

Grade

Asara

ERETZ YISRAEL THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

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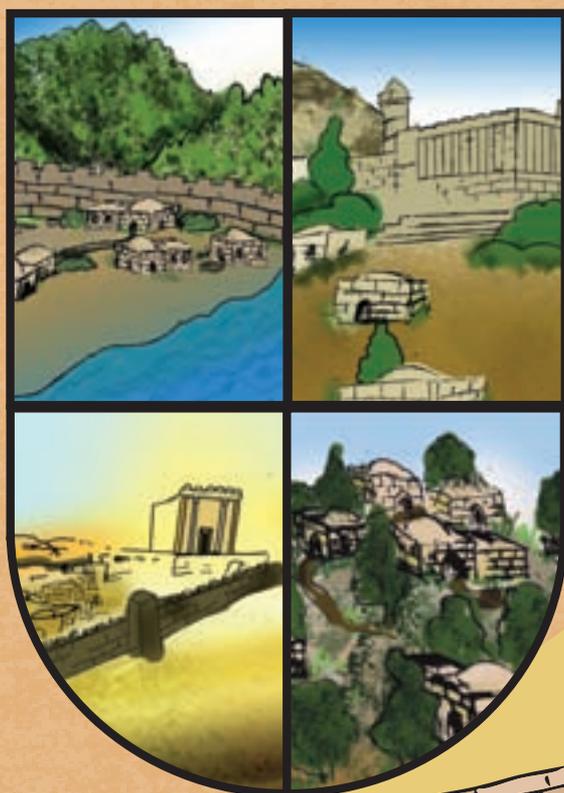


BeTevet



# The Four Holy Cities

ELLIE GELLMAN





THIS PROJECT WAS MADE POSSIBLE  
THROUGH THE VISION AND GENEROSITY OF  
**EVELYN AND DR. SHMUEL KATZ** OF BAL HARBOUR, FLORIDA  
AND REFLECTS THEIR GREAT LOVE AND COMMITMENT  
TO JEWISH EDUCATION AND THE STATE OF ISRAEL  
AND WAS LOVINGLY DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF  
JACOB DOV KATZ Z”L  
AND SARAH ROHR A”H



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# THE FOUR HOLY CITIES

GRADE 2

ELLIE GELLMAN



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# The Four Holy Cities

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This booklet is filled with lots of interesting information. If you only have time to study certain sections in class, we invite you to look at the others in your free time.



# INTRODUCTION

**Dear Student,**

Israel is often called the Holy Land. It also has four special cities that are considered to be holy cities.

In these lessons we will learn about the four holy cities and why they are considered to be more holy than the rest of Israel's cities. We will also try to understand what holiness means.



# LESSON 1



## THE LEGEND OF THE FOUR CITIES

In this lesson we will discover the four holy cities and begin to find out why they are holy.

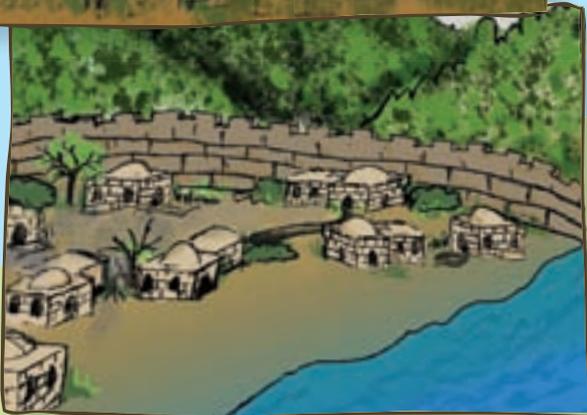
Your teacher or an older student will read the following story:

Long ago, in Eretz Yisrael, there were mountains.

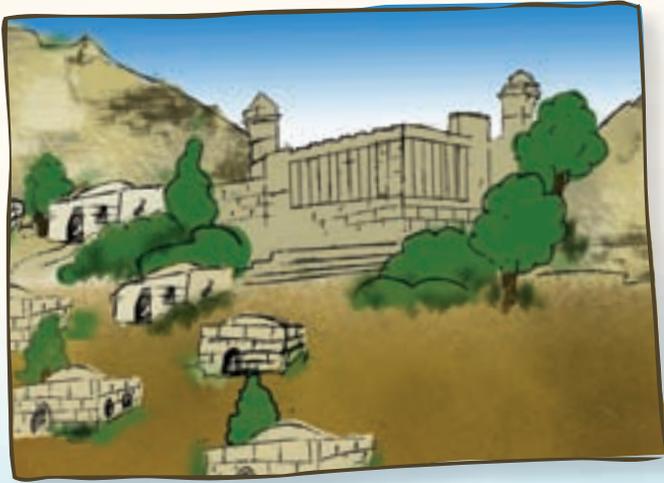
Way up north, the mountains were wide and green, with tiny streams and hidden springs running through them in

the winter. A city was built beside the green trees at the top of the mountain. It was called **Tzfat**.

Not too far away there was a beautiful lake. It was surrounded by rounded mountains with thick forests. Another city was built right at the foot of those mountains, near the lake. It had a strong wall around it and was called **Tiveria**.



Further down south, there were delicious red grapes growing on the side of sharp mountains. There were many caves hidden in these mountains. A third city was built there. It was called **Hevron**.



In the very center of Eretz Yisrael there was one special mountain. It was not too tall and was different from all the others.

On all these mountains people planted olive trees and herded their sheep, built cities, paved roads and built houses.

But on the top of the not so tall mountain was the *Beit Hamikdash*, the Holy Temple. It was in **Jerusalem**, the holiest city in the world.

The *Beit Hamikdash* had tall golden pillars and bronze gates, decorated with the shapes of fruits and vines. Its huge courtyards had marble walls. In the center of the building there was an embroidered curtain woven with lions and eagles in gold and blue.



Shepherds came to Jerusalem for the *chagim*, to thank God for everything He gave them. Farmers came to ask God for a good year. Best of all, families came to Jerusalem, for the *chagim*, to be together.



Jerusalem loved the families who visited. She was happiest when hundreds of children climbed her hills and ran down her paths. She knew that she had special treasures that no other place could match.

But having treasures meant that many nations wanted to take over Jerusalem. One day, a huge army marched across her valleys, stormed up her walls and broke through them. Soldiers knocked down the marble pillars, and burned the fruit carvings on the giant gates. They tore down the blue and gold curtain and burned the whole city. Ashes spread across the hills, blackening them. The soldiers forced the people out of the city, and did not allow them to come back. Jerusalem was alone. She cried.

Tzfat, Hevron and Tiveria all tried to make Jerusalem feel better.

*"Don't worry,"* they said. *"One day you*



*will be rebuilt again."*

*"But what about my children?" cried Jerusalem, "by the time I am rebuilt they will have gone to new places. They will stop looking for my treasures and will forget me."*



The cities thought and thought. They had an idea.

*"You have so many treasures, our friend Jerusalem, no one could ever forget a place like you," they told her. "If your children will only remember your special treasures, they will never forget you."*

*"How can they remember?" asked Jerusalem. "The Temple is destroyed, the hills are burned. They are not coming to visit anymore."*

*"We will remind them," answered the three cities. "We may not have all the treasures that you had, but each of us has one of them. We will invite your children to stay with us, and they will remember how beautiful your treasures were. Then they will want to come back to you."*

*"Prove it to me," said Jerusalem. "Show me the treasures that each of you have. If you can convince me, then I won't be so sad."*



The cities thought about Jerusalem's special treasures. They thought about what each of them had to give. They came up with a plan, and explained it to the crying city.

## Activity 1

### About the Cities

In some ways the four cities in this story are just like all other cities, and in some ways they are special.

Let's think about what is important in YOUR city.

What is the name of your city?

If friends from another city came to your city, where would you take them? What would you show them to make them realize that your city is special?

Have you ever visited another city? Which one?

What did you see in that city that was special? Why?

What do you think you would see if you visited a **holy** city.



*A synagogue*

## Activity 2

1. Think of something in your house that is holy, קדוש.

- What is it called?
- How do you use it?
- What does it look like?
- Who does it belong to?
- What makes it קדוש?

2. Think of a place you know in your neighborhood that is קדוש.

- What is the name of the place?
- What is in it?
- What do you do there?
- What does it look like?
- What makes it קדוש?
- Draw a picture of it.



## The Word קדוש

What does the word קדוש mean?

The Hebrew word קדוש is usually translated as “holy.” But it isn’t so easy to know what “holy” means, even in English. Here are some ways of understanding “holy”:

- Things and places that are holy are special. They are special because they help us think about God, and about what He does in the world.
- Things that are holy are different. They are different from the ordinary things we see and do everyday.
- Things that are holy are respected. We save them for special moments. We don’t use them in a rough or rushed way.
- Things that are holy are like treasures. They are valuable and we take care of them, keep them in special places and we are happy to have them.

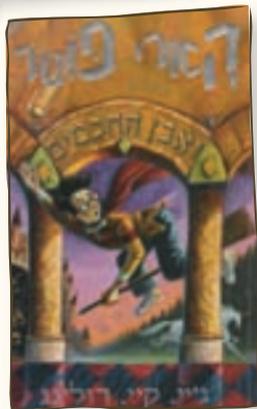
### Activity 3

Look at these pictures. Which ones do you think are קדוש, holy? Which ones are ordinary?



Using the explanations of קדוש above, tell the class why you chose them.

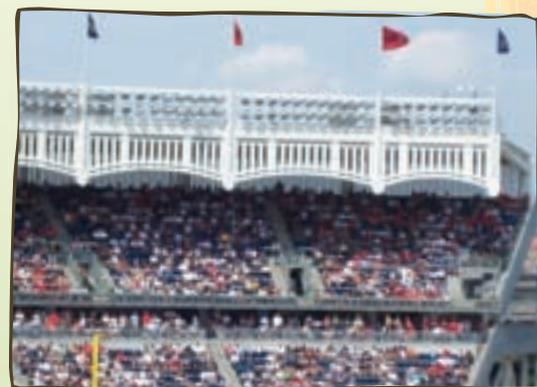




Let's remember what happened in our story.

When the city of Jerusalem was sad, she told her friends that she was worried about her children.

She was worried that Jewish children like you, will live in new places, and find new things to do, and that you will stop looking for the kind of treasures a holy city has. Can you help Jerusalem feel better? Can you convince her that you are interested in her and her treasures?



In the next three lessons you will visit the other three Holy Cities - Tzfat, Tiveria and Hevron. Listen and look for what is special about each city. Maybe you will be able to help the Holy Cities make Jerusalem feel better.

# LESSON 2



## TZFAT

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In the previous lesson, we saw that Jerusalem was Israel's holiest city but that it was destroyed. We also saw that three cities - Tzfat, Tiveria and Hevron - promised to look after Jerusalem's special treasures. That way Jews would always remember its holiness and be ready to return to Jerusalem when it is rebuilt.

In this lesson we will learn about the holy city of Tzfat.

Tzfat (also called Safed), the city that was built on the tall, green mountains, spoke first.



*"My sister, Jerusalem, I remember how beautiful you looked. I imagine how it must have been for children visiting you for the first time. They must have been so excited when they saw your blue and purple wall hangings, when they looked up at the tall wooden pillars with gold*

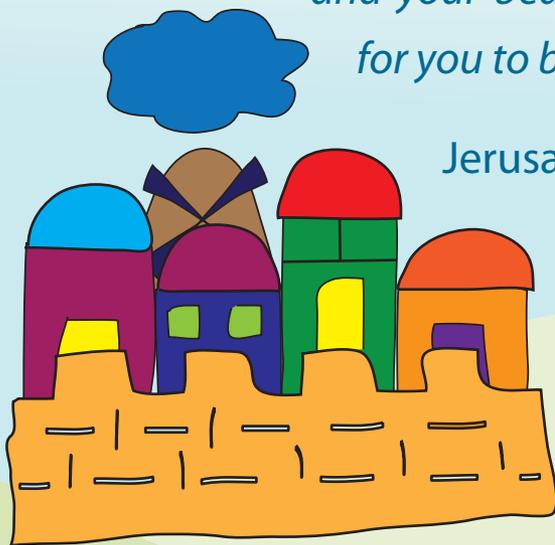


*pomegranates hanging from them. I can imagine how the children felt when they stood next to the huge bronze doors and the white marble floors when the sun reflected on them.*

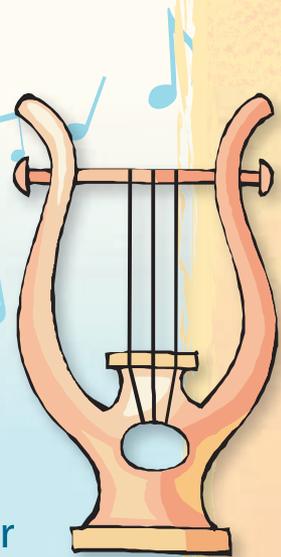
*"The children must have also loved the beautiful music coming from the Beit Hamikdash. They could hear the choir of Leviim singing the words that King David wrote about you.*

*"The children loved you because they love beautiful colors and the sweet sounds of music.*

*"We in Tzfat, have saved the treasure of beautiful color and music. When your children visit me, they will remember you and your beautiful colors and music and will wait for you to be rebuilt."*



Jerusalem thought for a while. Her friends could see a tiny smile appear on her face, as she hummed a tune that the children used to sing as they came towards the city gates:



תהילים קכ"ב:א

שְׂמַחְתִּי בְּאִמְרֵים לִי בֵּית ה' גִּלְךָ

I AM GLAD WHENEVER THEY TELL ME THAT WE ARE  
GOING TO THE HOUSE OF THE LORD

Psalms 122:1

"Does Tzfat have such beauty and can you make such beautiful music?" Jerusalem asked.

"Oh, yes," said Tzfat. "Come and see for yourself."

## Activity 1

### The Beauty of Tzfat

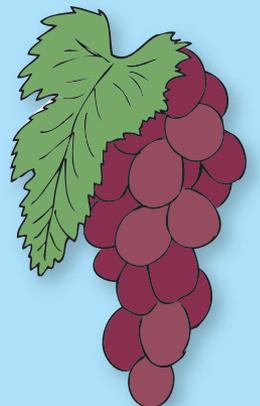
Listen to your teacher read this story.

When the *Beit Hamikdash* was destroyed, families of *Kohanim* escaped to Tzfat.

Naama Bat Yakim first came to Tzfat when there were no houses or streets. The mountaintop was covered with trees, the sides were covered with rocks of every size and the valley with water.



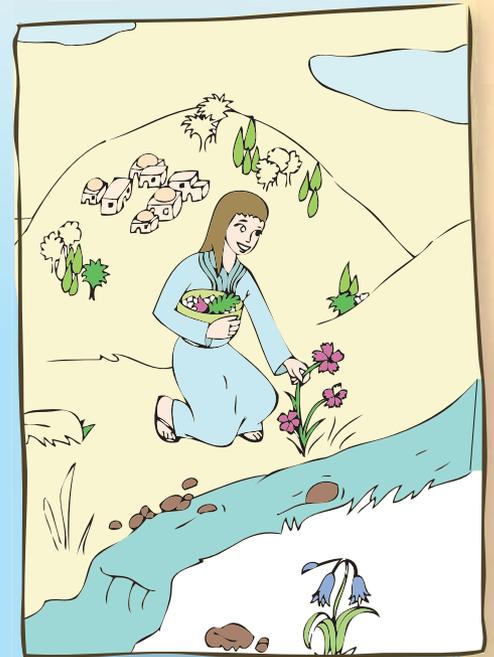
The families were lucky to escape the burning city of Jerusalem. They didn't care if they lived in small huts with mud paths between them. Her parents learned to live without their fancy furniture and without the feasts of roasted meat that they enjoyed when they worked in the Temple. Her father grew grapes for wine on the





chilly side of the hill. Her mother wove cloth from the wool of their sheep. But Naama missed the beautiful colors that the *Kohanim* wore in the *Beit Hamikdash*. She missed the gold and silver that her father saw all around him when he brought the sacrifices. Naama didn't want to work in the vineyards or herd the sheep. Instead she began to wander up and down the mountain searching for something that was as beautiful as what they used to have.

One spring morning, Naama left her tiny hut and began to walk in the fields, filling her basket with flowers. She wandered down the hill to the cold stream, and filled a bucket with bubbling water. On her way back up the hill she collected stones of many different colors, red and orange, brown and green, white and black. As she sat down in front of her house she looked up and noticed how close she was to the heavens. Immediately, she began to mash, grind and pound the stones and the flowers and mixed them with water. She had a tray full of paints with so many different colors. She began to paint





the beautiful view that she saw.

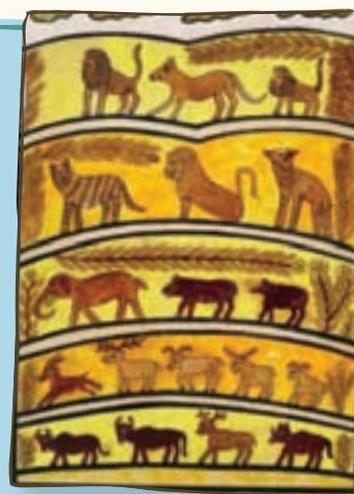
When Naama finished, she realized that right in front of her eyes were beautiful sights and colors just like the treasures she once had in Jerusalem. Suddenly she knew what she wanted to do. Every day, Naama collected colors from nature, every day she painted another scene. One morning she looked across the valley at the tall top of Mount Hermon. She took out a white chalk rock and drew the snow covered mountain she saw in the distance. Another day, she looked towards the bottom of the hills and saw the deep blue water of the Kinneret. Then with a blue-green flower mashed into color paste, she painted the lake. She drew the forests and painted the purple sunsets. Naama was happy again.

Travelers who came to buy wine and cloth from her parents were amazed by the beauty of Tzfat, the hillside city, and when they saw Naama's paintings they realized that they could take that beauty back home with them. The tall beautiful mountain of Tzfat became a new place to capture the beauty of God's creations, much like Jerusalem did.



## Did You Know?

Today, Tzfat is once again home to hundreds of artists who are excited by its beauty and its closeness to the heavens. They design and decorate holy objects so that we can take them home and be reminded that holy things are special treasures. In the many artists' shops you can buy colorful *Mezuzot* and *Menorahs*, decorated *Talitot* and *Kiddush cups*. Here is some of the beauty that artists of Tzfat have created.



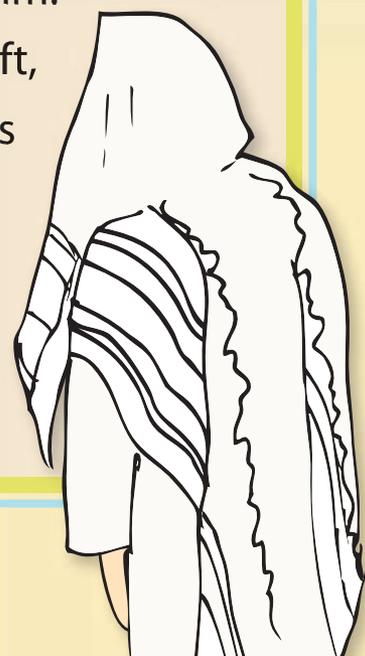
### Activity 2

Imagine that you are Naama. Draw one of the scenes of nature that Naama painted. Hopefully it will remind you of the beauty of Jerusalem.

Jerusalem stopped crying and looked at Tzfat. "Tzfat, my friend. Your beautiful colors remind people of me. It is so wonderful that in your city there are children remembering me!"

Tzfat smiled. "There is even more," she said.

Imagine yourself on a Friday afternoon in Tzfat, in the year 1571. You are standing on the main street of the ancient city. The golden sun is beginning to set on the mountains, and the wind carries with it the pleasant smells of Shabbat. All of a sudden, a door opens and out steps a young man wrapped in a *tallit*. He's wearing all white and his face is shining with a bright, peaceful smile. One by one, all the doors of the city open and very soon a large crowd flowing from Tzfat's many alleyways is following him. You hear the sounds of the people humming a soft, familiar tune. You are curious and you join this parade. You follow him out of the city and into the open fields. Suddenly everyone is silent as the man wearing the *tallit* begins to sing. The sound of his voice carries and grows stronger until you



hear the words "בואי כלה בואי כלה" - "Welcome, my Bride." All his followers stand together with their arms stretched forward ready to receive the Shabbat Queen. They bow and they sing "בואי כלה בואי כלה" - "Welcome, my Bride." You feel the excitement and you join in the singing. The Shabbat has arrived.

The young man was none other than Rabbi Yitschak Luria, the Ari, and this was how the people of Tzfat welcomed the Shabbat each week. Today, the Beit Knesset Ha'Ari – The Ari Shul, stands on the very spot that the Ari and his followers welcomed the Shabbat.



The song that the Ari's students sang was called *Lecha Dodi*. It was written in Tzfat by Rabbi Shlomo HaLevi Alkabetz.

*"Many of its words describe you, the city of Jerusalem" said Tzfat. "In the song, we ask Jerusalem not to be so sad anymore. 'Jerusalem, wake up. Stand up and be proud. Wear your royal clothes because God's light is shining on you again.'"*

*Lecha Dodi* is still sung today in every shul as the Shabbat begins.

### Activity 3

Look at the words of *Lecha Dodi* in your siddur. Take the first letter of the first eight stanzas. What do they spell?

### Finding More Holiness in Tzfat - Kabbalah

This same great rabbi, the Ari, was one of many important rabbis whose hearts were excited by the city of Tzfat. They came to Tzfat to search for God and come closer to Him by discovering the mysteries of the world. They were called mystics-*kabbalists*. They tried to explain why God made things in the world and how people can make the world a better place.



*Rabbi Yoseph Karo's shul in Tzfat. He was another important rabbi and kabbalist. He wrote a book about Jewish laws such as shabbat and brachot.*

The Temple in Jerusalem once helped people come closer to God. Tzfat tries to do the same thing today.

### Beautiful Music in Tzfat

Like the hills, music goes up and down, high and low. Tzfat,

high up on the mountains, has been the perfect place for music, way back then and even today.

The city of Tzfat would like to invite you to a music festival!



♪ **Where:**

In the streets and alleys of Tzfat

♪ **When:**

Every summer after Tisha B'Av

♪ **What:**

Hundreds of musicians will play in concerts, the streets will be full of food carts, art sales, street performers and of course music

♪ **Who:**

Performers from Israel and around the world



My name is Shlomo Mezamer and I play the clarinet. Come with me to the most exciting, fun-filled festival that any city has ever hosted. We can walk together through the narrow streets and up the stone steps. Look, there's a saxophone player playing a happy tune. Let's join him. He's motioning to me to play



with him. OK. The saxophone and the clarinet together. Look at these children coming from the nearby alleyway to watch. Wow. They can really dance. Look at their *payot* fly in the air as they skip to the beat. You can feel the music in the air. It's pulling me in. I just can't stop playing.

This sort of thing is happening in every alley during the Tzfat Klezmer Festival. The word Klezmer comes from the Hebrew words *כלי זמר* - "musical instruments."

Tzfat turned to the City of Jerusalem but did not speak. The songs that rang from her hilltops spoke for her.

Finally Jerusalem said:

*"In the Temple in Jerusalem, hundreds of Leviim sang songs from the Tehillim every day. They played flutes and harps and bells, they sang in harmony and in a chorus. I miss that music so much. Today I heard hundreds of people singing the songs from the Temple, and singing songs that tell how much they want to return to Jerusalem. Tzfat, my sister, you have done a great job protecting my treasures of beauty, art and music. I am feeling much better now."*

### **More About Tzfat**

Long ago Tzfat was a city of mysteries, and that is true even now.

Tzfat was in danger during the War of Independence, 1948. Most of the Jews who lived in the city were older people who had many Arab neighbors. When the war began, there were approximately 200 young Jews living in the city and more than 10,000 Arab soldiers were sent to capture it. The Israeli army could not spare any more soldiers, so the defenders of the city decided to use a strange secret weapon. They had a kind of gun called the Davidka. It was really just a pipe that could be filled with explosive powder. The Davidka didn't shoot very far but it made a lot of noise. When the Jews

in Tzfat began to fight, they shot the Davidka, and a huge BOOM echoed across the city. Just as they fired their noisy gun, the heavens opened in a fierce thunderstorm.

Lightning bolts shot through the entire sky. The city shook with the cracks of thunder. The Arabs thought that the Israelis had an atom bomb. They ran away, leaving the city in Jewish hands.



Who says that mysterious miracles only happened long ago!

In this lesson we learned about Tzfat. In the next lesson we will learn about Hevron.

# LESSON 3

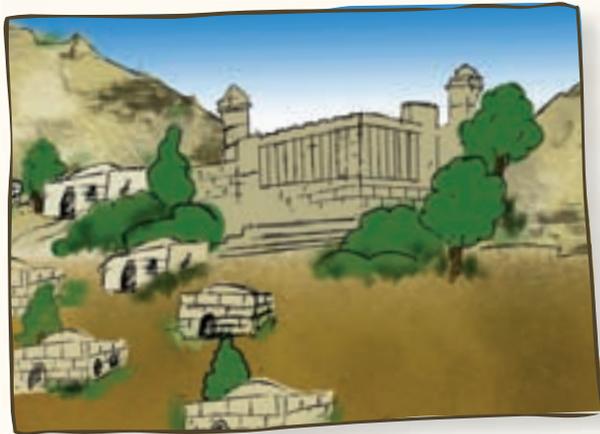


## HEVRON

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In the previous lesson we learned that Tzfat was one of Israel's four holy cities. In this lesson we will learn about another holy city and how it made Jerusalem feel better.

Hevron (also known as Hebron), the city in the south that grew delicious red grapes, spoke next:

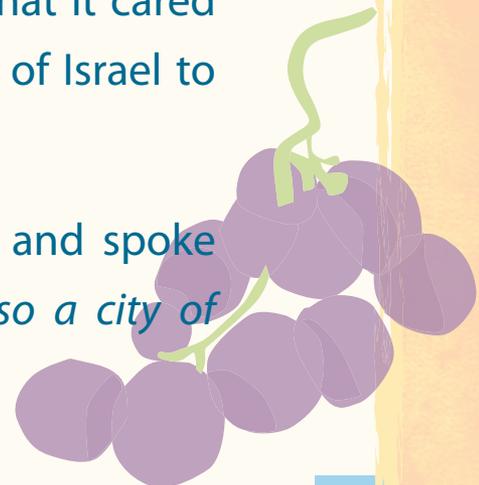


*"When King David first became king, he made me, Hevron, his capital. He knew that I was important because of all the special families that were here.*

*Later, when he made you, Jerusalem, his capital, he wanted you to be a city of families as well."*

One of the special treasures of Jerusalem was that it cared about all its families and invited all the families of Israel to come and celebrate together.

Hevron looked at the crying city of Jerusalem and spoke gently. *"I share that treasure with you. I am also a city of*



families. If the children remember what it is like to be in a city of families, they will remember you. I promise that I will help them remember."

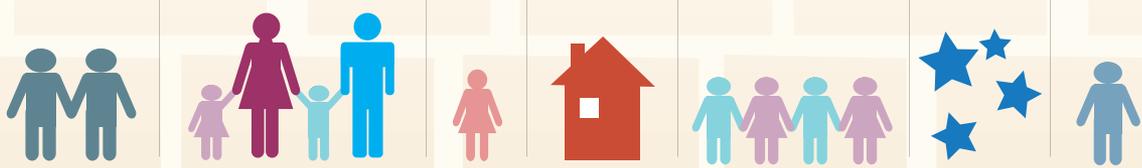


### Activity 1

#### Families in Hevron—In the Time of the Torah

Do you remember learning about Avraham and Sarah in *Breishit*? Do you remember the stories about their children?

Use the pictures to complete the story of Avraham's family.



1. Avraham came to Israel when God told him to leave his father's \_\_\_\_\_.
2. God told Avraham that he would have as many children as the \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Avraham and his wife, Sarah, had a \_\_\_\_\_ named Yitzhak.
4. Avraham sent his servant to find a wife for Yitzhak, a

kind \_\_\_\_\_ named Rivka.

5. Yitzhak and Rivka had \_\_\_\_\_ boys, Yaakov and Esav.
6. Yaakov had 4 wives and many \_\_\_\_\_.
7. This \_\_\_\_\_ was the beginning of the Jewish people.

Notice how many of these words have to do with family.

Hevron is called עיר האבות - the City of the Fathers. It is one of the cities where the *Avot* - Avraham, Yitzhak and Yaakov - and three of the *Imahot* - Sarah, Rivka and Leah - lived together with their families. It is also the city where they are buried.

One of the special places in Hevron is Me'arat HaMachpelah – the Cave of Machpelah. In olden times people used to bury their dead in caves. Avraham bought this cave to bury Sarah. Later, he, Yitzhak, Rivka, Yaakov and Leah were also buried there. Many years later, the Jewish people, Avraham's children, built a building above the Me'arat HaMachpelah. Today, hundreds of people come to the Me'arat HaMachpela everyday, to visit the place where the history of the Jewish



people began.

Many of the visitors think about what it would be like if they could meet the *Avot* and *Imahot*.



## Activity 2

Imagine that this tent belongs to one of the *Avot* and *Imahot*. You are invited in.

On a separate piece of paper, draw yourself in the picture and write, in a balloon, what you would talk to them about.

Inside the Me'arat HaMachpleah there is place to pray. Many people like to pray there. They feel close to God because the *Avot* and the *Imahot* were close to God.

The Me'arat HaMachpelah is a good place to say a prayer for your family. What prayer would you say if you were there?

### Optional Activity

Look in the *siddur* for a prayer that includes Avraham, Yitzhak and Yaakov. Make a bookmark that you can put in that page of your *siddur*. Draw a picture of the Me'arat HaMachpela on it.

### Hevron, The City of the Fathers, is Calling Out to Its Children

"I wish I could invite you children to meet Avraham, Yitzhak and Yaakov in their homes when you visit me, but I can't because they lived so long ago. But I do have something very special that I can invite you to."



*Inside the Me'arat HaMachpela*



# You are invited to a Special Shabbat



## Where:

Me'arat HaMachpelah—the burial place of your great-great-great-great-grandparents



## When:

Shabbat Parshat Hayei Sarah



## Why:

It is the Shabbat when we read about how Avraham bought Me'arat HaMachpela.



## What will happen:

Many families, schools, teachers and students come to Hevron on this Shabbat. There will be singing and dancing, prayers and Shabbat meals, and we will all remember that Hevron is a city that has been holy to the children of Avraham for thousands of years.



Families in Hevron - Throughout the Ages

Hevron is important to us, because Avraham and his family

lived there. Therefore, many other families have chosen to live there over the years. The families lived in small crowded rooms, but they all learned from Avraham that it is important to welcome guests.

Listen to this story about a very special guest who visited on Yom Kippur. Your teacher might ask some of you to act out this story.

### **An Ancient Yom Kippur In Hevron**

This story happened nearly 400 years ago. Hevron had been hit by a plague that killed hundreds of people in the Land of Israel. Many people left the city and went to the desert, small villages or anywhere to try and escape the deadly plague. Only a few Jews stayed in Hevron, even though it was Erev Yom Kippur.

The Jews who did stay gathered at the Avraham Avinu Synagogue in the middle of the Jewish Quarter. Its roof was a dome and it stood in the middle of the small, crowded Jewish neighborhood.



Nine men stood ready to begin *Kol Nidrei*, the beginning of the Yom Kippur prayers, but there wasn't a tenth man to make the *minyan*. The nine men looked up and down the streets hoping to see one more person.



"Look, there's an old man," someone shouted. Down the street an old man was walking in the direction of the shul. "Come, come quickly. The sun has almost set. The holy day is almost here. Would you like something to eat, or to drink, before you begin the fast?" "No", said the old man, "I've already finished. Let's go and begin the prayers."

The old man prayed with them that evening and insisted on sleeping in the synagogue. The next day he was called up to the Torah. He stood on his feet all day, even though it was Yom Kippur and he must have been very hungry and weak.

As the holy day slowly came to an end, the nine men from Hevron began to discuss among themselves: "Who will have the honor of inviting the guest to his home to break the fast and to sleep this evening?" They agreed to draw lots, and the *Hazan* won the draw. Following the *N'eila* service he

called the old man to him.

"Please come with me to my house. Please be my guest this evening. We can walk there and break the fast." They began walking through the narrow streets and alleys of Hevron.

The *Hazan* turned a corner and waited for his guest to follow him. When the old man was slow in following, the *Hazan* thought to himself, "He must be resting. I'll go back and wait with him." He returned, and to his surprise, the old man was nowhere in sight. "God have mercy, he must have made a wrong turn."

The *Hazan* looked everywhere for the old man, but couldn't find him. He finally arrived home and told his wife, "I lost our guest, the old man, the tenth man of our *minyán*." He was

very sad and embarrassed, and finally went to sleep, upset over having lost his honored guest.

That night, the old man came to him in a dream. "Dear host, treasured *Hazan* of Hevron. Please don't be upset. I didn't get lost, and I really wasn't hungry or thirsty. I had no need to eat or drink. I came to be



with you on Yom Kippur so that you would have a *minyan*. I am your forefather, Avraham.”

### Activity 3

Let's talk about this story.

Why were there so few people in the synagogue if it was Yom Kippur?

How did the people treat the mystery guest? Why did they treat him that way?

Why did the *Hazan* say that the old man was his “honored guest”?

Why didn't the old man sit down during the prayers or eat after the fast?

Why do you think that Avraham came to join the prayers that Yom Kippur?

Hevron has many narrow streets. Hundreds of years ago, in order to make room for new families, people built houses like blocks one on top of the other.

Imagine you are walking in Hevron. Look up at the stack of houses. Let's visit one family who lived in



Hevron for many generations.

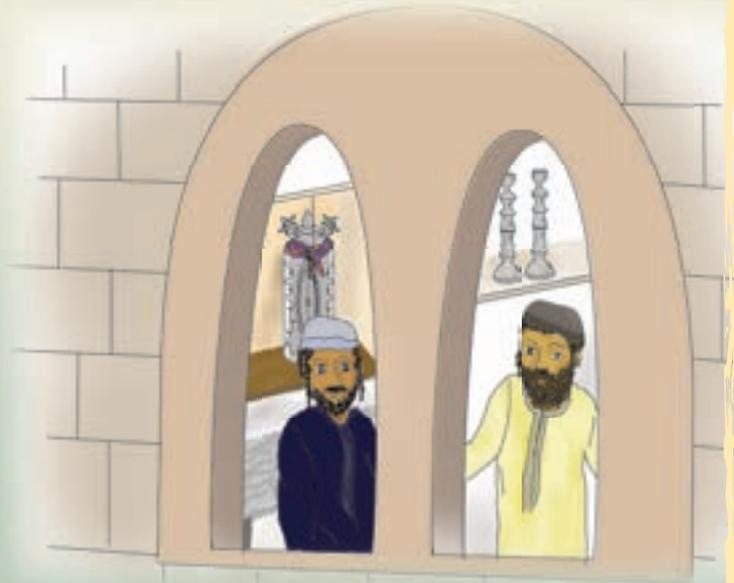
## The Castel Family Throughout the Generations



Shalom. I am the grandfather of the Castel family. I came from Spain in 1492 because the King and Queen of Spain told all the Jews that they had to leave. I had to decide where to go. Where else? Hevron, the place where my forefathers lived! I and my

sons are silversmiths. We make beautiful candlesticks and *kiddush* cups. Come in and have a cool drink.

Shalom. We are the Castel great-grandchildren. Our family has been here, in the Avraham Avinu neighborhood, for hundreds of years. There are seven of us in the house, but there is still plenty of room to share. Our parents set up a *yeshiva*.



We would like to study Torah in the place where so many of the stories in the Torah happened. Please come and join us.

The Castel family used to live here. There is no one here now. In 1929, after many years of living side by side, the Arabs attacked and killed many Jews, and all the families were forced to leave the city. Look inside. The table is broken and torn books are all over the floor.



Shalom. I am Miriam Castel. My family left Hevron for 40 years, but as soon as we could return, my cousins and I came back to live in our family home. One of my cousins is a doctor and another one grows grapes and makes wine. I am an

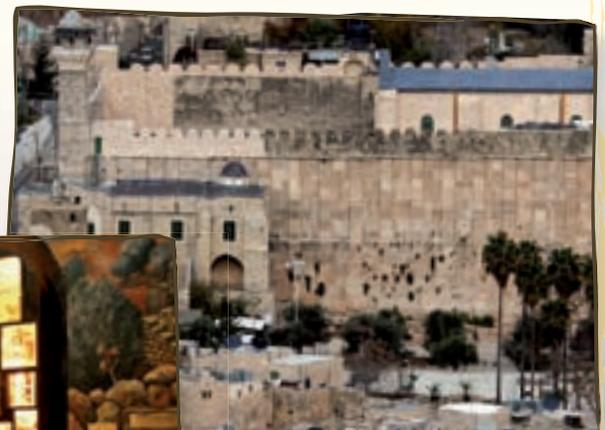
artist, and I paint pictures that show the history of the Jewish people. Please come and look at my artwork. We can see the story of our people throughout the years.

Why did the Castels originally come to live in Hevron?

What did they do in Hevron throughout the generations?

What did they do when visitors came?

Hevron turned to her friend, the city of Jerusalem. *“So you see, families in Hevron are important just like they were in Jerusalem long ago. Do you believe me now? Do you think that I can teach the children to remember what it is like to be in a holy city?”*



#### **Activity 4**

#### **Guests Are Important in Hevron**

Ever since the days of Avraham and Sarah, the people of Hevron were famous for welcoming guests. If you could

choose someone to invite to dinner, who would you invite?  
What would you do to make them feel special?

Draw your guest at your table, and show how you would welcome them.

### **What Are the Treasures That Make Hevron Holy?**

What treasures did you find in the Holy City of Hevron? Were they treasures like gold and silver? Were they places that are different from the ordinary? How? Were they special things about the people and the way that they behaved?

Did you find things that made you think about God?

Did you find places that are valuable and that you would treat respectfully and carefully?

*Jerusalem looked at Hevron and said: "You have made me feel better. I can see how you look after families and welcome all guests. Just like the people pray at Me'arat HaMachpela in your city, I now know that they will once again pray at the Beit Hamikdash in my city. Just like the families came back to you, I now know that they will also come back to me."*

In this lesson we learned about Hevron and why it is a holy city. In the next lesson we will learn about Tiveria.

# LESSON 4



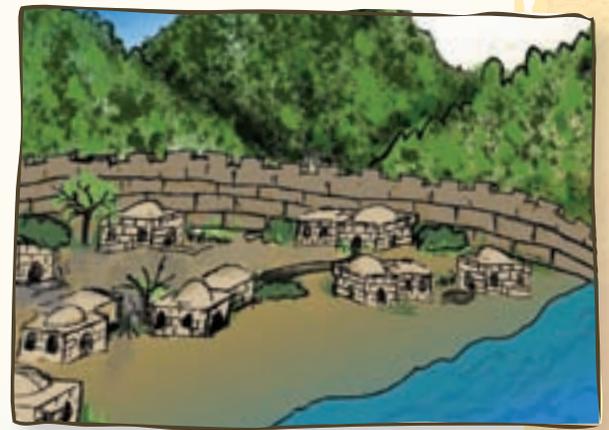
## TIVERIA

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In the previous lessons, we learned about three of Israel's holy cities: Jerusalem, Tzfat and Hevron. In this lesson we will learn about Tiveria and what it has to offer Jerusalem to make it feel better.

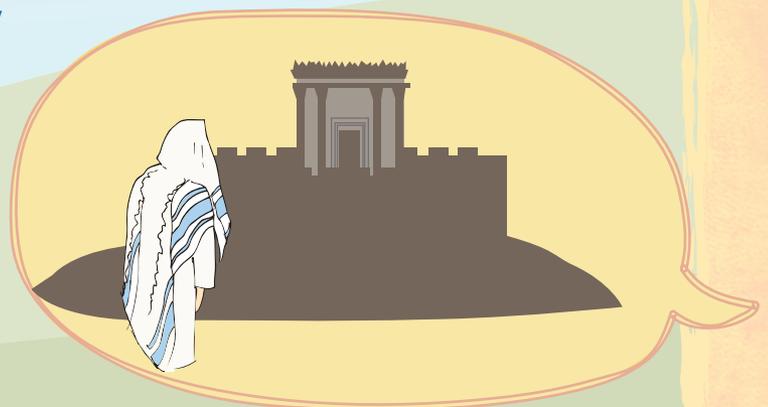
Listen to your teacher read this story:

Tiveria (also known as Tiberias), the city built next to the deep blue lake at the bottom of the mountain, spoke next.



*"I am also one of the Holy Cities," Tiveria said. "Please let me show you my treasures. Jewish children will come to visit me and remember you, Jerusalem, while you are waiting to be rebuilt."*

Jerusalem listened and said, *"How can you possibly have any of the treasures that I once had? I am built at the top of a mountain, you are built at the*





*bottom of a mountain. I am on the edge of a desert, you are at the shore of a deep lake. People come to me when they want to pray, people come to you when they want to play. How can you help me?"*

*Tiveria listened patiently. Then she spoke quietly. "Sometimes friends are best when they are different. If both friends are good at throwing and neither at catching, they can't play ball. If both friends want to use blue paint they might argue, but if one likes the green instead, they will get along. We are different, but we can still be friends. What is most important is that we share something. We are both special cities in the Land of Israel, so both of us want the Jewish people to feel at home. We both want to use the treasures that God gave us for our people."*

*"Let me think about it," said Jerusalem. "Let me see what you have to show me."*

### **Activity 1**

#### **Tiveria's Greatest Gift - Water**

Tiveria was built on the shores of *Yam Kinneret*. Other names for this lake are the Sea of Galilee and Lake Tiberias.

Listen to these stories about water; you can read along with your teacher.

## Water for the Jewish People Long Ago and Now

The story of Miriam's Well begins in the time of the Torah, when the Jewish people left Egypt and were on their way to the Land of Israel. The people had nothing to drink and complained. Moshe hit a rock with his stick and water began to flow out of it. The Midrash tells that the water became twelve streams. Each stream flowed to the tents of a different tribe. There was enough water for everyone to drink and no one even needed to leave their homes.

The Midrash says that the miracle rock became a traveling well that moved along with the people and camped wherever they camped. The well was named for Miriam, Moshe's sister, because she took care of him in the water of the Nile River when he was a baby. Miriam's Well gave fresh water to the Jewish people for 40 years, while they wandered in the desert on their way to the Land of Israel.



When the Jewish people arrived in Israel, Miriam's Well also came to Israel. The well became a rock that rolled across the valleys

and fields, until it came to the city of Tiveria. The rock sank into the water of Lake Kinneret, not far from the shore, and it continued to pour out fresh water for the Jewish people to drink. Some people have claimed they can point out the place where Miriam's Well had sunk in the Kinneret.

In 1948, when Israel was born, Israel's leaders needed to solve the same problem that Moshe had to solve in the desert: how to find enough water for the Jewish people to drink. They began to work on a plan to build giant pipes and canals that would take water from the Kinneret to towns, cities and farms throughout the country. It took more than ten years to build the *Movil HaArtzi* - the National Water Carrier. Water is now pumped out of the Kinneret to many cities and then into the homes throughout Israel. After more than three thousand years, Miriam's Well was doing what it had done long, long ago in the desert. The same rock that once gave water for the whole Jewish people in



*A section of pipe*

the desert, again gives water to the people of Israel. This time it uses modern pipes to bring the water right to their homes. The miracle of water goes on and on.

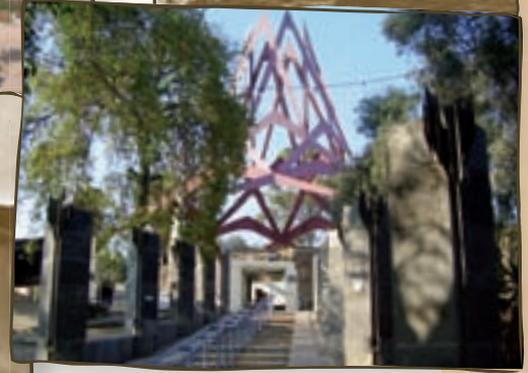
Do you want to see how much water there is in the Kinneret? You can visit the water measuring sculpture on one of the beaches in Tiveria. It is a huge window, shaped like Lake Kinneret. It tells us how much water is in the Kinneret.



Long ago in the desert, the people of Israel asked God to send them water. Today, we still pray for rain, and we also need to save water, to be sure that there is enough to drink.

## Activity 2

Here are some pictures of old and modern Tiveria. Which ones do you think are from long long ago and which ones are from today?



We are now going back in time, and will meet two Jewish children, Merav and Yehoshua, who lived in Tiveria almost two thousand years ago. They are standing outside the ancient synagogue. Maybe they can tell us what used to happen here.



Who are these people? I have never seen them in Tiveria before.

They are members of the Sanhedrin. They had to leave Jerusalem after it was destroyed. The one in the blue robe is their leader, he is called the Nasi.

I thought that the Sanhedrin was a court of rabbis that met in the Temple in Jerusalem. What are they doing here?



The 70 wisest rabbis in the country are called the Sanhedrin. Years ago they would meet in Jerusalem. People would come to the *Beit Hamikdash* and they would hear the rabbis explain the Torah and decide what the law should be. But when the Romans came they had to run away. They have been in many cities, but now they have chosen Tiveria as their home.



What can they do in Tiveria? We don't have a *Beit Hamikdash* for them!

They will study and teach us Torah. You don't need a Temple to learn Torah, all you need is a teacher. I heard that Rabbi Yehudah HaNasi told his students to write down the laws, so that no one will forget them. The teacher repeats the laws over and over again so that students will remember. That is called Mishna, repeating. Maybe here in Tiveria they will finish the Mishna that they are writing.



They also built a synagogue where they can pray and study. Look at the beautiful mosaic on the floor. I can see pictures from the Torah and pictures of the *Beit Hamikdash* in Jerusalem.



Jerusalem was the most important city in Israel, but I'm proud that Tiveria is home to the Sanhedrin until Jerusalem will be rebuilt. I would like to go to the synagogue and see the beautiful mosaics. Let's go!

### **Did You Know?**

Mosaics are a type of art in which small stones are placed together to form a colorful picture. It was often used to decorate the floor of ancient synagogues.



### Activity 3

Your teacher will give you a copy of the Mosaic Wordsearch. Find the words in the Word Bank and darken them. What picture can you see?

JERUSALEM, BEIT HAMIKDASH, TIVERIA, LAWS, SANHEDRIN, RABBIS, WISEST, MISHNA, TEMPLE, MOSAIC.

W	F	T	Y	U	M	K	L	B	V	D	F	L
I	S	R	G	M	H	T	K	W	A	M	W	Q
T	Y	A	E	I	S	E	M	I	O	O	S	H
E	A	B	E	S	L	M	E	S	A	S	M	B
Z	R	B	O	H	H	P	X	E	O	A	P	M
X	E	I	L	N	O	L	Z	S	P	I	O	L
C	W	S	M	A	Y	E	C	T	M	C	I	K
V	Q	S	A	N	H	E	D	R	I	N	U	J
B	A	Z	X	C	V	L	Q	W	E	R	Y	H
N	S	J	H	G	B	A	V	K	L	T	T	G
M	D	K	O	D	N	W	B	J	P	Y	R	F
L	F	L	T	R	M	S	F	G	O	U	E	D
K	G	A	T	I	V	E	R	I	A	I	W	S
J	H	J	E	R	U	S	A	L	E	M	Q	A
B	E	I	T	H	A	M	I	K	D	A	S	H

Jerusalem smiled a tiny smile when she heard that the rabbis in Tiveria were still thinking about her. But then, Tiveria said to her, *"I can show you even more treasures."*

Long, long ago Reuven, a bright 6 year old boy, had just learned to read all the Hebrew letters. He decided to open up the Torah and read it on his own. This is what he saw:

בְּרֵאשִׁית בְּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ

He looked at the first letter ב and knew that it made the sound “b.” But he was stuck. Was it “bee” or “ba” or “bay” or even something else?

He didn’t give up but after an hour, he went to his father and sadly said that he would never learn to read. His father, Aharon ben Moshe ben Asher, one of Tiveria’s most famous rabbis, put his arm around him, held him tightly and gently said that he will help him.

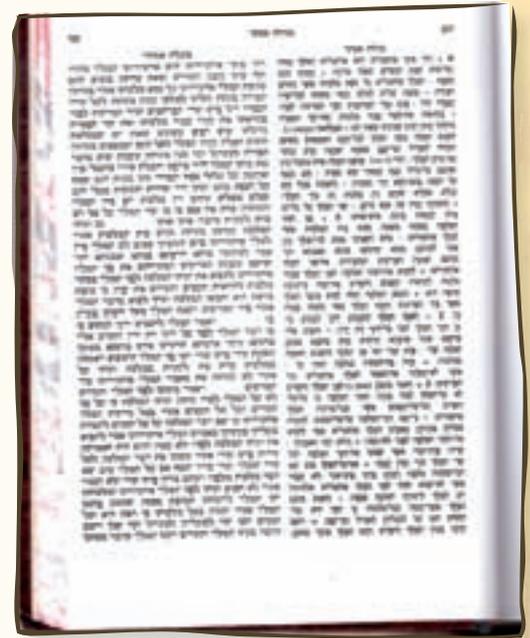
And suddenly, Rabbi Aharon had a great idea. “I know,” he said. “Let’s put little dots and lines underneath or on top of the letters which will show us how to read them.”

“What do you mean?” Reuven asked.

Rabbi Aharon picked up a stick and started to draw a number of dots and lines in the sand. He taught Reuven that each dot and line would make a different sound when put with a letter. Reuven quickly learned this system and asked his father if he could put the dots into the *Sefer* Torah for him so that he could read it.

His father told him that he cannot put the dots into a *Sefer Torah*, but he will put them into a special scroll just for him. This is what it looked like now:

בְּרֵאשִׁית בְּרָא אֱ-לֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ.



Rabbi Aharon Ben Moshe Ben Asher lived in Tiveria hundreds of years ago. He and his family invented the vowel rules to help us read the Torah. The rabbis of Tiveria also made the signs for the notes to help us sing the melody with which we read the Torah. They put these signs into the *Chumash*.

בְּרֵאשִׁית בְּרָא אֱ-לֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ:

When you learn to read from the Torah, it will be easier for you because of the rabbis of Tiveria. Aren't you glad?

## Did You Know?

Two very great rabbis are buried in Tiveria:

### Rabbi Meir Baal HaNess

Rabbi Meir was born not long after the Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed (almost 2,000 years ago). He was one of the rabbis who helped write the Mishna, the important books of Jewish laws. His wife Bruria also learned and taught Torah. It was said that he could make miracles happen, so they called him Rabbi Meir Baal HaNess, the miracle worker. Rabbi Meir's grave is covered with a dome because long ago they used to build special buildings and monuments to mark the graves of important people.



### Rambam (רמב"ם)

His full name was **Rabbi Moshe Ben Maimon**. These initials spell Rambam. Some people call him Maimonides. He lived 800 years ago. He wrote many important books explaining the laws of the Torah. He was also a doctor. The ruler of Egypt was his most famous patient. Many hospitals are named in his



memory. Many people wrote letters to him asking him to explain the *mitzvot* and his answers helped them understand the Torah. One of the many things that he taught was that the best way to give *Tzedaka* was by helping others to find a job.



## Tiveria - A Place to Have Fun - Now and Long Ago!

### Activity 4

Look at the advertisements on the next page. Both posters advertise a wonderful vacation at the lake shore.



One of them is from Tiveria long ago and the other is from Tiveria today. Let's see what is the same and what is different about having fun in Tiveria long ago and today.

## Come to Tiveria Vacation Spot of Emperors

Come to the Spa that King Antipas built for himself

Come swim in water that is hot-all year long

Our cooks can prepare a delicious feast of fresh grilled fish,  
caught just today in Lake Tiberias

Elders of Rome! Do you suffer from aches and pains? The  
healing waters of the Hot Springs will cure you

Women of Rome! Do you want to be beautiful again? Our  
steam rooms will make your skin soft and our secret formula  
for beauty oils will make it last!



## Come to the Hot Spring Spa for a Fun Family Vacation



 Do you love water sports?

We offer boating, fishing and water skiing.

 Do you love to swim?

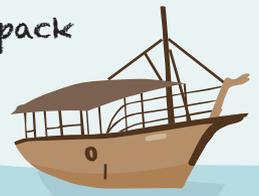
We have a warm pool and a lakeshore beach.

 Do you want to relax?

Come to our spa and try our massages, Jacuzzi and mud pack  
beauty treatments.

 Do you want to exercise?

Rent a bike and ride along our private lakeside bike paths.



ENJOY OUR DELICIOUS MEALS AND SNACKS! LET THE KIDS VISIT THE  
GAME ROOM WHILE PARENTS RELAX AT A POOLSIDE CONCERT!

Tiveria has many gifts. It has the Kinneret, the cold fresh water lake and the hot springs of Hamat Tiveria, where hot water springs out of the ground all year long. Long ago, when the rabbis of the Sanhedrin lived in Tiveria, many people came there for their vacations. The water was always warm and people believed that it could cure illness. The richest people of the Roman Empire built fancy houses and vacation homes in Tiveria. The people felt good when they were there and the city was a safe place to live.



Today, Tiveria still sits on the shore of the Kinneret and there are still hot springs at the edge of the city. Even today, people come to Tiveria for their vacations. There are fancy hotels and beautiful beaches in Tiveria. The city is a great place to live because people feel good when they are there.



## Optional Activity

Write a letter about an imaginary vacation in Tiveria, either from the past or the present.

The city of Jerusalem thought about everything her friend Tiveria showed her. She thought about the beautiful lake that God created. She thought about the miracle of Miriam's Well that brought water to all the people of Israel, and about the new water carrier that does the same thing. She thought about the special places, where rabbis studied and taught, and how they remembered Jerusalem. Finally she thought about the children, long ago and today, who came to Tiveria to have a good time. It made her feel good to see that her children were happy.

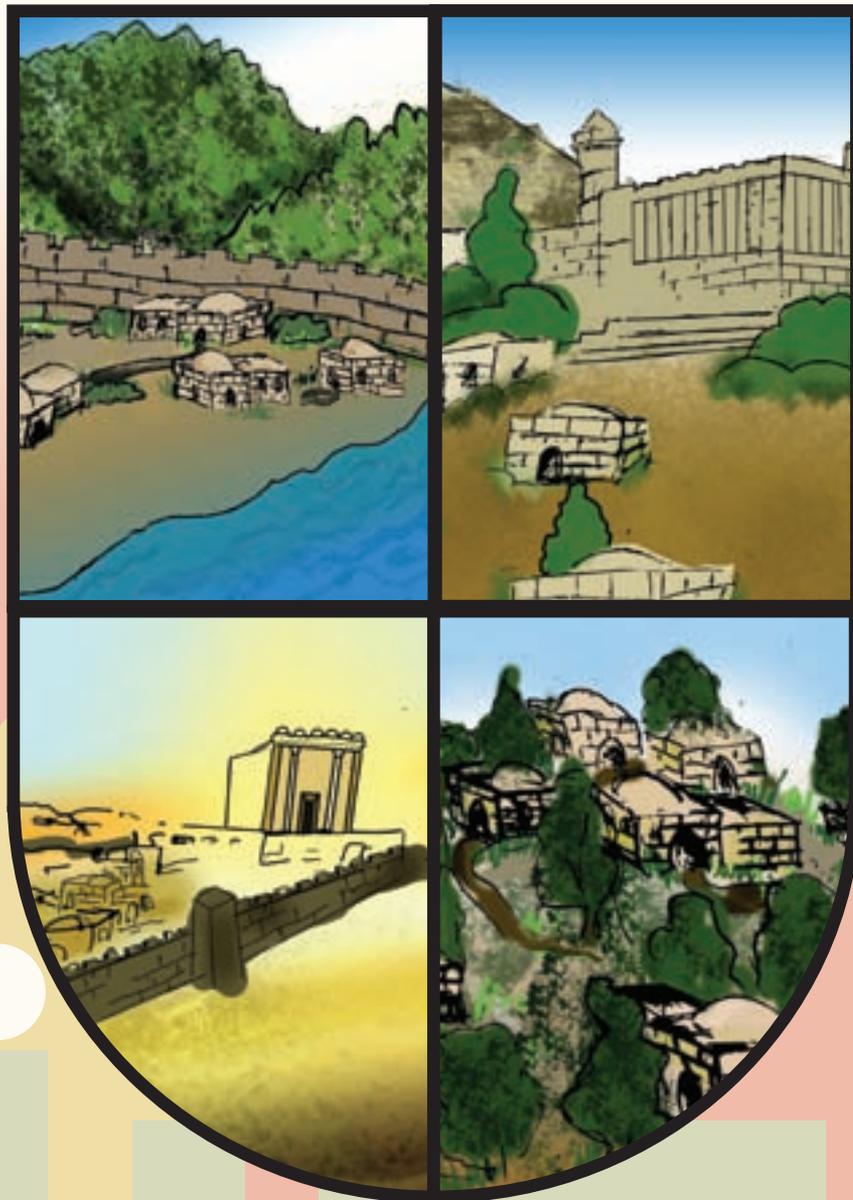
*"Alright," she finally said. "You are a good friend. You can help me."*

After hearing the stories of the other three holy cities of Tzfat, Hevron and Tiveria, the city of Jerusalem felt better. She knew that those cities would look after her holy treasures and that the treasures would return to her one day.

לשנה הבאה בירושלים – Next Year in Jerusalem

Jerusalem promised them, that when that day would come, they too would still remain holy cities.

Jerusalem, Tzfat, Hevron and Tiveria all invite you to come and enjoy their special treasures.





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