

בימים ההם בזמן הזה

Chanukah Lesson – Then and Now

Grade Level:

Primary School (Years 3-6)

Lesson Objectives:

Students demonstrate an appreciation for the נסים that Hashem does for them, and understand that these נסים are just as wondrous as those during the time of Chanuka.



Description:

An attractive timepiece connects Chanuka to today; combined with a lesson on נסים, this bulletin board inculcates an awareness of Hashgachas Hashem and an appreciation for His kindness.

The Lesson

The purpose of Chanukah is thanking Hashem, as it says in הלל, "וקבעו שמונת ימי חנוכה אלו להודות ולהלל".

Thus, it is appropriate to explore the idea of הכרת הטוב on Chanukah. This bulletin board parallels the nissim of Chanukah with the nissim that we receive every single day.

Step 1: Lesson on חסדי ה'

Open a discussion on the concept of הודו לה' כי טוב. Use stories to inspire the girls and show them what we have to be grateful for.

Some subjects to discuss:

- Modeh Ani – the first thing we do upon awakening is thank Hashem.
- Modim – what are we thanking Hashem for?
 - שאתה הוא ה' אלוקינו – That we are Yidden
 - ועל ניסך – For the נסים that Hashem does every second
 - Continue to explain the words of the bracha
- Hashem does טו because He loves us. Noticing these kindnesses makes us aware that Hashem is watching over us and cares for us.
- Our miraculous body – what happens if we are missing a body part? Or if it breaks/malfunctions?

Step 2: Lists

Set a timer for three minutes. The students use this time to list all the things they are grateful for.

Step 3:

When the timer stops, each student counts the number of things she wrote down. Add each total to get a class total. Show the students how many חסדים Hashem does for us: look how many things we can thank Hashem for in three minutes!

Step 4:

The student with the longest list reads her list to the class. The other students listen and add things to their own lists. This raises awareness of just how many חסדים there are.

Step 5:

Each student chooses the thing which they have an extra special *הכרת הטוב* for, writes in on a paper and sticks it on the board.

Step 6:

The teacher and the class categorize the list of items on the board. Sample categories: health, friends and family, clothing and shelter, food.

Step 7:

The class divides into groups based on the category their item fit into. The group works together to fill the following requirements:

- Make a play or share a story of a person who did not have this thing
- Prepare a banner or display that depicts what they are grateful for. Try to include one of the following:
 - what steps brought this thing to them; for example: rain → plants grow → → food
 - the smaller *ניסים* are part of this thing: for example: the eye has an eyelid, it blinks.
- Write a song to a known tune about what they are grateful for
- Present their play/story, banner and song to the class
 - Optional: bring in a nosh related to this thing

Step 8:

Open a discussion on what we can do to show *הכרת הטוב* for what we have. If Hashem does all these *ניסים* for me, constantly and continuously, what can I do? The students make a *קבלה* in this area.

Some *קבלות* are:

- ברוך – when saying a bracha, Pause to think Hashem is Source of all the good in my life
- מודים – bow and then rise slowly, think Who am I grateful to?

Additional:

- Each student makes *חסידי ה'* notebook, where they write down the *חסידים*.
- Stubbed Toe Concept – Discuss the concept of *הרע על הטוב כך מברכים על הרע*. Explain that Hashem loves us, and what Hashem does is good even if it feels bad. In the above lesson, students searched for kindnesses and recognized the care Hashem shows us all the time. Now, ask students why Hashem would do something that hurts if He loves us; it must be because it is also good. Hang a picture of a stubbed toe. Encourage students to verbalize this concept when they “stub their toe” and it hurts.

In place of the group banners on the bulletin board, give a candle template to each student. They can place a picture of what they are grateful for in the flame and write a short essay on the candle.

בַּיַד חֲלָשִׁים _____

בַּיַד מְעֵטִים _____

בַּיַד רְשָׁעִים _____

לֹא תוֹרָה _____

לֹא בְרִית מִיֵּלָה _____

לֹא כְּנֵשֶׁר _____

לֹא רֹאשׁ חוֹדֶשׁ _____

גְּבוּרִים, רַבִּים, צַדִּיקִים,

לְשִׁמּוֹר, לְשִׁמּוֹר, לְאֶכּוֹל, לְשִׁמּוֹר