

BERESHIT

FAMILY DYNAMICS

The parsha tells the story of Cain and Abel and man's first violent act: a lashing out of brother against brother based on family tension, jealousy and perceived favoritism. What can we do in our families to reduce tensions, manage jealousies, and create positive family dynamics? Recognize the special qualities of each family member. Our relationships with our family should be ever-lasting.

BREAKING RULES

One of the first things God tells Adam is not to eat from the tree of knowledge. Yet the first story about Adam and Eve together is a story about their breaking this rule. Rule breaking seems to be simply part of who we are, part of what it means to be human. Each time we break a rule, we are presented an opportunity; we can transform a broken rule into an opportunity for taking responsibility. What can we learn about self-control to help us resist the temptation to break rules?

TIKKUN OLAM

God placed Adam in a beautiful garden which grew delicious fruit, but in order for a garden to remain beautiful and fruitful, there has to be a gardener to work and maintain it. Adam was placed in the garden not just to enjoy the delicious fruit, but also to care for the garden. We are all gardeners in this world. We have the privilege of enjoying the gifts that God provides for us, but we also have the responsibility of keeping God's world beautiful. We must do our part!

NOACH

THE LIGHT IN A DARK ROOM

While it rained and poured for forty days and nights, Noah's ark protected his family. Just as Noah and his family were protected from the flood by their ark, we also have our own arks that guard us from the dark and stormy world. Our families are our arks. We turn to our family when we need protection. Maintaining peace and security in our own families helps us keep the stormy world at bay.

THE DIFFICULTY IN DISCIPLINE

The flood destroyed everything and almost everyone. When your computer or smartphone misbehaves, often it just needs a reboot to get going again. At times that may be an extreme step, losing all unsaved work. In life, we need to make the call between extreme measures and more cautious ones. For our personal development, we need discipline, because without it, there would be chaos and disorder.

CHANGE

Noah experienced radical change when he was forced to begin his life all over again. Just like this story, our lives are constantly changing. The challenge of change is getting through it with an open mind and positive attitude. We should not let change disrupt our normal ways of life. Undergoing change is good! Although easier said than done, embrace the change with a smile on your face.

LECH LECHA

CHOOSING HARMONY

Instead of allowing matters to deteriorate, Abraham chooses to put distance between himself and his nephew, Lot. His goal is to preserve the harmony between them. Separation may be an extreme solution to a problem that could be handled by a willingness to understand others. Useless fighting can be avoided by creative thinking, understanding, humility, and acceptance.

FAITH AND COURAGE

Abraham is told to leave his home and go to a place that God will tell him. He had the faith and courage to just go, not knowing where he is going. Having this blind faith is extremely difficult. Rather than focusing on the frightening and unknown, we should try to imagine the opportunities in a new situation. The power of our imagination can give us the courage we need. While what's new can be frightening, it can also be invigorating.

STANDING UP FOR WHAT IS RIGHT

Abraham lived in a land where everyone served idols. This didn't sit right with him, so he set off searching for a creator who indeed possessed the ability to create. At first, the rest of the world simply laughed at his ridiculous ideas. However, he refused to be discouraged, and he strengthened his efforts to teach the rest of the world his message. Not going along with something just because it's what everyone else is doing may not be easy, but the courage it takes is certainly rewarding. When is a time that you felt you had to stand up against the tide?

VAYERA

HURTFUL WORDS

Sarah's words could have been hurtful to Abraham. However, God changed these words so he would not hear them. We often carelessly speak in a hurtful way when we are upset. But this parsha teaches us that Communication is key when we are upset.

BEING TOO HONEST

God amended Sarah's comment when repeating it to Abraham. We believe that God left out the hurtful words in order to promote "shalom bayit", peace in the household. Lying is wrong; however, there is a more complicated version of the truth. Lying is sometimes necessary to spare someone's feelings in order to maintain peace.

WELCOMING GUESTS

Abraham shows us what an essential value hospitality is. Helping someone feel at home can go a long way in forming and deepening friendships. How can we make people feel welcome?

CHAYEI SARAH

RECONCILIATION

Although Isaac and Ishmael had their differences, the parsha emphasizes that when the time came to bury and mourn for their father Abraham, they did so together. Even Isaac and Ishmael were able to set aside their differences to focus on what united them. While we must be realistic about acknowledging our differences, we need to focus on what unites us, such as family, community, and interests. Can we set aside our differences for the common good?

HONORING PARENTS

Eliezer approached Rebecca's father, asking for permission to bring her back as a wife for Abraham's son, Isaac. Laban, Rebecca's brother, in utter disrespect for his father, jumped up and responded before his father could. Whether we agree or disagree, we must do so with deference and respect for our parents. Why do you think honoring your parents is a form of gratitude?

DOING CHORES

Rebecca, a young woman, carries a jug on her shoulder on her way to the well to draw water for her family. This must have been a hard chore due to the weight of the clay jug filled with water. Rebecca must have known how important this chore of life-sustaining water was to her family. Children also have commitments to the well-being of their family. As they grow older, their responsibilities expand so that they are able to play a larger role in taking care of their family.

TOLDOT

BEING A MENSCH

Esav proves to be the opposite of a mensch. After a long day of work, he barges into the house and demands food from his brother. The concept of manners did not occur to Esav at a time like this. We can learn from this that no matter what our day has been like, or what mood we are in, we must act like a mensch and speak in a refined and respectful manner.

INSTANT GRATIFICATION

Esav was the first born and therefore entitled to certain benefits, such as receiving a larger inheritance, the merit of the priesthood, and most importantly, the special blessings for a life full of goodness. However, Esav only cared about what he wanted now and did not consider his future. He gave up his birthright just for a bowl of soup. We constantly face an inner struggle between having immediate gratification and thinking about tomorrow. If we sacrifice short-term pleasure, and invest in our future, we will attain true eternal pleasure and joy in this world.

PRAYER

Isaac and Rebecca were childless for many years. They prayed, they begged, they beseeched God, until He answered their request, after twenty long years. This shows us what it means to pray, and to never give up on our prayers. When we want something badly enough, we will do whatever we can to attain it. Sometimes, God needs to see how much we really want what we are asking for, how serious we are in what we are praying for. And sometimes He wants us to see how much we mean it and feel for it. How can you pray if you cannot read Hebrew?

VAYETZE

COMMITMENT

Jacob committed to working for his uncle Laban as a shepherd, with the expectation that it included standard conditions. However, after just a few days, he realized he was mistaken; the working conditions were terrible. However, he knew he committed to the job and saw it through until the end. Sometimes we may get more than we expected, and sometimes less. The point of the matter is: a commitment is a commitment. When we give our word to do something, we need to stand by it.

CHEATERS NEVER PROSPER

Jacob ensured that his sheep never grazed in fields that did not belong to him and that he never took any of Laban's sheep to be his own. No matter how hard Laban tried to cheat Jacob, Jacob was successful in all he did, while Laban's fortune suffered tremendously. All that we have is from God. He decides who will be wealthy and successful, and who will have to struggle to earn a living. God wants to bless us and give us plenty; but when we warp justice, He will not lavish His blessings on us. How can you resist the urge to cheat?

SENSITIVITY

Laban secretly commanded Leah to be the one to marry Jacob, and not Rachel. Rachel did what she knew she had to do in order to save her sister from shame, ensuring that Jacob wouldn't realize the swap until the next morning. This kind of sensitivity is courageous. It can inspire us to think more about our friends' needs and feelings, thus strengthening our bond with them.

VAYISHLACH

FINDING GOD

Jacob faced many troubles and difficulties. God continuously hid from him, but Jacob never gave up. For this reason, he alone was blessed with twelve righteous sons. There were times in Jewish history that God revealed Himself, however, most of the time, the Almighty hides Himself, and it's up to us to find him. When situations are particularly painful, He's really hiding in a tough-to-find place. The lesson: don't give up and keep looking. He wants us to find Him, to reveal Him in every situation we arrive at.

DOING OUR PART

Jacob didn't rely on miracles when it came to meeting up with his brother Esau, who wanted to kill him. He sent gifts ahead to Esau to appease him, and split his family into different camps to ensure their safety. He then prayed to God to help him, and believed that G-d would not let him down. Once Jacob did his part, God made miracles. We believe that God can make the impossible possible; however, we must also believe in ourselves. We must do what we can do. How can you do your part?

MATERIALISM

Jacob said "I have everything." His monetary possessions did not even come close to Esau's, but nevertheless he sincerely felt that he had everything. Money and success is great, but Jacob had so much more than that. He had the priceless possessions a person can acquire in life. He had a wonderful family, which gave him the ultimate joy and nachas one can receive. Are the people who have the most "things" the happiest? Who are the happiest people?

VAYESHEV

STAYING POSITIVE

Joseph did not have an easy life, and he could have done what any average human being would do. He had every right to be a bitter man, yet we see that even in prison he was appointed guard over the prisoners. Joseph was a Tzaddik and the way he acted seems impossible for us to imitate. However, we can learn from him and take this message to heart and to action. So give it a try, keep up your spirits, even when all the reasons in the world are telling you to frown. Picture yourself having a bad day. What are you going to do differently to try handling the situation as Joseph did?

TIMING

Reuven, the oldest of Jacob's sons, performed a special mitzvah, but at the wrong time. Where was Reuven when the sale of his brother had taken place? He was repenting for a sin he had committed: bad timing! He was doing something great—asking God for forgiveness; but it was simply not a good time. It was the time for action and salvation. We always need to double check that we have the right timing. Helping out friends is great and important, but not when we are supposed to be listening in class. Do good, but at the right time! Do good intentions count?

BUSINESS ETHICS

This parsha discusses Joseph being sold by his brothers. We can learn from this parsha that there are ethics behind selling. The business world can be a scary place. We must be sensitive and treat people the way we want to be treated. We should try to remain above suspicion and even go beyond the letter of the law. By doing so, we are sanctifying God's name in the world by making Jews an exemplar of ethical behavior.

MIKETZ

SHABBAT

Every Friday night, Joseph closed his palace office and ushered in the Shabbat. The busiest man in Egypt managed to concentrate on Shabbat and his family, when there was a whole country to run. He knew that all of the blessings in his life come from God. Once a week, we bring everything to a full stop to remind ourselves who's really in charge. Joseph was the sole Shabbat observer in the entire country, yet he did it anyway. How can you make Shabbat enjoyable?

TAKING INITIATIVE

Joseph saw that his advice was well needed, so he offered what he could to the king, without being asked. Let's not wait to be asked to do good; let's just do it! When has someone done something good for you without your request for it and how did it feel? What are some examples of how this idea can be applied to our relationship with God?

SINCERE REMORSE

Reuven explained to his younger brothers that it's good that they feel bad for what they've done to Joseph, but their remorse needs to come from feeling sorry for the sin itself. The realization that they did something wrong should bring them to remorse, and not the trouble and hardship that their mistake caused. Real remorse is feeling sorry for what we've done, period! No matter what the repercussion may be, we should feel bad for the actual action. When have you done true repentance?

VAYIGASH

UNITY

When Jacob went down to Egypt with his family, the text reads, “Seventy soul went down to Egypt”, instead of “Seventy souls.” The reason for this is to show us that Jacob’s family was unified to the extent that it was as if they were but one soul. They shared the same beliefs and goals. They were one. In contrast, when Esav’s family traveled, the text reads “souls.” When we see others who seem so different from us, we may have a hard time identifying with them, or even recognizing that we are like brothers and sisters. But by focusing on the fact that we share the same beliefs and traditions, we can remember that we are one. We are united until the end of time, because we believe in one and the same God.

PEACEFUL JOURNIES

Jacob and his family decided to move down to Egypt. Jacob decided that there was no way he could arrive at Egypt without an important pit stop first. He stopped at a place called Be’er Sheba, and prayed to God. He prayed for success in Egypt, he prayed that his family would remain strong in the new and foreign land, and he fueled himself and his family for the big journey ahead. When we take journeys, even small ones like taking on a new mitzvah, we need to take a moment to reflect on our journey that lies ahead, and make a prayer to G-d, asking Him for His blessings and guidance in every part of our journey. What have you done, or plan on doing, that requires some fueling?

THE REAL YOU

This parsha, Joseph reveals himself to his brothers. He showed them that this Egyptian king was really their little brother. This teaches us that people act differently in different situations. Our personalities can become different, our emotions can become different and our words can become different. Who is the real you? How do you act differently when you are around different people?

VAYECHI

IT’S ALL GOD

Joseph knew that although his brothers were horrible to him, there was a reason God wanted it that way, and he accepted it and waited to see what those reasons could possibly be. It’s all from God. All of it. Everything that happens in this world is from Him; the good, the bad, the miracles and the disasters. Our job is to see the good in all that happens, and to remember that no matter what, it’s what God wanted, and He has a reason for it too.

USING OUR STRENGTHS

When Jacob was dying, he blessed his sons, assigning to each their roles as a tribe. Each was content with their mission, but yearned for the benefits of the other’s job. They took what they were blessed with, and used it to its fullest. Each of us are given specific talents and blessings, and it is our job to take them and soar. How can you use what God has given you in ways that He would want you to use them?

TAKING ACTION

This parsha discusses Jacob’s last days. Everyone has a vision for their lives. However, many people live their lives without this vision in mind. Don’t sit back and just hope for the best. Take action. Be the change you want to see. What is your vision for your future? How will you try to reach your potential?

SHEMOT

OVERCOMING OBSTACLES

Moshe had a terrible speech impediment and he needed his very own translator for people to understand him. But this challenge never deterred Moshe from accepting his task to lead the Jewish people. Moshe's lesson to us is that we all have the ability to overcome any challenges, and no task is too hard to overcome. What do you think it takes to overcome the challenges that face us?

PRIDE

One of the ways that the Jewish people survived for generations as slaves in Egypt was by remaining committed to who they were. Even though they suffered terribly, they never let go of their identity. They never changed their (Jewish) names for Egyptian ones or tried to assimilate into the Egyptian culture, although it would have made their lives easier. We should be proud of who we are, even when it seems tough. How do you express your Jewish pride?

CONFRONTATION

Moshe and Aaron approach Pharaoh and request freedom for the Jewish people. This is the initial conflict between Pharaoh and the Jews. Pharaoh clearly did not take it well, and ultimately said no. Confrontation is not an easy task- it is difficult to deal with. How do you deal with conflict and confrontation? How can you remain calm during this process?

VAERA

DOING WHAT WE ARE TOLD

God commands Moshe to approach Pharaoh and ask him to free the Jewish people from slavery. Before Moshe sets out, God warns him that Pharaoh will refuse the request. There are times when someone makes a request of you that seems to make no sense. The lesson from Moshe is that when someone makes a request from you, it is important to fulfill the mission even if you don't necessarily understand it at the time.

PRIDE

One of the ways that the Jewish people survived for generations as slaves in Egypt was by remaining committed to who they were. Even though they suffered terribly, they never let go of their identity. They never changed their (Jewish) names for Egyptian ones or tried to assimilate into the Egyptian culture, although it would have made their lives easier. We should be proud of who we are, even when it seems tough. How do you express your Jewish pride?

CONFRONTATION

Moshe and Aaron approach Pharaoh and request freedom for the Jewish people. This is the initial conflict between Pharaoh and the Jews. Pharaoh clearly did not take it well, and ultimately said no. Confrontation is not an easy task- it is difficult to deal with. How do you deal with conflict and confrontation? How can you remain calm during this process?

BO

NEW BEGINNINGS

The first mitzvah ever commanded to the Jewish people was Rosh Chodesh. This celebration is not merely to welcome a new month, but an opportunity to grow and mature. No matter what transpired in the previous stage of your life, you always have the opportunity to grow and right any wrongs. Each month brings a new chance. We celebrate the opportunity to be constantly growing and maturing.

ULTIMATE HONESTY

Moshe warned Pharaoh of the tenth and final plague—the death of every firstborn. When declaring the start of the plague, Moshe said that it will begin at approximately midnight, but God had informed Moshe that the plague would begin at exactly midnight. Moshe was purposely vague so that the Egyptians wouldn't miscalculate the time. Honesty is so important and necessary that Moshe made sure the Egyptians should not even mistakenly think that he was untrue to his word.

UNWAVERING FAITH

The Jewish people were able to survive their slavery in Egypt. What kept the Jewish people intact was their unwavering faith that their situation was going to improve. They could have easily given up hope, and simply disappeared from existence. But they remained faithful that God would improve their situation, and He did. In everyday life, we are faced with certain challenges that can cause us to lose hope. We should always believe that the situation will improve—and truthfully, it always does with perseverance!

BESHALACH

EXPRESSING THANKS

The splitting of the Red Sea takes place. After the sea split, the Jewish people sing a song of appreciation. It is extremely important to express gratitude to someone (or God) publicly. What are some things that you are thankful for?

SHABBAT

This parsha introduces the concept of the Shabbat, the weekly day of rest. During the week a person is constantly distracted and busy, and they rarely have time to study Torah and explore their faith. God therefore commanded a weekly day of rest to give us the opportunity to take a break from our weekly diversions. Without the distractions of work, school, iPhones, iPads, etc., there is ample time for Torah study, attending synagogue and spending quality time with family. What are some major distractions that you experience during the week?

CLOSURE

The Jewish people are leaving slavery in Egypt. They are now joyous and free, however; it is always a good thing to reflect back on experiences. They sang their song of thanks. This could be their reflection. We go through a lot of different experiences in life and there are specific ways for us to look back and glean on them. Was it what you thought it would be? Do you feel satisfied? How can you make your next experience even better?

YITRO

LAYING A FOUNDATION

The Jewish people are given the famous Ten Commandments. The Ten Commandments serve as a foundation for Judaism. A person cannot live his life without a foundation, or guidelines. This is the purpose of the Ten Commandments and the reason they are so monumental. If we set standards to live by, we are more likely to have a productive and fulfilling life.

IT'S NEVER TOO LATE

Not only did Yitro leave the comfort of his home and his position of leadership; he also acknowledged that it is okay to change your lifestyle if you realize that something else is more legitimate. This powerful lesson applies to everyone. It is never too late to change your actions if you realize that there is a more proper way to act. Have you been in a situation where you realized a more appropriate lifestyle and adapted to it?

A JEWISH NATION

When the Jewish people received the Torah and the Ten Commandments, they were so unified that they were considered to be like one person. The world needed to be purified before the Torah could be given, and that was possible only if the Jews worked towards purifying the world as one group with one goal. Whenever a group of people set out to accomplish something, they must do it with complete unity.

MISHPATIM

HUMANKIND

In this parsha we learn about the laws regarding damaging someone else's property, even if it was by accident. It is important to protect a borrowed item even more than you would protect your own belongings. It is not enough to simply regard these things like you regard your own stuff, but it is necessary to value the property of others with the utmost care.

ACCEPTANCE

This parsha talks about the requirement to be kind to a convert or foreigner. All people deserve to be treated nicely, and slight superficial differences are no reason to look down upon someone. Make sure to go out of your way to make new people feel as comfortable and included as possible. Always treat others with the same respect you like to be treated with, no matter where they come from or what they look like. What are some ways that you can ensure that you will always be kind and accepting of a person who is new to your life?

JUSTICE SYSTEM

This parsha gives the laws of our justice system. There is an importance to civil law in the Torah. The Torah teaches that moral conduct is integral to religious life. Who creates the values in your life? Do you have the same values as others? Does everyone doing the same thing make it right?

TERUMAH

CONTRIBUTIONS

This parsha describes the donations that the Jewish people gave towards building the Tabernacle—the portable Temple in the desert. Sometimes, doing the right thing and working to build something beautiful for everyone to use and share can cost us a lot. Just as the Jewish people donated their most expensive and valuable items for a spiritual cause, so too, we can learn to expend our most precious resources on a unifying project that will benefit everyone around us.

JEWISH COMMUNITY

Miraculously, the cherubs on the Ark embraced each other when the Jewish people were united, but turned away from each other when the Jews did not treat each other kindly. The Ark housed the Tablets engraved with the Ten Commandments, and was kept in the Holy of Holies, the most sacred room in the Temple. The fact that the cherubs were in such an important place shows how God treasures Jewish unity—and how we should too!

ITEMS OF SIGNIFICANCE

This parsha describes in detail the items in the Tabernacle. The Torah dives into such detail to show us how significant each item is. We have many items of significance in our lives, whether they have religious value or not. They can have a certain meaning to our families. What are some items of significance to you? Do you have any items that have been preserved in your family for multiple generations?

TETZAVEH

ASKING FOR HELP

This parsha describes the Kohen Gadol's beautiful breastplate that served a deep spiritual purpose. Whenever the high priest was asked a question that he could not answer, or was faced with a situation that he could not resolve, he would pose the question to his breastplate. He was the wisest of all men, but even he wasn't expected to be able to solve every problem he faced, he knew that it was okay to ask for help whenever he didn't have a solution. When a person is faced with a situation that he or she cannot resolve alone, it is important to ask for help or assistance.

STARTING ON THE RIGHT FOOT

This parsha describes the elaborate inauguration ceremony for the priests who served in the Tabernacle (Mishkan). This shows us how important it is to begin each new endeavor with enthusiasm. When you make a big deal out of starting something, you're more likely to stick with it later on, when the going gets tough. When have you begun something with the right attitude, and how has that helped you complete the project?

BEING A LIGHT FOR OTHERS

The menorah was lit every day in the Holy Temple. Unfortunately we do not have a Temple now, but each of us can create a "mini-Temple" within ourselves. Just like the menorah brightened the Temple when it was kindled, we too can brighten the world for all of those around us by making it a more positive and holy place. This is accomplished by being committed to the Torah and living a life of honesty and integrity. Being kind and charitable, helping others whenever we can, and being dedicated to the mitzvahs will light up the world.

KI KISA

SECOND CHANCES

This parsha tells the episode of the Golden Calf. The story teaches us that we have the ability to rectify our mistakes. God could have easily decided to destroy the Jewish nation after they so blatantly disregarded His laws, but He didn't. He allowed them the opportunity to fix the mistake. Everyone makes mistakes, but not everyone learns from them and corrects them. Try to be someone who does. Have you ever done something that you regretted? How have you rectified the situation and learned from it?

GOD'S LOVE FOR HIS PEOPLE

God commands Moshe to count the Jewish people. When something is precious to you, there is enjoyment in counting it, even if you already know how many you have. The opportunity to admire the beauty of each Jew brings Him immense pride. God considers all Jews precious no matter what circumstance they are in, but it is our responsibility to be worthy of the title "God's precious ones."

LIVING AND LEARNING

The story of the Golden Calf was quite a mistake. It was a sin; an act that the Jewish people performed that was not seen well in the eyes of God. However, God gave us a second chance. This can teach us that in life, things don't go our way. We make mistakes and we move on. Growing comes from failure. We live and do things that may not be great, but we learn from them and we gain strength from them. What have you learned from the last mistake you made?

VAYAKEL/PEKUDEI

RELAXATION

Shabbat is meant to be a day of complete relaxation, and therefore no work is permitted. Think about this: what do you do when you need to study for a big test? You turn off your cell phone and all your gadgets, and you focus on getting the work done. Shabbat serves the same purpose. It is a day that you turn off all of the distractions, and you focus on Torah and prayer.

REACHING OUT TO OTHERS

Moshe had it all. He could talk to God whenever he wanted and he knew the whole Torah and practiced all the mitzvahs. But that wasn't enough for him. He knew it was in his hands to help the Jewish people build their connection to God. He went ahead and built the Tabernacle, so all the Jews would be able to talk to God too. From here we learn that we should never be satisfied with helping ourselves. God wants us to reach out to others and draw them into His tent, into a life of Torah and mitzvahs.

NEEDS VS. WANTS

The parsha lists the materials needed for the Tabernacle. Needs are those things that are absolutely critical to living: Sufficient food and water, a roof over our heads, clothing to protect us from the elements, and a source of income to support ourselves and our families. All the rest is the stuff of want; that red convertible, the new Apple watch, your daily habit of a large iced coffee. We easily lose perspective on the difference between needs and wants. But we must focus on the luxuries that we take for granted in our lives. How can you find a mindfulness which helps us differentiate between needs and wants?

VAYIKRA

HUMILITY

The parsha begins with the word vayikra. If you look closely, you will notice that the last letter of this word, the aleph, is smaller than the rest of the letters. Our sages teach us that this is because Moshe was the humblest of all men. He knew God gave him everything that he had, and he was thankful for the many gifts. He did not boast it to others' faces, yet he did not hide his capabilities. He thanked God, and used it all to do what he had to do—lead the Jewish people. Someone who is humble recognizes his talents yet knows that it is all from God.

REPENTANCE

The parsha discusses the many different types of korbanot, sacrifices brought in the times of the Temple. Many of these offerings were brought on the altar to atone for all different kinds of sins. This teaches us a different lesson that is powerful and comforting. We are humans, and humans are not perfect. Even when we mess up and do something against God's will, we still have another chance. It's not like playing arcades, where the moment we make a bad move, it's game over. It's about repenting in the right way: feeling regret, thinking of practical ways to avoid the mess-up in the future. It's never too late; we should always be able to find our way home.

SACRIFICING OURSELVES

We learn from this parsha the many ways to give sacrificial offerings, mainly through animals. However, we can give sacrifices in other ways, too. We can sacrifice our time, our desires, or our talents. We can sacrifice for ourselves, for the benefit of others and for us to come closer to God. What are ways we can sacrifice ourselves?

TZAV

LOVING GOD

The Sanctuary where the Jews served God was with them in the desert, and then later on in Jerusalem. Each Jew also has a small sanctuary inside of him or her. God says that He will personally dwell in the heart of every Jew. There was always a fire burning; so too, every Jew needs to have a fiery love for God. As long as we keep that fire burning in our hearts, God is dwelling inside us. If He is always with us, there is no reason to fear anything at all.

THE DIFFICULTY IN DISCIPLINE

Anything that touches something impure will become impure itself. This shows us just how much we are affected by our surroundings. We have to be careful with the places we go and the situations we place ourselves in. On the other hand, this also shows us the power that we have. We can affect our surroundings for the better. It is in our hands to influence friends, neighbors and family in a positive way. Have you influenced or been influenced by others?

DIFFERING ROLES

This parsha gives the laws of Korbanot (sacrifices). The High Priest plays a big role during this time. However, it is not only the Kohanim! The community and the individual plays certain roles as well. In our lives, we have many roles. As an individual, as a family member, as a friend, as a community member, as a student, etc. In each situation, we must act differently. Have you ever stopped to think about what it takes to succeed in your different roles?

SHEMINI

EATING AND SELF-CARE

We are told very specifically that we can not eat whatever we want whenever we want. This teaches us that food and eating are sacred matters. The food we choose is important to our physical and spiritual health.

THINKING THINGS THROUGH

The parsha lists the signs for a kosher animal; it has to have split hooves and has to chew its cud. Why is chewing its cud a sign of kashrut? When you “chew a thought over,” it means that you think before you act. We are impulsive. A sign of maturity is when one can pause before saying or doing anything, and ask oneself if this plan is the most appropriate one. Slow down and chew it over before you act.

GIVING CONDOLENCES

After Aaron’s two sons, Nadav and Avihu, passed away, God addressed Aaron directly. He usually spoke to Aaron through Moshe; it was rare for Aaron to merit a private prophecy. This was actually a divine condolence visit. God could have sent a message of condolence through Moses, but He came Himself to teach us that during times of mourning we must exhibit the greatest degree of compassion and sensitivity. What are some other traits of God that we try to emulate?

TAZRIA/METZORA

ATTITUDE

This parsha is about leprosy. Leprosy is a spiritual illness– it is an external growth that signifies what is amiss inside. Nowadays, people don’t suffer from this illness, nor do people in our culture believe that our appearances are afflicted when we suffer from spiritual illness. But perhaps attitude, as opposed to our appearance, is the external signifier of what’s happening inside. Reflecting on our approach to life and our daily attitude is one way to begin exploring the state of our spiritual health.

THE ABILITY TO PERFECT

God does everything perfect; however, it seems like a lot of things that God made are far from perfect. If He would handle everything to a state of complete perfection, then the only role we would have would be to enjoy. We are capable of more than that. God invites us to be partners in creation; He gives us raw materials and we finish the job. What can we do to make this world a more perfect place?

MUNDANE HOLINESS

These two parshiyot go into great detail about seemingly mundane activities. This Torah is teaching us that these activities can be elevated to holiness. Whether its eating, sleeping, or interpersonal relations, we can transform them all into holy activities. Everything has the ability to be holy, so long as we put it in a certain framework and have a certain mindset.

ACHAREI MOT/KEDOSHIM

FOOD CHOICES

There are many rules about the food we eat; the types of foods we eat, how we prepare those foods, and even when we eat them. This week's parsha connects food to the idea of holiness. There are lots of ways we can change the way we make our decisions around food, but most important is that we raise our awareness about what we consume. Do you "eat to live" or "live to eat"?

HOLINESS IN OUR PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

There is a law against making gashes in one's flesh and tattooing oneself. We are commanded to be holy, and one of the ways to become so is through treating the body sacredly. It is difficult in our society to have a sense of respect and acceptance for our own bodies with all their inherent differences. People are often held to impossible standards when it comes to body weight, leading to eating disorders. Bodily sanctity can be nurtured. We should try to inspire others who struggle with their body image that they are acceptable, even holy, just as they are.

SINCERITY

We are told to leave the corners of our fields unharvested, and we cannot go back to collect any produce that we dropped along the way. We leave this produce in our fields for those less fortunate. There is no minimum size field for leaving this gleanings. The assumption is that any landowner can always spare a little. This lesson from the Torah helps us look at what we have and see the corners we could leave unharvested, whatever it may be. Where do you have a surplus in your life?

EMOR

KINDNESS TO ANIMALS

Gives the laws about properly treating animals. The very fact that these laws exist says a lot about Judaism's appreciation of the role of animals in our lives. Humans and animals both have emotions. The Torah is teaching us to be sensitive to the animals we encounter in our lives. Being kind to animals can make us better humans. The way we treat the world around us reflects on us, and animals are part of that world.

HOLIDAY SPIRIT

This parsha talks about Jewish holidays. We are called upon to celebrate these holidays joyously and always instructed to make sure we are sharing the joy with others – our families as well as guests we can bring into our home. We have so many great gifts, and we should enjoy them fully; however our own enjoyment of the world is incomplete if we cannot share it with others. Make the effort to have an open home and bring others into your world.

THE IMPORTANCE OF FAMILY

The kohen has to maintain a special level of purity, and may not tend to the body of someone who has passed away. However, the Torah points out that when it comes to family, the kohen can and must be of help. This teaches us that families should always stay together: in hard times, happy times, and every day of our lives! How does your family help you? How can you help your family?

BEHAR/BECHUKOTAI

FALSE IMPRESSIONS

This parsha tells us that we should not “misrepresent” ourselves and create an impression that is false. There are many ways to create a false impression, sometimes through commission and sometimes through omission. This is a very demanding standard when it comes to honesty. Do you ever allow others to believe something about you that isn’t true?

SHARING THE WEALTH

This parsha, we learn about tithing. Tithing is a sensible way to give to those who don’t have enough. It’s important to develop a life-long habit of giving. What do you think our responsibilities are to those who have less than we do? How can you give? How does it make you feel when you help out someone else?

RULES AND REGULATIONS

All Israelites are instructed to follow rules for the betterment of themselves and society. We have all sorts of rules in our lives; some rules make sense and are easy to follow. Others are more difficult to obey. Ultimately, we navigate our way through many decisions each day. No matter what our choices are, it is important to think about why we are making them. Do you think about the consequences of breaking a rule?



BAMIDBAR

ADVERSITY

The children of Israel begin their 40 years in the desert. They will face many challenges and hardships. They will lose their leader, they will face battles, there will be a lack of food and water. For the sake of our own development, we need to venture out of our comfort zone, sometimes failing and sometimes succeeding. How have you dealt with obstacles or failures in the past? What might help you in the future?

RITUALS

The Jewish people create a ritual for setting up the camp. Ritual is important in our lives. When we build order into our lives, we begin to manage the seemingly overwhelming tasks and take comfort in knowing that there are some things that will remain constant in our hurried lives. Do you have individual rituals that get you through the week?

SOME THINGS ARE BORING

The Jewish people begin wandering the desert. However, the journey is more than aimless wandering. They will be tested and there will be a time for renewal. We can learn from this that it is important to appreciate the “boring” moments of life. In working through the boredom there is much to learn, like patience and fortitude. What important things can you find within a seemingly boring moment?

NASO

VOLUNTEERING OURSELVES

The parsha gives the laws of a Nazarite. A Nazarite’s goal is to achieve a higher-than-required level of holiness. The Nazarite’s discipline can lead us to reflect on what we can take on voluntarily to become a better role model, ethically and spiritually. We might refrain from speaking Lashon hara, or volunteer to do social justice work. How can you uplift yourself?

MAKING MISTAKES

Here we learn about the comeback process after making a big mistake. Mistakes are a feature of life and they happen for a particular reason. When mistakes happen, there should be an acknowledgment of error and a process of improvement. How can you benefit from your mistakes?

DEDICATION

This parsha talks about dedicating the mizbeach. When you dedicate something special, it shouldn’t just be about the dedication. It should go beyond that. It should symbolize something important. Next time you are dedicating your time or possession, think about the meaning behind it. How can you incorporate its’ significance into the dedication?

BEHALOTECHA

CURIOSITY

The parsha describes the seven lamps that light up the sanctuary. The lamps can be seen as education, and the way we light up the minds and hearts of others. Education is not only a matter of mastering information, it's about questioning and exploring. Invite others to engage in conversation with their own questions and thoughts about things like God, the Jewish people, and what we practice ritually.

BRINGING OUT THE BEST IN OTHERS

Two men are prophesizing in the camp. Instead of being threatened, Moshe welcomes them. Often, when we see the strengths of others, we are threatened. Somehow, we think, their strengths mean the diminishment of our own. However, sharing power is the best kind of leadership out there. A leader should encourage and facilitate leadership in others. Even if we don't see ourselves as leaders, we should still try to bring out the best in others.

SHOWING APPRECIATION

Miriam got leprosy as a punishment for speaking badly about her brother. This meant that she, along with the entire nation, had to wait until she was healed so that they could continue traveling. The reason Moshe wanted to wait for one person was because he had so much appreciation for all she had done for him growing up and now was his chance to show it. What can you do to let those who you appreciate know that you really appreciate all they do?

SHELACH

VOICING OPINIONS

Calev and Yehoshua do not agree with the report of the spies, and they decide to speak out against it. It can be difficult when we find ourselves with a different view point than that of the larger group. It can take a lot of strength to stand up for what you believe in, but it is important not to simply follow the tide. How do you feel when someone in a group introduces a new perspective?

KEEPING THINGS IN PERSPECTIVE

The attitude of the spies rubbed off on the nation. Instead of making a realistic evaluation of the report and planning accordingly, they mourned. Mistakes and mishaps can happen, but we are responsible for our reactions, and only we can ensure that a small mishap remains nothing more than a small bump along the journey of life. How well can you keep life's challenges in perspective?

COURAGE AND SELF-CONFIDENCE

The ten spies lack courage and see themselves as very small, saying they are as "grasshoppers" in the eyes of the inhabitants of the land and in their own eyes. They lack the self-confidence it takes to do what is required. To have a positive self-image and to develop a sense of the courage, we need to make an effort to try new things. Where do you think courage comes from?

KORACH

COMMUNICATION

Moshe decides to reach out to some of the rebels and asks them to meet with him. Regardless of whether the person agrees to it; this action says much more about the one who asks than it does about the person who receives the request. It is a brave thing to do and can be very rewarding. Do you think that reaching out is a sign of strength or weakness?

AGREEING TO DISAGREE

Korach was completely disinterested in everything other than himself. Korach had an uncaring coldness toward the plight of others and toward the needs of the nation. Even when we disagree with someone, we still need to infuse ourselves with sincere care and concern for them. We all have our own opinions, and we should be able to voice them and have healthy discussions with our peers.

STANDING UP FOR WHAT YOU BELIEVE IN

Korach stood up for what he believed to be unfair. While the way he went about it was incorrect in the Torah's eyes, he still had the courage to object and voice his opinion. When you object to something, there is a proper way to do it. Be sure to be sensitive; you can be respectful yet effective.

CHUKAT

THE POWER OF WORDS

Out of temper, Moshe hits the rock twice instead of speaking to it. As punishment, God takes away his opportunity to go into the Land of Israel. This teaches how careful we need to be with our words, especially when we are role models. Words can push people apart, but they can also bring people together. By taking the time to think before we speak, we have a better chance of finding the right words in every situation. How can you affect others with your speech?

BULLYING

Again, out of temper, Moshe calls the people "rebels". He uses this hurtful label in public. Showing tolerance and respect for others, despite their shortcomings, is essential. We should discourage labeling others. Being respectful to others who are different from us, rather than trying to raise ourselves, is what we should strive to be like. How can social groups and cliques be hurtful?

LOSING CONTROL

Moses loses control, losing patience with his people who are constantly complaining. We might be dealing with ongoing frustrations, but whatever the issue may be, it is better to address the deeper issue than for us to lose control. Did losing your temper ever accomplish anything worthwhile?

BALAK

TEMPTATIONS

The Israelites are camped in the desert and find themselves tempted in many ways by foreign culture. They indulge their temptations, and it causes havoc in the community. Our lives are full of temptations. It is important that we know what our values are so that we can make sure that they outweigh the temptations we encounter. What do you do to resist your temptations?

JEALOUSY

Bilaam realized that in order to curse the Jewish people he would need to physically see them, thereby arousing feelings of jealousy and anger. Jealousy is when one spends too much time looking at what others have. Instead, we should be looking at ourselves and what we have, appreciating our blessings. We each have unique capabilities, and we should focus on those instead. What are your unique talents?

MODESTY

Bilaam observed the Jewish encampments, and the first thing he noticed was their modesty. Their tent doors faced away from each other, ensuring each other's privacy. He saw their modesty in the way they conducted themselves, and he was impressed beyond words. Beyond words to curse, that is. He was so inspired that he began to bless the Jewish people! It is hard to dress in a modest way and speak in a refined manner. If we realize what we can accomplish through our actions, it helps us conduct ourselves in a modest way.

PINCHAS

BALANCING PASSIONS

Pinchas sees a fellow Israelite behaving in a way that he believes to be unjust. His passion is fueled and in his desire to right this injustice, he takes the law into his own hands. He did in fact see the man breaking a law, but does that mean that it was acceptable for him to serve as a judge and jury? Passions drive us to take action, but sometimes we must refrain. How do your passions affect your actions? How can you use your passions for the good?

STANDING UP FOR YOURSELF AND WOMEN'S RIGHTS

The five sisters have no brothers and do not stand to inherit their father's property because they are women. They daringly stand before Moshe and the whole assembly to make their request to inherit the property of their father, even though they are daughters. Moshe confers with God and then fulfills their radical request. It is important to advocate for yourself. You never know what will happen if you don't speak up. What are the benefits of standing up for oneself?

ABOVE AND BEYOND

The general rule in the Torah is that a kohen has to be born into the family of kohanim. One can't just become a priest. But there was an exception made for Pinchas. Pinchas did an act that was beyond what was expected of him: he risked his very life and killed Zimri, one of the tribal leaders of the Jewish people who was leading them to sin. Pinchas thought only about the will of God; he did much more than what anyone would have expected. We can't become kohanim, but we can be sure that when we do more than what is expected, God will reward us in an exceptional manner too.

MATOT/MASEI

KEEPING YOUR WORD

The Parsha discusses vows and the importance of not breaking a pledge. Judaism teaches not to make a verbal commitment unless you really mean it. How can you value keeping promises?

RECOGNIZING ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND SAVORING MEMORIES

Moshe keeps a written record of the progress of the Jews wandering through the desert. Each stage of their journey is written down. In this way, they could always see where they came from and how far they still have to go. What were your accomplishments last week, last month, last year?

TAKING RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOUR ACTIONS

Moshe accuses Israel's enemies of tempting the Israelite men to sin, instead of placing the blame on the Israelites themselves. Is it helpful to place the blame on someone else? Does accusing others fix the problem? As difficult as it can be, take responsibility for your own actions.



DEVARIM

tone of voice

God is angry with the spies, not only for the negative things they say and the way they demoralize the rest of the people, but also for their tone of voice. Respect actually involves more than just the words we use. How are you affected by the tone of voice of others? What can you do to fix that?

listening to all sides

Moshe emphasizes the importance of listening – paying close attention and patiently listening to all sides. A qualified judge must ignore external factors and do his best to learn as much as he can about the litigants and their arguments. Try not to jump to conclusions. Listen, evaluate and consider.

making goals

Since Moshe is unable to go into the land, he gives a pep talk to the people for their future. Moshe told the Jewish people what they might fear and what obstacles they might face. He told them that they have the talents to overcome any obstacle. He gave them clear focus and aim. Whenever you are about to embark on something big, something important, a new stage in life, don't "wing it" or say that you'll worry about it when you get there. Make objectives and plan ahead.

VETCHANAN

taking care of our bodies

The Torah regards our bodies as 'holy' objects because they are tools for doing great things. We have all this potential within us that can only be accessed when we take proper care of our bodies. How much do you value your physical health?

teaching ethics

Moshe is told that he will not be able to enter the Promised Land, but is to teach the people of Israel a body of ethics to guide them in their new lives and into the future, with each new generation. Whether it's honesty, commitment, kindness to one's neighbor, giving to the poor, or gratitude, the ethics we instill in others will travel a great distance. What does it mean to you to be ethical?

actions have consequences

Moshe deals with the consequences of his actions—only getting a glimpse of the Promised Land, because of his moment of sin. In the moment when we react quickly, it is unlikely that we are running through all possible scenarios of action in our minds. So what happens when we are later faced with the consequences of those actions? There are times when apologies can make things right, and there are times when, like Moshe, we simply need to accept the consequence of our sin.

EIKEY

CONTROLLING ANGER

This parsha talks about the obligation to destroy idol worship in all its forms, even physically destroy idols. Sometimes though, the 'idol' isn't really an image or sculpture; it is ourselves. Anger is a self-centered indulgence, a modern form of idolatry. What are ways to handle feelings of anger?

THE VALUE OF GRATITUDE

Moshe instructs the Israelites to be grateful for all the blessings in their lives, especially for each meal. We lead blessed lives and it is easy to overlook what we have to be thankful for. Why do you think it is hard to be grateful sometimes?

THE ROLE OF A ROLE MODEL

The words of the Shema tell us that we should teach the words of the Torah wherever we are. Each and every one of our actions is a teaching moment, an educational opportunity. What can others learn from our actions?

RE'EH

FREE WILL

Moshe tells his people he is settling a blessing and a curse. The people have a choice; they can obey the commandments and reap blessings, or they can fail to listen to the commandments and suffer. We have impulses, but we also have the freedom of choice. What kinds of choices are hard for you?

TZEDAKAH

The parsha says we should not harden our hearts or shut our hands in response to the needy. Charity/tzedakah is not just a matter of feeling philanthropic, but an act of justice in our world. A perfect theme for a Mitzvah Project! There are plenty of volunteer opportunities in our society to participate in!

GIVING OF OURSELVES

We give 10 percent of our income in money, time, or products. Even though we are encouraged to be generous in our giving, the text indicates that we should not give more than 20 percent. This law is trying to model a balance between taking care of others and taking care of ourselves. What is important is not how much we give, but that we give sufficiently in relation to our means.

SHOFTIM

PRESERVING THE ENVIRONMENT

This parsha presents the mitzvah to protect fruit trees from destruction. This mitzvah is the foundation for the Jewish value of ba'al tashchit, which teaches us not to be wasteful and to care for the environment. How can you care for the environment?

FAIRNESS

The parsha talks about the court system and urges us repeatedly to pursue justice. We can do the best we can to navigate fairly in all the situations at home when a concern of fairness is raised. That can be the modest beginnings of coming to know what justice means in the wider world. What does it mean to be fair?

RESPECT TOWARDS ELECTED OFFICIALS

This parsha talks about appointing a king and having a monarchy. There are certain rules to govern the leadership. The king is not allowed to have too many horses, too much silver, or too many wives, etc. There needs to be a certain level of respect for our elected officials.

KI TETZEI

RESPECTING GOD'S CREATIONS

The parsha forbids us from plowing with an ox and a donkey together because it would be painful to the smaller animal. This shows the Torah's humanitarian concern for animals. Why do you think it is important to be kind to animals? What can you do to be kind to animals?

DECEIVING OURSELVES

We are instructed to return lost objects that we may find lying on the street. It is not always an easy mitzvah to fulfill when you are the finder; however, we must be truthful to others and to ourselves.

REMEMBERING OUR HISTORY

We are commanded to remember Amalek. Even though this was a difficult time for the Jewish people, it is still imperative for us to remember our history and learn from it. If we don't remember our history and pass it down from generation to generation, our history will be lost. The past needs to inform the future.

KI TAVO

BLESSINGS IN DISGUISE

God promises that blessings will pursue one who chooses the path of growth. Part of the assurance of blessing here is that the blessing and goodness will “pursue us” even though we may perceive it as unfair or difficult while it happens. Things come our way in life that don’t always seem like blessings. When have you ever experienced something that seemed bad at first, but turned out to be very good?

FIRSTS

The parsha gives the laws of the first fruits. We give them to the Kohanim. There are many laws in the Torah regarding “firsts.” This can teach us the significance of firsts and beginnings. At this time, it is the beginning of the academic year, the beginning of a job year, and almost the beginning of the Jewish year. The beginning gives us a new chance at something. We start fresh. We have a clean slate. We have the opportunity to think about what we would like to accomplish, what our goals may be and how we can get to where we want to be. This is a beautiful blessing we have in our lives, and we must take advantage of it!

CHALLENGES

We’re all faced with adversity, hardship, and challenge. They define us as a people. We should not be ashamed of it, we should not be upset about it, we should not let it take over; rather, we need to embrace it! We will overcome our obstacles with time, patience and perseverance. What is one challenge you face?

NITZAVIM

INHERITENCE AND CONTROL

God has made a covenant, not only with the current generation, but with generations that came before and future generations. Our lives depend on those who came before us and bear responsibility to those who come after us. We may be born with a Jewish identity, but what will we do with that? What are things you inherited and what are things you can control?

ASPIRATIONS AND GOALS

The parsha says, “It is not in the heavens”; in other words, what the Torah instructs is not beyond us to accomplish. Some struggle is inherent in accomplishment; however, striving for something important is rewarding. What is something new you would like to try?

ENSURING JUDAISM’S LONGEVITY

We are instructed by Moses to choose life. The Torah recognizes that, although we may very well know what is good for us and what is not, we still need to be reminded to make the right choices. Sometimes, we can’t comprehend the long-term consequences of our actions. How can we learn to “choose life” when challenged?

VAYELECH

DISCOMFORT

Moshe nears the end of his old and frail life, but this does not stop him from making the most of his days. He uses his time to impart final words of guidance and wisdom. It isn't easy for him, but it is his last chance. We should certainly enjoy the world in which we live, but there's much more to life than comfort. It takes effort to accomplish our goals. Apply yourself to reach your goal.

DISOBEDIENCE AND UNCONDITIONAL LOVE

God tells Moshe that God's people will be disobedient and violate the covenant. Nevertheless, God keeps faith in the Children of Israel, and despite their misbehavior, he brings them into the Promised Land. God does not abandon His people. Perhaps this is the oldest example of unconditional love. We remain faithful to our loving relationships, and that is why it's important to set limits. Do you remember when and why you have broken rules?

FINAL PREPERATIONS

Moshe is nearing the end of his life and must prepare for it. He needs to prepare himself and his people by setting them up for their future. Although it may seem upsetting when something is ending, but we must accept that nothing is forever. Once we accept this, we can prepare for our next stage, our next endeavor and our next journey. Do you have things set up for your future? How can we stay positive through this?

HAAZINU

FACING PERSONAL FEARS

The Children of Israel were afraid of their enemies and of being teased or judged by the larger nations. As they wandered in the wilderness, there were times when they lost hope in themselves and when they stopped believing in Moshe and God. We too have moments when we're overpowered by our fears. At moments like these, our greatest resource is our internal strength. How can you use your strengths to overcome your fears?

THE IMPORTANCE OF LISTENING

The parsha gives the injunction to "give ear", to listen. If one feels listened to, and feels that they can shape their own environment, they are likely to be open to listening to what we have to say. When is it hardest for you to listen?

SELF-JUSTIFICATION

Moshe reminds us that when we do things that are wrong, we must focus on the imperfection in ourselves and not try to blame others. People judge themselves by their motives, not by their actions, which is why all people think they are basically good. However, there is no way to correct our bad actions if we do not see them as wrong. Think objectively. Suppose the other person really is wrong: why is it helpful to focus away from them and onto yourself?

V'ZOT HABRACHA

SELF IDENTITY

Moshe gives his parting words, his last wishes to the Jewish nation. He gives blessings, instructions, and directions. His job as a leader never ends, and near his death he continues to inspire. Think about the messages you would like to be known by. We can each have a profound impact on our world.

COUNTING OUR BLESSINGS

Moshe blesses the tribe of Zebulun and Issachar, and he tells them to rejoice in their journeys and in their tents. The ability to rejoice is another blessing in our lives. Focusing on the overwhelming number of positives rather than on the fewer negatives can foster better perspective and balance. The capacity to feel joy is tied directly to being able to enjoy the blessings we do have. Our own joy is contagious. What are five blessings in your life for which you are thankful? Why do you think it is sometimes easy to take them for granted?

THE IMPORTANCE OF A NAME

The parsha lists all the tribes of Israel and their corresponding jobs. A name is no random thing. Our names have meaning. Some people are named after a loved one, the month they were born in, a character from the bible, and some are named simply because of its beautiful meaning. Who named you? What does your name represent? Can we find a way to connect the meaning of our names to our personality or our lives?

