generous to the others in the building.

• You are a single man in your late thirties. You're a devoted teacher in a public school and organize activities for the children in the building every now and then. You were never married. You live for your students and for helping others.

• You are a single mom with three kids. A girl of 4 and twins of 2. You struggle to finish the month, Work in three jobs and spend all your money on the rent, the kids and babysitters. You hardly leave the building and if so it's to visit your brothers family who live around the block in a small apartment.

You then go round the room and every character has to explain to the rest who they are and the reasons why they should or should not leave. At this point there are no discussions.

The next stage is for them to decide together who should be the one to leave, the group leader should encourage a discussion between the whole group.

After they have reached a decision you take a vote. Each person gets a card in each color and has to pick up the color of the person he\she should leave and explain shortly why.

After all this the group leader poses a question- In reaching a decsision, who here thought about themselves and who didn't think at all about themselves.

**DISCUSSION:** Sometimes when giving tzedakah or helping people we worry that we won't have enough for ourselves or by helping other people we won't be able to help ourselves. We learn that Hashem will always look after us and help us if we help other people and that when we give tzedakah to others, Hashem will give us "tzedakah" as well.

We are our own people and it's important to look out for our best and we deserve what we work hard for. We try to be the best people we can and our hard work deserves recognition and even rewards. That being said though, Hashem put many other people on this world with us. Its important to look out for everyone around us and take a step back and recognize that were not the only people in the world. That works for people as well as every other object as well. Hashem created this world and eveything in it deserves our respect and care.

**LEADER TIP:** Putting others before ourselves can be very difficult at times. Try your best to talk it out with the kids. Where would we be if we didn't have other people? What would the world be like if every person only cared about themselves? Even more so, what would it be like if Hashem didn't always look out for us either?

# PARSHA STORY

**Before you read:** In this week's parsha, Hashem tells the Jewish people to let their fields rest and not to plant their crops every seventh year. He promised them that if they do, they wouldn't lose out - He would perform a miracle and bring a double crop. This was a huge test of trust for the people, since in those days no crops meant no food! Each person had to face that test, and his decision really showed just how much trust he did or didn't have in Hashem.

We can apply this idea to our lives as well. Whenever we find ourselves in a dilemma where doing what is ethical and right seems like an inconvenience or loss, we can choose to trust in Hashem, knowing that if we do the right thing, in the end we will never lose out.

## "THE LONG SHORTER WAY"

It was a boiling, hot day, and Nancy and her friends were wondering if their long walk home from the neighborhood pool was ever going to end.

"Good thing we remembered our water bottles," Nancy said to her sister, Dianne.

The kids continued their trek, when suddenly someone noticed a break in the link-fence, running along the other side of the road.

"Hey, we're in luck!" shouted Dianne. "Taking that shortcut will get us home in half the time."

"Let's go for it!" agreed the tired girls. They immediately started to cross the dusty street.

But as they got closer, their hearts sank.

"NO TRESPASSING" read the old, rusty sign hanging off one side of the broken fence.

The kids looked at each other. "C'mon," said Dianne. "That sign has probably been hanging there for ten years. Nobody pays it any attention, and neither should we."

"Dianne's right," piped up Sarah. "Just look at how many people have 'trespassed'! They've beaten a path across the empty field."

"Besides," added Dianne, "who's gonna know? Who's gonna care?"

The hot and tired kids didn't need much convincing, and they started to go through the fence. But as Nancy bent down to go in, something just didn't feel right. True, she was hot and tired, but did that make it okay to trespass?

She stopped short and called out to the others. "Hey wait a minute!" The girls turned around. "Where do we get the right to cut through other people's property?" Nancy asked. "I know it's a long walk, but what's right is right, even when it's hard, isn't it?"

Dianne turned to her sister and said, "Listen, we've decided to take the shortcut. I'm sure it's not a problem. But if you want to sweat it out and take the long way around, be our guest. I'll be waiting for you, nice and cool, at home."

Nancy watched as Dianne and the others, laughing at their good fortune, disappeared through the hole in the fence, leaving her to continue on her own. Walking alone, the hike seemed even longer.

"Maybe I was dumb," she thought. "Those guys are probably all sitting in cool air-conditioned homes by now, and where am I?"

Once or twice she almost decided to go back and join them, or slip through the other openings that came up in the fence every so often. But each time she told herself, "Right is right, even when it's hard," reminding herself, as she often did, that by doing the right thing she would never lose out.

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"And Poison Ivy!" added Sarah between scratches. "It took forever to get through. We thought we'd never get out."

"Were you ever lucky you didn't come with us," Dianne said.

Nancy looked at her sister and tattered friends and nodded with sympathy. "I was lucky," she thought to herself, "that I trusted enough to do the right thing."

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Q. What does a person gain by trusting in God?

A. Trust in God, called "bitachon" in Hebrew, is just about the most valuable thing a person could have. Someone who has it can literally be happy and calm every moment of his life. This is because he knows that he is never alone, and that nothing that happens to him is merely by chance. Since nothing can help him or harm him unless God wants it to happen, he doesn't have to be afraid of anyone or anything. He doesn't have to flatter anyone, hoping for their help. Trust in God can transform our lives and put us into an entirely different plane. It's worth doing whatever we can to acquire it.

Q. Does trusting in God assure that things will always turn out the way we want them to?

A. To trust in God is to know that He loves us, always has our best in mind, and sends us just what we need at every moment. But our perspective is limited, and it is quite possible that what God thinks is genuinely best for us may not be the same as what we think. Trusting in God means knowing that whatever happens is ultimately for our best.

**LEADER TIP:** Trusting in Hashem is always a difficult concept to fully grasp. That being said, it's an incredible conversation starter. Take advantage!

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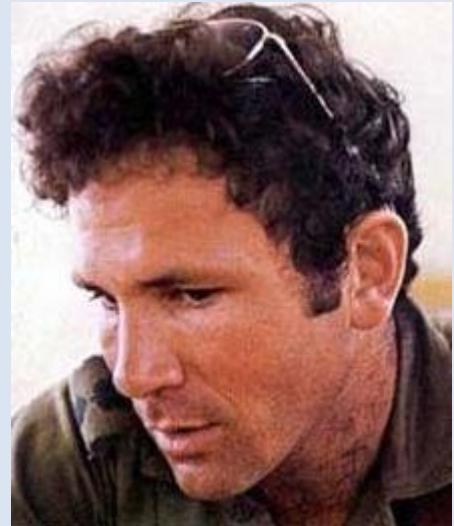
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Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said his "hard line against all terrorists" came as a result of the death of his brother.

In 2005, he was voted the 13th-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.

**LEADER TIP:** Yoni Netanyahu is one of the greatest of our heroes. He sacrificed everything in order to save other people. How much would you be willing to sacrifice for other people, your religion, or even yourself?



# TEFILLAH TREASURES

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**LEADER TIP:** Do a relay race with cups of water to tie the message of the two brachos together!



### This Week in Jewish History

5<sup>th</sup> of Iyar 5708- May 14<sup>th</sup>, 1948

#### **Yom HaAtzmaut- Israeli Independence Day**

The idea of a modern state of Israel dates back to the ideas of Theodor Herzl. He campaigned for a Jewish state in the Middle East and was instrumental in setting up the Zionist Organization and organizing the First Zionist Congress held in Basel, Switzerland, in August 1897. Herzl died on July 3, 1904.

Following the horrendous atrocities committed against Jewish people in the Holocaust, there were further calls for a Jewish state to be created. On May 14, 1948, David Ben Gurion, the first prime minister of Israel publicly read the Declaration of Independence of Israel. This event is commemorated each year on Israel's Independence Day, also known as Yom

Ha'atzmaut. The day before Yom Ha'atzmaut is Yom Hazikaron. This is a solemn occasion and a day of remembrance and is officially known as "Israel's Day of Remembrance for Fallen Soldiers and Victims of Terrorism".



According to the Jewish calendar, the fifth day of the month of Iyar cannot fall on a Sunday. If this date falls on a Friday or Saturday, Yom Ha'atzmaut is observed on the third or fourth day of the month. If the date falls on a Monday, it is observed on the sixth day of Iyar. This is so that the festivities do not fall just before, on, or just after the Sabbath.

**STAT LINE OF THE WEEK- EMOR**  
**32nd of the Torah's 54 sedras; 9th of 10 in Vayikra**  
**Written on 99 lines in a Sefer Torah**  
**7 parshiyot; 1 open, 6 closed**  
**57 p'sukim, ranks 50th; last in Vayikra**  
**737 words, ranks 50th; (last)**  
**2817 letters, ranks 50th; (last)**  
**Only 4 sedras are shorter, specifically, the last 4 of the Torah: Nitzavim, Vayeilech, Haazinu, V'zot HaBracha**  
**B'har contains 24 mitzvot of the 613; 7 positive, 17 prohibitions;**

#### **FIND...**

- Shmittah
- Planting
- Sowing
- Pruning
- Harvesting
- Yovel
- Interest
- Loans



# TRIVIA QUESTION OF THE WEEK

## WHAT IS THE TOTAL LENGTH OF ISRAEL?

Email your answers to [YOUTH@YOUNGISRAEL.ORG](mailto:YOUTH@YOUNGISRAEL.ORG) along with your **NAME** and **AGE** for a chance to win **AWESOME PRIZES!** Each correct answer will enter your name into a raffle that will happen once a month. Behatzlacha!

### THIS JUST IN!

- **A cockroach will live nine days without it's head, before it starves to death.**
- **Butterflies taste with their feet.**
- **Elephants are the only mammals that can't jump.**
- **Starfish don't have brains.**

For more info please feel free to contact us at  
[youth@youngisrael.org](mailto:youth@youngisrael.org)

### Parsha Points to Ponder...

The Parsha begins by instructing us concerning the laws of Shmita or the Sabbatical year. The fields are to lay fallow, no planting and no harvesting. A number of verses later the Torah says: “**וְכִי תֹאמֶר מַה נָאכַל בַשְׁנָה הַשְׁבִיעִית:** If you will say, ‘What will we eat on the seventh year? Behold we will not sow and not gather in our crop.’ ” (Lev. 25,20) The question, of course, is, if they will not be able to work the fields during the seventh year, on what will they survive? The answer follows that Hashem will provide on the sixth year sufficient food to last for the time they cannot work. The Ramban wonders, what is their concern about the seventh year. They have the growth of the sixth year. Their question should have been about the eighth year. He thus explains the words of the verse should be understood as saying, “If you will ask on the seventh year, what will we eat”, the concern is about what will they eat on the eighth year. Other commentaries put a comma after the word “eat”. The meaning is, “What will we eat, on the seventh year we cannot sow and gather crop?” The Sages tell us; whoever has food and asks what will we eat tomorrow, is of little faith. (Sota 48b) A person must trust that Hashem will provide his needs. If he has food he should not fear that he will not have in the future. A person should certainly be concerned about tomorrow but he should still put his trust in Hashem that he will provide his essential necessities.

F	U	H	Q	M	I	V	G	G	F	J
I	W	A	C	R	B	Y	N	N	P	O
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