

Program Title: Looking Through the Lens: Preparing Your TYG for Next Year!

Category: Jewish Learning

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Touchstone Text:

Then Moses called Joshua and said to him in the sight of all Israel: "Be strong and resolute, for it is you who shall go with this people into the land that the Eternal swore to their fathers and give them, and it is you who shall apportion it to them. And it is indeed the Eternal who will go before you. [God] will be with you; [God] will not fail you or forsake you. Fear not, and be not dismayed!" – Deut. 31:7-8

Goals:

1. TYG members will get excited for next year
2. PP's will learn from the Torah that transition of knowledge from one generation to then next is holy work.
3. TYG members begin preparing for the next NFTY year

Objectives:

1. Through discussion with an advisor, the seniors will have an opportunity to pass along some of the knowledge that they have gained and to learn about KESHER
2. PP's will participate in a text study and will learn how the transition of knowledge and leadership is holy work.
3. PP's will brainstorm programs for the upcoming NFTY year, establish means of communication and fun ways to start the year and integrate new members.

Materials:

- Picture cards: Note cards with a picture from the year on one side and a number on the back in order to break people up into groups
- Information about KESHER for the seniors
- Copy of *Tanach* with commentary or handouts of text attached.

People: 2 or more group leaders (clergy, advisors, youth workers, lay leaders, etc.)

Space Needed: 1 large room or a smaller room with two breakout spaces.

Timeline:

00-05: Hand out picture cards, form groups based upon numbers.

05-15: In groups, discuss text and prepare interpretation for whole group.

15-25: Present

25-30: Break into seniors and underclassmen

30-40: Seniors are given a plethora of information and determine what they are going to say to underclassmen

30-40: Underclassmen talk about the text and how it relates to the responsibility they now have.

40-50: Brainstorming session for programs

50-55: Seniors give advice to underclassmen

55-60: Final words from advisor/president, prayer

Detailed Procedure:

Prep: Take 3x5 pictures from the past years events of people having fun, and glue them to note cards. On the back of the note cards, with numbers corresponding to how many groups you want (4-5 in a group).

05-15: In groups, read story of Moses preparing Joshua to lead the Israelites at the end of Deuteronomy. Prepare interpretation of text for whole group. "What are we supposed to learn and gain from this story?" Perhaps spur conversation talking about the holiness of passing knowledge and leadership from one generation to another.

15-25: Present interpretations.

25-30: Break into seniors and underclassmen with group leaders – advisors, clergy, lay leaders, etc.

30-40: Seniors are given a plethora of information by their advisor, clergy, or other youth worker about KESHER, Hillel, anything the congregation does for high school students, and possibly a small gift like the NFTY bencher. This is also a great time to talk about pluralism, including topics such as how the full *birkat hamazon* differs from the NFTY version, and other customs that they should know. For more information about KESHER, please visit www.keshernet.com.

The seniors then write their own “poem” to the underclassmen. This parallels the fact that God told Moses a poem to tell the Israelites so that they would never stray from keeping the *Brit* (Covenant) with God.

30-40: Underclassmen talks about the text and how it relates to the responsibility they now have.

Questions:

1. What would it be like to be one of the Israelites listening to Moses tell them that he wasn't going to enter Israel with them?
2. How did Joshua feel with his new responsibility
3. How does it feel knowing that the continuation of the youth group relies on you?
4. God predicts that some will stray from His covenant. How does this relate to youth group?
5. What does it mean to be “..strong and resolute...”? (Deut 31:7)

40-50: Brainstorming session for programs

50-55: Seniors give advice to underclassmen – read their “poem”

55-60: Final words from advisor/president, prayer

Text for group1:

Deuteronomy 31: 7-8

After telling the Israelites that he is old and is going to die soon, Moses tells Joshua:

7] Then Moses called Joshua and said to him in the sight of all Israel: “Be strong and resolute, for it is you who shall go with this people into the land that the Eternal swore to their fathers and give them, and it is you who shall apportion it to them. 8] And it is indeed the Eternal who will go before you. [God] will be with you; [God] will not fail you or forsake you. Fear not, and be not dismayed!”

Deuteronomy 31: 14-21

14] The Eternal One said to Moses: The time is drawing near for you to die. Call Joshua and present yourselves in the Tent of Meeting, that I may instruct him. Moses and Joshua went and presented themselves in the Tent of Meeting.

15] The Eternal appeared in the Tent, in a pillar of cloud, the pillar of cloud having come to rest at the entrance of the tent.

16] The Eternal said to Moses: You are soon to lie with your ancestors. This people will thereupon go astray after the alien gods in their midst, in the land that they are about to enter; they will forsake Me and break My covenant that I made with them. 17] Then My anger will flare up against them, and I will abandon them and hide My countenance from them. They shall be ready prey; and many evils and troubles shall befall them. And they shall say on that day, “Surely it is because our God is not in our midst that these evils have befallen us.” 18] Yet I will keep My countenance hidden on that day, because of all the evil they have done in turning to other gods. 19] Therefore, write down this poem and teach it to the people of Israel; put it in their mouths, in order that this poem may be My witness against the people of Israel. 20] When I bring them into the land flowing with milk and honey that I promised on oath to their fathers, and they eat their fill and grow fat and turn to other gods and serve them, spurning Me and breaking My covenant, 21] and the many evils and troubles befall them—then this poem shall confront them as a witness, since it will never be lost from the mouth of their offspring. For I know what plans they are devising even now, before I bring them into the land that I promised on oath.

Moses then receives the poem from God, writes it down, and then tells it to the Israelites (Deut 32:1-43)

Deuteronomy 32:45-47

44] Moses came, together with Hosea son of Nun, and recited all the words of this poem in the hearing of the people.

45] And when Moses finished reciting these words to all Israel, 46] he said to them: Take to heart all the words with which I have warned you this day. Enjoin them upon your children, that they may observe faithfully all the terms of this Teaching. 47] For this is not a trifling thing for you: it is your very life; through it you shall long endure on the land that you are to possess upon crossing the Jordan.

God then speaks to Moses and tells him to ascend the mountain, Mount Nebo, which faces Israel. It is here where Moses will look over Israel, but will not enter.

Some notes about the text:

In 31:19 – it says “write down this poem”. It is noted in the Talmud San 21b; *Yad*, Hilch. M'zuzah 7:l, that this must mean that God intends for all Jews to study and learn the whole Torah, as according to *halachah* (*rabbinical law*) no one is permitted to copy only parts of the Torah.