

Purpose of the Book

It was the first Saturday night after Sukkot in 2018. My son, five years old at the time, and I attended our first Parent-Child Learning event at the local Kollel. We opted to grab a children's parsha book, hoping to find some interesting new topics to explore. However, he had already learned the parsha in school, and again over Shabbos, so the book did not hold his interest long. While searching for another option, I realized there wasn't a similar option that would allow me to expand his learning to Navi.

Yet the drive to expand our children's knowledge base was there and ever present. One Shabbos lunch, our children asked about the significance of a statue we have on the bookshelf. The statue depicts Shimshon pulling down the pillars in his infamous last miracle. We proceeded to tell our children the story of Shimshon. They were captivated. The uniqueness of a Jewish story that extends beyond the weekly parsha was a novel and fascinating concept for them.

In the many synagogues I have visited, I have observed a myriad of children's books on the shul bookshelves. Typically, the selection includes parsha books, Hilchos Shabbos books, and story books. However, stories of the Neviim (prophets) are quite rare. The purpose of this book, therefore, is to enable children to access the stories of Navi in the same way they can access the stories of Torah.

This book was written during the Covid-19 pandemic, which had the unexpected consequence of turning parents into teachers. Mothers and fathers across the globe were suddenly educating their children and looking for suitable material to supplement their remote instruction. Yet, even prior to Covid-19, Parent-Child Learning programs have become common. Not only do these programs increase the Torah study in our lives, but they strengthen the relationships between parent and child. It is our hope that this book serves as an additional tool to foster children's love and excitement for Torah, as well as enhance their familiarity with characters and stories that they may not have been exposed to. Special instructions and discussion questions are included throughout the book to help parents entertain, challenge, and teach their children the stories and the lessons of the Navi.

How to Use This Book

The text of the story is written with both content and entertainment in mind, as rhyming stories are both fun to listen to and easy to remember. In addition, this book was written to provide the reader the flexibility to learn and teach the stories of the Navi in multiple ways.

Section Summary: Each section begins with a few short bullet points summarizing the content. This is included to help the leader of the group familiarize him or herself with the content of the upcoming section, as well as to provide context for the pictures in the chapter, for pre-readers or those that won't be reading the actual text as they go through the book. Every group is encouraged to add details and commentaries to cater to the group's needs. *Kol ha-marbeh harei zeh meshubach*. The more one tells, the more praiseworthy it is.

Framing Questions: Following the summary, framing questions were added to help introduce the section. These questions serve both to help the children gain the proper perspective to best understand the context of the story, and to involve the child early and open a discussion style of learning. Group leaders are encouraged to adapt the framing question to the level of understanding of the child. Additionally, group leaders are encouraged to explore the comments of the children, as the discussion may help evoke feelings and ideas that will be linked throughout the chapter's discussion and will strengthen their connection to the learning process.

Footnotes: At various points throughout the text, I have included questions and commentaries that I felt would enhance the material. Some points highlight interesting ideas, while others raise challenging questions. I have included them to provide your learning session with more depth, as the overall text focuses primarily on the basic storyline.

Discussion Questions: While the book is mostly based on *pshat* (literal translation of the stories), a question was added to each section to elicit a deeper understanding of the chapter. This question will both test the reader's comprehension of the chapter as well as challenge the reader to think about the story in a new light. The discussion question provides multiple approaches by various commentaries to answer the question. However, the purpose of the question is to encourage discussion and to foster the joy of pondering and deliberating over Torah ideas. Please reference the answers provided, and encourage the group to come up with more!

Framing the Discussion: After each discussion question, one of the approaches mentioned will link back to the original discussion from the framing question in the beginning of the chapter. This approach will help tie together the entire learning session.

Acknowledgments

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They say it takes a village to raise children, and apparently it also takes a village to write a book. Thank you to our amazing neighbors, Dr. Allen and Sheila Beich, and Shayna and Morgan Howard, for their invaluable insight and contribution towards this publication. May it also be in memory of their parents Yitzchak ben Shmuel, Sarah bas Yaakov, Beryl ben Hershel and Esther bas Yaakov of blessed memory.

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To all of our educators, thank you for instilling in us a love of Torah and inspiring us to inspire others. To our siblings, Lisa and Zamir, Amy, Katie and Yoni, Mordy and Limor, Nechama and Jon and Elli and Estee, thank you for always being our cheering squad throughout the various projects in our lives. And of course to our children, Natan, Elisheva, Adira and Mimi, we love you and hope to grow together as a family until 120!

Rabbi Nachi and Jennifer Friedman
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About the Authors

Rabbi Nachi and Jennifer Friedman are all about children. Parents to four children of their own, their professional careers are also dedicated to the pediatric population. Jennifer owns a pediatric therapy clinic. She has a Masters in Occupational Therapy from Columbia University. Jennifer enjoys combining her professional background with her love of a good rhyme to capture a child's attention and engage the child throughout the story. Rabbi Friedman has smicha yoreh yoreh and has a Masters in Counseling with a specialization in play therapy. While learning is intrinsically fun, Rabbi Friedman strives to add elements of play to the learning as well, to keep the child active and involved throughout the book. We hope you enjoy our stories!

Section 1

Be Strong, Courageous & Ready to Enter the Land! (Perakim 1 and 2)

Section 1 Summary

- Leadership transitions to Yehoshua after the death of Moshe Rabeinu
- G-d speaks to Yehoshua and encourages him to **חזק ואמץ** (be strong and courageous)
- Yehoshua prepares Bnei Yisrael to enter Eretz Yisrael
- Yehoshua sends two spies to Yericho, but they are discovered
- Rachav hides them and helps them escape, and they return to Yehoshua with positive news

Framing Question

Do you remember your first day of school? Describe how you felt that day. Did anything seem overwhelming or scary? If yes, what did you do or tell yourself to help?

- In this chapter, Yehoshua must lead Bnei Yisrael all by himself. It is understandable that he is nervous without Moshe Rabeinu to answer his questions. Try and spot some things that Yehoshua does to help him cope with the transition.



משה קבל תורה מסיני ומסרה ליהושע

Racheli David

Fasten your seatbelts
As we tell you a tale,
We're going back in history
To the conquest of Eretz Yisrael!

The Torah ends with Sefer Devarim
As the last one of the five,
But when we start Nevi'im
A whole new story comes alive.

So let's meet Yehoshua,
Who is Navi number one.
In this brand new sefer
Yehoshua's leadership has begun.

Moshe Kibel Torah Misinai,
Moshe passed the mesorah along.
U'msarah l'Yehoshua,
It was time for Yehoshua to stand strong!



Linking the Text

In Sefer Shemos, Yehoshua leads the nation in a war against Amalek. However, it is clear from the psukim that even though Yehoshua was leading the war, Moshe was instrumental in their victory: "When Moshe raised his hand, the Jews were stronger" (Shemos 17:11). Now, Yehoshua is the sole leader as Bnei Yisrael enters Eretz Yisrael.





Carthili David

But Yehoshua was feeling nervous,
You could see it on his face;
He was just Moshe's student,
Could he really take his place?

Yehoshua turned to Hashem
In his time of need.
"Be strong and courageous," Hashem instructed
And then you will succeed!

"Chazak v'amatz" Hashem told Yehoshua,
Not only one time, but three.
Whether leading, learning, or going to war.
Just be strong and believe in me.

After this little pep talk,
Yehoshua's self-confidence grew.
"We will enter Eretz Yisrael" he declared,
"When the next three days are through."

Interesting Translation

Aderes Eliyahu 1:7 translates "chazak" as physical strength and "amatz" as spiritual strength.

Kehilas Yaakov 1:8 writes that Moshe had fought the battles in the spiritual realm, while Yehoshua fought them in the physical realm. Hashem is telling him that now that Moshe is gone, Yehoshua now must address both aspects of battle.

Points to Ponder

"Chazak v'amatz" is said 3 times corresponding to
1) Leadership, 2) Torah, 3) Going to war. Why isn't it either first, since Torah is very important, or not on the list at all, since it seemingly doesn't have to do with war?



To Reuven, Gad and half of Menashe,
The tribes who lived outside the land,
“You are also expected to fight for Hashem,” he said,
“I want to make sure you understand.”

With Moshe’s examples from the past
Laid out before his eyes,
Yehoshua followed right behind him,
And sent out two brave spies.

Kalev and Pinchas were sent to Yericho,
Dressed as merchants selling supplies.
They walked through Yericho’s big strong walls,
But were spotted, despite their disguise.

Just when things were looking scary,
An innkeeper kept them secure.
Rachav hid them on her roof all covered in flax,
And claimed she didn’t know where they were.

Points to Ponder

How were the spies discovered so quickly?

Radak 2:1 states that Yehoshua’s advice to disguise themselves was only to keep the spy mission secret from Bnei Yisrael, not Yericho. Rav Michael Hattin explains that the spies were actually discovered intentionally—this served to further scare Yericho, as their city had been successfully infiltrated.

Did you notice?

Rashi 2:4 quotes the medrash Tanchuma that Rachav only had to hide Kalev. Pinchas turned invisible, and the King’s men could not find him.

- If Pinchas had this capability, why didn’t he complete the whole mission in this state?
- **Sefer Etz Yosef** comments that it is not proper to rely completely on a miracle, so he only did so when necessary.