

Chodesh Elul

with Bnei Akiva

A fun-filled educational packet of games, activities and learning pages

WEEK 1: TORAH

Battling our Yetzer Hara

WEEK 2: TZEDAKA

Tzedaka Escape Room

WEEK 3: TEFILLAH

Raising our Tefillot with Tears

WEEK 4: TESHUVA

Correcting our Ways



BNEI AKIVA
OF THE US & CANADA

Rav Shaul Feldman on Chodesh Elul

ELUL. There are so many stories about how simply mentioning this word used to impart fear and awe of what is expected of us-- in just 30 days on “Yom Hadin” when the world is set to be judged.

These stories go as far as the extent of people fainting during Shabbat Mevarchim of the Month. Since the Month of Tishrei when Rosh Hashana falls has no Shabbat Mevarchim, the Shabbat we bless the Month of Elul includes the month of Tishrei, we are blessing Elul and “Rosh Hashana” as well.

Sefardi Jews already start “Slichot” from Rosh Chodesh Elul; Ashkenaz Jews start blowing the Shofar. Why do we start so early to prepare for Rosh Hashana? A full month in advance? Chazal tell us that Moshe returned back up to Shamayim after breaking the Luchot on Rosh Chodesh Elul. 40 days later is Yom Kippur when Hashem granted forgiveness to the sin of the Egel (golden calf) that led to the breaking of the Luchot. In other words, it looks like our preparation in advance of the Yamim Noraim should be a way to combat what led us to the sin of the golden calf. If we look at the Psukim describing the sin of the golden calf, there is a description of “parties” of joy. Chazal are critical about Am Israel wanting to be shallow and just enjoy life. But the essence of “simcha”- joy is actually a fundamental idea in the Torah. One of the reasons that we were thrown out of Eretz Israel is:

דברים כח, מז:

תחת אשר לא עבדת את ה' אלוהיך בשמחה ובטוב לבב מרב כל

“Because you would not serve the LORD your G-d in joy and gladness over the abundance of everything.”

Every year the Parsha that is either “Shabbat Mevarchim” of Elul or on Rosh Chodesh Elul is Parashat “ראה”. It may seem that the reason this was selected is the idea of “choice” - G-D is telling us that we have two possibilities “Bracha”- blessing “Klala”- curse. If we perform the “Mitzvot,” we will receive the “Bracha” -- but if you look carefully the Torah is telling us something perhaps even deeper:

דברים פרק יא פסוק כו-כז:

ראה אנכי נותן לפניכם היום ברכה וקללה את הברכה אשר תשמעו אל מצוות ה' אלוהיכם...

See, this day I set before you blessing and curse: Blessing, if you obey the commandments of the LORD your G-d...

It sounds as though the Torah is saying that the Bracha itself is listening to the commandments of G-D.

Several Psukim later the Torah describes our entry of Eretz Israel:



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דברים: יא לא-לב

כי אתם עוברים את הירדן לבא לרשת את הארץ אשר ה' אלוהיכם נותן לכם וירשתם אתה
...וישבתם בה .. ושמרתם לעשות את כל החוקים

For you are about to cross the Jordan to enter and possess the land that the LORD your God is assigning to you. When you have occupied it and are settled in it, take care to observe all the laws...

The Torah commands us to build the land, settle it – and keep the Mitzvot. As we can glean from the psukim– part of settling the land is keeping the Mitzvot in a way that we feel it is a Bracha.

The Goal we have in the month of Elul is to work on our ability to live a life where we see “keeping Torah and Mitzvot” as a true blessing. We start every year on the date that reminds us how we ended up rebelling against Hashem due to lack of joy in keeping the Torah.

In modern days, we have an opportunity to succeed in this very concept the Torah is describing and the connection of being able to settle the land **with** joy and excitement. In Bnei Akiva we strive to keep this excitement of modern redemption “Medinat Israel” alive, leading to keeping Torah and Mitzvot B'Simcha-- all the way to the full redemption.

Chodesh Elul Tov,

Rav Shaul Feldman

Executive Director of Bnei Akiva of the US & Canada

Introduction

Elul is mostly seen, not as a month standing on its own, but rather as a month of preparation for Tishrei. From Rosh Chodesh Elul we begin working on our behaviors, blowing the shofar to “wake us up” and start thinking about our upcoming year. In this spirit, there have been many findings of **אלול** as an acronym within psukim throughout Tanach that teach us about the various aspects unique to this month's preparation towards the coming holidays of Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur. The Lubavitcher Rebbe counts as many as 5 different acronyms representing the concepts of Tefillah, Torah, Teshuva, Tzedaka, and Geula. We are going to learn about 4 of them, 1 per week, in this month's packet.



Chodesh Elul
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תורה: WEEK 1

DAF LIMMUD

שמות כ"א: י"ב-י"ג

מִכָּה אִישׁ יָמַת מוֹת יוֹמָתוֹ: וְאִשֵּׁר לֹא צָדָה וְהָאֱלֹהִים אָנָּה לִידּוֹ וְשִׁמְתִּי לָךְ מְקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יָנוּס נַפְשָׁהּ:

He who fatally strikes a man shall be put to death. If he did not do it by design, but it came about by an act of God, I will assign you a place to which he can flee.

In this pasuk we learn about Arei Miklat. These were cities in which one would flee to if he had accidentally killed someone, and would be able to seek refuge there. The city would need to protect him, and he would stay there until the Kohen Gadol dies.

The reason why this pasuk is associated with Elul is because of the similarity drawn between an Ir Miklat and the Torah. Just as the Ir Miklat protects the accidental killer from his pursuer, the Torah protects us from our Yetzer Hara, which pursues us and causes us to sin.

Learn the following Gemara to understand where the concept comes from, that learning Torah protects us from the Yetzer Hara.

Sotah, 21a

The Gemara asks: Does the merit of a mitzvah protect one so much as to delay her punishment? But isn't it taught in a baraita: Rabbi Menahem bar Yosei interpreted this verse homiletically: "For the mitzvah is a lamp and the Torah is light" (Proverbs 6:23). The verse associates the mitzvah with a lamp and the Torah with the light of the sun. The mitzvah is associated with a lamp in order to say to you: Just as a lamp does not protect one by its light extensively but only temporarily, while the lamp is in one's hand, so too, a mitzvah protects one only temporarily, i.e., while one is performing the mitzvah.

And the Torah is associated with light in order to say to you: Just as the light of the sun protects one forever, so too, the Torah one studies protects one forever; and it states in the previous verse with regard to the Torah: "When you walk, it shall lead you; when you lie down, it shall watch over you; and when you awake, it shall talk with you" (Proverbs 6:22)....

Rav Yosef said that with regard to a mitzvah, at the time when one is engaged in its performance it protects one from misfortune and saves one from the evil inclination; at the time when one is not engaged in its performance, it protects one from misfortune but it does not save one from the evil inclination. With regard to Torah study, both at the time when one is engaged in it and at the time when one is not engaged in it, it protects one from misfortune and saves one from the evil inclination.

זכות דמצוה מי מגנא כולי האי והתניא
את זו דרש רבי מנחם בר יוסי (משלי
ו, כג) כי נר מצוה ותורה אור תלה
הכתוב את המצוה בנר ואת התורה
באור את המצוה בנר לומר לך מה נר
אינה מגינה אלא לפי שעה אף מצוה
אינה מגינה אלא לפי שעה

ואת התורה באור לומר לך מה אור
מגין לעולם אף תורה מגינה לעולם
ואומר (משלי ו, כב) בהתהלך תנחה
אותך וגוי בהתהלך תנחה אותך זה
העוה"ז בשכבך תשמור עליך זו מיתה
...והקיצות היא תשיחך לעתיד לבא

א"ר יוסף מצוה בעידנא דעסיק בה
מגנא ומצלא בעידנא דלא עסיק בה
אגוני מגנא אצולי לא מצלא תורה בין
בעידנא דעסיק בה ובין בעידנא דלא
עסיק בה מגנא ומצלא

Later on in the Gemara, Rabba disagrees and claims that Torah only protects us while we are learning, but not afterwards, citing Achitofel and Doeg from the Tanach, who were both learned, but also wicked. If that would be the case, in addition to learning Torah, we must be vigilant ourselves against the temptations of the Yetzer Hara which cause us to sin. To learn more about resisting the temptations of the Yetzer Hara, included is a board game which will help us practice resisting our temptations.



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ACTIVITY

Bnei Akiva's Yetzer Hara Board Game

What you'll need:

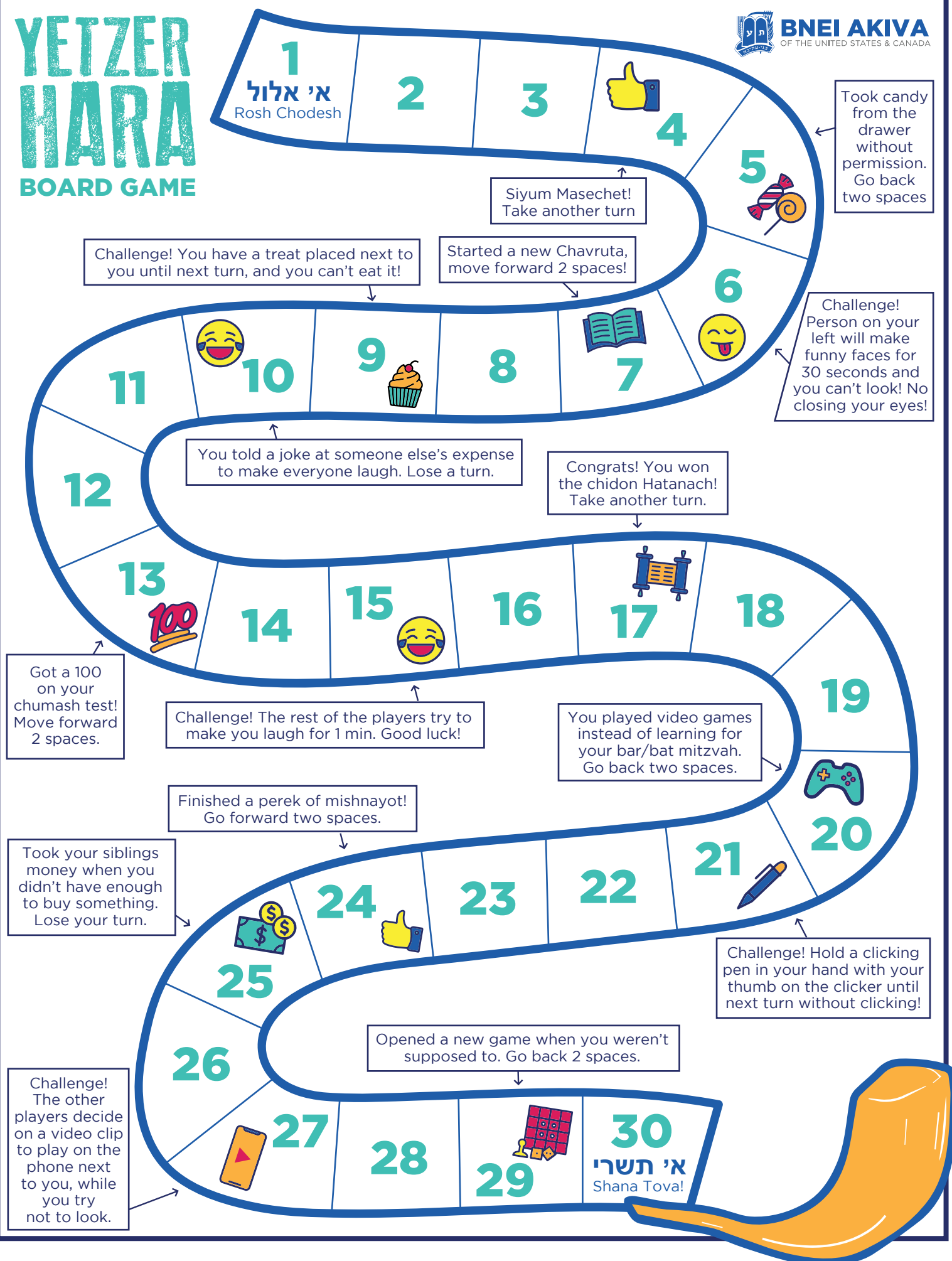
- A printer
- Game pieces from any other game according to the number of players
- A regular 6-sided die
- A timer (watch will suffice)
- A phone
- A snack your family will find irresistible
- A clicking pen

Instructions:

- Youngest player goes first **or** you can decide on a different way of figuring that out
- Each player takes a turn to roll the die and follows the instructions on the board
- If you land on a challenge: successfully complete the challenge, move forward 3 spaces. If you fail, move back 3 spaces.
- First to get to Rosh Hashana wins!



YETZER HARA BOARD GAME



WEEK 2: צדקה

LIMMUD

אסתר ט': כ"ב

כַּיּוֹמִים אֲשֶׁר-נָחַו בָּהֶם הַיְּהוּדִים מֵאוֹיְבֵיהֶם וְהַחֲדָשׁ אֲשֶׁר נִהְפָּךְ לָהֶם מִיָּגוֹן לְשִׂמְחָה וּמֵאֲבֵל לְיוֹם טוֹב לַעֲשׂוֹת אוֹתָם יְמֵי מִשְׁתֵּה וְשִׂמְחָה וּמִשְׁלֹחַ מְנוֹת אִישׁ לְרֵעֵהוּ וּמִתְנוּת לְאֲבִיּוֹנִים:

The same days on which the Jews enjoyed relief from their foes and the same month which had been transformed for them from one of grief and mourning to one of festive joy. They were to observe them as days of feasting and joy, and as an occasion for sending gifts to one another and presents to the poor.

ACTIVITY: Solve the puzzles and learn about Tzedaka to escape the room!

Tzedaka Escape Room

Tzedaka is another one of those keywords that comes to mind right after mentioning the word Judaism. As such an integral part of our religious practice and our community, we see the practice of Tzedaka everywhere we go. Derived from the word meaning “righteousness” the Rambam describes the practice as giving everyone their due kindness, giving to whoever is in need. This giving can take place in many forms, and Baruch Hashem, for better and for worse, we have a lot of opportunities to give (but that also means unfortunately there are a lot of people who are also needy.)

How much to give? Where to give it? How should we give it? We'll learn all of that through this Tzedaka escape room...

Prep time: Approx. 10-15 minutes

Activity time: 30-45 min

What you'll need:

- tape
- post its
- pens
- scissors
- printer
- Tzedaka box/Tzedaka-themed prize



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ROOM 1

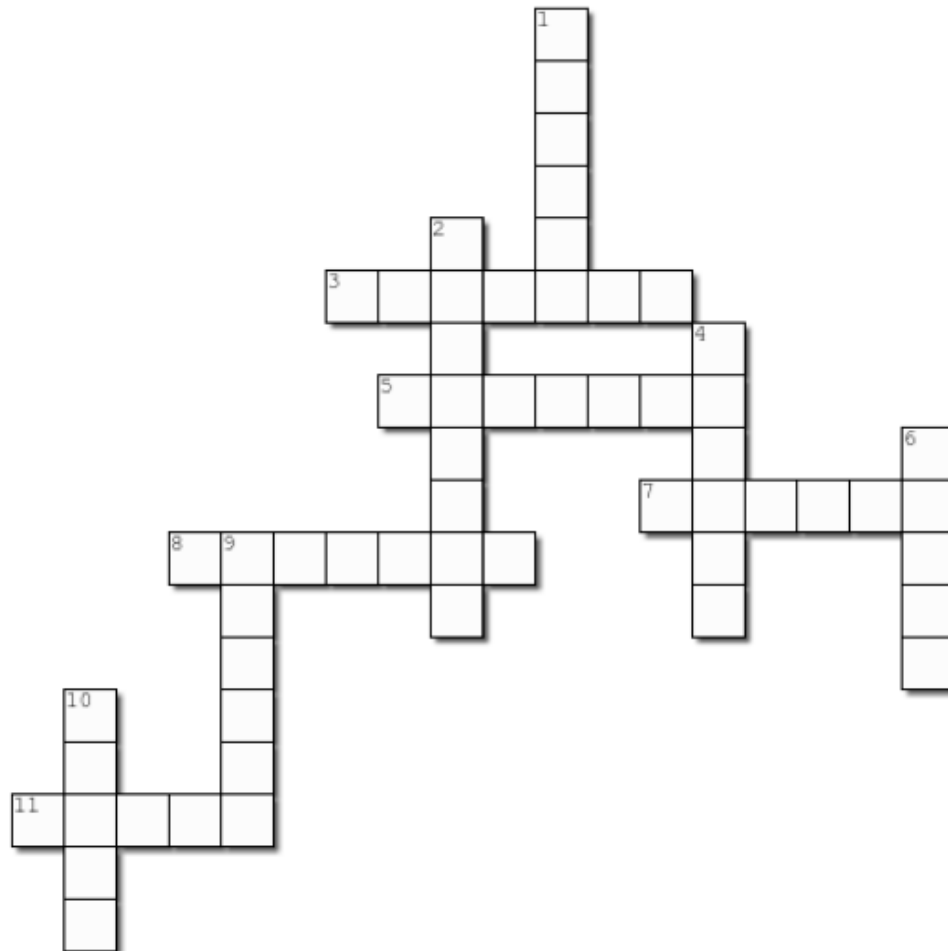
Facilitator instructions room 1:

- Start the kids off with the prompt and the crossword.
- All other papers spread around the room or table. They should be easy to find without too much difficulty.
- After they solve the crossword puzzle, they should look for what it correlates to. When they find the check they will need to fill in the missing amount.
- The check says ma'aser kesafim inc - meaning that is the next clue. Calculate 1/10th of the amount of the check and find where that corresponds to.
- That should bring them to the monthly expense sheet. The number 1,400 appears there with the directions, "under the chair." Tape the "Go to ____ room" clue underneath the chair.
- The other bills are just there to add confusion. If you want to add some of your own bills, also great.

Room 1: Clue A

Among the many halachot of Tzedaka, a big part of the mitzvah is Ma'aser Ksafim - giving maaser (lit. 1/10) of our money to tzedaka. Let's try to figure out how much we need to give in order to get to the next room!

Complete the crossword puzzle below



Created using the Crossword Maker on TheTeachersCorner.net

Across

- 3. giving to those who need
- 5. Our transfer between the weekly and mundane to the Kodesh
- 7. Eternal homeland
- 8. Holidays in which we were commanded to ascend to Beit Hamikdash
- 11. Our gift from Hashem, which we learn day and night

Down

- 1. Recognizing your sin and vowing to never do it again
- 2. One of our 'signs' which we strap on each morning
- 4. Giving or helping someone who a) you are not required to and/or b) who you are required to but more than you are required
- 6. Moving from Chutz La'aretz to Israel
- 9. Belief that all will be good in the end
- 10. A different term for tefillah, meaning worship

Room 1: Clue B

☐ ☐ Ma'aser Kesafim Inc. 1025

DATE א' אלול התש"פ

PAY TO THE ORDER OF Israel Israeli \$???

Regalim + Aliya Thousand DOLLARS

MEMO Paycheck Av

100000000000 1025

Room 1: Clue C

Monthly expenses		
mortgage		3000
in the closet		740
under the rug		650
inside the cup		2,600
under the chair		1,400
hanging from the door		1,240
on the ceiling		375
behind the books		985
in the toy box		745
next to the electric socket		1,350

Room 1: Clue D



City of Ann Arbor Water Utilities
PO Box 8647 301 E. Huron St.,
Ann Arbor, MI 48107-8647 (734) 794-6333

Document No. 2641768

Service Address	Service Class	Account Number	District	Billing Period		
100 SMITH ST	RES	528804-139542	99	3/1/2017 - 5/31/2017		
Meter ID	Meter Reading Date	Read Type	Current Read	Previous Read	Multiplier	Consumption
01843638-0.62	5/31/2017	Manual AMR	66	20	N/A	46

Important Information:

Please be advised that our rates have increased as of 7/1/2016. You can view the rates and pay your water bill online at www.a2gov.org.

Previous Balance	\$161.72
Payment Received 03/24/2017 - Thank You	(\$145.54) CR
Discount Received	(\$16.18) CR
WATER 7.00 ccf x @\$1.51000/ccf	\$10.57
WATER 21.00 ccf x @\$3.25000/ccf	\$68.25
WATER 17.00 ccf x @\$5.62000/ccf	\$95.54
WATER 1.00 ccf x @\$5.62000/ccf	\$5.62
Water 0.62 Domestic Customer Charge	\$11.25
SEWER 46.00 ccf x @\$4.32000/ccf	\$198.72
Sewer 0.62 Domestic Customer Charge	\$11.25
STORMWATER DISCHARGE 0.07 acres x @\$425.00/acre	\$29.75
Stormwater Domestic Customer Charge	\$6.77
Total Amount Due By 7/11/2017	\$437.72
Discounted Amount Due if Paid by 07/01/2017	\$393.95

Please return this portion with your payment

Checks payable to: City of Ann Arbor Water Utilities

Please include your 12-digit account number on your check

Service Address: 100 SMITH ST Document No. 2641768
 Account Number: 528804-139542 District: 99

Amount Due if Paid By: 7/1/2017 \$393.95
 Amount Due if Paid After: 7/1/2017 \$437.72
 Ann Arbor Assistance Fund Donation _____

Payment Enclosed _____

JOHN SMITH
 100 SMITH ST
 ANN ARBOR, MI 48103

Remit To: DEPT. #77610
 CITY OF ANN ARBOR TREASURER
 PO BOX 77000
 DETROIT, MI 48277-0610

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BNEI AKIVA
 OF THE US & CANADA

Chodesh Elul
with Bnei Akiva

חשבון דו חודשי



חשבונית מס קבלה - מקור 2013-300380835
עמוד 1/2

עוסק מורשה לעניין מע"מ מס' 520000472
מחוז דרום - רעננה, רח' ירושלים 36

מספר חוזה: 4995882

לשירותך, 24 שעות ביממה:
אתר האינטרנט של החברה
www.iec.co.il
בו ניתן לשלם את החשבון, למסור
מצב מונה ולקבל מידע בנושאים
שונים.

חשבון לתקופה - 65 ימים
מ- 23/01/2013 עד 20/11/2012

תאריך עריכת החשבון
27/01/2013

לכבוד:
22501
1160
462 68

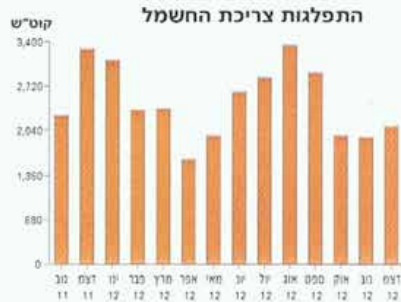
שירות 103
לדיווח על תקלות, לקבלת שירותים
בנושאי חשבונות וצרכנות:
טלפון 103, סלקום 103
פלאפון 103, Orange 103
פקס 1800-103

השיחות מטלפון קווי של בוק
או הוט הן ללא תשלום.

יש לשלם חשבון זה עד
ל- 10/02/2013
(גם אם התשלום מבוצע
בכרטיס אשראי)

אי תשלום במועד יגרוור חיוב
בהוצאות טיפול ובריבית פיגורים

ריכוז החשבון	
2,244.14	חיוב בגין צריכה - סה"כ 4415 קוט"ש
28.78	תשלום קבוע
386.40	הסכומים החייבים ב- 17.00% מע"מ 2272.92 ש"ח
	מע"מ בשיעור 17.00%
2,659.32	סה"כ לתשלום (ש"ח)



הודעות
■ ניתן לשלם חשבון עד 10,000 ש"ח בכרטיס אשראי במענה קולי
ממוחשב, באמצעות חיוב לשירות 103, או באתר האינטרנט.

חברת החשמל לישראל בע"מ

לקוח/ה נכבד/ה,
לחסכון בכסף, זמן וטרח, כדאי להצטרף לתשלום באמצעות הוראת קבע בבנק

שובר / הודעת זיכוי 2013-300380835

חשבון לתקופה
מ- 23/01/2013 עד 20/11/2012

מספר חוזה:
4995882

חברת החשמל
שם הצרכן:
נור דוד
סימול המוטב
5-30504-9

המסמך משמש קבלה רק לאחר הטבעת
חותמת הקופה ו/או חתימת הפקיד

2,659.32

הסכום לתשלום בש"ח



4 7 5088 888 22730713306 03808359 0000265932



Room 1: Clue E

Go to the _____ Room!



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ROOM 2

Facilitator instructions room 2:

- Place the intro letter on the door of the room you indicated for the end of room 1
- Place the different pictures of batei kneset, yeshivot/midrashot, and tzedaka organizations (separately) on tables, beds, or any other surface, spread out (make sure to include the letter/number that appears *below* the picture. The letter-number combination will decode the code in the prompt. The organization logo will lead to the next clue.
- Put the different shapes (separately) on the wall either printing and using tape, or drawing them on post-its
- Write the name of a different location for each shape on the back. On the one with the heart, write the name of the location of the next room.

(On the door)

Room 2: Clue A

Now that we know how much money we need to give to tzedaka, let's figure out where to give it!

Tzedaka should primarily be given to those in dire need, but it's also important to give to yeshivot, Batei Knesset, and other organizations that fulfill mitzvah requirements, like providing medical supplies (Yad Sarah) or helping the blind/deaf (Avukat Or) or supporting Jewish and religious zionist education (Bnei Akiva). The fulfillment of the mitzvah at its highest level is teaching someone in need a skill or craft with which they will be able to earn a salary OR to give someone a job. There are also organizations which provide guidance on how to manage their money (Paamonim), so that they can arise from poverty or prevent themselves from becoming needy. Let's see where we're going to give to!

7263193534

Room 2: Clue B



A2



1L



9i



ישיבת ההסדר מעלות יעקב הרצוג
HESDER YESHIVA | MA'ALOT YA'AKOV

3e



4r

ישיבה גבוהה/הסדר
שדרות
הגולה פורמת קדרוס



5z



7y



d6



8J



11G

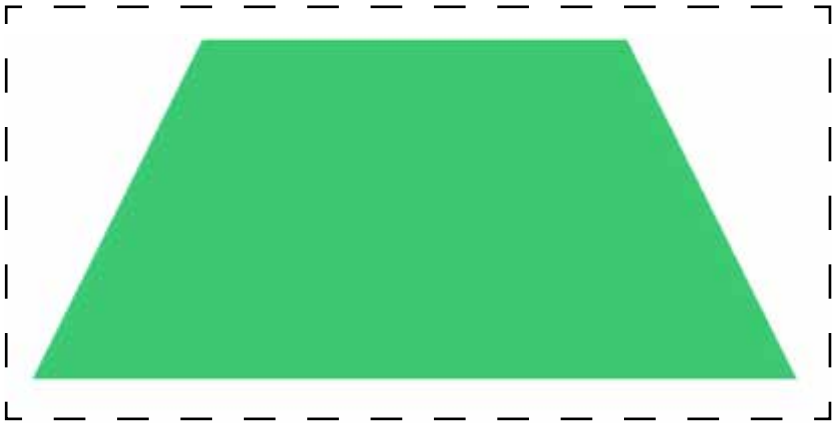
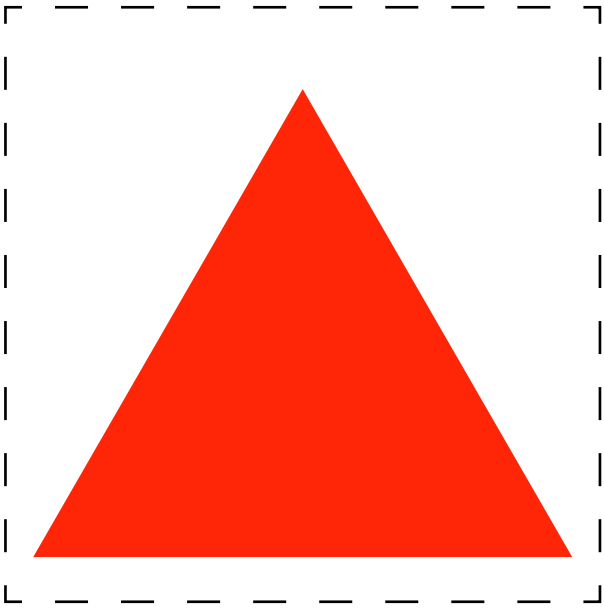
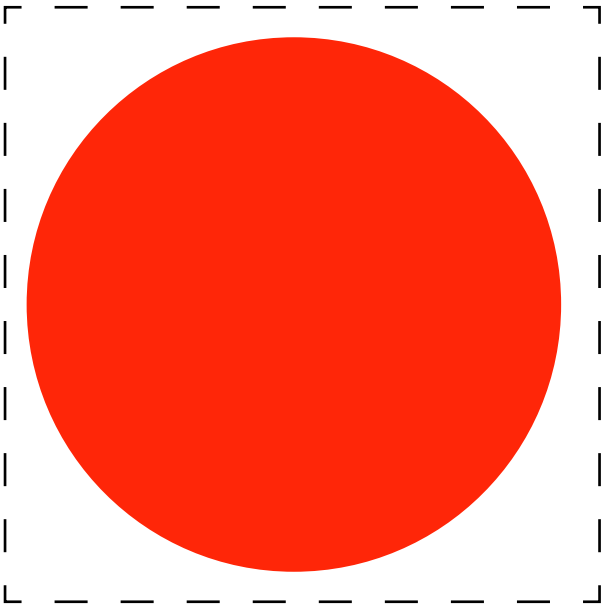
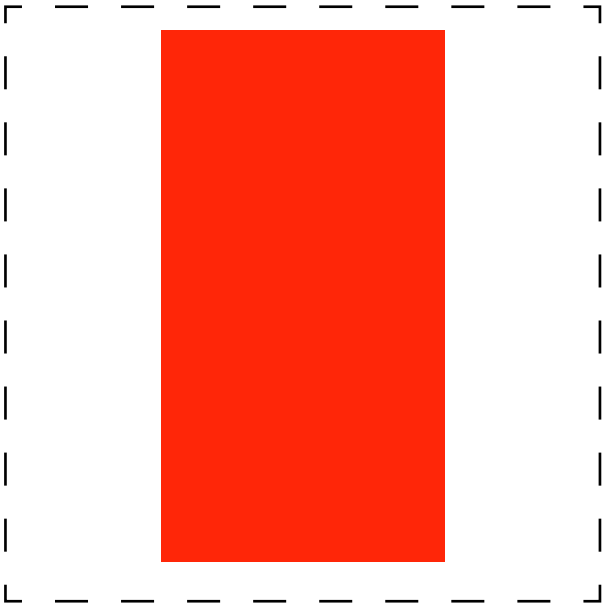
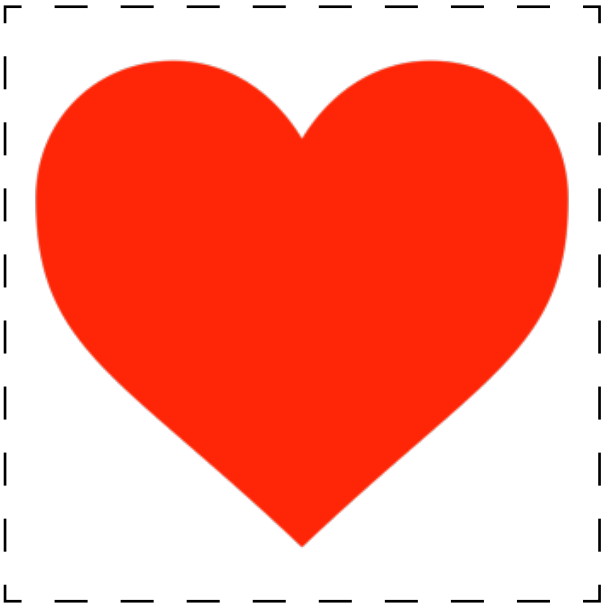


OM



Chodesh Elul
with Bnei Akiva

Room 2: Clue C



ROOM 3

Facilitator instructions room 3:

- Place the opening prompt for this room on the door of the designated room along with the story of Yossele the miser.
- All other pages should be spread around the room. The Kibbutz assignment list should be taped to the back of the door.
- The story has several words in bold and underlined. Unscramble those words and you get the phrase “better late than never.”
- Find out who is late by looking at the schedule and the cell phone correspondence.
- Find the letter to David to read about the anonymous giver.
- Find the letter to Phillip to correlate with that letter, and figure out, using the guess who board, who is the common neighbor.
- Roberts name appears on the kibbutz assignment list (included), directing the participants to the laundry room. In a drawer/cabinet/machine put a tzedaka box, a build-your-own tzedaka box, or any other project related to giving tzedaka as the prize.

Prompt:

There are many ways to give tzedaka. One can give money, food items, services, supplies, etc. One can also give through bank transfer, through a shaliach, or even in person. But the highest level of giving is called Matan B'Seter - literally translated as "giving in secret". The idea behind this concept is to give without the receiver knowing, as to not embarrass him on one hand, and on the giver side, to express the importance of giving without receiving any credit. Giving only for the sake of mitzvah. In this room we are going to have to solve the mystery and find out who was the secret tzedaka giver, and figure out where to go next!

Story:

Yossele, was known to be the richest man in Krakow, but he was considered a stingy, mean miser. He shared his wealth with no one, **never** gave to anyone - ever. Everyone in the village where he lived knew how much he had and how he hoarded it, and everyone judged him for not doing something to help the suffering and needy. But he never made public donations...

They thought he was hard-hearted, and they hated him for it. They talked about him and his stinginess and prayed that God, blessed be the Name, would remember his meanness. The children feared him and threw stones at him when he walked in the street. Yossele, like everyone else, eventually got old and sick. The word spread that he was finally nearing the end. Before he died the community burial society went to him and asked for a gift of a thousand rubles for the poor. He turned his head to the wall, refusing even to speak with them. So they left him and he died alone.

When the miser died, the townspeople who long despised him refused to bury his body for several days. Out of scorn, they eventually buried him in the back of the cemetery, in an area reserved for paupers and social outcasts, rather **than** giving him a plot amongst the wealthy. This would be more fitting, they thought, for a man who had not recognized the poor while he lived.

Within a week of the misers death disturbing changes began to surface. Just before the Sabbath, the community leaders started approaching the rabbi for money to be given to poor women and children and old people. He asked them, "What did you do before? Why are you only asking me now? You never did previously." The rabbi began making inquiries. To his horror he found that every week before the Sabbath, someone had been secretly giving to the poor very **late** at night, so that they did not have to beg. But now that has stopped. It wasn't too long until they realized it was Yossele.

The rabbi gathered the whole community at his grave and decreed that they would fast and do tshuva for what they had done to Yossele while he was alive, for how they had dishonored him in death and how it would have been **better** to judge him more favorably. Ultimately, they had the word "Tzaddik" inscribed on his tombstone, next to his given nickname, "Yossele the miser". The rabbi, HaravYom Tov Lipmann Heller asked to be buried next to him, in the back of the Remuh Cemetary in Krakow



Alex



Anita



Peter



Eric



Charles



Sam



Joe



Maria



Phillip



Richard



Susan



Max



Alfred



Robert



Frans



Claire



Paul



Bill



David



Bernard



George



Tom



Herman



Anne





Schedule 8/17/2020

9:00	Board meeting in the conference room
10:00	Research and Development team meeting
10:30	Conference call with Singapore branch
11:15	Break
11:30	Respond to emails
12:15	Meeting with David
12:45	Lunch
1:15	Mincha
1:30	Employee one-on-ones
2:30	Respond to emails
3:00	Reviews orders for the week
3:45	Interviews
4:30	Daily wrap-up routine



Dear David,

I am looking to donate some money to a tzedaka organization next month. I recall that you have mentioned a few that you often donate to... Yad Eliezer was one... I think Paamonim was another. If you don't mind sending me a list, I would greatly appreciate it. Also, if you could advise me, if you know, if they will honor my request for it to be anonymous. Or if perhaps you wouldn't mind passing along a check. I am not seeking any acknowledgment for my contributions.

Thanks,

Your neighbor



Chodesh Elul
with Bnei Akiva

RANDOM INCORPORATED

Shalom Phil,

I understand that you have connections with Avukat Or in Jerusalem. I will be travelling to Israel soon and I would like to drop off a donation. Would you be able to forward me their address and let me know if they have a mail box drop off that I would be able to put an envelope in. I know you offered once to introduce me to someone there, but I would rather just give the money without meeting anyone.

Looking forward to your response,

Your neighbor

Kibbutz Assignments 9/1/20	
David	Kitchen
Robert	Laundry
Richard	Cows
Anne	Kitchen
Howard	Chickens
Joe	Landscape
Sam	Guestrooms
Susan	Packing plant
Anita	Kitchen
Alex	Garage
Tom	Storage

תפילה WEEK 3:

DAF LIMMUD

שיר השירים ו:ג
אֲנִי לְדוּדִי וְדוּדִי לִי הִרְעָה בְּשׂוֹשָׁנִים:

I am my beloved's And my beloved is mine; He browses among the lilies

Without a doubt, Tefilah plays a major role in Judaism. Whether it's pleading to Hashem for mercy and forgiveness in selichot or praising Hashem's glory and crowning him as king for Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, Tefilla is one of the keys to our atonement. As it says in the tefillah of Unetaneh Tokef:

“ותשובה תפילה וצדקה מעבירים את רוע הגזרה”

“But repentance, and prayer, and charity remove the evil decree!”

Tefillah is powerful in and of itself, but there is an additive that makes it unstoppable: tears. Let's learn about the power of tears in the following Gemara:

ברכות ל"ב:ב'

On the subject of prayer, Rabbi Elazar also said: Since the day the Temple was destroyed the gates of prayer were locked and prayer is not accepted as it once was, as it is said in lamentation of the Temple's destruction: “Though I plead and call out, He shuts out my prayer” (Lamentations 3:8). Yet, despite the fact that the gates of prayer were locked with the destruction of the Temple, the gates of tears were not locked, and one who cries before God may rest assured that his prayers will be answered, as it is stated: “Hear my prayer, Lord, and give ear to my pleading, keep not silence at my tears” (Psalms 39:13). Since this prayer is a request that God should pay heed to the tears of one who is praying, he is certain that at least the gates of tears are not locked.

וְאָמַר רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר: מִיּוֹם
שֶׁחָרַב בֵּית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ
נִנְעְלוּ שַׁעְרֵי תְפִלָּה,
שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: “גַּם כִּי אֶזְעַק
וְאֶשׂוּעַ שְׁתֵּם תְּפִלָּתִי.”
וְאִם עַל פִּי שֶׁשַּׁעְרֵי תְפִלָּה
נִנְעְלוּ, שַׁעְרֵי דְמָעָה לֹא
נִנְעְלוּ, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: “שְׁמָעָה
תְּפִלָּתִי ה' וְשִׁוְעִי
הָאֲזִינָה אֶל דְּמָעָתִי אֶל
תַּחֲרֹשׁ.”

Why do you think tears are so powerful?

For those of you who have visited the Tank Museum Yad Lashiryon in Latrun on previous Israel visits, this Gemara was the source of inspiration for Danny Caravan's (architect of the memorial hall there) Tower of Tears. Built out of 12 tons of reinforced steel armor, the tower features shell holes and dents, but also “tears” streaming down the walls, depicted the idea that shells may not be able to tear through the armor, but the tears do, and in the process they change the armor and wear it down (rust).

For those of you who haven't yet visited, put in on next trip's itinerary :)

ACTIVITY

Bnei Akiva's Tefillah Science Experiment

Activity: Salt Water (tears) experiment

What you'll need:

- A couple of large tall glasses (preferably clear)
- Salt
- Eggs (not boiled)
- Sharpies

Fill the glasses with warm water (so it will be easier for the salt to dissolve later).

Have the kids write their tefillot on the eggs (carefully) with sharpies. It would suffice to write individual words like health, Israel, Tshuva, Beit Hamikdash, success, etc. Give them a few minutes to think of what they would like to daven for.

Place the egg in the water. Tell them that we are going to raise our tefillot to Hashem with our “tears.” Add salt to the glasses (with the egg still inside. If the glasses aren’t big enough you can take the egg out and put it back in afterwards.) and stir until all the salt dissolves. The amount of salt depends on the amount of water in the cup, but it should be **a lot** of salt.

Observe how after the salt is dissolved in the water, the Tefilla egg now floats on the top [goes up to Hashem].

Afterwards feel free use your eggs for omelettes for dinner or baking challot or cakes :)

תשובה: WEEK 4:

DAF LIMMUD

דברים ל':

וּמַל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֶת־לִבְּךָ וְאֶת־לִבְּבָב זַרְעֶךָ לְאַהֲבָה אֶת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל־לִבְּךָ וּבְכָל־
נַפְשְׁךָ לְמַעַן חַיֶּיךָ:

Then the LORD your God will open up your heart and the hearts of your offspring to love the LORD your God with all your heart and soul, in order that you may live.

Teshuva is a mechanism for which we return to Hashem with purifying ourselves from sins and correcting our ways. The Rambam describes 3 main stages of teshuva: recognizing the sin, confessing the sin, and committing to never do it again. Teshuva will then be completed when you will be in a situation to recommit the sin and you refrain from doing so. Here is the exact language of the Rambam (Hilchot Tshuva, 2;2):

What is repentance? The sinner shall cease sinning, and remove sin from his thoughts, and wholeheartedly conclude not to revert back to it, even as it is said: "Let the wicked forsake his way"

ומה היא התשובה. הוא שיעזב החוטא חטאיו ויסירו ממחשבתו ויגמר בלבו שלא יעשה עוד שנאמר (ישעיה נה ז) "יעזב רשע דרכו" וגו'

We plan on correcting our ways using advice from the Rambam from a different place - Hilchot Deot (1;3)

The two extremes in each and every tendency is not a good way, and it is not proper for a man to follow them, nor to have himself instructed in them. If one finds his nature leaning toward one of them, or susceptible to one of them, or if he already acquired one of them and followed it, he should turn himself toward goodness by following the path of the good which is the straight path.

שתי קצוות הרחוקות זו מזו שבכל דעה ודעה אינן דרך טובה ואין ראוי לו לאדם ללכת בהן ולא ללמדן לעצמו. ואם מצא טבעו נוטה לאחת מהן או מוכן לאחת מהן או שכבר למד אחת מהן ונהג בה יחזיר עצמו למוטב וילך בדרך הטובים והיא הדרך הישרה

In order to highlight this idea, we created a matching game with challenges, for you to match a sin with a challenge to "correct your ways" by doing the exact opposite of the sin that was committed. Hopefully we'll be able to improve our behaviors, and have fun at the same time. Behatzlacha!

Bnei Akiva's Teshuva Matching Challenge

Matching challenge:

- Set up the 12 matches (24 cards in total) randomly, and play like a standard memory game.
- Each pair consists of one sin and one tikkun - something to fix what the sin was that was committed. Each one of the pair will have an identical background having to do with Rosh Hashana/Yom Kippur. [please standardize the size per card]
- Once the match is made, they have to perform the challenge. If they are not able to complete the challenges, they will lose the match, and they have to put the cards back and mix them up.

What you'll need:

- A printer
- Thick or colored paper (a relatively light cardstock should be fine). The idea is that they shouldn't be able to see the pictures from the other side. Another trick could be putting mailing labels on the back.



LASHON HARA

Say 5 nice things about someone in the room



TELLING A LIE

Confess about something you did that your parents don't know about (yet)



BASELESS HATRED

Call up someone you're not as friendly with and see how s/he's doing



BEING ARROGANT

Find something to put on your head and hop around the table quacking like a duck



LAUGHING AT SOMEONE ELSE

Tell a funny story about yourself



EMBARRASSING SOMEONE

Talk about the good qualities of your brother/sister (or friend)





TALKING DURING DAVENING



**Don't say a single word for
the next 3 minutes**



NOT LEARNING TORAH IN YOUR SPARE TIME



**Say a quick Dvar Torah
on anything**



FORGETTING A BRACHA



**Go on a pantry raid for foods
with different brachot and say
all of them in correct order**



WASTING FOOD/ THROWING AWAY GOOD FOOD



**Eat an entire apple (or pear),
including the core (but not
the stem)**



DISRESPECTING OTHERS



**Take everyone's drink order and
go prepare them in the kitchen
(and serve them)**



NOT RESPECTING OUR PARENTS/RABBIS/ TEACHERS



**Everyone else in the circle has to
tell you to do something, and
you must do it (within reason)**

