

Key Parasha Information

Summary

At the start of the parasha, we are told that we should be Holy because Hashem (G-d) is holy “You shall be holy, for I, the L-rd your G-d, am holy.” We are then provided with many mitzvot that we can do to make ourselves holy, such as; not serving idols, giving tzedaka (charity), being honest in judgement, keeping the laws of Shabbat, being honest in business dealings, honouring your parents, the importance of saving someone's life etc.

According to Rabbi Hillel, the most important Mitzvah in the entire Torah is found in this parasha, which is; “Love your fellow person, as you love yourself.”

Discovery

Did you know that according to a 12th Century Scholar called the Rambam, there are eight levels of tzedaka. 1) giving but doing so begrudgingly, 2) giving not quite enough for what they need but doing so with a smile, 3) giving directly to the person after they ask you for money 4) giving to the person directly before they ask you for money 5) giving where the giver doesn't know who the receiver is, 6) where the giver knows who the receiver is but the receiver doesn't know the giver, 7) the receiver and the giver don't know who each other are, 8) helping a person with a gift, a loan or by giving them a job.

Did you know that people used to worship idols; bowing down to them and bringing them food and jewels? They believed that there was one idol for health, one for wealth, one for success, one for the weather, one for beauty etc, and they had to please them. When Avraham discovered Hashem, he realised that there was one G-d, who had complete control of everything.

Did you know that a Jewish judge is not allowed to accept a bribe? If a judge is even offered a bribe, they must remove themselves from the case.



Parasha Thinking



- 1) Why do you think that the highest level of tzedaka is giving someone a gift, a loan or a job?
- 2) We don't serve idols in this day and age so why do you think that people in the past, did this so willingly?
- 3) How does the word, honest, link to the Parasha?

Counting
the Omer:
Day 18

Today is day
18 making
two weeks
and four
days of the
omer.

Yom Ha'atzmaut: Israel's Independence Day

Yom Ha'atzmaut is celebrated on the fifth of the Hebrew month of Iyar. This is the Hebrew date when the State of Israel was established in 1948. Members of the provisional government signed the Declaration of Independence in Tel Aviv. In Israel it is a national holiday, so most schools and businesses have the day off.

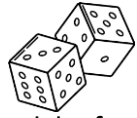
The day before Yom Ha'atzmaut is called Yom Hazikaron, Memorial Day, for showing respect to the Israeli soldiers that have lost their lives serving their country. The two days are linked because the Israelis owe recognition for their independence to the soldiers who worked so hard in their life to achieve it and maintain it.



Who has done something special for you this week and what did they do? (If they are present, go up to them and say thank you!)

Games

1) Tsedaka Acting



Resources: print out of the 8 levels of tsedaka from the discovery section on page 1, for each pair.

Children prepare a skit to demonstrate the eight levels of tsedaka.

2) Two Truths and a Lie

Link: be truthful in judgement and in business.

The first child must make three statements (two true and one lie) about themselves to the rest of the group and everyone guesses which statement they think is made up.

3) "What if"

Everyone asks the group a "what if" question. This can be anything from "what if you woke up as a professional footballer tomorrow - who would you be?" Or "what if you had a voucher to buy any one item from Brent Cross - what would you choose?"

Story (One of the children can read this out loud – encourage them to use expression.)



"Aaaaa, I'm excited and nervous at the same time!" squealed Meghan.

"Stay still, or I won't be able to do your hair!" said Mum. "I know – this is the biggest performance you've ever done and you've got the main solo - you're singing the Hatikva. I get it that you're feeling two emotions at the very same time."

Meghan's children's service was in charge of the Shul's Yom Ha'atzmaut celebrations. They took it very seriously. Out of twenty three children, they all wanted to help in some way. "I am not such a great singer," admitted Jess, "so I don't want to be in the performance but I have really improved in my baking – maybe I can come into shul during the morning and bake for the event, in the shul's kitchen, together with the shomer." Harrison was teaching himself graphic design and offered to make the flyers and the tickets. Tilly actually was a good singer but she was waaaay too shy to sing alone, so was just happy to join in with the group. Olivia had been at the Shul the longest and knew literally everybody in the community. She decided that she could help out by being at the front desk on the day and she could check people off the list as they came in. Avi was great at maths and he calculated all the financial stuff, like security costs, electricity, price of ingredients for the refreshments, ticket prices etc. It really seemed that everyone was pulling their weight and the parents were mighty proud.

James and Julia knew a thing or two about fashion and made sure that everyone looked incredible in their costumes and Gila was so creative, she took charge of decorations. She was so glad when Jerry offered to help with putting them up as he was the tallest person she knew – he'd have no issues sticking up the banners and the balloons in the Shul hall.

They all agreed to get to the Shul around an hour early, to set up and to make sure that they were ready for the big concert, so at 5pm, they started to arrive, everyone that was, except Jess, who was in charge of the refreshments. "I'm sure she'll be here any minute," said Gila, "I know she was here this morning and she worked hard to bake up a storm."

It was getting later and Jess still hadn't shown up. James' big brother was around in case anyone needed an extra pair of hands and as he was friends with Jess' brother and sent him a message, to check where Jess was. He replied a minute later, saying that Jess had suddenly remembered that she had a friend's surprise party and she couldn't be in both places at once. She knew that her friend would understand if she left half an hour early to get to the shul – she'd be late for set-up but there with enough time to display everything really beautifully. As James' brother read the message to everyone, Jess walked in and they all cheered. They all helped her set up the refreshments and it really did look very professional.

Meghan's Hatikva brought a tear to everyone's eye and the whole event was a roaring success – they managed to raise £650 for tsedaka. Everyone who attended agreed that they should do this again next year. And the next. And the next.

1) What can we learn from this story and how does it connect to the Parasha and Yom Ha'Atzmaut?

2) Have you ever joined a group to plan an event? Wat was your role?

3) How are you going to be celebrating Yom Ha'Atzmaut?