



This week's:

## Jewish Literacy Programme Year 5 ~ Week 7

<b>man</b> / a Jewish <b>man</b>	<b>אִישׁ</b> \ <b>אִישׁ יְהוּדִי</b>
<b>woman</b> / every <b>woman</b>	<b>אִשָּׁה</b> \ <b>כָּל אִשָּׁה</b>
<b>very</b> / very good	<b>מְאֹד</b> \ <b>טוֹב מְאֹד</b>
<b>under</b> / under the book	<b>תְּמַת</b> \ <b>תְּמַת הַסְּפָר</b>
<b>before</b> / before the king	<b>לְפִנֵּי</b> \ <b>לְפִנֵּי הַמֶּלֶךְ</b>
<b>after</b> / after Shabbat	<b>אַחֲרִי</b> \ <b>אַחֲרִי שַׁבָּת</b>

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### English Translation / Explanation

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#### The Calendar (part two)

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9th - Fast of Av - תְּשׁׁׁוּעָה בָּאָב - commemorating the destruction of the First Temple (586 B.C.E.) and the Second Temple (70 C.E.)

**אָב**

The Shofar is blown every week day in Ellul are said all this month by Sephardim and in the last week by Ashkenazim

**אֶלְוּל**

1st and 2nd - Rosh Hashana - ראש הַשָּׁנָה  
3rd - Fast of Gedalia; 10th - Yom Kippur - יּוֹם כְּפֹור  
15th - Beginning of Succot - סְפֻוֹת

**תְּשִׁירִי**

Also called מרַחְצָוָן, "bitter Cheshvan," because there are no festivals in this month

**חֶשְׁבָּן**

## Jewish History 5

### Shoftim: Shimshon

#### **Shimshon** (Samson)

Again, this new chapter begins in the way we now expect:

“The Bnei Yisrael continued to do what was evil in the eyes of G-d, and G-d gave them over into the hands of the Philistines (Plishtim) for forty years.” (Shoftim 13:1)

Shimshon is the Judge famous for his superhero strength, and for leading the struggle against Israel's arch-enemy, the Philistines. (See Shoftim, 13-16.)

The Philistines were a seafaring people. They lived along the eastern Mediterranean Coast from the southern coast of Israel to Lebanon. In the southern coastal area of Israel they established a group of five city-states (Gaza, Ahskelon, Ashdod, Gath and Ekron). During the period of the Judges they are constantly at war with the tribes of Israel, pushing them away from much of the coast and into the hilly, inland regions of the country.

Excavations show that the Philistines were very sophisticated culturally. They had perfected iron tools and iron weapons, gaining an important technological advantage over their neighbours.

Shimshon, who judged Israel for 20 years, was one of the people who takes on the Philistines. Shimshon is a Nazir. (Nazir is a form of Teshuvah in which a person temporarily refrains from cutting his hair and abstains from wine) Shimshon's Nazir status is unusual in that he is a Nazir from birth and remains one his entire life. In addition, his long hair gives him super-human strength.

To undermine the Philistines, Shimshon pretended to join them by deliberately taking a Philistine woman as his wife. She is killed by her own people; he then married another Philistine woman, Delilah. This turns out to be a mistake.

Delilah realised that Shimshon was a major threat to her people. After many failed attempts and much pleading she finally succeeded in getting Shimshon to reveal the secret of his superhuman strength and cuts off his hair while he is asleep. As a result the Philistines were able to capture him. They blinded him and threw him in prison.

The Philistines decided to execute Shimshon in a public display at the Temple of Dagan, one of their gods.

As the masses gather to watch the execution, blind Shimshon asks a slave boy to position him next to one of the columns supporting the temple.

At the climax of the story, Shimshon prays:

"My L-rd, G-d! Remember me and strengthen me just this one time, O G-d, and I will extract vengeance from the Philistines for one of my two eyes."

Shimshon grasped the two central pillars upon which the building rested, and he leaned on them; one with his right hand and one with his left hand. Shimshon said, "Let my soul die with the Philistines!" (Judges 16:28-30)

With his renewed superhuman strength he overturns the column and collapses the building killing all inside.

Shimshon died giving his life for the Jewish people and the Bible says he killed more Philistine enemies in that moment than he vanquished the whole rest of his life.