

Parasha Thinking



- 1) How do you think Ya'akov felt, knowing that Esav was on his way with 400 generals?
- 2) What was the point of Ya'akov splitting his family into two camps?
- 3) How does the word, animal, link to the Parasha?

Key Parasha Information

Summary

Ya'akov (Jacob) returned to Cena'an (now known as Israel), the place where he grew up, after 20 years in Charan and sent messengers to Esav, to see how Esav felt about him these days and in hope of making peace. The messengers reported that his brother, Esav, is on the way with 400 generals. Ya'akov prepared for war in three ways; he prayed to Hashem (G-d) for the safety of his family, sent Esav a generous gift of sheep and goats – perhaps this will appease him and he split his family into two groups and hid them both. These were his strategies.

That night, Ya'akov and his family crossed the Yabok River and when they all settled he noticed that they'd left behind some jars, in their previous location. He crossed the river alone and returned to collect the jars. When he was there, he met the angel that protects Esav and wrestled with him, until sunrise. Ya'akov's hip was dislocated and the angel wanted to return to Hashem. Ya'akov asked the angel for a blessing and the angel blessed him with the name Yisrael, meaning, "he who prevails over the divine."

Ya'akov and Esav met each other and embrace. Esav said he'd walk back with Ya'akov's family, to see their dad but Ya'akov didn't want him to be a bad influence on his children so he convinced Esav to go ahead. Ya'akov bought a lot of land near Shechem.

Ya'akov continued his journey and tragically, his wife, Rachel died while giving birth to her second son, Binyamin (Benjamin). She isn't buried in the cave of Machpela, along with the other Avot and Imahot (forefathers and foremothers), she was buried in a roadside grave near Beit Lechem (Bethlehem). Soon after, Reuben lost his birthright. Ya'akov arrived in Chevron (Hebron), to visit his father, Yitzchak (Isaac), and he died a while later, at 180 years old. His Mum, Rivka (Rebecca) passed away before he arrived.

Meanwhile, Esav had many wives, children and grandchildren and settled in Se'ir.

Discovery

Did you know that some commentators praise Ya'akov for going back to collect the jars and say he was righteous in doing so but some say for someone so righteous, a few jars should not have concerned him.

Did you know that each general that Esav brought was in charge of 400 soldiers, so there 160,400 men were charging towards Ya'akov and his family.

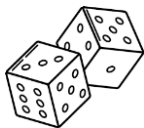
Did you know that the way Ya'akov convinced Esav to go ahead was he said that he has little children with little legs, so they walk much more slowly and he doesn't want to slow Esav down. This was the truth but his main aim was to protect his family from learning from Esav's ways.



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) Are you ready? – parasha quiz



Divide the group into two. Two children – one from each team, compete to answer the quiz question first. They are asked a parasha question by the Children’s Service Leader and the first one to shout out the answer, wins. They both then stand at the end of the room and have a hopping race to the other side but the one who got it right gets, a two second head start. One point for whoever reaches the end first. Which team will win?

2) Answer the previous person’s question

Link: Target training – Esav brought an entire army to meet Ya’akov.

Place an empty bin in the middle of the circle and give everyone a chance to throw a beanbag or a tennis ball inside. Alternatively, place the bin at the end of the room and the children line up at the front of the room and you give them a spot from which they have to aim. Please be mindful of anyone who doesn’t have complete mobility in their arms.

Resources needed: Empty bin (or hoop), tennis ball or bean bag.

3) Something that begins with the previous word’s ending letter

Link: Ya’akov didn’t know if it would be the end of his life when he met with Esav.

Choose a topic, such as fruits and vegetables, and the first person suggests carrot, for example. The next person must choose a fruit or vegetable beginning with a t, as that is the last letter of carrot. Tangerine. Etrog. Grape. Edamame. Etc.

Topic: Names: David. Daniel. Leonard. Dalia. Anna. Ava. Ariel. Liz. Ze’ev. Vikki. Etc.

Topic: Places in the world. Edinburgh. Haiti. Israel. Luxembourg. Gibraltar. Rome. Equador. Romania. Athens. Strassbourg. Etc.

Story



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

“I think we spend it” squealed Jake, “Nice night out ice skating, taxi there and back, new wardrobe, supper at a kosher restaurant on the way – my kind of night!” “Nah, that’s so irresponsible, I think we invest it!” suggested Tali “That way it makes more money for us, without us even trying!” “Borrerrrrrrnnng.” Yawned Jake.

They went back and forth, until the third band mate, Nina, piped up, “I have a better idea! Why don’t we use the money we got from our concert, to buy new instruments?” The others frowned. “Hear me out,” she said, “better quality, better sound and then next time people come to hear us, we’ll be even better musicians and the vibe in the room will be awesome! People will tell more friends and the following concert will draw in an even bigger crowd.”

The three of them debated their ideas, whilst Adam, the fourth band mate, listened. He kept thinking to himself, ‘We need a strategy! We need a strategy!’

“Why aren’t you saying what you think, Adam?” laughed Jake? Adam took a deep breath and explained that he felt they needed a strategy. “Let’s split it up. We can use some for a really delicious takeaway – that way Jake is happy because we’re spending some of it. Let’s invest some, too – we can speak to the bank and get their advice. That way, Tali’s right, we’ll be gaining money and if something goes wrong in the future, like our van breaks down, we’ll have money to fix it. We should absolutely upgrade our instruments and equipment but one at a time. The first thing we actually need is a card reader so let’s buy that first and then after next concert, we’ll decide what we need. How does that sound?” Everyone was happy with this strategic plan and they actually ended up very rich ... and when the van did break down, they had the money to fix it. ... and they had great takeaways ... and their instruments and amps were totally high-tech. Good on Adam, for being strategic.

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

2) Have you ever planned something really well and then it was successful?

3) In your opinion, should they have; spent the money, invested it, bought new up-to-date equipment or did what they did by strategically spreading their money wisely?