

The Pardes Center for Jewish Educators presents

An Interactive **PARSHA EXPERIENCE**



Parsha: Matot-Masei

Title: How to Get What You Want! Plan Your Next Big Ask!

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The Parsha at First Glance

Spotlight on the Parsha:

The Israelites are just about to finally be done with their journey in the desert and cross the Jordan River into the Land of Israel. The tribes of Gad and Reuven have the most cattle and sheep. They really want to stay on the eastern side of the Jordan River, where there are plush fields for their livestock.



They ask Moshe if they can just stay on the land on the eastern side of the Jordan River, instead of crossing over into the Land of Israel. Moshe gets pretty upset and accuses them of trying to start a whole revolution of people just wanting to stay put instead of fighting for the land. This is his reaction, of course, because their request has brought up past trauma: remember, with the previous generation, the whole episode of the “spies” reporting that it was too scary to go into the Land of Israel?

The tribes of Reuven and Gad could have just gotten mad and yelled “that’s not fair” or gotten sad and stomped away. Instead, they decided to think about what it was that was holding them back from getting what they wanted! They realized that Moshe just wanted to make sure everyone crossed the Jordan River to fight so that they could have the land. Not everyone had to live there afterward, though! So they promised to still go and fight hard! Moshe doesn’t say ok, but he does say that they better keep their promise or God will be very upset.

Zooming In and Questions for Consideration:

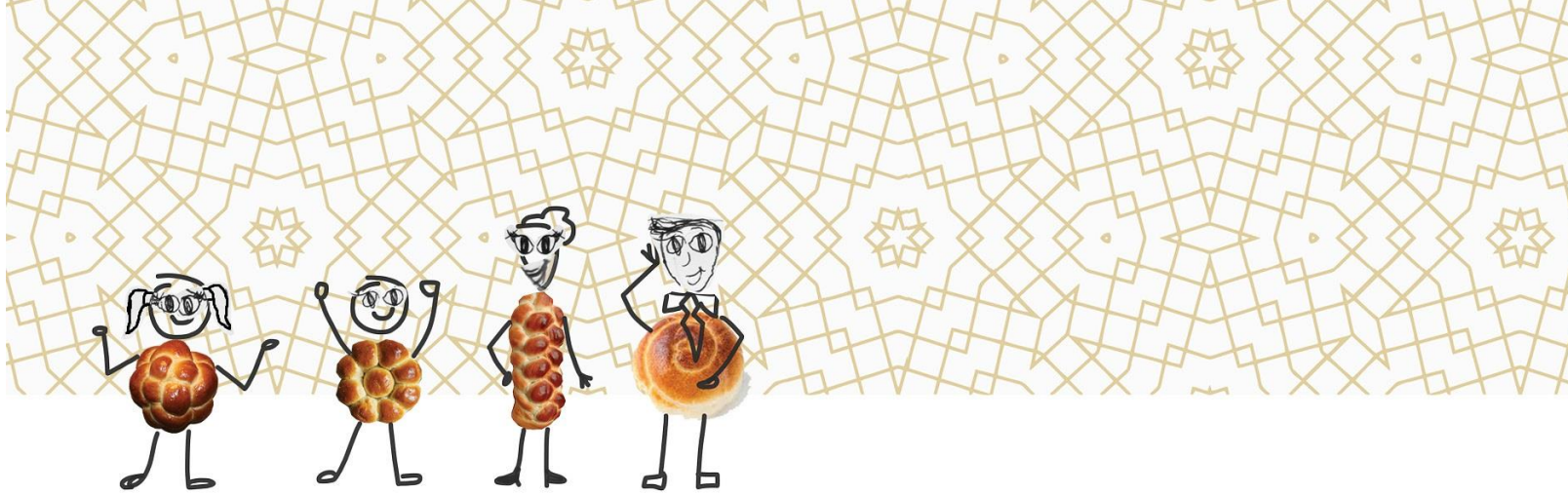
In your own lives:

- Think of something you asked for that you did not get. Why do you think you didn’t get it?
- Now, think of something you asked for and got! Why do you think the person said yes?

The tribes of Gad and Reuven are wise, and use a very helpful practice for getting what they want. We can follow their lead!

1. What is it you really want?

Think about the purpose of what you want and open up to the one you are asking. This can help the person you are asking have empathy (care and understanding) for you and your cause.



In this case we see that the tribes of Gad and Reuven just want a safe, happy place for their livestock and families.

Bamidbar 32:16

<p>Then they stepped up to him and said, "We will build here sheepfolds for our flocks and towns for our children.</p>	<p>וַיִּגְשׁוּ אֵלָיו וַיֹּאמְרוּ, גִּדְרֹת צֹאן נִבְנֶה לְמִקְנֵנוּ פֹה, וְעָרִים לְטַפָּנוּ .</p>
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2. Come together with the other people who might want the same thing, or make sure you are very clear with yourself about the purpose of what you want.

- How do you become united with the people with whom you are asking for something?
- How do you really make sure you are "on the same page" about your reasoning for getting what you want?

Here we see that the text goes from plural to singular while talking about Gad and Reuven's tribes.

Bamidbar 32:5

<p>They said, if we find favor in your eyes...</p>	<p>וַיֹּאמְרוּ, אִם-מִצְאֵנוּ חֵן בְּעֵינֶיךָ...</p>
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Bamidbar 32:25

<p>And the children of Gad and the children of Reuven said (singular) to Moshe...</p>	<p>וַיֹּאמֶר בְּנֵי-גַד וּבְנֵי רְאוּבֵן אֶל-מֹשֶׁה...</p>
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3. Think about it from the other side.

Recognize how the person you are asking is feeling about your request. Make sure you understand what would worry them about you getting what you want.

What is Moshe worried about?

Bamidbar 32:6-8

<p>6. Moses replied to the Gadites and the Reuvenites, "Are your brothers to go to war while you stay here?"</p> <p>7. Why will you turn the minds of the Israelites from crossing into the land that the LORD has given them?</p> <p>8. That is what your fathers did when I sent them from Kadesh-barnea to survey the land.</p>	<p>ו ויאמר משה לבני-גד ולבני ראובן: האחיכם יבאו למלחמה, ואתם תשבו פה?</p> <p>ז ולמה תניאון את-לב בני ישראל-- מעבר אל-הארץ אשר-נתן להם יהוה?</p> <p>ח כה עשו אבותיכם, בשלחי אתם מקדש ברנע לראות את-הארץ.</p>
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4. Think about your approach and how you will reassure them.

How do you approach someone you are asking something from?

Gad and Reuven "come close" (vayigshu eilav), and meet Moshe. This makes it feel more personal. How might this help them get what they want?

Bamidbar 32:16-18

<p>16. Then they stepped up to him and said, "We will build here sheepfolds for our flocks and towns for our children.</p>	<p>טז ויגשו אליו ויאמרו, גדרת צאן נבנה למקננו פה, וערים לטפנו.</p>
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17. And we will hasten as shock-troops in the van of the Israelites until we have established them in their home, while our children stay in the fortified towns because of the inhabitants of the land.

18. We will not return to our homes until every one of the Israelites is in possession of his portion.

יֵזְ וְאִנְחֵנוּ נַחְלֵץ חֲשִׁים לְפָנֵי בְנֵי
 יִשְׂרָאֵל, עַד אֲשֶׁר אִם-הִבִּיאֲנֵם אֶל-
 מְקוֹמָם; וְיָשֵׁב טַפְנוּ בְּעָרֵי הַמְּבֻצָּר
 מִפְּנֵי יֹשְׁבֵי הָאָרֶץ.

יִחַלֵּא נָשׁוּב אֶל-בְּתִינוּ--עַד
 הַתְּנַחַל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אִישׁ נַחֲלָתוֹ.

The Parsha Through Another Lens

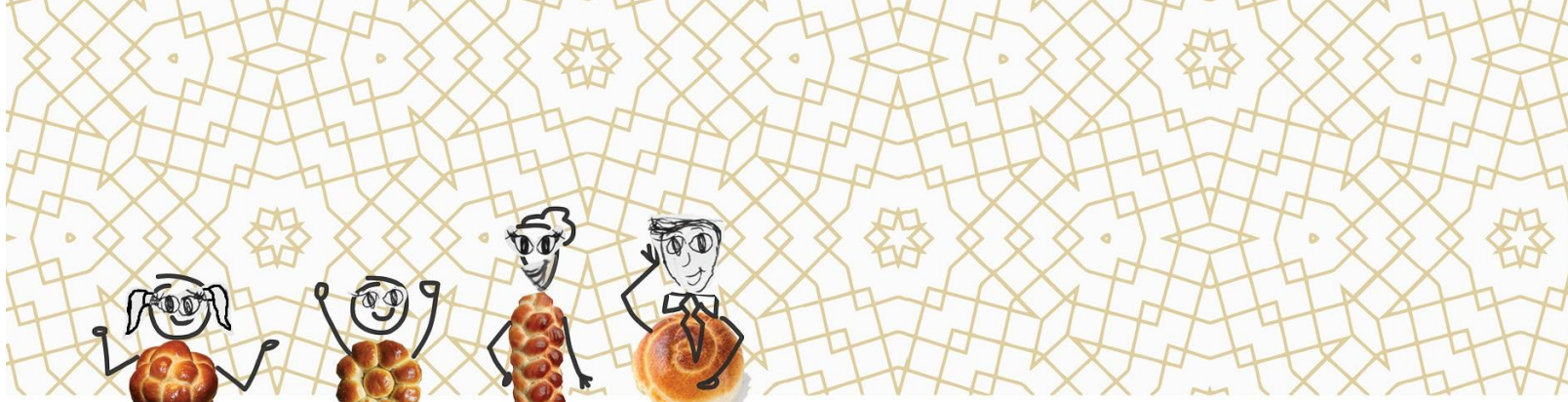
The Parsha in Practice - My Planner

Note: This activity can be talked through on Shabbat and written up after Shabbat.

The table on the following page follows the steps according to the wise tribes of Gad and Reuven in Parshiot Matot-Masei.

You should try to use this chart next time you want to ask for something! It can help you get what you want by being mindful of everyone's concerns and by listening to yourself and the person you are asking.

Make sure to use a kind understanding tone while asking.



<p>What do I want?</p>	
<p>Why do I want this?</p>	
<p>Am I working with anyone else? If so, how can we make sure we are together in what we want?</p>	
<p>In your own words, how would you find out what the person from whom you are requesting something is concerned about?</p> <p>Ask the person you are going to request something from what they might be worried about if you get what you want. <i>For example: "You'll be too tired," or "You won't have time for homework," or "We already spend a lot of money on that."</i></p>	
<p>This is what I/ we promise in return that will make sure what you are concerned about is taken care of.</p> <p>Come closer to the person you are asking and make sure they know that you understand their concerns and that you respect them.</p>	

Shabbat Shalom!