



Parasha Thinking



- 1) Why do you think Moshe mentioned the bad times, as well as the good times?
- 2) The Jewish people knew they were close to the land of Israel – the land they had been yearning for. How do you think they felt, knowing they would actually reach it soon?
- 3) How does the word, fair, link to the Parasha?

Key Parasha Information

Summary

Moshe (Moses) will sadly pass away soon and in this week's parasha, 37 days before his death, he repeats the Torah to the Jewish people who had all gathered for this occasion. He reminded them of the events that happened and explained all the halachot (laws) that they were given as they travelled through the desert, towards Israel – the Promised Land, known then as Canaan. It was also important for Moshe to bring up the times that the Jewish people behaved badly, as this was an opportunity for them to learn from what went wrong. Moshe instructed them to keep all the laws of the Torah once they reach the land of Israel once he passes - the land that Hashem (G-d) is giving them forever.

Moshe reminded the Jewish people of the time when he set up levels of judges to deal with disputes and queries. He taught them the halachot and that way they all followed what Hashem expected. He told them to judge each case fairly. Any query that was too difficult for the top level of judge was handled by Moshe himself. The journey they took from Egypt to Israel was also recounted.

Moshe mentioned some recent events such as the spies, and then gave a message to Yehoshua (Joshua) who would take over from him and lead the nation into Israel and lead the battles to conquer the land – don't fear the nations (living there) because Hashem will fight for you.

Discovery

Did you know that Moshe told the judges that even if a particular case had come up three times before, they shouldn't think, 'oh, I know this!' they should listen to the details like they're new and review the laws each time.

Did you know that the Tribe of Levi was not represented when the Spies went into the land of Israel but each other tribe was (including Efrayim (Ephraim) and Menashe (Manasseh)?

Tisha B'Av (9th day of the month of Av – Jewish Fast Day)

Throughout history, five tragedies happened to the Jewish people on Tisha B'Av. 1) The Jewish people believed the spies' evil words and Hashem told them that they would not be allowed to enter the land of Israel. 2) The first Beit Hamikdash (Temple) was destroyed. 3) The second Beit Hamikdash was destroyed. 3) The Romans captured the city of Beitar in Israel, and tens of thousands of Jews were massacred. 4) Hadrian ordered Turnus Rufus to plow the city of Yerushalayim (Jerusalem), so that there would be no memory of the holy city. Once this was complete, he built a pagan temple on the site of the Beit HaMikdash and forbade the Jewish people from entering Yerushalayim, which was renamed as a pagan city.

Our Sages said this day will be a fast day - a sad day, mainly because of the destruction of the two temples. We are sad that we are still in exile today. We also remember other tragedies that happened to the Jewish people.



Games

1) Quiz

Ask questions about the Parasha Summary on sheet 1. Alternate between team A and team B. Children stand in a line and run to the wall if they know the answer.

2) The Journey

Play in a circle

The leader begins the play with the name of an imaginary person. Each player, in turn, must add something to this made-up character's journey, with a letter that starts with his or her name.

Example: "I have an Auntie Eva." "She lives in Estonia." "She went to work by elephant." "On the way, she saw elderflowers on the side of the road." "She was hungry so she ate an egg sandwich!" "She realized she forgot an important envelope at home so she turned back." etc.

The player who is unable to add something is out.

3) Why, When, Where

Link: the judges had to listen to all the details before deciding on the outcome of a case

Divide the group into two teams and send one player from each team outside. The remaining children then decide on an object. One at a time, a player from each team enters the room. This player may then ask any of the following questions: "When do you use it?" "Why do you use it?" "Where do you use it?" The player may ask the same questions of each player in the group, but each player must give different answers.

The player continues asking questions until they guess the item. The total number of questions until they guess are counted and then the next player enters the room. The team whose player asked the least number of questions, wins.



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

"Well I know whose side I'm on!" chuckled Ava, "it's clear that Jeremy is in the right here."

"How can you be so sure, Ava?" asked Natalie, who was Ava's very best friend.

"Well Dan had the £5 in his schoolbag - Gideon found it. Caught him!" answered Ava.

"I don't know," Natalie argued, "I just have a hunch that it might not be so straightforward. How do you know that it was the exact same £5 note that Jeremy lost?"

"Oh that's easy," offered Ava, smugly, "Jeremy had taken a photograph of it because the serial number ended in 613 – the number of mitzvot in the Torah and when Gideon found it after it went missing, it had the exact same serial number. There you go – guilty!" "I still don't know," said Ava, uncomfortably. "Who said someone didn't try to frame Dan?"

Ava looked confused, "frame Dan? Why would anyone want to do that?" she asked, as Gideon was passing. Gideon's face crumbled and he froze.

Gideon burst into tears and cried to Ava and Natalie, "How did you guess? It was me – I framed Dan! What was I thinking?"

Natalie offered him a tissue and asked if he was comfortable to elaborate? He was.

"Well, there was an opening on the football team and it was between Dan and I. I know the two of us are the best and we both equally deserve that spot. We both went to the trials and the coach ended up choosing him. Oh goodness, I was so jealous. I decided there and then that I had to do something to make him lose his spot. I thought for three days of what I could do and then today at lunch, I saw my chance. I took the money from Jeremy's bag – I'd seen the photo, and slipped it into Dan's bag. Oh, what did I do? I thought he would get told off for stealing and lose his spot on the team but because it's not so much money, he wouldn't be in too much trouble. I'm so foolish – what have I done? I was so wrong!"

Natalie and Ava told Gideon that he should go to the Head Teacher and explain what had happened. He agreed and set off right away. Ava sighed really loudly and said, "Nat, thank you for teaching me not to judge before I had all the facts!"

- 1) What can we learn from this story and how does it connect to the Parasha?
- 2) Have you ever judged incorrectly? (Don't say the names or any detail that will let others know who they are).
- 3) What should the Head Teacher do to help the situation when Gideon talks to her?

