

**LEVEL 1**

#5 **ADVENTURING THROUGH TORAH**

ב”ה

**BIRTHDAY IN SPAIN**

The interior of a grand synagogue in Toledo, Spain. Originally known as the Ibn Shushan Synagogue, or commonly "The Congregational Synagogue of Toledo". It was built in 1180, and it may very well be the oldest synagogue building in Europe which is still standing. It is now a national monument, known as S. Maria La Blanca.



**TIME: 1404**  
**PLACE: TOLEDO, SPAIN**



**5 : ALWAYS REFLECTING AND BECOMING EVEN BETTER**

**INTRODUCTION****WORDS TO KNOW:**

- 1 Hashem  
G-dliness  
mission
- 2 Torah  
Mitzvot  
Rabbi
- 3 Kedusha/  
Kadosh
- 4 Yetzer Tov  
Yetzer Hara
- 5 **Halacha**  
**Chet**  
**Teshuva**

**We can always return to Torah (Teshuva)**

- The Torah tells us how to live purposeful lives. How to bring Hashem into our lives, how to be kind
- The Torah is a way of life. Torah is called a path/ a track. (Way = **Halacha**)
- We should stick to the path of Torah, mostly to the center, to have a proper balance.
- As we are human, there will be times that we stumble off the track, we will listen to our Yetzer Hara thoughts and we mis-step. (mis-step/ mis-take = **Chet**)
- The Torah tells us that even if we make a mis-take, we can always return to/ get back on track. (return = **Teshuva**)

**Reflection helps us return to Torah**

- The first step in getting back on track is realizing that we have fallen off the track. We do that by thinking about what we are doing in life. That is called **reflection**.
- Of course, we can stop and reflect at any point to help us stay on track.
- The Torah includes many times in the day, week, month, year to stop and reflect – how am I doing in my life: Am I following the directives as outlined in the Torah?
- (Structured times for reflection:  
Daily = during each Tefillah, and at night before you go to bed  
Weekly = Every Shabbat  
Monthly = Rosh Chodesh  
Yearly = Tishrei)

**Birthdays are special times for personal reflection**

- And one special time – just for you! Your birthday.
- Your birthday is a special day in your life. Use it to reflect on previous year, and upcoming year.
- On your birthday, make a **hachlata / resolution** about how you will do better in one particular area – to get back on track in one particular area, or to do something even better. The resolution should be something you can really do — small goals that you want to train yourself to do better.

**The Rebbe has taught that we should make our birthday special by:**

- making a party
- giving Tzedakah
- learning Torah (saying certain Torah passages)
- making a Hachlata

**THINGS TO CONSIDER:**

- Don't use the word "sin" for Chet
- Don't get side tracked with birthday parties
- Structured times for reflection: Only use if this is applicable to your students.

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**ABOUT THIS LESSON****OVERVIEW of LEARNING ACTIVITIES**

- Students will play a game relating to Torah and Teshuva.
- Students will discuss what it means to reflect, using reflection questions and scenarios.
- Students will re-enact a Jewish birthday party.

**DESIRED OUTCOME By the end of this lesson, students will know, understand or be able to:**

- The concept of Teshuva as reflection and strengthening ourselves in Torah.
- Teshuva is and can be done on a constant basis.
- A birthday is a special time to reflect and make good resolutions for the coming year.

**BEFORE CLASS**

- Print **5.1.1.AdventuringThroughIsraelReview** – 1 per student
- View and listen to CD: **AdventuringThroughTorah** –Birthday In Spain (5)
- Print **5.1.2.ItineraryLesson5** – print 1 packet per student
- Bring activity materials to class (see next page)
- Prepare a bag of birthday items – tzedakah box, pennies, birthday cake, pesukim, party hats, etc.
- Print Do it at Home #5- **5.1.3.FamilyTalk5** (back to back with) **5.1.4.TripClues** – 1 per student
- Prepare names and birthdays of students for Poster Lesson 5 – Birthdays.

**LEARNING ACTIVITIES OUTLINE**



The Learning Activity Details must be read for full understanding of this outline.

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|--|---|
| <p><b>ADVENTURING THRU ISRAEL REVIEW</b><br/> <b>Time:</b> 4 minutes<br/> <b>Materials:</b><br/>         - 5.1.1.AdventuringThroughIsraelReview</p>  | <p><b>Review “Do it at Home”</b> – “Adventuring Through Israel” piece only<br/>         Students present their answers from last week’s clue.<br/>         Eliminate cities, based on the clues.<br/>         Put in binder.</p>      |
| <p><b>ADVENTURING THROUGH TORAH PPT</b><br/> <b>Time:</b> 4 minutes<br/> <b>Materials:</b><br/>         - Laptop/ projector<br/>         - Adventuring Through Torah CD<br/>         - 5.1.2.ItineraryLesson5</p>            | <p><b>Students listen/ view “Adventuring Through Torah” PPT.</b><br/>         Give out the itinerary (packet of the day’s work materials.)</p>  |
| <p><b>LEARNING ACTIVITIES</b><br/> <b>Time:</b> 10 minutes<br/> <b>Materials:</b><br/>         - Masking tape<br/>         - Ball<br/>         - Permanent marker<br/>         - Paddles<br/>         - Student paper 18</p> | <p><b>“Following the Path” Game<sup>1</sup></b><br/>         Students will play a game to understand the concept of “Chet”= mistake, and how it’s possible to do Teshuva.<br/>         (Refer to Student Paper page 18)</p>           |
| <p><b>Time:</b> 7 minutes<br/> <b>Materials:</b><br/>         - Student paper 19</p>   | <p><b>Teshuva Through Reflection Scenario<sup>2</sup></b><br/>         Students read the scenario and enact. Then, they discuss how the characters might reflect and grow from the scenario.<br/>         (Student Paper page 19)</p> |
| <p><b>Time:</b> 10 minutes<br/> <b>Materials:</b><br/>         - Tzedakah box<br/>         - Pennies<br/>         - Birthday cake<br/>         - Birthday hats</p>   | <p><b>A Jewish Birthday Party<sup>3</sup></b><br/>         Students participate in a re-enactment of Jewish birthday party.</p>   |
| <p><b>CLOSE LESSON</b><br/> <b>Time:</b> 3 minutes<br/> <b>Materials:</b><br/>         - Student paper 20</p>  | <p><b>Think it, Write it!</b><br/>         (Student Paper page 20)</p>  |
| <p><b>EXPLAIN THE “DO IT AT HOME”</b><br/> <b>Time:</b>4 minutes<br/> <b>Materials:</b><br/>         - Do it At Home #5</p>  | <p><b>Teacher explains:</b><br/>         1.) “The Power of Tools” mission<br/>         2.) “Adventuring through Israel” piece.</p>  |
| <p><b>POSTER</b><br/> <b>Time:</b> 3 minutes<br/> <b>Materials:</b><br/>         - Poster #5</p>   | <p><b>Present the poster (#5) to the students<sup>4</sup></b></p>   |

## LEARNING ACTIVITIES DETAILS

### <sup>1</sup>“Following the Path” Game

**PREPARE:** With masking tape, draw two identical straight paths, one for each team. (Each path should have two sides, ex: | | and | |. Each path should be three times the width of the ball/ item that the students will be rolling down the path.)



**THE ACTIVITY:** Divide the class into two teams. The first two players from each team each take a paddle and try to move the ball along the path. If the ball falls off the path, they must use the paddles to move it back onto the path. The rest of their team guides them by saying “Left” or “Right” as they get too close to the edge. The first team to get the ball to the end wins.

**DISCUSS:** Discuss how they could have done the race even better. Jot down their ideas on paper. Ask:

- What happened?
- Did it go as well as we had hoped?
- How could we have done it differently?

**THE ACTIVITY:** Then, put a face on the ball and name the path “Torah”. Explain that they should now think about the ball as a person. Do the race again.

**DISCUSS:** Discuss the analogy. Ask for their ideas. Possible ideas include:

- The path is the Torah way.
- Sometimes, we veer off the path.
- Even if we veer off the path, there is always a chance to get back on the path.
- With careful thinking, we can do better the next time around.
- If we keep to the center of the path, we can do much better about staying on the path.
- The path is not so narrow, there is lots of room; just don’t go over the edge.

**EXPLAIN:**

- Torah tells us how to live purposeful lives. How to bring god into our lives, how to be kind [📖 review from previous lessons.]
- Torah is a way of life. Torah is called a path/ a track. (Way = **Halacha**)
- We should stick to the path, mostly to the center. Have a proper balance.
- As we are human, there will be times that we stumble off the track, we mis-step. (📖 concept of **Yetzer Hara**] (mis-step/ mis-take = **Chet**).
- Torah tells us that even if we make a mis-take, we can always return to/ get back on track. (return = **Teshuva**).
- The first step in getting back on track is realizing that you have fallen off the track. We do that by thinking about what we are doing in life. That is called **REFLECTION**.
- 📖 **Rabbis** help us and give us advice on ways we can improve and strengthen ourselves in Torah

### <sup>2</sup>Teshuva Through Reflection

**ASK:** What are some questions that we can ask ourselves when we are reflecting? Answers can include:

- What happened?
- How could things have been done differently?
- How did what happened make you feel?
- How could you have behaved differently?
- What can you do about what happened?
- What did you learn from it?

**ASK:** What are some established reflection days that Torah gave to all of us?

**🏠** Rosh Hashana – we reflect about the past year and make good goals/resolutions for the upcoming year. Rosh Chodesh – we ask Hashem to bless us with a successful new month. Shabbat – we reflect about the past week and rejuvenate for the upcoming week. Every day we have set aside times for Tefillah when we can reflect on the previous part of the day and see what we can do to make it better or to correct any mistakes we might have made.

The Torah has set up our lives so that we are constantly reflecting and trying to better ourselves to keep ourselves on the path of Torah.

Some things we can think about when we are reflecting are: family, friends, Hashem, talents, Torah, Mitzvot, and behavior.

**ACTIVITY:** Read aloud the scenario to the class. One or two kids can come up and act out the scenario.

**DISCUSS:** What might the reflection be like. What questions does David ask himself? What does he think about and how does he decide to better himself?

**WRITE:** Students complete Student paper 19.

### <sup>3</sup>Planning A Jewish Birthday

**EXPLAIN:** Our birthdays are a special day for us. Hashem created each of us for a special purpose and on our birthdays we have an extra strength to be able to fulfill our mission and to make good resolutions for the upcoming year. Therefore it's a good thing to celebrate our birthdays and make a party so that people can share in our growth both in age and in Torah.

**ACTIVITY:** Re-enact a Jewish birthday party. Write a checklist of the 4 things we do at a Jewish birthday party:

1. Make a party
2. Learn Torah – recite verses
3. Make a resolution based on your reflection
4. Give Tzedakah

The students should tell the teacher what is needed for the party and she should pull the things out of a (pre-prepared) bag as the items are announced. For example: the students say “we need tzedakah coins and a tzedakah box” – the teacher pulls them out of the bag

Recite some of the pesukim with the kids, make a bracha and have birthday cake, and go around the room so each student gets a chance to make a birthday resolution out loud (or they can write it down) .



**EXPLAIN:** Good resolutions - which are based on reflection – can also be made any time throughout the year.

<sup>4</sup>**Present the poster (#5) to the students**

The poster is versatile enough to be used in several ways:

The students can write their name and Jewish birthday on a balloon/ piece of paper to be placed on the poster.

The students can write their hachlata on a balloon/ piece of paper when it is their birthday, or at this point.

SAMPLE - DO NOT SHARE

Chet

חֵטָא

05



Halacha

הֲלָכָה

05





# Teshuva

# תשובה

05



SAMPLE - DO NOT SHARE

# ADVENTURING THROUGH TORAH

## BIRTHDAYS ARE SPECIAL!

This is an Interactive poster where students can write their birthday hachlata (around the time of their individual birthday.)



#5

**ADVENTURING  
THROUGH TORAH**

ב"ה

**BIRTHDAY IN SPAIN**

**The interior of a grand synagogue in Toledo, Spain.**

Originally known as the Ibn Shushan Synagogue, or commonly 'The Congregational Synagogue of Toledo'. It was built in 1180, and it may very well be the oldest synagogue building in Europe which is still standing. It is now a national monument, known as S. Maria La Blanca.

SAMPLE DO NOT SHARE



**TIME: 1404**  
**PLACE: TOLEDO, SPAIN**

# REFLECTING HELPS US KEEP ON TRACK

The TORAH tells us how to live good and meaningful lives – to be kind, to be good, to be G-dly.

The TORAH's instructions, the path of TORAH, is called **HALACHA**.

We try to follow the path of TORAH, the HALACHA.

But sometimes, we stumble off that path, we fall off track.

Sometimes, we know we should do something, but we don't feel like it and we do the wrong thing.

Making a mis-take like that is called a **CHET**.

Even if we make a **CHET** (mistake), we can always get back on the track, get back to the path of TORAH, to a good life.

Returning to the track, to the HALACHA, is called **TESHUVA**.

The first step in getting back on the path is realizing that you have fallen off the track, We do that by and thinking about what you are doing and where you going in life.

We do that by thinking about what we are doing in life. That is called REFLECTION.

Torah includes many times in the day, week, month, year to stop and REFLECT.

And a special time for REFLECTION is your birthday.

Your **BIRTHDAY** is your special day! You were born because the world needs you. Birthdays remind us that we are here for a reason, and give us an opportunity to reflect on the past years and make decisions for the coming year. On our birthday, we reflect and see if we're heading on the right track.

You're a year older, a year wiser, and have greater ability to follow the Torah's ways – to live a good and meaningful life.



**SO ...**

What are some good questions to think about as you REFLECT?

How can you celebrate your birthday in a way that helps you become an even better person?

With good reflection, you can always do TESHUVA and come back to the TORAH's way, to HALACHA, to a good and meaningful life.

## WORDS TO KNOW

**HALACHA** הלכה (Ha-la-cha) means 'the way to go', 'a guide'. The Torah's instructions are a guide to a good and meaningful life. The 'Rules' of Torah are called Halacha.

## WORDS TO KNOW

**CHET** חט (Chet) means missed the mark, in other words a mistake.

## WORDS TO KNOW

**TESHUVA** תשובה (T'shu·va) means to return. To return to the ways of Torah. (It includes reflecting on your life, regretting the mis-takes, and making firm commitments not to repeat the mistake.)



# LEARN IT. LOVE IT. LIVE IT.

## A BASEBALL STORY!

David and Sam were playing ball outside after school. David was tossing pitches to Sam who was working on his batting skills. "Alright David," Sam said "throw me a good one!" David threw the pitch to Sam and heard the crack of the bat as the ball went soaring over his head and all the way over the fence into the lake. David froze.

"Oh no!" he thought to himself, "That's my big brother's ball that I took from his room without permission. It has the autograph of his favorite baseball player on it. He's going to be so angry at me!" David turned to Sam and yelled "Now look what you've done! My

brother will be so mad at me and it's all your fault!" Now, it was Sam's turn to get upset, "It's not my problem that you took your brother's ball without permission! Don't yell at me for your own mistake."

With that Sam picked up his glove and made his way back inside the house. David sat down on the porch swing and reflected on what had just happened...



### THINK IT *Write It* REFLECTING ....

**WHAT HAPPENED IN THIS STORY?**

Handwriting practice area with three horizontal lines for the response to the first question.

**WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN DONE DIFFERENTLY??** What could David have done instead of taking his brother's ball? How did David feel after the ball fell into the lake? How do you think Sam felt after David yelled at him?

Handwriting practice area with three horizontal lines for the response to the second question.

**WHAT DID YOU LEARN FOR YOUR LIFE FROM THIS STORY?**

What would be the right thing for David to do next?

Handwriting practice area with three horizontal lines for the response to the third question.



# BIRTHDAY IN SPAIN

Eli and Leah were excitedly getting ready to celebrate Eli's upcoming birthday. They began discussing birthday celebrations throughout history, and suddenly were wondrously transported to Toledo Spain in the year 1404!

Leah and Eli looked up to see where they were. "Wow, this building is really beautiful," said Leah as she began to explore. "Look at the arches and pillars. The sign says that it is the Ibn Shushan Synagogue", and it was built in 1180! That's so cool!"

Suddenly, a young boy dashed by. "Hey, Leah," said Eli, "there's a boy running in. I saw him go this way, let's go follow him!" The young boy wound his way into the Synagogue and began to think out loud... "It's my birthday today. It's a special day for me. I'm a year older, that means I'm a year smarter, a year more responsible.



"My father told me that a birthday is a special day for me — to really think about my life, what am I doing with my life. What is my special mission in life! Yeah, so what is my special mission in life? I know

I am a Jew. But these days, it's so hard to be Jewish. It used to be so grand for the Jews here in Spain. So much Torah was learned, and so many Mitzvot everywhere in our neighborhood and around Spain. But lately, the King is making it so difficult. He wants everyone in his land to follow his religion."

The boy, stood up determinedly and exclaimed aloud, "but I want to follow the Torah, I want to bring Kedusha into this world!" He sighed, "but in school, the kids make fun of me, they say that they will tell the king that our family is Jewish. He was confused, "So, now on my birthday, as I think about my life: Should I show all that I am Jewish? Should I hide it all? What is the best thing?"

Once again, he was determined. "I want to be a Jew! I want to bring Kedusha! I will! I will! I will be like the Macabees in the Chanukah story. I will stand strong. On my birthday, I declare to myself that I will be proud to be a Jew and live by the Torah's way

As Eli and Leah returned home, they had learned about a very important birthday celebration, a birthday reflection. "This really is the best birthday ever!" declared Eli.

## ABOUT Spain in 1404

More than 2,000 years ago Jews were living in Spain. For many years, the Jews in Spain were very wealthy and respected by their Christian Spanish neighbors. In the 8th century, the Muslims took over the rule of Spain and the Golden Era for the Jews of Spain began. Jews were very successful in their businesses and many great Torah leaders lived in Spain during this time; they added commentaries on the Torah that are still studied today. Then, the Christians took over again. The Jews continued to have great fortune and were respected citizens of Spain. Unfortunately, this didn't last very long. The Spanish rulers made it very hard to live as a Jew and forced many Jews to convert to the Catholic religion. They took over many of the grand Synagogues and beautiful Jewish homes. Eventually, they expelled the Jews from Spain all together in 1492. The Jews then fled to places like Holland and North Africa . Some Jews went to the New World ( America ).

Eventually in the late 1800's, Jews started slowly coming back to Spain. Now there are over 50,000 Jews in Spain and they have built beautiful Synagogues, kosher restaurants, and schools. There are several Chabad Houses and Hebrew Schools in Spain today!

## THINK IT Write It

How is this story relevant to you?

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