



Bible Hunt

Learning to Use a Tanakh



by Rabbi Jonathan Mishkin





Bible Hunt

by Rabbi Jonathan Mishkin

Educational Goal: to teach or reinforce the ability to find references in Tanakh.

Introduction: In our education of children we sometimes overlook the obvious. We teach our students the stories of אברהם and משה but don't emphasize that they live generations apart and that they appear in different books in the Torah. Bible Hunt is a fun and active game which simultaneously forces children to find their way around the Tanakh – a fitting exercise for שבועות when we celebrate receiving the first part of Tanakh.

The game is a straightforward treasure hunt using your shul as the playing board. This game is best played when services are not taking place, since some of the locations require use of the sanctuary. If you will be running this program during davening time, you can leave out some of the clues that will interfere with the adults, or rework the game to fit your site. For example, the most intrusive clue sends the kids to the שלחן – the table that's used to read the Torah. If you are unable to hide a clue there, you might be able to use a similar structure in the building's Beit Midrash, or even a plain old table that stands somewhere in the shul.

How to play: Below you will find two sets of 12 clues. Print up the two sets of clues - one set for each team (when it comes time to play – you will divide your kids into two teams). The clues are the same in each set, but they are presented in reverse order so that the two teams don't follow each other around – each team is working on a different clue at any given time. Color code the clues by rolling up set #1 and making a blue mark on the backs of the rolls; roll up set #2 and color code it by making a red mark. Half an hour before the program is set to begin hide the clues around the shul. Teams should only touch clues that are marked with their color. If they find the other team's clue they must leave it in place. Don't hide Clue #1 – it will be given to the two teams to start them off (each team getting a different clue). Once they solve it, Clue #1 will lead the team to location #1 where Clue #2 is hidden. The kids find Clue #2, solve the riddle and head off to location #2. At location #2, they will find Clue #3 which leads them to location #3 where they find #4 and so on. To help avoid confusion, there's a list following the actual clues telling you where to put each one.



Each clue has three parts:

- a. a Biblical citation.
- b. a riddle.
- c. a Hebrew letter.

The goal is to find the verse in the Tanakh and use the information in the pasuk to solve the riddle. The solution to each riddle is a spot in the shul, and each clue leads to another spot. Because you give the first clue to the kids, there are eleven hiding places altogether. In addition, each clue has a Hebrew letter on it. When all twelve clues are collected, the letters will spell out a message. Feel free to give hints or help the kids out if they have difficulty. The first team to solve all the riddles and piece the message together wins.

Preparation: You will need to prepare the clues by printing them up and marking them with a color. Roll the clues but do not tape them since you don't want the kids tearing the paper on יום טוב. Instead, use a paper clip to keep the clue folded. Gather Tanakhs for the kids to use. It's not necessary for each child to have their own book, but the team should have several so one or two kids don't dominate the game. It will be helpful to have at least one Tanakh with English translation. Hide the clues before the game starts but not that far in advance – you don't want curious shul members finding them and removing them from their spots. Having a prize ready for the winning team is always appreciated, but it is inadvisable to hand out cheese blintzes to the children without plates.

In addition to helping the kids learn their way around Tanakh, this game will help newcomers to your group become familiar with the shul itself – an added bonus!



Blue Team Clues

Clue #1: Genesis 37:3 בראשית לו:ג

He certainly felt very fancy in it, but he couldn't have worn it all the time. Where do you think he put it when he came to shul?

?

Clue #2: Exodus 25:23 שמות כה:כג

This was made out of gold and was used for holding bread. The one in our shul often has people crowding around it looking at a holy object.

מ

Clue #3: Exodus 17:12 שמות יז:יב

משה was probably uncomfortable on his. Imagine if we invited משה to our shul - since he was so modest he would use the one in the back.

ן

Clue #4: Genesis 1:7 בראשית א:ז

We don't know how God did it without a big object in between. If He were to do it in shul, He might have used this to help Him.

מ



Clue #5: Deuteronomy 11:19 דברים יא:יט

It's not only your parents who have the job in this pasuk. Somebody else you know does this with you too.

ת

Clue #6: Joshua 2:15 יהושע ב:טו

A quick escape! I'll bet she wouldn't try that in our shul - they're too high up.

ן

Clue #7: Genesis 28:12 בראשית כח:יב

Kind of a cool way to travel, huh? Well, if they'd been in our shul, they'd have used these. Try the 6th one.

ת

Clue #8: Deuteronomy 23:14 דברים כג:יד

What do you expect? They lived in the desert. Here in our shul, we go here.

ן



Clue #9: Judges 16:3 שופטים טז:ג

If he tried that in our shul, we'd have to take away his membership!

ך

Clue #10: Jeremiah 36:23 ירמיה לו:כג

Wow! King Yehoyakim certainly has no respect for these objects. But we do - we have a special spot for storing them.

ת

Clue #11: Esther 1:3 אסתר א:ג

What an elaborate gathering this king had. Where would this pasuk take place in our shul?

נ

Clue #12:

Congratulations! You found the final clue! Your last letter is:

ן



For the Blue Team



Don't Hide Clue #1. Give that to the kids to start the game.

Hide Clue #2 in the coat room.

Hide Clue #3 on the שלחן (table) used to read the Torah.

Hide Clue #4 in the back bench or row of the men's section.

Hide Clue #5 on the מחיצה somewhere.

Hide Clue #6 on you. You're the teacher. If you can get the shul rabbi to participate, give him the clue to hold.

Hide Clue #7 on a window.

Hide Clue #8 in the sixth stair from the bottom.

Hide Clue #9 in the bathroom, or near the door.

Hide Clue #10 on the front door of the shul.

Hide Clue #11 on the bookcase.

Hide Clue #12 in the social hall or kiddush room.



Red Team Clues

Clue #1: Esther 1:3 אסתר א:ג

What an elaborate gathering this king had. Where would this pasuk take place in our shul?

?

Clue #2: Jeremiah 36:23 ירמיה לז:כג

Wow! King Yehoyakim certainly has no respect for these objects. But we do - we have a special spot for storing them.

מ

Clue #3: Judges 16:3 שופטים טז:ג

If he tried that in our shul, we'd have to take away his membership!

ו

Clue #4: Deuteronomy 23:14 דברים כג:יד

What do you expect? They lived in the desert. Here in our shul, we go here.

מ



Clue #5: Genesis 28:12 בראשית כח:יב

Kind of a cool way to travel, huh? Well, if they'd been in our shul, they'd have used these. Try the 6th one.

ת

Clue #6: Joshua 2:15 יהושע ב:טו

A quick escape! I'll bet she wouldn't try that in our shul - they're too high up.

ן

Clue #7: Deuteronomy 11:19 דברים יא:יט

It's not only your parents who have the job in this pasuk. Somebody else you know does this with you too.

ת

Clue #8: Genesis 1:7 בראשית א:ז

We don't know how God did it without a big object in between. If He were to do it in shul, He might have used this to help Him.

ן



Clue #9: Exodus 17:12 שמות יז: יב

משה was probably uncomfortable on his. Imagine if we invited משה to our shul - since he was so modest he would use the one in the back.

ך

Clue #10: Exodus 25:23 שמות כה: כג

This was made out of gold and was used for holding bread. The one in our shul often has people crowding around it looking at a holy object.

ת

Clue #11: Genesis 37:3 בראשית לז: ג

He certainly felt very fancy in it, but he couldn't have worn it all the time. Where do you think he put it when he came to shul?

ן

Clue #12:

Congratulations! You found the final clue! Your last letter is:

ך



For the Red Team



Don't Hide Clue #1. Give that to the kids to start the game.

Hide Clue #2 in the social hall or kiddush room.

Hide Clue #3 on the bookcase.

Hide Clue #4 on the front door of the shul.

Hide Clue #5 in the bathroom, or near the door.

Hide Clue #6 in the sixth stair from the top.

Hide Clue #7 on a window.

Hide Clue #8 on you. You're the teacher. If you can get the shul rabbi to participate, give him the clue to hold.

Hide Clue #9 the מחיצה somewhere.

Hide Clue #10 in the back bench or row of the men's section.

Hide Clue #11 on the שלחן (table) used to read the Torah.

Hide Clue #12 in the coat room.