

Key Parasha Information

Summary

Moshe's (Moses) father-in-law, Yitro (Jethro), heard about all the miracles Hashem (G-d) performed when saving the Jewish people from Egypt and wanted to join the Jewish people and become part of the nation. Yitro brought his daughter Tsiporah who was Moshe's wife and their two sons, to the Jewish camp. Yitro observed hundreds of people lining up throughout the day, to ask Moshe halachic (Jewish law) questions and suggested to Moshe, that he should train judges at different levels, so that the more straight forward questions can be answered simply, the more tricky questions can be answered by judges that are expertly trained and only the most complicated questions would reach Moshe himself.

The Jewish people had now reached Har (Mount) Sinai and were camping in front of it. They are told that Hashem has chosen them to be His "kingdom of priests" and a "holy nation." The people responded, "Everything that Hashem has said, we will do."

On the sixth of Sivan, seven weeks after leaving Egypt, the whole nation gathered at the base of HarSinai for Hashem to give them the Torah. There was thunder, lightning, billows of smoke and the sound of the shofar. Hashem instructed Moshe to ascend.

Hashem uttered the Aseret HaDibrot (Ten Commandments); Believe in Hashem, do not worship idols, do not take Hashem's name in vain, keep Shabbat Holy, honor your parents, do not murder, do no love someone else's wife or husband, do not steal, do not lie and do not be jealous. The people cried out to Moshe that the experience was too intense for them and asked him to teach them the Torah.

Discovery

Did you know that Yitro was actually a priest in Midian and wanted to convert to Judaism, when he heard that Hashem had split the sea for the Jewish people and saved them from the Amalekite nation.

Did you know that on the 1st Sivan, Moshe didn't speak to the Jewish people because they were exhausted from their journey. On the 2nd, he told them that Hashem wanted them to be a nation of priests. On the 3rd he instructed them to build a fence around Har Sinai. On the 4th they were told to prepare themselves spiritually that day and the next, for the 6th Sivan, when they would receive the Torah.

Did you know that when the Jewish people camped in front of Har Sinai, they were described as "K'Ish echad b'lev echad." 'Like one man with one heart, meaning that if one person was suffering, they all did and if one person was sad, everyone was affected.



Parasha Thinking



- 1) Imagine having to queue up all day to ask Moshe a Jewish question. How would you feel once a system was put in place to categorise the questions and for different judges to answer?
- 2) In your opinion, was it necessary for them to build a fence around Har Sinai?
- 3) How does the word, parent, link to the Parasha?

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) On your chairs

If safe to do so, get all children to stand on their chairs and go round the circle asking them quiz questions based on the Parasha summary. If they get the parasha question right, they have to stand on the floor. If they get the next question right on the next round, they can stand up on their chair again but if not, they're out.

2) I went to the shops and I bought X for Shabbat

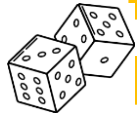
Link: One of the 10 Commandments is to keep Shabbat holy. One way to do this is to prepare for Shabbat throughout the week.

This is a memory game. The first child says I went to the shops and I bought X for Shabbat, X being a Shabbat item of their choice, for example grape juice. The next child had to say I went to the shops and I bought X (what the previous person said) and Y (a different item of their choice). Child three has to mention the previous two children's items and then say their own. Child 4 needs to continue but remembering child 1's item, child 2's and child 3's and then add their own. If someone can't remember an item, they are out. This game continues until there is one player left who can remember every item.

3) Bag of Truths or Lies

One by one, children open bags containing bizarre (Shabbat friendly) items that you have put there, and choose to either describe it truthfully or lie about what's in the box. The other children vote on whether they're telling the truth or not.

Resources: Three bags, each containing an unusual item of your choice.



Story

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

“She’ll never let me,” said Noa, “Even though I’ve watched her a thousand times!” “You can’t have watched your mum make challot for a thousand, weeks? If it was 1,000 weeks, you’d be 19 years old!” teased Miri. “Ok, 500 weeks then, I’m 10. ... I just think I know what to do. Even when I was a baby in the bouncer, I used to watch her. I know the exact measurements of all the ingredients and I know how long everything should be left to rise and exactly how long the dough should be baked,” Noa told Miri. “You should ask her then. Tell her that you are ready to make challot this week. She might say no ... but she might say yes. If you don’t ask, you’ll never know.”

That night Noa asked her mum if she could be the one to bake the challot that week and confidently told her mum that she was ready and she knew exactly what she was doing. Her mum listened to her and decided to let Noa take charge. Noa was delighted and bought all the ingredients. She carefully measured the ingredients and kneaded them together. She paid so much attention to her task and was so excited when they were finally ready to come out of the oven.

On Friday night, Noa discovered there was a problem. Her challot were rock solid on the outside and raw in the middle. The very thin layer inside that actually had baked was very dry and didn't taste quite right. Everyone pretended to like it but Noa just knew they were trying to be kind. The next day at shul, Noa told Miri that she never wanted to make challot again.

The next week, mum called Noa to the kitchen and said, let's bake challot together this week. Noa was unsure but her mum said, “You’ve got all the right ideas, you just need practice and to learn some tips and tricks.” Noa helped her mum and listened carefully as her mum taught her all the special ways she knows, to make the challot the best ever.

That Friday night, when everyone but into their challah, it really and truly was, the best ever.

- 1) What can we learn from this story and how does it connect to the Parasha? (there are a few links)
- 2) Have you ever not got something right the first time but then improved it the next time?
- 3) In your opinion, should Noa's mum have helped her the first time she made the challot?

