

“Ten Days of Awe-Some Israel”

Building up to *Yom HaAtzma’ut* 2021 / 5781

We’re delighted to present “Ten Days of Awe-Some Israel”, an easy-to-use set of resources designed to complement your teaching and promote ongoing engagement with your students and their families around Israel and *Yom HaAtzma’ut* this year.

- *It’s a Jewish thing:* Counting up to holidays and significant moments in the Jewish calendar is a key concept and practice. The counting of the Omer (from Pesach to Shavuot), the numbered nights of Hanukkah, and the Ten Days between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur are just a few examples that illustrate how our tradition and practice incorporate the building of excitement and anticipation to special days.
- *It’s a thriving thing:* We have learned from research on thriving and positive psychology that the planning and eager anticipation for something special, like an event or a trip can generate high and sustained levels of happiness. While a festive celebration on its own may result in one day of happiness, multiple days of preparation and planning and engagement can lead to a more sustained sense of thriving.
- *It’s a good Jewish education thing:* We know that stand-alone, one-off experiences are simply never as effective as multiple, layered learning opportunities. While many of us are currently unable to provide those experiences in our buildings, and may also be restricted to less instructional time, we can capitalize on the time we know our students have with their family at home to offer multiple avenues of engagement.

Below you will see numerous facts related to the State of Israel along with suggestions for how to use them as a springboard for relevant and meaningful family conversations. Send one to your families each day as a count-down to build the anticipation and excitement for *Yom HaAtzma’ut*. Aside from the two that are recommended to send on Yom HaShoah (Wednesday evening, April 7 – Thursday, April 8) and *Yom HaZikaron* (Tuesday evening, April 13 – Wednesday, April 14), the other concepts can be selected as you see fit for the days leading up to *Yom HaAtzma’ut* on Thursday, April 15th.

| | IT HAPPENED IN ISRAEL | BRINGING IT HOME |
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| 1 | 1860’s: The first Jewish neighborhood outside Jerusalem’s Old City walls, Mishkenot Sha’ananim, was developed by philanthropists Moses Montefiore and Judah Touro. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share descriptions of the neighborhoods where the members of your family have lived. Do you know why your parents / grandparents, etc. chose to live there? What was something special or unique? • Montefiore was British and Touro was American. They cooperated to do something important for Jews in a different part of the world. How does your family decide where to direct their efforts and support? |

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| 2 | 1880's: The First Aliyah. Most of the immigrants were from Eastern Europe and Yemen. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you imagine were the thoughts, hopes, and concerns of those who came on the First Aliyah? • Do you have any relatives or close friends who live in Israel? Do you know where they live or when they arrived? • Share a time when you took the first step to do something important, before it was considered normal or "everyone" was doing it. |
| 3 | 1881: Eliezer Ben Yehuda made Aliyah to Israel and led efforts to revive Hebrew as a spoken language. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We can all have a Hebrew name, either given by our parents, or chosen as an adult. Share what they mean, and the reasons they were given or chosen. • Here's a fun challenge – 25 common words and phrases used in Israel. Watch this YouTube clip as a family and see how many you remember to use. Tell each other "<i>Kol Hakavod</i>" (the Hebrew way to say – Way to go!) when someone uses a word or phrase correctly! |
| 4 | 1911: Arthur Ruppin, a key leader of pre-State Palestine, strongly advocated for the full inclusion of women in Zionist efforts. Because of Ruppin's support, women were well trained and played important roles in the new agricultural communities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who are some important Jewish women that you know, from history or the present? What have they done to be considered a leader or a key player? How are they a role model to you? • Two of the signatories of Israel's Declaration of Independence were women, and decades ago a woman was Israel's Prime Minister. How do women's leadership roles in politics and government in Israel compare to those in the U.S.? |
| 5 | 1953: Israel's stock exchange was established. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All the countries in the EU adopted the Euro as their currency, giving up their own. Is it significant for a country to have their own currency, why or why not? • Look at the symbols and individuals on Israel's coins and banknotes. Do you recognize any? Are there any surprises? How is Israeli currency similar and/or different from American currency? |
| 6 For Yom HaShoah | 1954: Yad Vashem, Israel's Holocaust Museum, was established. Approximately 1,000,000 people visit Yad Vashem every year. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Israel has a unique and powerful way to mark Yom HaShoah, Holocaust Remembrance Day; a siren is sounded throughout the country exactly at 10:00 am for two full minutes. During these two minutes, people put their activity on pause and stand quietly in remembrance and reflection, as seen on this clip. • Share your thoughts upon watching the scene, hearing the siren and seeing the behavior of people. |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do you think Yom HaShoah will still be observed in 25 years? In 100 years? 500 years? Why or why not? |
| 7 For Yom Ha Zikaron | <p>1973: Egypt and Syria coordinated a surprise attack on Israel on Yom Kippur. This started the deadliest war in Israel's history.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Four years later in 1977, Anwar Sadat, the president of Egypt visited Jerusalem and addressed the Knesset, breaking the barrier between the Arab world and Israel. Sixteen months later in 1979 after intense negotiation, the Egypt-Israel Peace Treaty was signed by Israel's Prime Minister Menachem Begin and Anwar Sadat (they won the Nobel Peace Prize that year, too). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You may remember that Israel sounds a siren on Yom HaShoah. A two-minute siren is also sounded on Yom HaZikaron, Israel's Memorial Day; but this time twice: the first time on 8:00 pm the evening before, or "Erev", to mark the start of the day, and the second time at 11:00 am on the day itself. During these two minutes, people stop every activity including driving, and stand quietly to remember and honor those who died protecting Israel's security as seen on this clip. What does the sound of the siren bring to mind? How does Israel's observance of Yom HaZikaron compare with your experience of observing Memorial Day in the U.S.? Sharing stories and memories of friends and relatives who are no longer with us is a wonderful way to honor their lives. Share a story and memories with your family this week of a special relative or friend who is no longer with you. Listen together to this song that Amit Farkash wrote and sung to honor her brother Tom Farkash who died in a helicopter crash in the second Lebanon War in 2006. |
| 8 | <p>1965: Drip irrigation was developed by Netafim (an Israeli manufacturer of agricultural equipment on Kibbutz Hatzerim in the Negev (the desert in Southern Israel) by adopting an ancient watering technique. This practical and sustainable method for watering fields in the desert method is now used in over 150 countries around the world, allowing agriculture to exist in regions that were previously barren.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make a list to show the ways you are dependent on water on a regular day. What do you do at home to preserve water? How does knowing that Israel taught something valuable to the world make you feel? |
| 9 | <p>1978: Israel won first place in the Eurovision Song Contest, an annual international song competition among dozens of countries.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As a family, listen to the four Israeli Eurovision winning songs on YouTube. What style do you each like? Find other Israeli songs and develop your family's play list! |

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| | And took home first place again in 1979 , 1998 , and 2018 ! | |
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| 10 | 1989: Dov Moran launched the flash-memory company M-System and creates the first flash drive, called DiskOnChip. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Find out how many people in your immediate family have a flash drive. Ask the adults to explain what they used before that was available. Interview grandparents and other relatives from a previous generation about their life without computers; school, work, socializing, etc. What is better about having so much technology now, what is more difficult? |
| 11 | 2002: Daniel Kahneman won the Nobel Prize in Economics. (Four Israelis received the Nobel Prize before him, and seven more after!) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professor Kahneman's research found that wealthy people are not happier than people of average wealth. What are some things your family likes to do together that makes you happy? If your family were to win the lottery, what are some things you could do to make a difference in the world? |
| 12 | 2004: Gal Friedman won Israel's first Olympic Gold Medal at the Athens Olympic Games in windsurfing. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gal Friedman said "If you fight someone, fight him in sport to prove you are better, not in different ways. This is our job as athletes." Explain in your own words Gal's message. Do you agree that is part of an athlete's job? What are your family's favorite sports to watch? What are your favorites to play yourself? |
| 13 | <p>2006: FreeMap Israel was developed by Ehud Shabtai as a community project with crowdsourcing assistance from users. Its name was changed to Waze in 2008. Google purchased it in 2013 for \$966,000,000 (almost 1 billion dollars).</p> <p>Fun fact: the voices on Waze have included professional basketball player Shaq, actors Morgan Freeman and Kevin Hart, and Cookie Monster!</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interview the members of your family who were driving before 2006. What tools did they use to get to their destination? How has Waze improved their driving experience? "Placed on the map" is an expression both in Hebrew and English about becoming well known, publicized and famous. Israel was put on the map for ... putting on the map! How does it make you feel that the 130 million users each month throughout the world benefit from an instrument Israel developed? What would you like to be "placed on the map" for? Think together as a family of other technological tools that should be invented to improve our daily lives. |