

TAKE ISRAEL TO THE MOON

In 2003, all of Israel watched in excitement as Ilan Ramon trained with his NASA colleagues after he was selected to be the first Israeli astronaut in space. Sadly, he died, along with the other six members of the Columbia crew, when the Space Shuttle crashed upon re-entry.

The excitement for Israel exploring space was rekindled when a team of young Israeli scientists jumped at the opportunity to draw attention to STEM education. Team Spacell launched its spacecraft—named Beresheet—in 2019. Although it did not actually land on the moon, the mission to space was considered an overwhelming success, sparking global Jewish pride and inspiring people around the world to persevere when chasing their dreams.

Between Israel's attempt to land the smallest spacecraft on the moon and the story of famous Israeli astronaut Ilan Ramon, participants now have the opportunity to “take Israel to the moon” while exploring the elements that make up their Jewish identity and relationships with Israel in the context of space exploration.



SPACEIL



Tip

*This program can have even more impact if you connect it to Jewish values that your participants may be exploring. Here are some that may work well: **Curiosity, Creativity, Social Responsibility, Leadership, Tradition and Innovation, Courage.***



Further exploration

*To learn more about the many scientific achievements and advancements made through Team Spacell's journey, visit: **spacell.com***

PREPARATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

Part 1: The Israeli Space Program

Spend about 10 minutes introducing Ilan Ramon and Spacell. Highlight parts of the stories that are important and tailored for age-appropriateness, and be sure to note the items that Ilan Ramon took into space, as it is important later in the activity. You can make reference to the following Ilan Ramon quote to add depth to the conversation about Israel and space:

“Personally I think it’s very peculiar to be the first Israeli up in space. Especially because of my background, which is kind of a symbol of a lot of other Israelis’ background. My mother is a Holocaust survivor. She was in Auschwitz. My father fought for the independence of Israel, not so long ago. I was born in Israel and I’m kind of the proof for them, and for the whole Israeli people, that whatever we fought for and we’ve been going through in the last century (or maybe in the last two thousand years), is becoming true.”

- > Why do you think Ilan Ramon wanted to bring things with him into space? Why did he choose these items?
- > What does it mean that Ilan Ramon was the first Israeli in space? How does it make you feel? In what ways does his story inspire?
- > What is the significance of Israel trying to become the fourth country to reach the moon? Is it important to you to do something few people have done before?

Part 2: Creating an Israeli Spacecraft

Provide participants with instructions, along with a variety of arts and crafts materials, to build and decorate their “Israeli” spacecrafts.

Making the Body:

1. Get an empty paper towel tube.
2. Cut a sheet of paper to be big enough to cover the tube.
3. Wrap the paper around the roll, then secure the edge.
4. Cut three 1-inch slits into the base of the tube.
5. Decorate your spacecraft.

Creating the Cone:

1. Trace a circle onto a sheet of cardstock or construction paper.
2. Cut the circle out, then cut a slit into the middle.
3. Roll the circle into a cone shape, then secure it.
4. Hot glue the cone to the top of the toilet paper roll.



Adding Fins:

1. Cut three triangles (1" tall and 2" wide) out of paper.
2. Fold the triangles in half lengthwise to make a crease.
3. Insert the triangles into the slits.
4. Glue down the triangles inside the rocket.
5. Add some tissue paper to make flames at the bottom of the spacecraft.

Spacell's spacecraft, Beresheet, carried the Israeli flag with it to the moon. Encourage participants to think about their relationships with Israel and how they may bring them to life on their personal spacecrafts. Encourage everyone to choose decorative items other than the Israeli flag that represent other things they may know or feel about Israel.

Part 3: Choosing Personal Items for Your Journey

Like Ilan Ramon, who took a number of items of personal significance with him to space, participants should think about what they might want to take with them. Suggest items from the list below, or add your own:

- > an item that reflects who you are
- > an item that reflects an aspect of your family
- > an item that reflects what Judaism means to you
- > an item that reflects your relationship with Israel

Have participants draw or write descriptions of their items on a piece of paper. Time permitting, you could have some or all of them share their items with the group. When they are done, have them roll up the sheet and fit it into the nose cone of their spacecraft.



Tip

For this part, larger groups may work in teams—teams could give their spacecraft a Hebrew "team" name which could be part of the decoration.



Tip

When participants are done with their spacecrafts, put them on display for all to see!