

YOUNG JUDAEA'S HIGH HOLIDAYS PART II



SUKKOT & SIMCHAT TORAH

5772



THE ZIONIST YOUTH MOVEMENT OF HADASSAH



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Shalom and Shana Tova! As we are now well into the swing of the High Holidays and the autumn breeze blows through the windows of Young Judaea's national office in New York, our attention turns to our the second batch of high holidays festivities, namely **Sukkot** and **Simchat Torah**.

Sukkot and Simchat Torah are both joyous celebrations and one of the best pairs of holidays to use for creating a Young Judaea program in your community. Sukkot is one of the three pilgrimage festivals (Passover and Shavuot are the other two) and carries multiple layers of meaning. Observing Sukkot comes primarily through two mitzvot primarily:

Building and Dwelling in the Sukkah: For one week we are commanded in the Torah to build and dwell in a *sukkah* (a temporary booth). This commandment is explicitly explained in the Torah to remind us of our time wandering in the desert before we entered the Land of Israel, and could only live in temporary booths

The Four Species: The collecting and shaking together of the four types/species: *Lulav*, *etrog*, *hadassaim* (myrtle) and *willow*. Different interpretations of these species, which are commanded in the Torah, are different variations on the theme of unity: unity of the Jewish People, unity of the Torah, unity of G-d, etc.

There is also a strong emphasis on agriculture in Sukkot. This starts its timing, which coincides with the harvest time. This makes Sukkot double as a celebration of the harvest, and the sukkah as an amenity to keep proximity with one's fields during the peak of harvest season. It is also important for us to remember that while we reap the rewards of the Land of Israel, literally, we recall when we did not have land of our own to harvest. The use of the different plants found in the Land of Israel also reinforces the agricultural undertones of the holiday.

Simchat Torah is a celebration of the completion of studying and reading the entire Torah in weekly *parshiot* and the beginning of a new cycle, starting at B'reisheet. The studying of Torah has been at the center of Jewish Identity for thousands of years. Therefore we celebrate our love, respect and gratitude for having received the Torah and reading it as our ancestors have for thousands of years.

While these holidays are joyous days of celebration, throughout our celebration, we should also use the opportunity to consider our own Jewish identities and challenges today including malnourishment, homelessness, and illiteracy, which these holidays also remind us to fight.

I hope that these activities may help you do all that and more,

B'Hatzlacha!

Andrew Fretwell, Manager of Youth Leadership and Education

Celebrating Sukkot: The Sukkah

Andrew Fretwell, October 2011

Goal: Chanichim will understand the basic practices and ritual objects of Sukkot

Essential Question: How do we celebrate Sukkot?

Age: 2nd-8th graders

Time: 45 minutes

Materials: Hershey Kisses, skittles/starbursts/jolly ranchers, almond M&M's, twizzlers, paper, markers or crayons, and drawing materials

Experiences/Outline:

Step 1: Chanichim will introduce themselves and do a name game (10 minutes)

Step 2: Chanichim will read the mitzvot for Sukkot (5 minutes) and discuss the requirements for a sukkah, including:

- *Can have four walls – like the samech's shape*
- *Can have three walls – like the kaf's shape*
- *Can have 2 walls and 1 shared wall from a permanent structure like the Hey, which has 2 and ½ sides*

Step 3: Chanichim will draw their sukkah and build a candy model (15 minutes)

Split chanichim into groups of four; together chanichim draw their model sukkah on paper and will be given graham crackers, frosting, sprinkles, twizzlers, M&M's, and other foods for building a model candy house.

Step 4: Candy Sukkah Presentations (5 minutes)

Chanichim will present their candy sukkot to each other. The madrich/a will verify that they fit the requirements for a proper sukkah and certify them as kosher.

Step 5: Sikkum (10 minutes)

The madrich/a will certify the sukkahs as kosher and together everyone will recite the prayer for the sukkah (attached) and eat their candy-sukkkah!

Sukkot Party Taboo

By Aviva Weinstein, Merav David, Jennie Kratz, Julia Spiegel

Goals: To learn about characters from the Tanach and the Jewish People's connection to the Land of Israel

Essential Question: Who are important figures in the Tanach?

Time: 1 hour

Age: 2nd-8th Grade

Materials: character cards, taboo words (both attached), pumpkins to carve (or ask participants to provide)

Step 1: Name Game – Bulldog – (10 minutes)

Everyone stands in a circle and beats a rhythm on their legs. one by one, people come into the middle for the circle and chant this (see below)

*“My name is _____
They call me _____
I'm here to show you
How to bulldog
First you shake it
and then you roll it
and then you chicken it
and then you dog it”*

Step 2: Introductions of characters 10 minutes (see attached)

Madrachim will dress up as different characters from the Tanach (choose from the attached cards) and will introduce themselves to the group.

Step 3: Taboo 10 minutes (see attached)

Split the chanichim into two groups. Madrichim will then mix up the cards and play taboo with the characters. Each team should send up one volunteer to describe the character. Both teams will try to guess their character at the same time and whoever guesses correctly first receives a point for their team for that round. team must guess first which character they are conveying. Each team who correctly guesses a character first, gets 1 point.

Step 4: Pumpkin Carving (30 minutes)

Break the chanichim into different groups. Each group will be assigned a different character, and must design their pumpkin to a different character. Provide pictures to help!

Simchat Torah: Celebrating Creation

Andrew Fretwell, October 2011

Objective: Chanichim will understand the importance of the Jewish cyclical approach to studying the Torah

Essential Question: What's the traditional Jewish belief of how the world was created?

Age of Chanichim: 2nd-8th grade

Time: 45 minutes -1 hour

Materials: masking tape (for yam-yavash), Hebrew letter stickers, blank piece of paper

Implementation:

A. Introduction and Name games: 5 minutes

Chanichim will go in a circle and say their name and will get a sticker of the letter of the Hebrew alphabet that is the first letter of their name (either English or Hebrew)

B. Explanation of Simchat Torah (see talking points) from Madrich/a: 5 minutes (see talking points)

C. Games for Each Day of Creation (40 minutes)

Day 1 Creation of Day and Night: Red Light, Green Light

Madrich/a is Judge. All the chanichim line up at one end of the room, with the goal to reach the finish line first. Chanichim can only walk/run after the judge says "Sunrise!" and cannot move when the Judge yells "Sunset!" Anyone who moves after the judge yells "sunset" is out.

Day 2 – Sky – Snowflake

The madrich/a stands in the center of the room holding a full piece of paper, with the chanichim spread out around her standing in a circle. He/she will simultaneously drop the paper (like a snowflake falls from the sky) and call a chanich/a's name. The chanich/a must catch the paper before it touches the ground. If he/she does not, it is cut in half. This process repeats until the paper is too small to be used, or time expires.

Day 3 – Land and Ocean: Yam-Yavash

Put a strip of masking tape down the center of the room. The right side is Yavash (dry land) and the other is Yam (water, ocean). Everyone starts on Yavash but must jump over to Yavash when the madrich/a calls yavash, and then must jump back to Yam when the madrich/a calls it. If the madrich/a calls yam when the chanichim are already on the yam side, everyone must jump in place. Same for yavash. An errant or non-jump gets you out.

Day 4 – Sun and Moon: Red Rover

Form two equal lines holding hands at opposite ends of room (about thirty feet apart at the most). Each team will take turns in daring someone from the other team to try to break their lines, as in get two people to let go hands, by saying "Red Rover, Red Rover, let _____ come over!" If the person does not succeed, he becomes a part of that team. If he/she does succeed, he can choose two people from the other team to join him on his team. Play until there are only 1-2 people left on one team, they are the Moon team and the winning team is the Sun team.

Day 5 – Sea creatures and birds: Hawk and fish

Chanichim form a large circle standing, holding hands. There is one chanich, the fish, who starts inside the circle and one chanich/a, the hawk, who starts outside the circle. The chanichim that make up the circle will periodically raise their arms to either let the fish or hawk in or out, though usually the circle looks to help the fish. Once the hawk catches the fish, two more people are chosen for the next round to be the fish and hawk.

Day 6 – Animals and man: evolution rocks-paper-scissors

Everyone plays each other in rocks, paper scissors. every time they win they advance an evolutionary level, every time they lose they go down one level. Levels include: Amoebas, fish, monkey, man. As they play, chanichim must act out their evolutionary stage. E.G Diana Ross signing “stop in the name of love” is a fun way to represent man. First person to win a game as Man, wins!

Day 7 – Rest – Count to 7

Everyone must sit quietly, close their eyes and relax and then count out loud to 7 in order as a group, without more than one person saying any number.

D. Sikkum (see Sikkum talking points) and Teach the song “yum padum”: 10 minutes

Explanation of Simchat Torah Questions for chanichim and Talking Points

Question: How often we read the Torah? We read it once a year. Simchat Torah is the celebration of starting it again for this year.

Question: Why do we read it so much? Because it’s really important and every time we read it, we can find new ideas, new meaning.

Question: What does Simchat Torah literally mean in Hebrew? The Joy of Torah, which is why it’s a holiday!

Question: How many books of the Torah are there, who can name them all? 5 – Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy.

Question: What is the first Book and who knows how it starts? Genesis, it begins with creation story. – Great, now we’re going to do a fun activity about the creation story!

Sikkum Talking Points:

So who can tell me what was created on each day? Any questions?

All these things are obviously really important from the creation of light to the creation of rest, Shabbat. This all comes from the first parsha of the year, that we’re going to read this week. Now we’re going to teach a fun song that uses some of the words from the Torah about the six days of creation:

Words to Yum Pa Dum

Verses –taken directly from Torah (Genesis 1)

Veyee Erev, Vaeyee Boker; Yom Rishon

Veyee Erev, Vaeyee Boker; Yom Sheini

Veyee Erev, Vaeyee Boker; Yom Shlishi

Veyee Erev, Vaeyee Boker; Yom Revi’i

Veyee Erev, Vaeyee Boker; Yom Chamishi

Veyee Erev, Vaeyee Boker; Yom Shishi

Veyee Erev, Vaeyee Boker; Yom Shabbat

Chorus between each verse (with hand motions):

Put Left thumb up

Yum padum, padum padum padum.

Bring Right Thumb Up (now both Right and Left thumbs are up)

Yum padum, padum padum padum.

Left thumb down, keep right thumbs up

Yum padum, padum padum padum

Two thumbs down Left thumb up, right thumb down Both thumbs up left thumb down, right thumb up both thumbs down bring both thumbs up

Yum

padum,

padum

padum

padum

padum

Simchat Torah: Didn't I Read this Already?

Andrew Fretwell, October 2011

Objective: Chanichim will understand the importance of the Jewish cyclical approach to studying the Torah

Essential Question: Why do Jews read the Torah over and over?

Age of Chanichim: 9th-12th grade

Time: approximately 1 hour

Materials: attached readings, texts

Outcome Activity: Chanichim will discuss differences in their interpretation of an excerpt of the Torah

Implementation:

Introductions and Name Game (5-10 minutes)

Chanichim will go around, introduce themselves and if they can remember, cite what their Bar/t Mitzvah parsha was, or if they can't remember, their favorite story from the Torah.

Reading the Creation Story (5-10 minutes)

The madrich/a will distribute the story to chevruta groups (2-3) to read over Chapters 1-3 in groups out loud to each other. Once everyone has read and understands the story...

Three Text Studies: (11 minutes each) Creation Story

Chanichim will be split into three groups; Each group rotates between three stations in which they will read a different selection from Midrash (attached), Breisheet. Chanichim will read and discuss each selection. After ten minutes, chanichim will take one minute to write their thoughts.

Presentations and Sikkum (10 minutes)

After the third station, the groups will present the answers supplied throughout the peulah to each other. The leader will sikkum

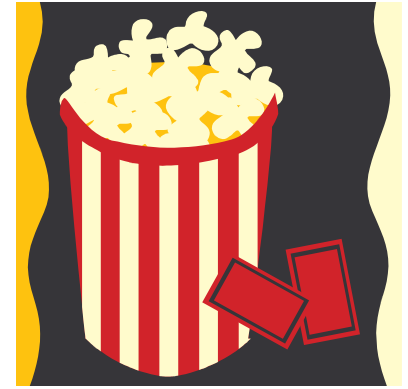
Sikkum Talking Points:

Why did we do this? Well, as you can see we've read only the first sentence of the Torah, only ten words. Yet, we were able to discuss a variety of questions that depending on your interpretation could totally alter your understanding of the Creation Story, and therefore the Universe. The reason we read the Torah year after year is because there is so much value and meaning sewed into it (especially in the direct Hebrew) that it never stops providing new ideas, concepts, debates, shades of meanings and lessons for us to take. Most Torah scholars concede that they could just study Torah for their entire lives and nothing else, but still feel like they only got a fraction of the meaning it offers.

This is why every year, we as a people, celebrate that we concluded another year of learning from the Torah and immediately begin celebrating that we're entering a new year of learning even more!



Popcorn Peulah



Sallah Shabbati (1964)



In the theme of understanding the importance of home, whether permanent or temporary, this sharp, often hilarious satire that became the most successful film in Israeli history is about new immigrants Sallah and his family, who are left to live in a small shack close to the apartment they were promised and for months. This Jewish family from Yemen that was flown to Israel during "Operation Magic Carpet" - a secret operation that brought nearly 50,000 Yemenite Jews to Israel - is moved into government housing. The patriarch, portrayed by Chaim Topol, who is famous for his role as Tevye in "Fiddler on the Roof," tries to make money and get better housing, in an infantile country with high hopes, but many challenges at its doorstep.

Sicha Questions to start:

- Do you think Sallah felt welcomed when he first got to Israel? Why not?
- How did he feel more at home by the end of the movie? Were there some things that did not improve?
- What was the role of ethnicity/Sephardic vs. Ashkenazi in this movie?
- Do you think Sallah considered himself a Zionist?



Food, Inc. (2008)

In the spirit of appreciating harvesting, farming and where our food comes from, this documentary takes a hard, extensive look at the food industry in America. Food, Inc. exposes some of the deep economic and health injustices that our country stomachs from flawed governmental policies, corporate greed and a generally uneducated American public about the risks of mass production of agriculture, dairy and meat products. For more information go to www.foodincmovie.com.

Sicha Questions to start:

- What is the most disturbing thing you've learned or internalized from this?
- Would you think about changing your shopping or eating habits because of this? Why or why not?
- Why is the way we consume food important as a country?

Tikun Olam – 4 Ways to Repair the World

Help repair the world by hosting a special Sukkot Tikun Olam Party! All you need is each of the four species and a little information! For each of the four species/types for Sukkot, we have different *tikun olam* options:



Myrtle

Myrtle is traditionally used to clear wind passages, i.e. breathing easier. You can help people who are less fortunate and help them breathe easier:

Fighting Poverty in Israel – You can fight poverty in Israel, combat malnourishment and support the work to provide proper medical and basic services to Israel's poor. To learn more, go to <http://www.latet.org.il/english>.

Fighting Hunger in America – You can take part or host a food drive for a pantry or homeless shelter in your local community. To learn more, go to <http://feedingamerica.org/foodbank-results.aspx>

Willow

Willow is traditionally used to ease aches and fevers- remove people from imminent danger. You can help those who are vulnerable to physical danger and attack:

Child Soldiering – every year, thousands of children are abducted and forced to fight, commit war crimes, suffer and die on behalf of gangsters and warlords. To fight this double edged sword of cruelty, visit www.invisiblechildren.com.

Support Sderot – Thousands of Israelis continue to live in peril, under the threat of rocket attacks from Gaza, in the city of Sderot. To learn more about how to help Israel's most besieged citizens, go to www.sderotmedia.org.il.

Date Palm

Date palm is traditionally used to soothe sore throats and colds. Help people become at ease in their communities:

Pluralism and Coexistence in Israel – Organizations like the New Israel Fund are at the forefront of fighting for democratic rights and Pluralism in Israel. To learn more, go to www.nif.org.

Fearless Inclusion Campaign – Join Young Judaea and the other major Jewish youth organizations for inclusion for LGBT teens in the Jewish- American community. To learn more, go to www.youngjudaea.org/fearlessinclusion.

Etrog

Ok so the Etrog doesn't seem to have any traditional medicinal uses, but it is a native fruit to the Land of Israel. By supporting the environmental movement in Israel, which Young Judaea is largely responsible for launching, you can help preserve Israel's environment. To learn more, you can check out the Arava Institute at Kibbutz Ketura www.arava.org.il or the Heschel Center for Environmental Learning and Leadership www.heschel.org.il/en!

Appendix A

For celebrating Sukkot: the Sukkah, step 2

Commandment to Build and Dwell in the Sukkah

Leviticus – 23:42

Ye shall dwell in booths seven days; all that are home-born in Israel shall dwell in booths; that your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt. I am the Lord your God.

Prayer for the Sukkah

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם

Barukh atah Adonai, Eloheinu, melekh ha-olam

Blessed are you, Lord, our God, sovereign of the universe

אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ

asher kidishanu b'mitz'votav v'tzivanu

Who has sanctified us with His commandments and commanded us

לְיֹשֵׁב בַּסֻּכָּה (אָמֵן)

leisheiv basukah (Amein).

to dwell in the sukkah (Amen)

Appendix B

Sukkot Party Taboo – Character Cards

Ushpizin Alef

Ushpizin Bet

<p>Moses: Hi! My name is Moshe, also known as Moses. I was born in Egypt thousands of years ago, during the time that Jews were enslaved and killed. My mother heard of the law of death to all Jewish baby boys, and sent me down the Nile in a basket where Pharaoh's daughter took me and adopted me. Later in life, God spoke to me and commanded me to lead the Jewish slaves out of Egypt. I was considered very humble and modest.</p>	<p>David: Hello, my name is King David. I was the second king of Israel thousands of years ago, and my son Solomon responsible for the building of the holy temple, which only remains today as the Western Wall in Jerusalem. I was a poet, with many children and wives, who is famous for playing the harp. I was also a warrior (that was me in the story "David and Goliath").</p>
<p>Aharon: Hello! I am Aharon. I am a prophet and the older brother of Moses. I was known as his spokesperson because he sometimes had problems talking. I am also called Aaron ha Cohen. My job as the Cohen was to keep the menorah lit and to sacrifice animals. Like my brother Moses, I was not allowed to enter the land of Israel.</p>	<p>Yitzchak: Shalom! I am Yitzchak my dad is Avraham, the first ever Jew. Dad and my mom, Sarah, were 100 years old before I was born! One time when I was a kid, my dad brought me up a mountain and tied me up. His plan was to kill me because God had told him to. but right before he did, an angel stopped him and told him to sacrifice a nearby ram. Phew! When I grew up, I married Rivka, and we had twin sons, Ya'akov and Esav.</p>
<p>Jacob: Shalom everyone! I am Ya'akov, or Jacob. My father is Yitzhak. I have had two wives; Rachel and Leah. I have 12 sons, just as my father did. I have achieved many of the goals I set for myself, unfortunately I sometimes had to lie. But as long as I accomplished things the right way, it's ok, right? Many people are intrigued by my dream about angels ascending and descending the ladder to heaven....maybe you know it better as Jacob's Ladder? I can't wait to come to your sukkah!</p>	<p>Devorah: Shalom! My name is Devorah and I lived in Israel during the time of the Judges, after Moses but before David or Solomon. Despite the fact I was a woman, I was a great warrior and leader and helped fight off local tribes, such as the Canaanites. I was a warrior, wife and poet and one of the only women in the Tanach who is known for something other than whom I married or who I gave birth to.</p>
<p>Avraham: Hey guys! I'm Avraham! I was born a long long time ago. I was originally named Avram but I changed my name when I became the first Jew. One day, G-d told me that I would be the father of a great nation. (That's a lot of pressure). I packed up my home and my family and moved to Canaan. G-d told me that one day my people would become as numerous as all the stars in the sky. That's a lot of people! I always love having guests and I firmly believe that there is only one G-d.</p>	<p>Yosef: Hi I'm Yosef. I grew up in a big family with 11 brothers. My father loved me the most and gave me this awesome colorful coat. I bragged to them all the time and even had dreams about how I was the best out of all of my siblings. My brothers got very angry at me and threw me in a pit and sold me into slavery. Don't try that at home, kids. They even told my father that I was murdered. Luckily, things turned out well for me in the end and I got to live in the royal palace in Egypt where I interpreted dreams. In my later years, I got to save my family by giving them food during a famine.</p>

Taboo Words (words you cannot use):

Cut individually before distributing

Moses – Bush, Burning, Slavery, Egypt, Red Sea, Plagues

David – King, Goliath, Jerusalem, Statue, Warrior

Aharon – Brother, Moses, Priest/Cohen, Golden Calf, Levite

Yitzchak – Abraham, Sacrifice, Jacob/Yitzchak, Ishmael, Rivka/Rebecca

Jacob – Esau, Yitzchak, ladder, Israel, angel

Devorah – woman, warrior, poet, judge, fight

Abraham – Father, Sarah, first, Jew, God, sacrifice

Yosef – Jacob, coat, Egypt, dream, wise

Appendix C

What happened at the very beginning of Creation?

Taken from Midrash, Breisheet Chapter 1

What Came First, Torah or the World?

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. Genesis 1:1

R. Bannai said: The world and the fullness thereof were created only for the sake of Torah.

"I was in the mind of the Holy One," says the Torah, "like the overall design in the mind of a craftsman."

In the way of the world, when a king of flesh and blood builds a palace, he builds it not according to his own whim, but according to the idea of an architect. Moreover, the architect does not build it out of his own head; he has [a design]--plans and diagrams to know how to lay out the chambers and where to put in wicket doors. Even so the Holy One looked into the Torah as He created the world.

Questions:

According to Rabbi Bannai, the world was created in order to fulfill the Torah, like a building being made to fit its design. Do you agree with Rabbi Bannai?

If the Torah preceded Creation, why wouldn't the Torah say that?

It doesn't start by saying there was nothing and then God created Heaven and Earth, is it possible there was something that preceded Creation that God brought order to in making Heaven and Earth?

The Foundation Ideas of the World
In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. Genesis 1:1

R. Zutra bar Tobiah said in the name of Rav: The world was created by means of ten capacities and powers: By wisdom, by understanding, by reason, by strength, by rebuke, by might, by righteousness, by judgment, by loving-kindness, and by compassion.

"The Lord God made earth and heaven" (Genesis 2:4). A parable of a king who had cups made of delicate glass. The king said: If I pour hot water into them, they will [expand and] burst; if cold water, they will contract [and break].

What did he do?

He mixed hot and cold water, and poured it into them, and so they remained unbroken.

Likewise, the Holy One said: If I create the world with the attribute of mercy alone, its sins will be too many; if with justice alone, how could the world be expected to endure? So I will create it with both justice and mercy, and may it endure!

Questions:

- Do these "capacities and powers" encompass all values that underlie the world?
- What are other values or ideals that could be the starting point of creation?
- Why would God not also create negative characteristics like jealousy, rage, greed, etc as well? Where do those come from then?

Which came first: Heaven or Earth?

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. Genesis 1:1

The sages taught: The school of Shammai says, Heaven was created first and the earth was created afterward, for it is said, "In the beginning God created heaven and earth" (Genesis 1:1).

But the school of Hillel says: The earth was created first and heaven afterward, for it is said, "In the day that the Lord God made earth and heaven" (Genesis 2:4).

The school of Hillel said to the school of Shammai: According to you, a man should build the upper story of the house first and the lower story afterward, for in the verse "It is He that builds His upper chambers in the heaven, and hath founded His [lower] vault upon the earth" (Amos 9:6)

The school of Shammai replied to the school of Hillel: According to you, a man should first make a footstool and then make the throne, for in the verse "The heaven is My throne and the earth is My footstool." (Isaiah 66:1)

But the sages say: Both were created at one and the same time, for it is said, "Yea, My hand has laid the foundation of the earth, and My right hand has spread out the heavens; when I called to them, they stood up together." (Isaiah 48:13).

In the name of the sages, R. Yochanan said: In creation, heaven was first; in being brought to completion, earth was first.

R. Tanhuma said, I will state the proof for this statement: the verse "God created heaven and earth" (Genesis 1:1) shows that heaven was first in creation; while the verse "In the day the Lord God completed making earth and heaven" (Genesis 2:4) shows that earth was first in being brought to completion.

- Do you side with any particular belief here? Why?
- Why is this argument even worth recording, let alone learning about? Why is it important? Why isn't it important?