

Parasha Thinking



- 1) What can you do to make your guests feel welcome?
- 2) Imagine you were Avraham, feeling so sad that no guests were out and about. Can you act or describe how he may have felt when he saw three visitors approaching him?
- 3) How does the word, tree, link to the Parasha?

Key Parasha Information

Summary

At the age of 99, Avraham was sitting outside his tent, in Mamre's field, three days after his brit milah. Avraham loved guests and his tent actually had four entrances so that he could look for visitors in all directions. He was downcast that no guests were walking outside. Hashem appeared to Avraham to wish him well. Avraham then spotted three angels disguised as men and he rushed over, bowed down to them and invited them to wash their feet, rest under the tree and have a simple meal.

Avraham and his household hurried to prepare a fine meal for the three guests who also appeared to him. Each angel had come for a purpose; one to heal Avraham, one to destroy the city of Sedom and one to tell him that Sarra would have a baby in a year's time. Sarra overheard and laughed but not out loud – it was internal. Avraham pleaded with Hashem to spare the city of Sedom. "Are there 50 people worthy of saving? Are there 40? Are there 30? Are there 20? Are there 10?" The answer to all of these pleas was no. Avraham stopped at 10.

Avraham's nephew, Lot, lived in Sedom and when the angels arrived, he welcomed them in and protected them from the wicked people of the city. The angels told Lot's family to flee Sedom and NOT look back. They fled immediately but Lot's wife couldn't resist and she peeked behind her, seeing Sedom in flames and right there and then, she turned into a pillar of salt.

Avraham moved to Gerar and the Philistine king, Avimelech took Sarra to be his own wife. Hashem warned him that unless he returns Sarra, he will die, so he let Sarra go.

Hashem fulfilled His promise and gave Sarra and Avraham a son, who they named Yitzchak. He had a brit milah at 8 days old. When Yitzchak was older, Hashem tested Avraham's faith by commanding him to sacrifice Yitzchak. He saddled his own donkey and took Yitzchak, his servant, Eliezer and his other son, Yishmael to the mountain, to perform the sacrifice on Yitzchak. As he is about to carry out the sacrifice, a voice from heaven calls to stop him. He saw a ram whose horns were caught in the bushes and that ram is offered in Yitzchak's place.

Discovery

Did you know that Mamre wasn't Jewish but his name is mentioned in the everlasting Torah as a reward for him giving Avraham good advice?

Did you know that we learn the mitzvot of hachnasat orchim (welcoming guests) and bikkur cholim (visiting the sick) from this week's parasha?

Did you know that we read the story of Avraham being asked to sacrifice Yitzchak, on Rosh HaShannah?





Gratitude

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.)

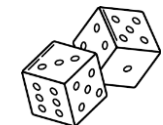
THANK YOU!

Games

1) Noughts and Crosses

Divide group into two teams and ask them quiz questions based on the Parasha summary. Each time a team gets a question right, they earn a nought or a cross and can place it down for their team.

Resources: four scarves for the noughts and crosses board, pre-printed noughts and crosses.



2) Fruit basket

Place a chair in a circle for each child, minus one. One child stands in the middle. Leader goes round the circle, giving child 1 in the circle, Avraham, child 2 – Sarra, child 3 – angels and continue with these three names round the circle, until everyone but the child in the middle, has one of those three names. The child in the middle calls out one of those names and all the people in the circle with that name, must stand up and quickly change places. The child in the middle needs to try and sit in one of their chairs. Whoever is remaining without a chair, is the one who now stands in the middle and calls out the next name. If the person in the middle shouts out, 'fruit basket' then every child must move to a different seat.

3) Divide the group up into teams. They can use coats, tables, chairs etc, to make a model of Avraham and Sarra's tent. RULE: safety is paramount. Children service leader gets to judge which team's tent is the best. Extra points for their acting of the story.

Story



"Shoes on, coat on!" said mum. "Where are we going?" asked Abi. "We're going round the corner to visit Mrs Levy," answered Mum "she's been unwell for three weeks now." Abi stared at Mum and softly said, "I don't want to go, I don't think I can!" "Why ever not?" Mum enquired – "you've known Mrs Levy all your life. When you were born, she knitted you the most gorgeous outfits and she's bought you a birthday present every year. Of course you should come with me to see her!" "I know I should, ... but I'm nervous. I don't know what to do or what to say! What if I make her feel even worse?" Mum sat Abi down and they planned their visit to Mrs Levy, so that Abi would know what to do. They packed some books and magazines for Mrs Levy to read (if she felt up to it) and they heated up some fresh soup. Whilst the soup was boiling, they thought of some topics that they could speak about, that would be interesting for Mrs Levy.

When they got to Mrs Levy's house, they gave her the soup and the books and chatted about lots of things. The time flew by and Abi realised that she needn't have worried and she felt proud of herself for preparing the mitzvah and then doing it. Mrs Levy was so grateful for the visit and it really made her feel better.

1) What can we learn from this story?

2) Have you ever been nervous to do something but it turned out really well in the end?