

CORNERSTONE 2018 RESOURCE

Nature Specialty Track 1 Building Sacred Spaces: Inside and Outside

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SUMMARY:	Building Holy Places: from our bodies/minds to the Mishkan (the tent that holds the Ark after Mt. Sinai), how can we build our environment and ourselves to be sacred spaces (and have fun in the process)? We will build survival shelters, make rope, and meditate in nature amongst other things. - Submitted by Josh Lake
TOPIC(S):	Nature, making/building, yoga, meditation, fun!
LEARNING OBJECTIVE:	You will learn how to create a survival shelter in the woods and how the Jewish connection to survival impacts you. You will experience being quiet in the woods while practicing <i>hitbodedut</i> (unstructured, spontaneous and individualized meditation). You will learn how to make cordage and how Jewish artisans have used their skills to save lives and build the Mishkan.
AUDIENCE:	10-99 years of age. Best with between 10-20 people.
TIMING:	90 minutes
APPENDICES:	Hevruta study sheet (Exodus 38:1-8)
MATERIALS NEEDED:	Raffia. Map of the Mishkan. Parachute cord.
SET-UP DETAILS:	This program is best run outside under a canopy of trees in the woods or forest.

SESSION TIMELINE & OUTLINE:

00-05: Intro: Yoga: Downward dog. Tapping? Mountain Pose (Tadasana, tada=mountain, Asana=pose)

06-20: Cordage making:

Gold braids: Raffia: Cordage Making (Yocheved's skill). Yocheved was Moses' mother. She knew how to make rope, made her *Tevat* from Papyrus along banks of Nile. Where is connection between making cord and making community? Ecclesiastes 4:12

20-35: Hevruta text Study:

Break into Hevruta groups (2-3 people) and find a quiet space to read Exodus 36:1-8.

Hevruta=friendship groups; traditional way of studying Torah for 1000s of years

Burn incense while studying.

35-45: Questions for Hevruta

What was the sacred task?

What was the problem? Can you imagine that the problem was that people gave TOO MUCH?! Imagine if on Super Sunday you got a call that said, "Normally we would ask you for money, but everyone has already given more than enough. So please, do not give us more money!"

Building the Mishkan was the sacred task. I would argue that it is still a sacred task in which we are engaged. Obviously, we are not building THE Mishkan, but we can still build a metaphorical Mishkan. The ingredients for the Mishkan were *Terumah*.

Some of the *Terumah*:

Gold, Silver, Copper, Sky Blue Wool, Dark red wool (wool dyed with the crimson worm [*Argaman*])
According to Rabbi Sara Etz Alon, *Argaman* is a shamanic substance, not a color), linen, goat's wool, etc.

All things that were *Terumah* were created in *Breishit*. God created all these things in *Breishit*, and we use them to build the Mishkan. Therefore we are co-creators. What an opportunity! I'd like to investigate creation and create some things with you today.

What was created on the third day? Grasses, vegetation, dry land. Part of the dry land are all the minerals, including gold. While we are not as lucky as Bezlel and Oholiav, Cornerstone does not have gold to let us weave with. Part of the Mishkan was gold brocade, chains. I'd like to make gold chains (cordage) with you.

45-60: Building the actual Mishkan: Survival shelter: Shelter for Jews. Elaborate instructions. Explicate the fact that you are building your bunks. This building is also a holy building for each camper. What do you and each camper add to the holy construction of the bunk?

Mishkan as lungs and body cavity.

Order of survival

Shelter, Water, Fire, Food

Let us create survival shelters, our own Mishkanot.

And whoever saves a life, it is considered as if he saved an entire world.

-Mishnah [Sanhedrin](#) 4:5; *Yerushalmi Talmud* [4:9](#), Babylonian Talmud Sanhedrin 37a.

Tell story about life saving in Michigan.

Break into groups of 2-3. Build a mini-Mishkan. Place of shelter. For yourself.

Pick 2-3 to “tour.” Campers love showing off their stuff. Give them this opportunity! Imagine having a fairy garden of Mishkanot around/near your cabin. Age appropriate! My daughters LOVE fairy gardens!

60-75: Now that we have built external Mishkanot, let’s do the internal work.

What I’d like you to do is to be able to practice Hitbodedut.

Hitbodedut is Jewish Meditation. Made famous by Rabbi Nachmun of Bratzlav

Go and *lehitboded!* But with the frame of how you can use *breishit*, nature, to build something. Go!

What did you see/feel/hear? Recitation of the Amidah!

75-85: Get together with 1 person, debrief. Where/how could you use any of these ideas/activities at camp?

85-90: Howling over our Mishkanot!

ADDITIONAL NOTES FOR BRINGING IT BACK TO CAMP:

- Consider doing any of these activities as standalone activities.
- Consider doing this as a fort building for the cabin/bunk.
- Consider doing this near your cabin so people can see their mishkanot as they enter their own cabin.
- How is the tent of meeting like their cabin?
- How is the mishkan like their cabin?
- What holy things happened in the mishkan?
- What holy things happen in the bunk?