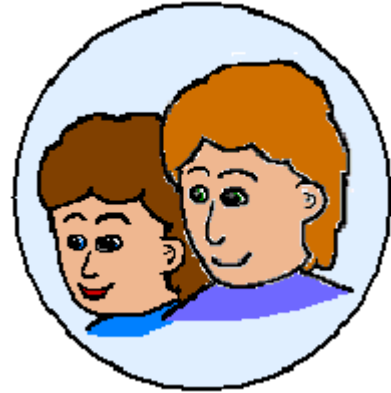




and the



In the story below, some of the English words are replaced with Hebrew. If you don't know what the words mean, look at the list of Hebrew words and pictures at the end of the story. Remember that Hebrew is read from right to left. One word in the story has no picture. Read the story and see if you can figure out what it means. Check your answer with the key on page 20.

*Jewish Midrash re-told by Elisabeth Niedrauer*

Once upon a time in Persia, there lived two men, **מְרֹדְכִי** and **הֶמֶן**.

**מְרֹדְכִי** was a good man. He was a Jew, and he loved teaching **יְלָדִים** in his

**בֵּית-הַסֵּפֶר**. **הֶמֶן** was the **מֶלֶךְ**'s advisor. He was an evil man and hated

the Jews. He especially hated **מְרֹדְכִי**. **הֶמֶן** had convinced the **מֶלֶךְ** that

the Jews were bad people and should all be killed. The **מֶלֶךְ** had agreed. The

day was now drawing near when **הֶמֶן** would be allowed to murder all the Jews, in-

cluding **מְרֹדְכִי** and his young students. But **הֶמֶן** wasn't sure he wanted to

wait much longer to dispose of **מְרֹדְכִי**. So he decided to ask the **מֶלֶךְ**

if he could hang **מְרֹדְכִי** right away instead of waiting for the appointed day.

That night on his way to ask the **מֶלֶךְ**, he saw a Jewish **בֵּית־הַסֵּפֶר** with the lights on. He walked in and saw a circle of **יְלָדִים** sitting on the floor. In the middle of the circle sat **מְרַדְכֵי** ! **מְרַדְכֵי** was reading out loud from a **סֵפֶר** in his lap. The **יְלָדִים** were reading along with their own **סֵפֶר**s. As **הֶמֶן** stepped into the room, several **יְלָדִים** got up to bow to him but **מְרַדְכֵי** quickly pulled them back down and continued to read. **הֶמֶן** was furious! He ordered his servants to arrest all the **יְלָדִים** in the **בֵּית־הַסֵּפֶר** and lock them up in a his dungeon. Then, **הֶמֶן** told the **יְלָדִים** that he was going to hang their teacher **מְרַדְכֵי** in the morning, but before that he was going to kill them and burn their **סֵפֶר**s. The **יְלָדִים** were frightened in the dungeon, but they remembered what **מְרַדְכֵי** had taught them about Hashem and how He was always with them, even though they couldn't see Him. They stacked their **סֵפֶר**s carefully in a corner of their cell. They spent all night weeping, and begging Hashem to have mercy on them and deliver them and **מְרַדְכֵי** from the

hands of the evil **הָמָן**. Hashem heard their prayers and had compassion on

them. **הָמָן** never got a chance to ask the **מֶלֶךְ** if he could hang **מָרְדֵּכַי**.

That night, Queen Esther told the **מֶלֶךְ** that she was a Jew. She told him that

**הָמָן** was trying to destroy her people. The very day on which **הָמָן** had planned

to kill all the **יְלָדִים** from **מָרְדֵּכַי**'s **בֵּית-הַסֵּפֶר** and burn their

**סֵפֶר**s, the **מֶלֶךְ** and Queen Esther had **הָמָן** hung on the gallows he had

built for **מָרְדֵּכַי**. The **יְלָדִים** from **מָרְדֵּכַי**'s **בֵּית-הַסֵּפֶר** were sent

home safely and the entire Jewish nation was saved!



**מָרְדֵּכַי**

*mordechai*



**הָמָן**

*haman*



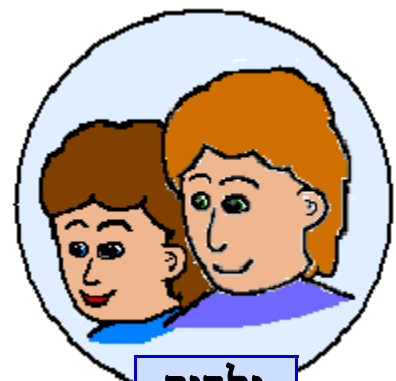
**מֶלֶךְ**

*melech*



**סֵפֶר**

*sefer*



**יְלָדִים**

*yeladim*

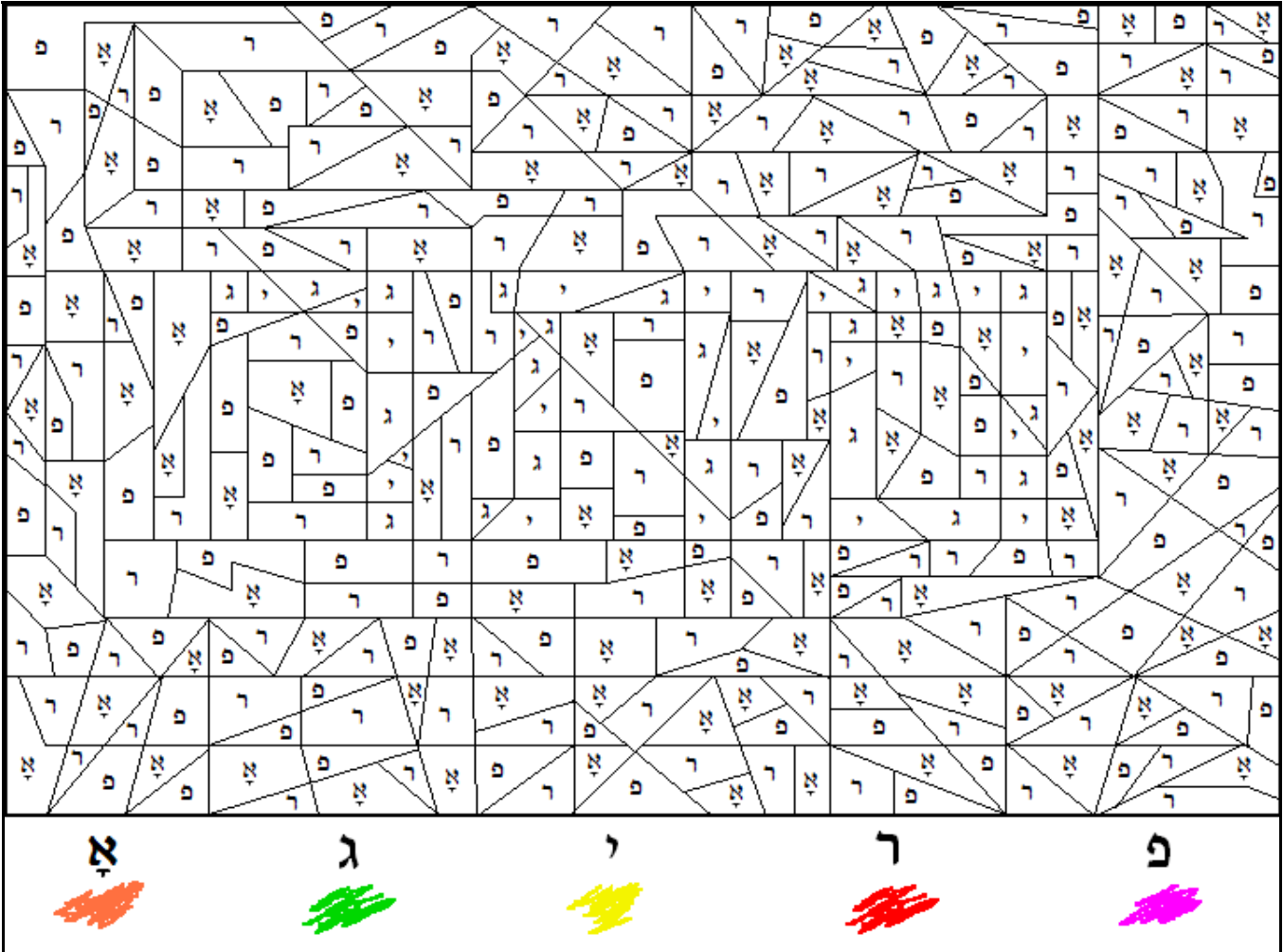
**בֵּית-הַסֵּפֶר** = \_\_\_\_\_  
*beit-hasefer*

# Find the Hidden Message

Using the Hebrew letter key at the bottom of the picture, color in the spaces of the picture below.

When you are finished, a Hebrew message will appear.

*Answer key on page 20.*



B. C.

by Josiah Niedrauer

