

Key Parasha Information

Summary

In this week's parasha, the Jewish people are still in the desert and Hashem (G-d) asks Moshe (Moses) to take a census of the tribes to find out how many people there are. Moshe concluded that there were 603,550 men between the ages of 20 and 60 who would be in the army. There was one tribe that was counted separately because they didn't do regular jobs, they worked in the Mishkan (travelling Temple).

Whilst in the desert, the Jewish people camped at various locations and then they packed up all their belonging and moved to the next place. The Tribe of Levi dismantled, wrapped and transported the parts of the Mishkan and rebuilt it in the next encampment. The set-up was as follows; the Mishkan was in the centre, and the tents of the Tribe of Levi were built around that. Moshe and Aharon (Aaron's) tents were next to the Mishkan's entrance.

The remaining tribes camped in groups and they kept the same formation when they travelled. Each tribe had its own nasi (prince), and its own flag with an emblem.

Discovery

Did you know that when the census was carried out, each person brought a half shekel coin to the mishkan and the coins were counted to determine the number of people? We learn from this that we don't directly count people.

Did you know that the largest tribe in the census was Yehuda (Judah) with a population of 74,600 people.

Did you know that the emblem on the flag of each tribe had a meaning or connection to that tribe?



Parasha Thinking

- 1) What do you think would happen if someone didn't show up with a half shekel piece? Would they lose out?
- 2) In your opinion, why should the Mishkan be placed in the middle of the camp?
- 3) How does the word, people, link to the Parasha?



Counting the Omer:
Day 46

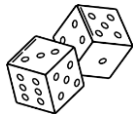
Today is the 46th day making six weeks and four days of the omer.

Shavuot

Shavuot is a festival that marks the date when the Jewish people were given the Torah at Har (Mount) Sinai, 3336 years ago. When day 49 of the Omer finishes, we begin Shavuot, as the 50th day. On Shavuot we don't do work but we go to shul to hear the 10 Commandments being read from the Torah and we have Yom Tov (festival) meals. There are customs that are carried out on Shavuot, such as, decorating the Shul with flowers like Har Sinai, eating dairy foods and staying up all night to learn Torah. Shavuot starts on the 6th Sivan. In Israel it lasts one day but in England and in all other places outside Israel, it lasts for two.

Games

1) How Many Flags



In teams, children are challenged to remember as many world flags as possible. Go from team to team and they have to say the colours, e.g. Israel – blue and white. Etc.

2) Names

Link: a census was taken of all the Jewish people in the desert

Can you say a name that begins with each letter of the alphabet, e.g. Alfie, Basil, Cameron, David, Evan etc. Annie, Beth, Celine, Dina, Elisheva etc.

(You can time it, to see how long it takes them.)

3) Clue for You

Child thinks of a Judaica item and gives one clue. Children have one guess without any clues. If they happen to get it right, they get 5 points.

Child gives a clue – if the others guess correctly here, they get 4 points. For every clue that is given, the points they can get for guessing reduces.

Story

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

“And that will be on your door all year!” announced the Head Teacher in the assembly.

The students started buzzing with ideas.

Back in classes, the discussions continued formally and each idea was noted down on the whiteboard and debated further.

“I think our class’s flag should really represent us!” offered Laura.

“Yes, our talents and our special interests!” added Micky.

Myla was a bit skeptical, “How are we going to include everyone in the class on one flag? I do believe that we should all be included but if we draw 30 different things, it will look way too crowded and you won’t be able to make out individual drawings. It won’t be anything special.”

That put a damper on things and everyone sat silently, thinking about what Myla had said. That was until Jesse raised his hand and he said, “I have an idea. For each subject that we learn, there has been one thing that has topped the rest. Like, when we study music, we liked most of the songs but we LOVED Fresh Prince, so maybe we can add some of the lyrics to our flag.”

“Yessssss,” buzzed the rest of the class.

“And what about our History topic on the Greeks?” Continued Jesse. “It was all interesting but the Olympics that we did outside was AMAZING – we had the best afternoon. Let’s add a drawing of one of our Olympic activities.”

Everyone agreed and the discussions carried on in this way. The design was finalized and the class got to work.

At the next assembly when each class presented their completed paper flag to the head Teacher and explained the meaning behind it, they were all so excited. The Head Teacher sent off the designs to a professional graphic designer and when the material flags were sent to the school, and stuck on the classroom doors, everyone, even Myla, was very proud.

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

2) If you had to make a flag to represent your class, what do you think should be on it?

3) Why do you think the Head Teacher wanted each class to have their own flag?

