Hiddur Mitzvah

David Gronlund-Jacob

Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for Masters of Arts in Religious Education Degree

Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion
School of Education
New York, New York

March 1, 2004
Adar I 8, 5764

Advisor: Lisa Grant, Ph.D

Contents

Introduction

In our never-ending quest to refine and develop Jewish education we have access to a long history and a wide range of choices. Here, I am going to focus on using the concept of Hiddur Mitzvah as an educational approach that uses both history and contemporary teaching theory. Hiddur Mitzvah is a Jewish concept that entails the beautification of ritual objects to enhance the fulfillment of a mitzvah. We must use utilitarian objects in order to fulfill certain mitzvot. For example, we need a cup to hold the wine when we make Kiddush even though the Kiddush is said over the wine not the cup. We are commanded to build and live in a temporary booth during the festival of Sukkot. And we need a box to protect the words of the Sh'ma that we place on our doorpost. These objects that we use take on special significance because we are using them to honor God. If we are to take our relationship with God seriously, and display our commitment to this relationship through the performance of mitzvot, then the objects that we use should be special. We will examine what makes these items special and suggest ways we can use them to teach about Judaism and the mitzvot that they represent.

To begin I must explain my personal philosophy regarding Jewish education. I believe that Jewish education is about building connections. These are connections to the extended Jewish past, the extended Jewish community worldwide, and to the God that unites us as one people. Judaism has a long, diverse, and dynamic story to tell. This story is told through our texts, liturgy, arts, rituals, foods, and other forms of communal expressions. It is the task of Jewish educators to be a link in this chain, passing along the knowledge and practices of our people to the next generation and add to this continuous chain. When we pass a set of Shabbat candlesticks down from one generation to the next

we are making a physical connection between the generations. We enhance the performance of a mitzvah when we light the Hanukah menorah that our grandparents carried with them to the new country. And we can enhance the performance of a mitzvah when we drink from the Kiddish cup that we used at our own wedding or Bar mitzvah.

In this pursuit of building connections, I will examine Jewish texts, rituals, and objects, and conduct interviews with people to gain an understanding of how these items have been used to maintain a Jewish identity and how these things may have been used to keep Judaism a living heritage while other ancient peoples and traditions have faded away.

I will focus more specifically on home celebrations of Shabbat and the ritual items associated with the performance of the mitzvot connected with the greeting of Shabbat. Ahad Ha'Am's statement "One can say without exaggeration that more than Israel has kept Shabbat, the Shabbat has kept Israel" has always stuck with me. Separating this day from the other days of the week is one of the first gifts God gives to us. The greeting of Shabbat is also a family centered activity. There is great importance placed on the family being together for the candle lighting, Kiddish, the motzi and a special dinner. What is it about the items we use when performing these tasks that make them special? What can we learn about ourselves through these objects? What can we learn about the history of our people through these items? Do we make connections between these objects and the mitzvot? How can we use these objects to teach us about Judaism? And, how can teaching about these objects enhance role the home plays in Jewish education?

I will begin to answer these questions through a range of methods. First, I examine our ancient texts for clues regarding the history of the artist's role in creating our legacy. I then discuss some modern social theory and how Judaism is practiced in people's lives. I also look at how art education theories can be applied to Jewish education. And through a series of interviews with people with varying levels of observance, how they bring more meaning to their individual rituals through the objects that they use. All of this is intended to help us reach a better understanding about why we use the objects we use when performing mitzvot and how we can use this information as one tool in the development of Jewish education.

The Home as Classroom

"You shall teach them diligently to your children." With this phrase we are commanded to pass along our knowledge to our children. The mitzvot that were handed to Moses and to the children of Israel are the common legacy that binds generation to generation. What we know and do is not to die with us. While we are commanded to pass along these mitzvot, we are not given specific instructions regarding how to teach them. This is our challenge in this directive. We are told to teach them diligently. Diligently, according to the dictionary is "constant and earnest in effort and application; attentive and persistent in doing something."[1] Our responsibility is to make sure these lessons are learned. Our obligation is to perform the mitzvot and teach them to the next generation so that they will be inspired to pass them along to their children. Every generation is compelled to fulfill this directive. Each generation must reevaluate its commitment to this commandment. Each generation must adjust their lessons to fit the needs of their children. The reward of this diligence is the continuance of the legacy that has been handed to us. This simple request, to pass our teachings along to the next generation, does not seem like too much to ask. But the implications become eternal, as we ask in our liturgy, "Can a people disappear and be annihilated so long as a child remember its parents?"[2] When our Judaism is passed directly from father to son and mother to daughter we can never disappear. The importance is placed directly on the family. Jewish identity

---

[1] *College Dictionary*; Random House, New York 2000
[2] Stern, Chaim Editor; *Gates of Prayer*, CCAR , NY 1975 pg 622

has always started with the family and Jewish education has traditionally begun at home. It is only recently in our history that that has shifted.

In his book Traditions and Crisis, Jacob Katz present us with a brief history of Jewish education. He explains that traditional Jewish education begins at home. This is where we learn the basics. The focus is on family rituals and celebrations. Here is where we learn about the blessings before and after our meals, how to greet Shabbat, and the Passover Seder. We also learn the basic of social and societal expectations like warmly welcoming guests, visiting the sick, and helping those less fortunate than ourselves. Home is the place where we learn good manners, basic prayers, and moral behaviors. This is where "both religion and family ties were strengthened and values were transmitted to the new generation."[3] Katz follows the course of Jewish education through the traditions of the *Heder* and the *Yeshiva*. But the focus for many Americans was shifting. With the major immigration from Europe in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, American Jews were not only taught the lessons of their ancestors but also how to live in the "New World" of America. With emancipation, Jews were able to escape the ghetto and live wherever they chose. In addition to living where they wanted, the opportunity to send their children to free public school was also an option that a vast majority of American Jews chose for their children. The public school is certainly not the place for our children to receive their Jewish education. The importance was placed on a good secular education in order to get a good job, rather than a good Jewish education to become knowledge and practicing Jews. The home was losing its important role in education and Jewish education seemed to be following along on the same path.

[3] Katz, Jacob: *Tradition and Crisis*, Syracuse University Press, 2000 pg. 157

Jenna Weissman Joselit's *The Wonders of America* traces the cultural history of modern American Jewry. Her book points out that early in the twentieth century as more Jews were immigrating to America, a new form of Jewish identity was beginning to emerge. She traces this cultural advance through changes in the way American Jews chose a spouse, decorated their homes, celebrated lifecycle events, and related to their past. This land of opportunity presented new choices along with new responsibilities. American Jews now have the dual task of raising both good Americans and knowledgeable Jews. Since the household and child-raising are traditionally left to the domain of women this presented Jewish women with an even larger role in the Jewish education of their children. To emphasize the importance of the Jewishness of a home she quotes Rabbi Jacob Kohn,

> If in a home the Oriental rug must be the best which the family can afford, but the Chanukah Menorah, or the service of the Seder table, or the kiddush cup and the candlesticks for the Sabbath, are the cheapest and the tawdriest of objects and to be conveniently hidden away in some dark cupboard when not in use, we should not be astonished if our sons and daughters draw devastating conclusions from this and evident evaluation of the factors of Jewish living.[4]

As Jews were placing their European past behind them, many seemed to be placing the their religious past behind them as well. The candlesticks and kiddish cups from our European ancestors were hidden in the closet. Sometimes they were replaced with new and modern ones but this was not always the case.

The notion of presenting a modern Jewish American home is also addressed in the 1941 publication *The Jewish Home Beautiful* by the National Women's League of the United Synagogue of America of New York. They dedicate this entire publication to the

[4] Joselit, Jenna Weissman; *The Wonders of America*; Hill and Wang, New York, 1994, pg 154

importance of the beauty of the American Jewish home. It is presented as clean and well appointed along with the warmth that our traditions offer. They compare their place settings to those presented in department stores and in women's magazines. Jewish homes should not be left without the imagination used in the homes of our non-Jewish neighbors and their holidays. Along with these suggested inspirations they point out that it is up to "...every mother to remember that the ethical and historical lessons associated with the holidays, have been as deeply impressed upon many a youthful mind by memory of unique foods and symbolic ceremonies round the family table, as by books and teachers."[5] Teaching about Judaism is much more than what happens in our classrooms; it begins at home and is reinforced at home on a regular basis. We teach what is important to us by the way present our holidays in our homes.

There are many other articles that provide critical reviews of the history of Jewish education. Jack Werthheimer's *Jewish Education in the United States: Recent Trends and Issues* reviews this topic in depth. In it, he explains the history of the changing demographics of American Jewry, including increased mobility, changing community views, and how the rate of intermarriage is affecting American Jewry. A major focus in this study is also the population shift from cities to suburbs, which led to the growth of the congregational schools, community schools and day schools. He also points out the differences between the Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox models of education. This includes, among other topics, the financial resources and their implications. There is a survey of the student teacher ratio and male female faculty ratio. One of the most important factors he points out is the number of hours dedicated to Judaic and Hebrew

[5] Greenberg, Betty D., and Althea O. Silverman: *The Beautiful Jewish Home*, The National Women's League of the United Synagogue of America, New York 1941 pg. 14

education. In his conclusion he sums up the difficulty of this task is a result of "the complex nature of Jewish Identity, a mix of religious and ethnic components-both of which must be integrated into the lives of our young people. And in part it results from the nature of Jewish life in the United States, where Jews constitute a minority striving to sustain a distinctive religion and culture."[6]

Where does this commitment to our distinctive culture come from? As we move around and our lifestyles change there needs to be a focal point. Greenberg, Katz, Weissman, and Rabbi Kohn would all agree that Judaism begins at home. Our earliest Jewish experiences begin at home. Our homes say a lot about our commitment to Judaism. We teach our children through our regular observance of holidays. The way we celebrate and the objects we use for our celebrations help to tell our story. We suggest what is important to us by the way we chose which holidays we observer and what items we chose to observe them with.

Another study[7] points out the increased pressures felt by today's teenagers. They feel the pressure of living in both an American and a Jewish culture. The current competition for getting into the proper college overshadows the decisions for many teenagers as to how they will divide their time. As Jews became more acculturated they also became more involved in other cultural activities. Piano and violin lessons along with baseball and other sports compete for time with Jewish education. Having a certain amount of financial independence is another ambition that competes for time in the already busy schedules of our teenagers, leading many of them to taking part time jobs.

---

[6] Jack Werthheimer's *Jewish Education in the United States: Recent Trends and Issues*, American Jewish Yearbook, 1999

[7] Kadusin, Charles. *Being a Jewish Teenager in America*: Trying to Make It: Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, Brandeis University, 2000

Asking our students to dedicate more time to learning about the culture and religion their parents have relegated to part-time status or to the back of the cupboard is a difficult challenge. One hopeful sign in their report is the way some of our students spend their summers. Jewish summer camps offer them full access to the rhythms of a Jewish life. The challenge is bringing the Jewish summer experience into their regular lives. How do we transfer these experiences back into their homes?

We are continually asking these questions. What messages are we sending to our children if the ritual objects are still relegated to the cupboards and never used? If Katz's is correct that our primary Jewish education begins at home and our children see that our sacred objects are displayed in beautiful cabinets and never used, what is the message they are receiving? How do we help modern Jews add meaning to the Jewish holidays and rituals?

The challenges before us today are not new. In his opening remarks at the Lehrhaus in Frankfurt, Franz Rosensweig said, "It is a learning in reverse order. A learning that no longer starts from the Torah and leads to life, but rather the other way round: from life, from a world that knows nothing of the Law, or pretends to know nothing, back to the Torah. This is a sign of the time."[8] As Rosensweig points out the order is now reversed, Jewish education no longer begins at home. The primary source of Jewish education for many of our students is in our synagogues and Hebrew schools. Our challenge is to bring Jewishness back to the home. When we teach Judaism in our schools we need to educate for the transfer of these rituals back where they traditionally came from.

---

[8] Rosensweig, Franz: *From the Draft of the Address at the opening of the Lehrhaus in Frankfurt*, 1920

How do we bring Jewish education back into the home as Katz taught us? As Jewish educators how can we bring these traditions out of the closet? How do we accept the challenge in Joselit's research and combine our American identity together with our Jewish identity? I suggest that this can be done through the objects that already exist in these homes. We can use candlesticks, Kiddish cups, and Seder plates in our lessons to teach Judaism. They can be brought out of the china cabinets and closets and used to tell family stories and traditions. We can use them to teach about the Jewish celebrations for which they were originally intended. What can these treasures tell us about our culture and family history? How can we use these hidden resources to teach the mitzvot diligently to our children? What kinds of family traditions can these objects teach us?

Torah/ Bezalel and Ohaliab

Let's take a look at what the Torah can teach us about the arts and the artists who create the objects and the setting that will serve as God's holy place on earth. We are informed that Bezalel and Ohaliab will oversee the construction of the Tent of Meetings, the Ark of the Covenant, all of the vessels, the menorah, the incense, the alters, and the holy garments for the priests[9]. While there have been very specific instructions already given, (in Terumah) the artistic details are left to Bezalel, the son of Uri, son of Hur, from the tribe of Judah and Ohaliab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan. These two artists are in charge of carrying out the construction of this most holy space for the wandering children of Israel.

Other than being singled out by God we are not given much information about these two men. Adel C. Berlin tells us about three types of biblical characters, *full-fledged, type,* and *agents*[10]. Berlin describes *full-fledge* characters as "complex, manifesting a multitude of traits, and appear as real people." These characters are developed through their actions, words, or interaction with others. We don't learn that much about the two artists mentioned here. The *type* characters are "built around a single quality or trait." She defines *agents* as "functionaries" or characters that are given a specific task or role within a story but not much else. Despite the importance and magnitude of the task ahead of these artisans we are not given much information give

---

[99] (Ex. 31 7-11) The appointed tent, and the ark of the covenent, and the covering, and all the vessels of the tent. And the table and its vessels, and the pure candleabrum with all its vessels, and the laver and its frame, and the knitted garments of holiness for Aaron the preist, and the anointing oil, and the incense of aromatics, for the holiness, according to all that I have connanded you shall do.

[10] Berlin, Adele, *Poetics and Interpretation of Biblical Narrative: The Almond Press, 1983 pg 23*

about them. While we are not given insight into their personalities, we do know that they both have been, "endowed with skill and ability to perform expertly all the tasks connected to the service of the sanctuary."[11] The only other biblical character with all three traits is Hiram, a son of a widow of the tribe of Naphtali who comes down from Tyre to assist Solomon in the construction of the Temple. There are however two very important people that possess two of these traits. Solomon is endowed with wisdom and discernment in great measure[12], and Joseph, when he is appointed over pharaoh's court is told that there is none so discerning and wise as you.[13] So while we may not know much about them as people, we do know that they are in very good company.

There must be more that each of them has to offer. Bezalel and Ohaliab are named along with their lineage. Bezalel we are told comes from the tribe of Judah, and Ohaliab from the tribe of Dan. Rashi points out that,

> Ohaliab was of the tribe of Dan, one of the lowliest of the tribes, of the sons of the handmaids, and yet the Eternal placed him with regard to the work of the Tabernacle on a level with Bezalel although he was a member of one of the highest tribes, Judah, in order to confirm what Scripture says, (Job 34:19) "He regards not the rich more than the poor."[14]

The creation of this most holy of spaces is not left only to the most elite among us, it is to be constructed by rich and poor alike so that all may point to it and say I took part in this as well. This important lesson of inclusion was not lost in this portion of our legacy. This only adds to the collective spirit of our story.

With two names being called out we can also ask what each individual brings to this project. Both are described by Moses as "filled with wisdom of heart, to work all

---

[11] Exodus 36:1
[12] 1 Kings 5:9
[13] Genesis 41:39
[14] Silbermann, Dr. A.M. and Rosenbaum Rev. M.: *Pentateuch with Rashi's Commentary, Exodus*: Hebrew Publishing Company, NY pgs. 202-203

manner of work, of the engraver, and of the cunning workman, and of the embroider."[15] Why do we need two leaders for this assignment? What separates them from the rest of the "wise hearted men"[16] that God calls forth to take on this sacred task? What special talents do they bring individually to this task?

Their names also give us another understanding of their uniqueness and special perspective on this mission. We are told that Bezalel has been "filled with a Godly spirit, with wisdom, and knowledge, and every craft; to weave designs, to work with gold, silver, copper; stone cutting for setting, and wood-carving to perform every task."[17] Ohaliab, on the other hand is given no unique talents. He is filled with "a wise heart." along with Bezalel[18] and with all the other men he is given "wisdom that they may make all that God has commanded."[19] What is it that Ohaliab adds? Since he is given no unique talents why is he even mentioned? An examination of their names gives us another way to examine their uniqueness.

Their names present us with two distinct ways to approach the arts and artistic vision. The name Bezalel is translated into "in the shadow of God." Bezalel draws inspiration directly from his connection with his God. Bezalel has visions that others don't possess. He is not concerned with what he sees around him, his understanding comes from another source. This source is attributed to God himself. As the Talmud tells us, when Moses explains to the people the instructions that were given to him by God on the mountain, Moses reverses the order. Bezalel points out that one must make a home before one makes the furnishings. When Moses hears this he says, "'Bezalel, you must

[15] Exodus 35:35
[16] Exodus 31:6
[17] Exodus 31:3-5
[18] Exodus 35:35
[19] Exodus 31:6

have been sitting in the shadow of God, for certainly this is what God commanded of me!' And consequently Bezalel made the Tabernacle first and afterwards he made the vessels."[20] The aesthetic vision that Bezalel has comes from being in the direct shadow of his God. This Divine inspiration is the center of his creations.

Ohaliab translates as "my fathers tent." His artistic vision comes from the world he has inherited. When Ohaliab looks around him he sees the rich traditions of his forefathers. His inspiration comes from his father's tent and all that has brought him and his people to this place. Ohaliab has a different view of the world from Bezalel. His vision is a reordering of his past. He asks himself about the things that have been handed down to him. He wants to know what was important to his father. The world around him does not need to be completely reinvented. It is filled with wonderful images and icons and he wants to use these traditions and reorganize them for the world he currently occupies. His vision is in his ability to take what has been handed down to him and show people the beauty that already exists.

When artists begin their creative process some begin with a vision or image of what the finished product will be like. Bezalel works directly from this vision. He turns these images and dreams into tangible works of art for the world to see. His craft is his ability to use his skills to inspire and lead. The beauty and grace of his creations come directly from his being in the shadow of God and he is unencumbered by the rules and regulations of the world around him. His task is to reorganize this world through his vision. His vision, as Moses realizes, comes from somewhere beyond this world, it comes from being in the direct shadow of God.

---

[20] Talmud Brakoth 55a

I would suggest that it is necessary for these two artists to come together to create the space that will be God's dwelling place on earth. They represent two different parts of the creation process. While Bezalel will bring about the creation of something new for this group of freed slaves that are beginning to unite as one people, Ohaliab is looking to add the images and icons that will link them to their past. If this new space is only new the people may have trouble connecting to it because it has no meaning to them. If it looks exactly like the past they will not be moving forward. And it will be as if they are returning back to Egypt.

These two craftsmen are not only artists; they are teachers of the arts. Moses explains to the children of Israel that not only is Bezalel filled with wisdom of heart, he also has placed "in his heart that he may teach, both he and Ohaliab..."[21] The word used here for teach is *lehorot*. Of the words used in the bible for teaching this one refers to a specific goal or action. This is not part of a general form of education but a more specific kind of instruction. They are given a specific objective and they must guide the others toward it. They are not instructed to build the Tabernacle themselves, they are appointed to lead all of the other craftsmen as well.

I would also suggest that Bezalel and Ohaliab represent not only themselves as artist but also two separate schools of art. Just as the Mishnah presents two different points of view in the names of Hillel and Shammai, we can understand Bezalel and Ohaliab as artistic schools with different points of view. Clements adds to this theory when he states that they "represent famous family guilds of craftsmen well known in ancient Israel."[22] Whether or not there were two men by these names is not a major

---

[21] Exodus 35:34
[22] Hostetter, Edwin C.: *Anchor Bible Dictionary*,

concern for us, the idea that each of the schools represented gives us a way to examine the treasures that have been handed down to us. This can help us frame a current discussion regarding the roles of tradition and aesthetic inspiration in today's world of Judaism.

In order to build a place for God to dwell among us, God calls two men by name. They each come to this single task with different points of view. Bezalel and Ohaliab each represent two sides of this discussion. Without either the Divine inspiration or the family traditions this project would be incomplete. The lessons and directions that each has to offer are lessons and directions that are still relevant today. We need to see Judaism as our own but we can't lose sight of our past.

Hiddur Mitzvah

"Humans, of all living species, have the distinctive, if not the unique, ability to create a culture through which those in the community can grow. Humans can leave a legacy."[23] The ability to rearrange the world as we see fit is unique to us. We use this special talent to create objects, monuments, and rituals that pay tribute to things that are important to our culture. We use this ability to make sense of our surroundings and to enhance the ideas and concepts that are important to us. One way of understanding what was important to a civilization or culture is through examination of the objects that they left behind. As John Dewey tell us,

> The glory that was Greece and the grandeur that was Rome for most of us, probably for all but the historical student, sum up those civilizations; glory and grandeur are aesthetic...Continuity of culture in passage from one to another as well as within a culture, is conditioned by art more than any other one thing. Troy lives for us only in poetry and in objects of art that have been recovered from its ruins. Minoan civilization is today its products of art. Pagan gods and pagan rite are past and gone and yet endure in the incense, lights, robes, and holydays of the present.[24]

The difference between the cultures of Rome, Greece, or Troy, and Judaism is that there are still practicing Jews. If it is important for us to understand the continuity of other ancient cultures then it is certainly important to understand the continuity of our own culture. When we see a menorah from ancient Rome and compare it to a menorah that stands in our synagogue today we are connecting our current practices with those of our ancestors. These objects and artifact become a physical connection to the heritage and culture that came before us.

---

[23] Eisner, Elliot W.: *The Arts and the Creation of Mind*: Yale University Press 2002 Pg. 3
[24] Dewey, John: *Art as Experience*: pg. 327

Jews are commanded to transmit our culture from one generation to another. During the Pesach Seder we are told four times to tell our story to our children. For Jews this culture is passed along not only in our rituals and texts, but also with the objects that we use in the performance of these rites and rituals. The rabbis understood the importance of the use of ritual objects when they introduced the idea known as Hiddur Mitzvah, the glorification or enhancement of a commandment.

The section of Torah most often cited when describing the concept of Hiddur Mitzvah is from Exodus 15:2 at the beginning of the Song by the Sea, " This is my God and I shall glorify Him." After witnessing the awesome power and strength of God, at the parting of the sea, the children of Israel begin to sing. In the beginning of this public and communal display of gratitude and affection the Israelites proclaim their acceptance of God and their obligation to honor God. The acceptance of this God as their God will be demonstrated by their performance of the mitzvot that will be spelled out, in greater detail, later in the Exodus story.

The Rabbis of the Talmudic period explain that it is our obligation to honor God through the observance of the mitzvot. Since this is our way to show our dedication to God, we are also obligated to enhance our performance of the mitzvot in the best way possible as the Talmud says,

> This is my God, and I will adorn him, but here that we require, 'This is my God, and I will adorn him', that indeed is so! (For it was taught: This is my God, and I will adorn him: [i.e.,] adorn thyself before Him in [the fulfillment of] precepts. [Thus:] make a beautiful sukkah in His honor, a beautiful lulav, a beautiful shofar, beautiful fringes, and a beautiful Scroll of the Law, and write it with fine ink, a fine reed [-pen], and a skilled penman, and wrap it about with beautiful silks.[25]

[25] Shabbat 133b

We are not to cut corners or hold back in our observance since we are using these objects to honor God. A curious point to be made here is that this brief reference to this list of sacred objects is contained in a lengthy section discussing the rules of circumcision on Shabbat and this comment seems to leave us hanging without further explanation. However, according to the Rabbis we are to use the best items we can afford. One question is: What do we mean by the best?

One answer the Talmud gives is to tell us that we are to go up to one third[26] in our performance of a mitzvah. The conversation then follows regarding the question, a third of what? Does this mean a third of one's total positions? If this were the case, then if one were to perform three mitzvot at the same time, one would loose all of his possessions. We can't be left with the idea that we are to give up all of our wealth in order to honor God. If this means that we are to add a third to an ordinary expense, then we need to know what ordinary expense are we comparing this too? We are left with the idea that in performing a mitzvah we are required to extend more effort than when performing our daily routines. What is an ordinary observance? After all we are performing these mitzvot in order to honor God. If we fulfill these obligations with less than extra effort do they go unfulfilled? We are left without a clear answer to these questions. We are left with the understanding that when we are honoring God we are obligated to make more than an ordinary effort.

In the early 16th century Rabbi Joseph Caro wrote the Shulhan Arukh. In his codification of Jewish laws he makes several references to the beautification of a mitzvah. He also quotes the Exodus passage as a proof text in his description of the

[26] Bava Kamma 9a-b

mitzvah of wearing a tallit, he writes, "For every religious deed must be performed in the grandest manner, as it is written 'This is my God, and I will glorify Him,' and it is explained to mean: Show yourself glorious before Him when performing His Commandments."[27] This emphasis on using the best is carried into the section regarding rejoicing on a festival where he writes, " The holiday garments should also be costlier than those used on Shabbat."[28] He suggests that during Pesach, "We should arrange the seats while it is still daylight, using the best spreads that we can afford..."[29] Each of these references to the enhancement of a mitzvot refers to the grandest, the best, or the costliest. For Caro the items we use suggest the importance in the performance of a mitzvah. If we were to use anything less than the best would imply that this act is not that important to us. Caro suggests that this should not be the message we want to send to God.

At Sinai we received and accepted our contract with God[30]. The Mitzvot are our way to celebrate our relationship with God. This connection is not to be taken lightly. This is our way of displaying the special connection we personally have with God. The issue for us should not be only one of value, but of meaning. Our question should not be how much more should I spend but how do I display my own personal values and commitments in the performance of this mitzvah. How does the performance of this mitzvah help me make a connection with God? When honoring God we should want to show the proper respect and dignity. Using beautiful and expensive objects is one way to

[27] Ganzfried, Rabbi Solomon, Goldin, Hyman, translator: *Code of Jewish Laws: Kitzur Shulhan Arukh.* Hebrew Publishing Company, NY 1961 Ch. 9:1
[28] Ch. 103:5
[29] Ch. 118:6
[30] Exodus 19:9

display our respect. It shows that we do believe that this task is important. But it is not the only way and in some cases it could miss the point.

Anyone with the means can buy the largest menorah or the most ornate Kiddish cup. But that does not mean that they are enhancing the mitzvah. The mitzvah is fulfilled when it is performed not when the items to fulfill it are owned. The objects only have meaning when they are used. The objects themselves are not source of meaning. If a beautiful set of candlesticks sits on the shelf in the china cabinet and is never taken out and used to greet Shabbat there is no mitzvah being fulfilled. It is what the objects represent that gives them meaning. It is what these objects remind us of that is important. When we use a handsome silver cup to hold the wine we use to sanctify the Shabbat we remind ourselves of the gift of Shabbat and thank God for this gift. We glorify the performance of a mitzvah when the items that we use remind us of this connection. Do they have to be the most expensive to be the most meaningful? Do my Shabbat candlesticks have more meaning because I spent more money than someone else? Does greater cost does translate to greater meaning.

Personal meaning in the performance of a mitzvah is very important and can come from many different sources. In their book "The Jew Within," Cohen and Eisen give us a through account of moderately affiliated Jews in America and their performance of mitzvot. One of their conclusions is that if there is no personal connection to a mitzvah, they don't do it. They explain, "Our respondents seem to like observance, and to value it-in part because the meanings it carries are meanings that they themselves have

supplied..."[31] They provide examples of people finding this meaning through a variety of sources but the source repeated most often is family.

As part of my own research I conducted several interviews with Jews who have demonstrated different levels of Shabbat observance. These interviews included people that described themselves as Reform and Conservative Jews and all felt it important to have some form of Friday night family routine. These interviews support the findings of Cohen and Eisen. When asked why people use the objects they use when they perform their Shabbat rituals, people always had personal stories behind these objects. These stories were a way for people to make a connection between the objects, their rituals, and their Judaism. In some cases the connection was to family members, in others it was to the larger Jewish community, and still others it was to history of the Jewish people.

It seems natural that parents and grandparents would be one source of meaning. We often do things because our parents did them. In one interview, Rachel told the story of using her grandmother's three-pronged Shabbat candlestick. As her grandmother was entering a nursing home, where she was not allowed to light her own candles, Rachel promised to light the candles for her until she was able to do so herself. Rachel had fond memories of her grandmother using these candlesticks every Friday when the family would be together. She volunteered for this task so that she could do her part to keep this family tradition going. Her grandmother has since passed away and Rachel still uses this set. It is one way for her to feel connected to her past. She has added her current family connection as she light the first two candles and lets her young son light the third. She has other sets of Shabbat candlesticks but this is the one she always chooses to use.

---

[31] Cohen, Steven M. and Arnold M. Eisen: *The Jew within, Self, Family, and Community in America*: Indiana University Press, 2000, pg.86

Barbara who had heard of the organization *Lifeline for the Old* made another connection. *Lifeline for the Old* (Yad Lakashish) describes itself as, "a voluntary community organization that offers work opportunities, support services and intergenerational programs for several hundred men and women, needy elderly and disabled in Jerusalem. Thousands of visitors from around the world come to meet the elderly at work and learn about Lifeline's unique Tzedakah message."[32] They offer workshops in a variety of fields including metal, wood and ceramic shops along with embroidery, knitting, and toy making. This is offered regardless of ethnic or social background and includes many immigrants from around the world.

After hearing about this organization Barbara made it a special destination on one of her trips to Israel. She went there to purchase a tallit for her son's upcoming bar mitzvah. While she was there she toured the facilities and she "went crazy. It felt like my grandmother was giving me a tour of her house and I could not resist looking for other things to buy and use." In her quest to connect her son's bar mitzvah to the State of Israel she found a way to connect her own Shabbat rituals to her homeland.

Betty, another interviewee who visited the *Lifeline for the Old* said, "every time I use the items purchased there it makes me feel like I am doing another mitzvah." Shabbat has taken on even more meaning for her with the mitzvah of giving tzedakah. She recalled Maimonides seven levels of tzedakah and understood the highest level to be helping someone gain employment. This connection between the family's weekly Shabbat routine and mitzvah of tzedakah is a powerful reminder of what is important to her and her family. This connection is a teaching opportunity too important to be overlooked.

[32] Lifeline or the Old website: http://www.lifeline.org.il/lifeline/ Feb 2004

Connections with Israel also played an important role when choosing the items to use for Shabbat. Some people explained the importance of visiting Israel and spending money there to help the Israeli economy. There was also a conscious effort to bring Israeli products here. Several people also talked about synagogue gift shops and Israeli vendor fairs that were sponsored by their local synagogues as important factors in deciding which items to buy and use.

Another way people have added meaning to their Shabbat rituals was through their children. Joan said she grew up in a nonobservant household. Currently, Shabbat is very important to her and she recently added hand washing to her family's Shabbat rituals. She uses a pitcher that her daughter made in school. She told me her parents were not observant and she feels as though she missed something growing up. She said "I want to begin the traditions to be able to pass them along to my children." She really loves the pitcher for hand washing and believes this helps to add to making this new family tradition personal and meaningful.

Eugene Borowitz addressed this issue from a different perspective in 1977 when discussing modern Reform Jewry and how we view new ritual objects. He comments that for the last century the progression to find a new Jewish aesthetic has been defined by our breaking with the past. The old way, for us, is not always better. If the old way lost its meaning we simply got rid of it. Borowitz suggest that we need to add some consistency he states, "The point is a simple one: 'contemporary' need not mean 'disposable.' We can use a certain measure of input into our esthetic life to keep it fresh even as we develop an American Jewish tradition. Though we now wish to balance innovation with continuity, we shall still want, as Reform Judaism has taught us, to reflect in our Jewish life that

which modernity suggests is good art."[33] Borowitz suggests here that while we are searching for new ways to enhance the performance of mitzvot we should not continually through out the old. Our desire to accept Bezalel's contemporary inspiration should not overpower all the traditions that Ohaliab wants to retain. Traditions are our link to the past and we cannot simply discard them. Our challenge is to bring contemporary meaning to our traditional rituals and objects to enhance both the ancient and the modern to keep us as part of the continuous chain of Jewish history.

Our traditional view of Hiddur Mitzvah as defined through the ages is that we add to the performance of a mitzvah through using objects that are grand or costly. While this is true it does not tell the whole story for us today. We do go out of our way to bring objects of value into the performance of mitzvot, but this value is not always based on cost or size. More often it is based on some other connection to our lives. As Cohen and Eisen pointed out, we like observance, but we want to bring our own meaning to our observances. When we bring personal meaning to our observances through the memories of our parents or our commitments to our children or even the performance of another mitzvah we are beautifying the mitzvah in our own way. We enhance a mitzvah when we bring ourselves to the task. Just as Bezalel represents the beautiful and the aesthetic nature of our ritual objects, Ohaliab helps us make connections to the mitzvot through our families and personal rituals. We use both points of view to bring meaning to our personal connection to the performance of mitzvot and to our own personal connection to God. This new view of Hiddur Mitzvah can be a powerful tool in understanding why we perform the rituals we do. With a better understanding of these connections we can build

[33] Borowitz, Eugene B.; *Reform Judaism Today, Book 1 Reform in the Process of Change*, Behrman House, Springfield NJ, 1977

a better understanding of how we can teach our students to make their own meanings and connections.

Why teach the arts?

In his brief but influential treatise, *Experience and Education,* Dewey lays out his philosophical case for what he refers to as progressive education. He compares both the advantages and defects of traditional education and progressive education. Among the differences are the shifts in focus from the teacher to the learner, and an inclusion of the importance of the surrounding society. Most important, is the belief that the there is an experience of education that exists outside the content of the information being taught. Dewey describes the current prevailing philosophy of education as the transfer of an existing fixed body of knowledge and information. This is accomplished through reading textbooks and lectures. In this educational paradigm, standardized information from the textbook is transferred to the student using the teacher as the agent to make sure the proper lessons are being taught. All of this information acquired is to be used as building blocks for more information or to be used at some point latter in life. Dewey does not argue that the information being taught is not proper or irrelevant. His question is in regard to the experience of this process. His reaction is to the method of education, as he describes it, the imposition of this knowledge. He asks the questions, "How many (students) lost the impetus to learn because of the way in which learning was experienced by them? How many came to associate the learning process with ennui and boredom?"[34] These questions are still relevant today. And anyone who has stood in front of a group of seventh graders in the typical Jewish supplemental school will be able to add their personal experiences to this chapter of the educational story. For Dewey, and us, the

[34] Dewey, John; *Experience as Education*, Collier Books, New York; 1963 pg. 26-27

experience of education is as important as the information we intend to transfer. If our goals are the love of learning and the lifelong pursuit of learning, then our lessons should not teach that learning is boring.

Dewey continues to stress the importance of experiential education in his book *Art as Experience*. He states, "All language, whatever the medium, involves *what* is said and *how* it is said, or substance and form."[35] The way we choose to teach says as much as what we choose to teach. Language in this instance refers not only to the written word but also to other forms of communication. This includes not only written prose and poems, but also music, dance, and fine arts as well. Each of these forms of communication brings with it its own unique vocabulary as Dewey points out "For each art has its own medium and that medium is especially fitted for one kind of communication. Each medium says something that cannot be uttered as well or as completely in any other tongue."[36]

This uniqueness of each individual medium presents us with another challenge. We now must teach not only the original subject but the language of the medium as well. For example a painter must learn to blend pigments together in order create the desired color. Or a photographer must learn to examine his subject matter from several different angles before deciding which one would provide the best composition for the photograph. This may be an additional challenge for us as educators but it also offers additional opportunities for our learners. By teaching in a variety of forms we are opening up our students to the different worlds associated with them. We also are opening our learners to the diverse tools available to them. When we use a variety of forms to teach a specific

[35] Dewey, John: *Art as Experience*: Perigee Books, NY, NY 1943 Pg. 106
[36] ibid pg. 106

subject we give our learners more tools to understand not only the substance of our lessons but also a variety of ways to view the world around them. This allows students to understand different types of expression.

Using the fine and performing arts to teach, also allows a unique opportunity to educate across cultural and historic barriers. Paintings or dance performances are not bound by the limitations of historical period or language. Any painting from any time can be discussed in any language. Nor does the viewer need not develop the expertise to create a painting in order to understand or gain a deeper appreciation of a painting. They only need to understand the imagery and symbols used to gain a better understanding of a work of art and the world of art. This lesson of visual vocabulary is transferable worldwide.

The titles of Dewey's books also make a statement about his beliefs. He does not present us with an either/or vocabulary. He tells us about *Experience and Education* or *Art as Experience*. They go hand in hand. Dewey does not want us to forget that the experience of education is as important as the content of our education. We must learn to present an understanding of both form and content. Both are important building blocks to the ongoing experience of education.

A more contemporary advocate for teaching with and through art is Elliot Eisner. He agrees with Dewey that experience is integral to the learning process. He builds on Dewey's theories and adds to the duality of teaching with the arts. He points out that there is more to using the arts to teach than the crayons and paste that we remember from elementary school. Eisen makes the case that when we can use the arts to teach we are teaching more that just how to mix colors or mold clay. The arts also teach us

observational skills. He writes, "The phrase 'work of art' can have two meanings. It can refer to work of *art,* or it can refer to the *work* of art. The former refers to the product created, the latter to the process of creating it."[37] The experience of *working* with art is very different than the experience of working with *art.*

Interacting with the *work* of art gives the learner the opportunity to have experiences with a variety of materials and use them to solve problems and personally reorder parts of their world. When a bowl of fruit and flowers are placed in front of a painting class and each student given the same size canvas and the same amount of paint there is very little chance that any two students will produce the same painting. Learners bring to the canvas their individual life experience. The individual experience that one brings to the canvas is an important part in the creation of a work of art. This is a very different experience than a math class where a teacher presents the class with an equation to be solved. Everyone is expected to come to the same conclusion regardless of his or her personal life experience or point of view.

Interacting with a work of *art* allows the learner to examine an artifact or image from a different time or culture. When looking at a painting by Rembrandt we can discuss more that just his style of painting. We can examine the historical context of the painting itself. What kind of clothes are the people wearing and what does that tell us about their social status? What kinds of articles surround the figures in the painting and what does that say about the objects that were important to them? What can we learn about the lives of the people during that time? By learning to examine a work of art in its historical or social context we are also learning how to reexamine our current culture and time period.

---

[37] Eisner, Elliot W.: *The Arts and the Creation of Mind*: Yale University Press 2002 Pg. 81

Learning to experience a work of art teaches us more than just what the art is about. It gives us a different framework to examine ourselves and examine the messages we are sending to future generations.

Another important characteristic for Eisner is the classroom experience itself. Art rooms work differently than most other classrooms. He points out, "...in many classrooms looking at your neighbor's work is prohibited; it's called copying. In some classrooms students are not to leave their seats without having asked for and received permission. In other classrooms, especially art rooms, looking at your fellow students' work is not only permitted, but encouraged; it's a way to learn."[38] Cooperative learning is built into art education. For Eisner, as well as Dewey, this is another important aspect of the experience of education. Working together with fellow students to solve problems is encouraged in the art room. In addition to working together students also critique collectively. This form of community assessment allows students to take part in different aspects of the educational experience. They experience not only the creation of the work of art, but they experience the interaction with a work of art. Having students participate in the reviewing process of each other's work allows them to discuss their intentions and learn from their peers if their messages are being conveyed. At this stage of the art process learners are using a variety of methods for communication. They are learning from each other, not only the visual tools used to communicate with art but the verbal skills to be used in all other aspects of their lives. This communal discussion and review also aids in the building of community.

Howard Gardner recognizes the same distinction between form and content as both Dewey and Eisner. He points out, "Under the multiple intelligence theory, an

[38] 2002 Pg. 73

intelligence can serve both as the *content* of instruction and the *means* or medium for communicating that content."[39] Gardner, in his theories of Multiple Intelligences tells us that contrary to the traditional view, language and mathematical skills are not the only skills that are important in intellectual development. He lists seven forms of intelligences. They are, Musical, Bodily-Kinesthetic, Logical-Mathematical, Linguistic, Spatial, Interpersonal, and Intrapersonal.

While Gardner does not separate artistic intelligence as its own category, he does point out that a variety of other intelligences can be used for artistic means. For example linguistic intelligence can be used for poetry as well as instruction manuals, spatial intelligence can be used for sculpture as well as sailors for navigation, and bodily-kinesthetic intelligence can be used for surgery as well as dancing.

The arts, as a means, may be used in teaching in a variety of contexts. Gardner cites the PROPEL[40] project as a model program that suggests a comprehensive arts program will include production, perception, and reflective components. PROPEL is a joint project including Harvard Project Zero, Educational Testing Service, and the Pittsburgh Public Schools to devise, "a set of assessment instruments that can document artistic learning during the later elementary and high school years."[41] They describe three essential elements necessary for a successful arts program. They begin with the *production* segment. This includes a painting, sculpture, or creative writing. This section represents body-kinesthetic, spatial, or linguistic intelligences. Here learners will demonstrate an understanding of a particular medium or form. The second section is the *perception* segment or thinking artistically about the project. This draws on the

---

[39] Gardner, Howard: ***Multiple Intelligences: The Theory in Practice***, Basic Books, 1993 pg. 32
[40] 1993
[41] 1993 pg. 144

intrapersonal intelligence. In the section the learner develops their ability of self-evaluation. The reflective segment uses the interpersonal intelligence, where the learner demonstrates the ability to see his or her own work in the larger context of cultural or historical periods.

David Perkins, one of the best thinkers in the field of art education, agrees with Gardner and presents an additional benefit of teaching with the arts by telling us that "A multifaceted, comprehensive, sequential art education helps students both to understand the aesthetic dimensions of a work of art and to develop their minds."[42] Perkins also suggests that art education programs should not end in the primary grades. We need to add developmentally appropriate arts curriculum. As our students grow our methods should grow also. Teaching the observational and reflective skills that are necessary to produce and critique the arts are both important skills. Perkins then suggests seven teaching advantages that the arts provide.

He begins with *sensory anchoring*. Here the focus is on the object itself. Imagine you are in a classroom discussion about yesterday's news or ancient Rome. When you have a photograph of yesterday's event or a sculpture from ancient Rome, you have something tangible to refer to. A classroom conversation may have the tendency to drift off topic and the photograph becomes a quick reference point to anchor the conversation.

Instant access to the work of art provides a single entry point to different discussions. With something physical in the classroom you have access to the object being discussed. You can reference back to it at any moment to correct any misconceptions or add new insights to the conversation. This is not so easily done when

[42] Perkins, David N: *The Intelligent Eye*; The J Paul Getty Trust, CA. 1994 pg.ix

checking for references within a lengthy section of text or when discussing yesterday's baseball game.

Discussing a work of art also encourages *personal engagement.* When examining a painting or a sculpture you invite the learners to become personally involved with the work. What does this piece say to you? How do the colors and images make you feel?

Engaging in what Perkins calls *dispositional atmosphere* takes the discussion to another level. What does this remind you of? The longer you spend looking and examining a work of art the more you will notice. This is not going to happen quickly. He suggests that as we learn to look deeper and broader we will gain a better understanding of what is in front of us.

Artwork also offers *wide-spectrum cognition.* Even though the focus is on a visual image the learners are developing language and other communication skills to present their cases or make their feelings known. The learners are analyzing the art from many points of view. Where does it come from? What does it tell me about the period in which it was produced? How was it used? What does it say about the artist? All of these questions add to a deeper understanding of the work itself.

This leads directly to the *multiconnectedness* of the arts. Works of art, as we have learned, are not produced in a vacuum. The represent real people in real life situation reacting to the community and culture that surrounds them. Focusing on a particular piece of art from a particular place or time allow us a window into their world. When we engage with a work of art we are engaging not only with the clay, pigment, or stone in front of us, we are engaging with the world that existed around it at the time it was made.

We are also continuing a dialogue with all of those that have that have reacted to it in the past. We become part of its history.

Another idea that is addressed by Perkins is referred to as the "Challenge of Transfer." How do we know that the lessons and concepts that we are teaching are being transferred to real life situations? To use Perkins' example, "You learn to drive a car. Later, moving your household, you rent a small truck and find that you can drive it fairly well. That's transfer."[43] This finicky issue as Perkins calls it is not unique to art education but part of the discussions of education in general. The case stated regarding driving is an example that he uses to point out that transfer is something that we can teach. Using a comprehensive arts program can be an effective way to teach with transfer as a goal. He suggests two approaches: *Abundant and diverse* practice and *reflective awareness of principles and deliberate mindful connection making.*

Abundant and diverse practice is giving our learners ample opportunities to master the skills required and present these skills in a variety of contexts and situations where they will apply. In other words using the same skill sets in a variety of situations to reinforce the abilities being taught. For example, when learning to examine a painting of a market scene from the 16th century, we ask out students to describe who is the merchant and who is the customer? How does this painting portray the roles of the men and the roles of the women? Next, examine a painting from the 17th century and ask the same questions along with the question, how have the roles changed? Then examine a work from the 19th and 20th centuries and repeat the same questions. The repetition of these observations will lead to an historical survey of the changing roles of men and women in the marketplace. This leads directly to the next phase of *reflective awareness.*

[43] Perkins pg. 86

By *reflective awareness of principled deliberate mindful connection making* Perkins means examining the principles that connect our lessons to common practice. To continue with our example above we can then ask our learners to go out to their local markets and make the same observations. Again asking the same questions regarding the changing roles of men and women in the marketplace. This can lead to a discussion of the changing roles for men and women in other aspects of their lives. Making the connection between the 16th century painting and our students' contemporary lives is the teaching for transfer that an effective arts program can provide.

Eric Jensen agrees with Perkins regarding the importance of learning to understand what we see when he says, "Estimates are that we receive over 90% of our information visually. When students can't do visual arts, we've shut off a big part of their world."[44] Teaching our students how to examine the world around them to gain a better understand of what it is they are looking at is a skill they find helpful wherever life takes them. We are constantly bombarded with visual imagery and we must be able to understand the vocabulary of this visual imagery in order to make better sense of the world around them. A well-planned art education program teaches the observation and reflective skills that are necessary in any society.

Jensen also builds on Perkins theories in his book *Arts with the Brain in Mind*. In this modern age when each of us have access to more and more information the questions are no longer about how much we know but about what we can do with what we know. He cites a study by the Copenhagen Institute for future Studies that suggests that 21st century employers are saying, "We want thinkers, we want people skills, we want

[44] Jensen, Eric: *Arts with the Brain in Mind*; Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Alexandria, VA. 2001 Pg.70

problem solvers, we want creativity, and we want teamwork."[45] Our students are no longer receiving all of their information from textbooks and teachers; they are watching television and searching the Internet. They have access to all of this information; they must now learn what to do with it. They must learn how to incorporate this knowledge into their daily lives.

Jensen is reminding us that all of the skills that are presented by Dewey, Gardner, and Perkins are exactly the skills that are in demand in this new millennium. A well-planned art education program teaches not only the skills necessary to draw or paint or dance, it teaches the skills necessary to examine the world around us. As we experience the world around us we try to make sense of it. Art instruction teaches us to see the world from different perspectives and to reflect on what it is all about. This is done through a well-organized and well thought out series of lessons.

Having a comprehensive and well-planned arts program in our educational toolbox satisfies many of our goals in teaching. Dewey teaches us that the experience of education is as important if not more important than the content of education. Teaching our students that learning is boring is not one of our goals. Approaching a given subject from a variety of angles is another advantage of using the arts to teach. Using the *work* of art as well as a work of *art* as different focal points for our lessons and allows our students to engage with the same subject on different levels. An effective arts program can also present our learners with the different learning styles pointed out by Gardner. Discussing a work of art stimulates our linguistic skills. Making a sculpture or painting uses our bodily-kinesthetic, spatial, and intrapersonal intelligences. The creation and the discussion of a work of art also require the interpersonal and reflective skills pointed out

[45] Jensen, Eric: 2001 Pg. 9

by both Perkins and Jensen. And as Perkins suggests the arts can be a very effective tool in teaching for transfer. To help our learners understand that what they are learning in our classrooms can be applied in their everyday lives. Teaching our students the love of learning, and the many different ways of learning, have marvelous implications for us as educators. All of his is true for us as Jewish educators. As Jewish educators we are teaching our students not only what Judaism is but also how to live a Jewish life. We want their learning experiences to lead to Jewish behavior outside the classroom and into their daily lives. This leads us directly into how we can use an effective arts program to teach Judaism.

Why teach Judaism with the arts?

In the previous chapter we learned that Dewey wants the experience of education to be equal to the content of education. Eisen added that we could teach with the arts by using both a work of *art* and the *work* of art. Each requires as separate set of skills and both parts are important to a complete educational program. Gardner explained that there are many different types of intelligences and they can be used not only as tools of understand by our learners but also can lead to a better understand our methods of teaching. Perkins tells us that an arts program is most effective when it includes a series of focal points to help direct each lesson. He also suggests that an art program can be an effective tool in teaching for transfer. This leads us to Jensen who wants us to understand that we have access to more information than at any other time in our history and an arts program can be used to gain a better understanding of all of this information. Now, the question is how does all of this apply to Jewish education? How can Jewish education be enhanced by the use of these tools? How can we build an effective Jewish educational program through using the arts?

Here, I will reexamine each of the topics discussed in the previous chapters and apply them directly to Jewish education. I combine the information gleaned from Torah and other texts regarding Hiddur Mitzvah along with modern educational theory to develop an understanding of how we can teach Judaism through the arts.

One of the basic foundations of this curriculum will be teaching for transfer. We want Judaism to be a part of our learners' everyday lives, not one aspect that they visit only when they are inside a synagogue or at summer camp. By using ritual objects as

sensory-anchors for these lessons we will be transferring Judaism from the synagogue to the home, and from the past to the present, connecting American Jews with Judaism and the greater community of Judaism. We will use these objects to enhance these connections.

Dewey suggests that the experience of education should be more than memorizing facts and figures from the ancient past. This might see like a challenge for the group that is known as "The People of the Book" but we are more than a book. We have a history of sights, smells, tastes, and things to touch that have been important to us. We already use the experience of these senses to teach and draw our students into Judaism. Our Pesach Seder is filled with this form of experiential learning. We taste the bitterness of slavery in the maror and see the texture of the mortar and brick in the charoset. Rather than just reading about redemption we use our senses to experience the redemption.

A Jewish arts class might ask students to bring in their Seder plates. We would discuss the similarities and differences between them. In this conversation we can answer questions about where the individual plates come from and why we use the same plate every year or why we use a new one every year. Here, biblical text can be introduced into the conversation regarding the biblical artists Bezalel and Ohaliab and their contributions to artistic perspective. We can them move the discussion to the five foods that are represented on the plate and the symbolism behind each of these foods. We begin to understand that we can explain many parts of the Exodus story not through words but through taste and smell. For example, when examine the foods more closely we can introduce our students to charoset from different parts of the world and different

segments of our Jewish population we are teaching them about other places where Jews live. We don't need to speak Arabic or French when we taste the charoset from Morocco or France. The barriers of language are broken down when we discuss the differences and similarities of the recipes. We make connections to Jews and their traditions in different parts of the world and in different times. The content of our lesson connects the observance of Pesach from our individual homes to others around us throughout the Jewish world. Our content is how we observe Pesach, but our form is food. Our lesson began with a Seder plate. From the focal point of this object we were able to connect to Judaism both historically and worldwide.

Interpersonal engagement in the classroom is one of the aspects that Eisen discusses as a difference between a typical classroom and an art classroom.[46] Interaction between students is encouraged not discouraged. He explains that cooperative education is part of art education. It is not cheating for art students to get out of their chairs without permission and work with one another to solve problems. One example of how we might encourage this behavior in an early childhood class is when we ask our students to make a Hanukkah menorah. We give them the rules regarding the proper height restrictions and the materials to use to build one and we send them back to their desks to begin construction. While each student is building, they are also encouraged to see how other students have solved specific problems. In our Jewish art classroom, this is not called cheating or stealing. In this context it is called helping your neighbor. In Torah we are taught to help those in need. Here the form is sculpting but the content is Torah.

The community building that results from cooperative learning is another experience that Eisen tells us is important to the art education curriculum. As he points

[46] Eisner, Elliot W.: *The Arts and the Creation of Mind*: Yale University Press 2002 Pg. 73

out this can be experienced both through a work of *art* and the *work* of art.[47] The difference is, a work of *art* is the object created, and the work of *art* is the process used to create it. Another example regularly used in our early childhood classrooms is the making of objects to be used in our ritual observance. Elementary school children teachers are quite successful in using hands on projects to teach about holidays and observances. Students are encouraged to get physically involved when they make Challah covers with various symbols on them, or when they make their handprints on the side of a pitcher for washing their hands. Encouraging them to share the paint and brushes along with their ideas with their classmates is part of the lesson. We should be inspired by this type of lesson and use this as a model for our older students. For example, in our Jewish art classroom, we can use a yarmulke as a focal point for a lesson. We begin by answering basic questions regarding the history of Jewish head covering. Here we can introduce the concept of Jewish laws mentioned in Torah versus Jewish laws of rabbinic origin. Then by presenting a variety of yarmulkes from around the world we can discuss the concept of visible signs that define a community. What can we learn about the people that wear them? How do they define community? How do they unite or separate a community? As a work of *art*, this collection becomes the focal point of a conversation about ways we define community. We can then add to this lesson by asking our students to make their own yarmulkes. They can paint or draw symbols on leather yarmulkes or even learn how to crochet their own. This is another opportunity to discuss the differences between tradition and artistic invention. What makes part of the continuation of Jewish tradition and what are you adding that is new. Jewish tradition places an emphasis the on community but it also recognizes the individual. Using ritual objects as a focus for

[47] 2002 Pg. 81

discussion here, teaches more that just how the object is used. It can teach how these rituals have changed or remained the same over the years. It can also teach some of our students the craft of crocheting and maybe encourage them to make their own for special occasions.

Moving out of the art classroom and into the sanctuary gives us the opportunity to use Gardner's theories on multiple intelligences[48]. When he speaks of spatial intelligence he refers to sculptors and architects who use this form of intelligence for insight into how a space is being used. Using the sanctuary for sensory anchoring[49] as Perkins describes, to develop a student's spatial intelligence can be another way of teaching about Judaism. We might also ask our students how is this space used? What is the most important object in the room? How do you know? What is it about the design of this space tells you what is important? To develop the intrapersonal intelligence[50] that Gardner suggests, we could ask: What does this space tell me? What can I learn from my observations? For Gardner using these types of questions define the *perception* section of a curriculum. This is where the learner draws upon their own experiences and develops their ability of self-evaluation. What kinds of objects are in the room and how are they used? The next step for Gardner is the *reflective* segment where we place this space in a larger context. Or how does the learner see this in a larger context, either historically or worldwide. Which of these objects represent items that are described in Torah? How do they compare to the ones from Torah to the ones in front of us today? This can lead to the discussion about how we can make connections to our past through these objects. This also opens us up to a discussion about what is new in the setting. Moses and the ancient Israelites did not

[48] Gardner, Howard: *Multiple Intelligences: The Theory in Practice*, Basic Books, 1993 pgs. 17-26
[49] Perkins, David N: *The Intelligent Eye*; The J Paul Getty Trust, CA. 1994
[50] Gardner, Howard: *Multiple Intelligences: The Theory in Practice*, Basic Books, 1993 pg. 24

have electricity to light their eternal light. How has this changed things? By using these objects and artifacts as our guide we can trace parts of our history?

Another method available to us back in the classroom is the use of slides or photographs. By bringing photographs of synagogue from around the world we can compare and contrast the items used in them. What if anything do they all have in common? One thing can we learn about certain ritual objects, is that no matter what may separate us from other Jews there are still other things that continue to unite us?

We can apply a trip to the sanctuary to a lesson using body movement and dance. We already have examples of bodily movement in our prayers. Along with standing up and sitting down we learn to bow are heads and bend our knees during different parts of our prayer service. The emphasis placed on these sections of the service help us to take notice that certain important events are happening or about to happen. We rise at the beginning of the Torah service to show our respect. To develop our students' awareness of physical activity we can ask them how they would display increased importance during certain parts of the service through physical movements. Then, they can observe a prayer service and observe when people stand, sit or turn. Asking themselves what does this say about this section of the service? Or what makes this different? This can lead to conversations about what is important to them and how do they display this importance? Then how would they perform a prayer service that could convey the levels of importance without words, only expressing themselves through movement?

All of this should not diminish the importance of exposing our students to Torah and other sacred texts, but Judaism is more than books. Judaism is more than the names and dates. Our texts are collections of discussions and dialogues. Using these texts as an

entry point for discussion and drawing our students into the process of this discussion is one way to bring them into the texts. Let the experience of Jewish education be their participation in the discussion not just the memorization of others' words. As Rosensweig told us Judaism comes from the individual to the Torah, not the other way around. Let the discussion begin from our learners' perspective. What do they think about...? Then introduce comments and quotes from our texts. Let them begin the dialogue before they know what Rashi thinks. Their participation in the classroom becomes their participation the historical dialogue of our people. Let them engage in Torah, Midrash and Talmudic discussions as part of their Judaism. The content is Talmud, but the form is personal engagement and interpersonal communication skills.

This brings us to Perkins'[51] suggestions regarding a well-developed arts curriculum and how to apply it to Jewish education. He suggests that we begin with the objects themselves. Centering a class discussion about celebrating and honoring Shabbat by having Kiddish cups or candlesticks or even photographs of historical versions of these items in the classroom gives us the *sensory anchoring* that he refers to. If the conversation drifts off topic you can bring it back by asking specific questions regarding these specific objects.

This *instant access* also offers *personal engagement* when we engage in discussions about the people that use these items. Questions about how these items have been used over the centuries help put our students into Jewish history. They are bringing their own experiences to the subject. This is one way for them to add their personalities to the objects of the past.

---

[51] Perkins, David N: *The Intelligent Eye*; The J Paul Getty Trust, CA. 1994

When we look deeper, as Perkins suggests, into these images and objects and ask about the memories that are stimulated by these objects, we are entering another level of understanding. Perkins refers to this as *dispositional atmosphere.* Here this new level of perception brings us to a very different recognition. Which of our own experiences can be brought to these objects? How can these items help in understanding our own relationship to Shabbat? Through these different levels of understanding we help our students develop the tools and skills to better understand the world around them and their relationship to Judaism. When we use these items to stimulate our students' own feeling, and emotions we are asking them to bring themselves to the ritual objects and to Jewish history.

We can now send our learners out into their world to find objects from their current Jewish world. How does their kiddish cup look different from the ones we discussed in class? How are they the same? What will their kiddish cup tell Jewish students of the future about the world today? This is where the arts are used to develop what Perkins call *wide-spectrum cognition* and *multiconnectedness.* This is where learners reach outside themselves and ask where these items come from and what they teach about that period or place. They also examine their own world and what these items say about them. Using a Kiddish cup or Shabbat candlesticks as a focal point for teaching Jewish connectedness gives our learners the opportunity to develop their observational, analytical, and communication skills. They are developing the communication skills necessary to express themselves in this world. If we want to teach our students that they are a part of the continuing history of Judaism, than using the arts from the past to compare to the arts from the present, and to help them develop the arts for the future, places them right in the middle of this process. If Judaism is to be a living and breathing

part of their lives, we must find ways to link them to both the past and the future. The art and artifacts that have been handed down to us provide a physical presence of this link.

This brings us back to where we started and to what Perkins calls "the challenge of transfer." How do we know the lessons that we teach are being learned? The transference of the lesson is another aspect where an effective arts program can add to our curriculum. We can teach our students the blessings over wine or Challah for Shabbat and we can easily assess whether they can recite them, but how do we know that when they are home on Shabbat they do them? Students can take art projects home. These items become a physical reminder of the lessons. In addition to using ritual objects as a physically present to focus to lesson, these objects become a reminder when they are in the home. Everyone with children that have gone through elementary school has had their refrigerator decorated with art projects completed as classroom assignments. The reason we display these items is not necessarily because of their artistic value but because we want to show how important the artist is to us. When our children come home with Shabbat challah covers or Seder plates we display them with pride in our homes. When these items become part of our holiday rituals we are not only commenting on the importance of our children but the importance of including our children in our ritual observance. This was emphasized during one of my interviews by Abby who said that she rotates several different Challah cover but likes to use the one made by her oldest son in Hebrew school because they, "get a kick out of seeing how his hands have grown." When she added her son's "hands" to her Shabbat ritual she demonstrated how important it is to include him in the family traditions.

If our lesson is that our students should know how to say the blessings, then having them recite them in class is an adequate form of assessment. If our goal is to add the observance of saying the motzi before their Shabbat meal then sending the student home with a tangible item can have more of an impact. Rosensweig suggested that Jewish education no longer begins with Torah and leads to life, but the other way around and Cohen and Eisen suggest that we need personal meaning before we add Jewish rituals to our lives, then our Jewish education must follow this path. By using objects that are currently in our china cabinets for focal points in our lessons we can teach the other way around. These objects have been acquired in a variety of ways, we can use these stories as an entry point for Jewish education.

The reverse can be taught when these items enter the home and are not used. As Dewey would remind us that the experience of having our projects hidden in a drawer and never used teaches us how unimportant some things can be.

An effective well-rounded Jewish arts program can teach our students the importance of helping each other solve problems. It can teach them to see to world around them with a more probing eye. They will be able to look for the signs and symbols that connect them to other Jews both historically and worldwide. They will learn that Judaism is something that is not restricted by geographic location. Judaism is something they take with them and practice everywhere they go. It can also teach them that they are an important part of the continuing dialogue of Judaism and that it is important for them to keep participating in it.

Bibliography

Altshuler, David, Editor: The Precious Legacy. Judaic Treasures from the Czechoslovak State Collections, Summit Books, NY 1983

Borowitz, Eugene B.; Reform Judaism Today, Book 1 Reform in the Process of Change, Behrman House, Springfield NJ, 1977

Cohen, Steven M. and Arnold M. Eisen: The Jew within, Self, Family, and Community in America: Indiana University Press

Dewey, John; Experience and Education Collier Books, New York; 1963 pg. 17

Dewey, John; Art as Experience, Perigee Books, New York, 1963

Eisner, Elliot W.: The arts and the Creation of Mind; Yale University Press, New Haven CT, 2002

Falk, Marcia: The Book of Blessings, Beacon Press Books 1996

Gordis, Robert and Davidowitz, Moshe: Art in Judaism: National Council on Art in Jewish Life and Judaism, NY 1975

Greenberg, Betty D., and Althea O. Silverman: The Beautiful Jewish Home, The National Women's League of the United Synagogue of America, New York 1941

Grossman, Grace Cohen: Jewish Art, Hugh Lauter Levin Assoc., Inc, 1995

Herschel, Abraham Joshua: The Sabbath, Noonday Press NY 1975

Hoffman, Rabbi Lawrence A. Editor: My People's Prayer Book: Traditional Prayers, Modern Commentaries, Vol. 7. Shabbat at Home: Jewish Lights Publishing VT 2004

Joselit, Jenna Weissman; The Wonders of America; Hill and Wang, New York, 1994, pg 154

Jensen, Eric: Arts with the Brain in Mind; Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Alexandria, VA. 2001

Kadusin, Charles. (And others) Being a Jewish Teenager in America: Trying to Make It: Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, Brandeis University, 2000

Katz, Jacob: Tradition and Crisis, Syracuse University Press, 2000 pg. 157

Kayser, Stephen S. and Schoenberger, Guido: Jewish Ceremonial Art, The Jewish Publication Society of America, Philadelphia, 1955

Perkins, David N: The Intelligent Eye; The J Paul Getty Trust, CA. 1994

College Dictionary; Random House, New York 2000

Rosensweig, Franz: From the Draft of the Address at the opening of the Lehrhaus in Frankfurt, 1920

Stern, Chaim, Editor; Gates of Prayer, CCAR, NY 1975 pg 622

Werthheimer, Jack: Jewish Education in the United States: Recent Trends and Issues, American Jewish Yearbook, 1999

Curriculum

Educational Philosophy Statement

Jewish education is about building connections. These are connections to the extended Jewish past, the extended Jewish community worldwide, and to our God that unites us as one people. Judaism has a long diverse and dynamic story to tell. This story is told through our texts, liturgy, arts, rituals, foods, and other forms of communal expressions. It is the task of Jewish educators to be a link in this chain, passing along the knowledge and practices of our people to add to this continuous chain.

Curriculum Overview and Rationale

This is six-lesson adult education program that will introduce the Jewish tradition of Hiddur Mitzvah, the enhancement of a mitzvah through the use of ritual objects. We will examine several mitzvot connected with Shabbat. We will use the ritual objects to build a bridge between the history and the contemporary meaning in the performance of the mitzvot. The goal is to use objects already in people's homes as focal points in lessons regarding home Shabbat rituals. Through the sharing of personal stories in addition to Hebrew texts the learners will develop personal meanings and better connections to these home rituals.

Enduring Understandings

1. *The historical and a modern view of Hiddur Mitzvah*
2. *These same mitzvot are ways of connecting ourselves to the past and future of Judaism.*
3. *Performing these and other mitzvot are ways to connect us to Jews worldwide.*

Essential Questions

1. *What is a mitzvah and why should I do it?*
2. *What is Hiddur Mitzvah and how does it enhance the performance of a mitzvah?*
3. *What are the historical connections to these mitzvot?*
4. *How can I add a personal connection to these mitzvot?*

Assessment

Assessment will be a Shabbat dinner. Each participant we bring a Shabbat object and share a comment regarding its meaning before the proper blessing is recited.

Order of Lessons

1. *Introduction to Hiddur Mitzvah*
2. *Kiddish Cup*
3. *Shabbat Candlesticks*
4. *Hand washing*
5. *Challah Board and Cover*
6. *Havdalah*

Introduction Lesson Plan

Core Concepts

- Defining Hiddur Mitzvah
- Biblical and Talmudic connections.
- A modern meaning for Hiddur Mitzvah.

Essential Questions

- What does Hiddur Mitzvah mean?
- Where does this concept come from?
- How can the use of ritual objects bring meaning to my performance of a mitzvah?

Approach

1. Begin with the blessing for Torah study
2. What do you know about Hiddur Mitzvah?
    - In this section the information will be shared and some common ground will be found. This will be a general conversation and questions we addressed later through text study and discussion.
3. Introduce biblical text Exodus 15:2
    - "This is my God and I shall glorify Him."
    - How are we supposed to glorify God?
4. Introduce the use of ritual objects
    - What kind of objects do we use in the performance of a mitzvah?
        - List them
5. What does the Talmud tell us about Hiddur Mitzvah
6. Read Talmud Shabbat 133b
    - What do we learn from this section?
        - We use these objects to honor God: therefore they should be beautiful.
        - Compare this list to the list made earlier.
    - Read Talmud Bava Kamma 9a-b
        - What do we learn from this section?
        - Is it all bases on value?
7. Introduce Rabbi Caro and the Kitzur Shulhan Arukh
    - Chapter 77:7
        - What is the issue here?
            - Clean and quantity
            - Is it all about value, quantity, or cleanliness?
8. Back to the bible for more clues?

- Introduce Bezalel and Ohaliab
    - Read Exodus 31:1-6
    - Why two people in charge?
    - Introduce and Rashi comment
        - What is the advantage of having both tribes represented?
    - Introduce the definition of their names
        - Bezalel "in the shadow if God"
            - Esthetics
        - Ohaliab "my fathers tent"
            - Traditions

9. How are these two points of view different and why do you think we need them both?
    - Something new to relate to our modern age
    - Something traditional to connect us to our history

Conclusion

The traditional view of Hiddur Mitzvah has been one of value, quantity, and esthetic beauty. There is more to it than that. If these objects are to be used to enhance the performance of a mitzvah, they must not only be beautiful, they must have meaning for us. When we use objects that represent our personal Jewish history we are connecting ourselves to the past. If we simply discard objects when we can afford newer and more costly ones we may be bringing one form of new meaning but we may also be losing another. When we combine the perspectives of Bezalel and Ohaliab in our performance of mitzvot we are making Hiddur Mitzvah more complete.

Introduction

This is my God and I shall glorify Him.
Exodus 15:2

This is my God, and I will adorn him, but here that we require, 'This is my God, and I will adorn him', that indeed is so! (For it was taught: This is my God, and I will adorn him: [i.e.,] adorn thyself before Him in [the fulfillment of] precepts. [Thus:] make a beautiful sukkah in His honor, a beautiful lulav, a beautiful shofar, beautiful fringes, and a beautiful Scroll of the Law, and write it with fine ink, a fine reed [-pen], and a skilled penman, and wrap it about with beautiful silks.
Shabbat 133b

R. Zera said on behalf of R. Huna: For [the performance of] a commandment one should go up to a third. A third of what?
You could hardly suggest 'a third of one's possessions,' for if so when one chanced to have three commandments [to perform at one and the same time] would one have to give up the whole of one's possessions? — R. Zera therefore said: For [performing a commandment in] an exemplary manner one should go up to a third of [the ordinary expense involved in] the observance thereof.
R. Ashi queried: Is it a third from within [the ordinary expense] or is it a third from the aggregate amount? This stands undecided.

Bava Kamma 9a-b

For every religious deed must be performed in the grandest manner, as it is written 'This is my God, and I will glorify Him,' and it is explained to mean: Show yourself glorious before Him when performing His Commandments.
Kitzur Shulhan Arukh Ch. 9:1
The holiday garments should also be costlier than those used on Shabbat.
103:5
The cup used for the kiddush should be in perfect condition and thoroughly clean...It is well to say the Friday night kiddush over a large cup of wine, and leave some of the wine for the kiddush of the day and for Havdalah.
77:7

1 And the LORD spoke unto Moses, saying: 2 'See, I have called by name Bezalel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah; 3 and I have filled him with the spirit of

God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship, 4 to devise skilful works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, 5 and in cutting of stones for setting, and in carving of wood, to work in all manner of workmanship. 6 And I, behold, I have appointed with him Ohaliab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan; and in the hearts of all that are wise-hearted I have put wisdom, that they may make all that I have commanded you:
Exodus 31:1-6

Ohaliab was of the tribe of Dan, one of the lowliest of the tribes, of the sons of the handmaids, and yet the Eternal placed him with regard to the work of the Tabernacle on a level with Bezalel although he was a member of one of the highest tribes, Judah, in order to confirm what Scripture says, (Job 34:19) ' He regards not the rich more than the poor.'

Rashi

"The point is a simple one: 'contemporary' need not mean 'disposable.' We can use a certain measure of input into our esthetic life to keep it fresh even as we develop an American Jewish tradition. Though we now wish to balance innovation with continuity, we shall still want, as Reform Judaism has taught us, to reflect in our Jewish life that which modernity suggests is good art."
Borowitz, Eugene B.; Reform Judaism Today, Book 1 Reform in the Process of Change,

Behrman House, Springfield NJ, 1977

Kiddush Lesson Plan

Core Concepts

1. Understanding the meaning of the Kiddish blessing.
2. The connections between Remembering and Keeping Shabbat in both the Kiddish and Torah text.

Essential Questions

- What does this blessing mean?
- What is the connection between the Kiddish and the Torah verses?
- What is the difference between keeping and remembering Shabbat?

Approach

1. Begin with the blessing for Torah study

2. What do we know about Kiddish?

    - In this section the information will be shared and some common ground will be found. This will be a general conversation and questions we addressed later through text study and discussion.

3. In hevrutah discuss the Kiddish cups brought in to today's session.
    - How did you acquire them?
        - Gifts, Homemade, purchased…
    - Who uses them?
        - Mother, Father, everyone…
    - Do you have other versions of these items?
        - Do you ever use those?
        - Why/why not?
    - Why do you use this one?
4. How do these objects reflect the "schools" of Ohaliab and Bezalel?
5. Return to entire group and discuss the highlights from each table.
    - Discuss any
        - Similarities/differences between tables
        - Personal connections to
            - Rituals
            - Objects
6. Introduce handout and read the blessing.
        - What does kiddush mean?
        - According to this blessing, why are we celebrating Shabbat?

- What are the biblical references?
  - in memory of acts of creation
  - a memorial of the Exodus from Egypt

7. Introduce the two times the 10 Commandments are mentioned
   - Exodus 20:6-10
     - Why are we told to remember Shabbat?
     - Relate creation to Bezalel and his being in the "shadow of God"
     - Creation is for everyone
   - Deuteronomy 5:11-14
     - Why are we told to observe (keep) Shabbat?
     - Relate exodus to what God did for us as the children of Israel (not the entire world) We remember through traditions and rites (Ohaliab)
     - Exodus was for the Israelites
8. Together they make a complete picture of why we celebrate Shabbat.
   - Remember the creation
   - Keep the traditions

Conclusion

When we use a beautiful cup to hold the wine for our Friday evening kiddish we are both remembering that God rested on the seventh day upon the completion of the creation of the world and we are keeping Jewish traditions alive by connecting it to the Exodus, one of God's greatest gifts to the Israelite nation.

Kiddush

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, ruler of the world, creator of the fruit of the vine.

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, ruler of the world, who sanctified us with His commandments and adored us with, lovingly granting us His holy Shabbat as our inheritance, in memory of acts of creation. For it is the first day of the holy festivals, a memorial of the Exodus from Egypt. For You have chosen us and sanctified us above all nations, lovingly and adoringly granting us Your holy Shabbat as our inheritance. Blessed are You, Adonai, who sanctifies the Shabbat

Exodus 20

ז זָכוֹר אֶת-יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת, לְקַדְּשׁוֹ.
ח שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים תַּעֲבֹד, וְעָשִׂיתָ כָּל-מְלַאכְתֶּךָ.
ט וְיוֹם, הַשְּׁבִיעִי--שַׁבָּת, לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ: לֹא-תַעֲשֶׂה כָל-מְלָאכָה אַתָּה וּבִנְךָ וּבִתֶּךָ, עַבְדְּךָ וַאֲמָתֶךָ וּבְהֶמְתֶּךָ, וְגֵרְךָ, אֲשֶׁר בִּשְׁעָרֶיךָ.
י כִּי שֵׁשֶׁת-יָמִים עָשָׂה יְהוָה אֶת-הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת-הָאָרֶץ, אֶת-הַיָּם וְאֶת-כָּל-אֲשֶׁר-בָּם, וַיָּנַח, בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי; עַל-כֵּן, בֵּרַךְ יְהוָה אֶת-יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת--וַיְקַדְּשֵׁהוּ.

7 Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.
8 Six days shall you labor, and do all your work;
9 but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God, in it you shall not do any manner of work, you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your man-servant, nor your maid-servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger that is within your gates;
10 for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested on the seventh day; wherefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.

Deuteronomy 5

יא שָׁמוֹר אֶת-יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת, לְקַדְּשׁוֹ, כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוְּךָ, יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ.
יב שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים תַּעֲבֹד, וְעָשִׂיתָ כָּל-מְלַאכְתֶּךָ.
יג וְיוֹם, הַשְּׁבִיעִי--שַׁבָּת, לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ: לֹא תַעֲשֶׂה כָל-מְלָאכָה אַתָּה וּבִנְךָ-וּבִתֶּךָ וְעַבְדְּךָ-וַאֲמָתֶךָ וְשׁוֹרְךָ וַחֲמֹרְךָ וְכָל-בְּהֶמְתֶּךָ, וְגֵרְךָ אֲשֶׁר בִּשְׁעָרֶיךָ--לְמַעַן יָנוּחַ עַבְדְּךָ וַאֲמָתְךָ, כָּמוֹךָ.

יד וְזָכַרְתָּ, כִּי עֶבֶד הָיִיתָ בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם, וַיֹּצִאֲךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ מִשָּׁם, בְּיָד חֲזָקָה וּבִזְרֹעַ נְטוּיָה; עַל-כֵּן, צִוְּךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ, לַעֲשׂוֹת, אֶת-יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת.

11 Observe the Sabbath day, to keep it holy, as the LORD your God commanded you.
12 Six days shall you labor, and do all your work;
13 but the seventh day is a Sabbath unto the LORD your God, in it you shall not do any manner of work, you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your man-servant, nor your maid-servant, nor your ox, nor your ass, nor any of your cattle, nor your stranger that is within your gates; that your man-servant and your maid-servant may rest as well as you.
14 And you shall remember that you were a servant in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God brought you out thence by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm; therefore the LORD your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day.

Candle Lighting Lesson Plan

Core Concepts

- History and practice of candle lighting for Shabbat.
- Women's role in Candle lighting.

Essential Questions

- How have we brought personal meaning to this ritual?
- What are the connections between this being a home ritual and a woman's mitzvah?
- Why do we light more than one candle?
- How many can we light?

Approach

1. Begin with the blessing for Torah study
2. What do we know about Shabbat candles and their blessing?
    - In this section the information will be shared and some common ground will be found. This will be a general conversation and questions we addressed later through text study and discussion.
3. In hevrutah discuss the candlesticks brought in to today's session.
    - How did you acquire them?
        - Gifts, Homemade, purchased…
    - Who uses them?
        - Mother, Father, everyone…
    - Do you have other versions of these items?
        - Do you ever use those?
        - Why/why not?
    - Why do you use this one?
4. How do these objects reflect the "schools" of Ohaliab and Bezalel?
5. Return to entire group and discuss the highlights from each table.
    - Discuss any
        - Similarities/differences between tables
        - Personal connections to
            - Rituals
            - Objects
6. Introduce handout and read text 1 (Hoffman)
    - How is Hoffman's framing different than what you already thought?
        - Bible never tells us to light candles
        - Is this a political or a religious statement?
        - How important is the Jewish home in this discussion?

- How has this perspective changed over the years?

7. Introduce Frankel text
   - How have women's roles changed or stayed the same?
   - How important is the Jewish home in this passage?
   - How does this perspective affect Judaism in general?
8. Introduce the Shulhan Arukh text.
   - According to this text, how many candles can we light?
   - Who should light them and why?
   - How are Caro's reasons for women performing this mitzvah different from Frankel's?
9. Pull together comments from Hoffman (the political perspective) and Frankel (the women's voice) and Caro (the halakhah perspective) and personal connections through the objects we use.
   - All agree on the important role of the Jewish home.
   - All agree on the important role of Jewish women.
   - We can all agree on the importance of Jewish home rituals and their ability to connect us to the history of the Jewish people.

Conclusion

Historically the world of Judaism has revolved around men. The roles in a traditional synagogue exclude women almost altogether. The home however has been central to the continuity of Judaism and here is where women rule. The important role of bringing Shabbat into a Jewish home is the responsibility of women. Lighting the candles on Friday evening has always been a woman's role. Whether this was a political statement or a religious statement it has always been an important position.

Candle lighting

The Mishnah lists it along with two mitzvot for which women are obligated on pain of childbirth should they fail in their responsibilities. This emphatic demand may have been motivated by the fact that kindling Shabbat lights was a point of controversy between Pharisees (the group whom the Rabbis saw as their immediate predecessors) and the Sadducees (their rival party). At issue was the interpretation of Exodus 35:3, "You shall have no fire throughout your settlements on the Sabbath day." The Pharisees held that even though no new light could be kindled, lights already begun could be allowed to burn down. The Sadducees believed that even fires already lit were prohibited and had to be doused before Shabbat set in. Kindling light in one's home, where it could be clearly visible from the street, would have demonstrated allegiance to the Pharisees rather than the Sadducees.

Hoffman, L: (Hoffman, Lawrence, My Peoples Prayer Book Shabbat at Home vol. 7 2003, Pg.42

The Rabbis of antiquity understood that women were attuned to different rhythms than men. In the traditional home, women have been responsible for managing the elaborate cycles of observance: Shabbat and the festival meals prepared and served, children scrubbed and dressed, relatives and guests accommodated, and the elderly and unfortunate taken into account. And through the laws of family purity (tohorat hamishpachah), they also managed the cycles of fertility and birth. Without them, the Jewish family would quite literally fall apart. (Of course, in modern times, the changed and changing rhythms of women's lives have challenged many of these rabbinic assumptions.)

Frankel, Ellen, (Hoffman, Lawrence, My Peoples Prayer Book Shabbat at Home vol. 7 2003, Pg. 47

It is meritorious to light as many candles as possible in honor of Shabbat. Some light ten candles, others seven. In no event should less than two candles be lit, symbolizing the two verses: Remember the Sabbath day, (Exodus 20:8), and, "observe the Sabbath day, (Deuteronomy 5:12). But in an emergency, also one candle is sufficient. The candles should be big enough to burn at least till after the meal, and one should endeavor to procure nice candles. The Talmud states, 'Rab Huna said: 'The one who is accustomed to buy nice candles for the Sabbath, will have children versed in Torah, for it is written "For the commandment is a lamp, and the Torah is light" (Proverbs 6:23) meaning: Because of the "lamp" (candles) will come the light of the Torah.'" It is, therefore proper for the women, when lighting the candles, to pray that the Almighty grant her male children bright in the study of Torah.

Shulhan Arukh, Code of Jewish Laws. Ganzfried translation 75:2

Hand Washing Lesson Plan

Core Concepts

- History and practice of hand washing.
- Understanding the blessing for hand washing.
- Connections between priestly and common rituals.

Essential Questions

- How have we brought personal meaning to this ritual?
- Why do we wash our hands?
- How is this different than just using soap and water?

Approach

1. Begin with the blessing for Torah study
2. What do we know about the ritual hand washing and their blessing?
    - In this section the information will be shared and some common ground will be found. This will be a general conversation and questions we addressed later through text study and discussion.
3. In hevrutah discuss the pitchers brought in to today's session.
    - How did you acquire them?
        - Gifts, Homemade, purchased…
    - Who uses them?
        - Mother, Father, everyone…
    - Do you have other versions of these items?
        - Do you ever use those?
        - Why/why not?
    - Why do you use this one?
4. How do these objects reflect the "schools" of Ohaliab and Bezalel?
5. Return to entire group and discuss the highlights from each table.
    - Discuss any
        - Similarities/differences between tables
        - Personal connections to
            - Rituals
            - Objects
6. Introduce handout and read text 1 (Falk)
    - How is Marcia Falk framing differently than what you already thought?
        - Have you made connections between morning, meals, and funerals?

- How does her definition of *n'tilat yadayim* help in making a distinction between washing with soap and water and this type of hand washing?
- Does this help us to celebrate the mundane and how?
- Personal story: *When they were young we told our children that once you say a blessing before a meal (hand washing or motzi) you can no longer argue because you have invited God to the table.*

7. Introduce Torah text
   - What role does the water play in these two texts?
   - Do they need to bathe because they were smelly or is there another reason?
   - How can we relate this to our lives today?
8. Introduce the Shulhan Arukh text.
   - According to this text, how important is the "vessel"?
   - How does the vessel assist in completing this task?
   - Is Rabbi Caro making a connection to a spiritual washing?
9. Pull together comments from Torah, Falk, and Rabbi Caro.
   - All agree this as a spiritual washing not a "good scrubbing".
   - Hand washing is a way to transform a mundane practice into a spiritual practice.
   - Saying a blessing as we wash our hands before our meals can be a way to turn every meal in the daily life of ordinary people into a sacred event.

Conclusion

Torah teaches us that "cleansing" is an important part of our spiritual lives. It was necessary for each individual along with the priests. Washing our hands before a meal gives us an opportunity to take a moment and reflect upon and be thankful for the gifts that we do have.

Washing of the hands

Central to rabbinic Judaism's view of the human body are concerns with purity and impurity; an ancient and core part of the liturgy is the purification ritual known as *n'tilat yadayim*, "lifting (or washing) of the hands." This ritual, which entails the washing and drying of the hands accompanied by the recitation of a blessing, is performed in several contexts: upon awakening, before a meal at which bread is eaten, and after contact with a dead body (or upon leaving a cemetery). In the first context, *n'tilat yadayim* may be seen as symbolizing renewal or rebirth. In the case of its use before a meal, it was originally intended, among other things, to reenact the priestly purification ritual performed when offering a sacrifice at the Temple. One might say that by mandating the washing of hands before eating, the rabbis turned every meal in the daily life of ordinary people into a sacred event.

Falk, Marcia: The Book of Blessings, Beacon Press Books 1996 pg. 426

1 And the LORD spoke unto Moses, saying: 2 'Take Aaron and his sons with him, and the garments, and the anointing oil, and the bullock of the sin-offering, and the two rams, and the basket of unleavened bread; 3 and assemble all the congregation at the door of the tent of meeting.' 4 And Moses did as the LORD commanded him; and the congregation was assembled at the door of the tent of meeting. 5 And Moses said to the congregation: 'This is the thing which the LORD has commanded to be done.' 6 And Moses brought Aaron and his sons, and washed them with water.
Leviticus Chapter 8

5 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 6 'Take the Levites from among the children of Israel, and cleanse them. 7 And you this shall do this to them, to cleanse them: sprinkle the water of purification upon them, and let them cause a razor to pass over all their flesh, and let them wash their clothes, and cleanse themselves.
Numbers Chapter 8

It is difficult to ascertain the exact quantity of water required for the washing of hands. We should, therefore, pour water lavishly on our hands for Rav Hisda said: "I wash with handfuls of water and handfuls of goodness are given me." (Shabbat 62b) We first wash our right hand and then our left. The water must cover the entire hand up to the wrist. No part of the hand should be left unwashed; therefore, the fingers must be slightly parted and raised somewhat upwards, in order that the water may run down the entire length of

the fingers. It must cover the fingertips and the full circumference of the fingers. The entire hand should be covered with one outpouring of water. We should, therefore not wash the hands out of a vessel with a narrow opening through which the water cannot flow out freely. It is best to pour water twice on each hand.
40:4

The water used for washing the hands must be poured out of a vessel that is perfect, having neither a hole nor a crack. It must also be even at the top without any indents or projecting parts. When using a vessel having a spout, we must not let the water run through the spout, because that part of the vessel proper does not hold any liquid. We must therefore, pour the water from the edge of the vessel which contains the water.
40:2

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם

Blessed are You, Lord, our God, King of the Universe,

אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּעַל נְטִילַת יָדַיִם

Who sanctifies us with his commandments, and commands us concerning washing of hands.

Challah Lesson Plan

Core Concepts

- Connections between Challah and Shabbat.
- Why we use two Challot.
- How Challah is a sign of our covenant with God to this day..

Essential Questions

- What is the connection between Challah and Shabbat?
- Why do we have two?
- How does God use food to teach the Israelites about Shabbat?

Approach

1. Begin with the blessing for Torah study
2. What do we know about Challah and its blessing?
    - In this section the information will be shared and some common ground will be found. This will be a general conversation and questions we addressed later through text study and discussion.
3. In hevrutah discuss the boards and covers brought in to today's session.
    - How did you acquire them?
        - Gifts, Homemade, purchased…
    - Who uses them?
        - Mother, Father, everyone…
    - Do you have other versions of these items?
        - Do you ever use those?
        - Why/why not?
    - Why do you use this one?
4. How do these objects reflect the "schools" of Ohaliab and Bezalel?
5. Return to entire group and discuss the highlights from each table.
    - Discuss any
        - Similarities/differences between tables
        - Personal connections to
            - Rituals
            - Objects
6. Introduce handout and read text 1 (Ex. 25 and Lev. 24)
        - What does this text tell us about "showbread"
            - How important are they? How do we know?
                - They are included in this description along with the menorah, the Tabernacle, and the Holy Ark.

- We are given many details about their arrangement on this table
- We are told how many there should be.
- We are told to set these out forever as a sign.

- What do they look like?
- Personal story: *When we braid a challah from six strands we are representing a row of six showbreads. When we use two breads we represent all twelve loaves.*

7. Introduce Exodus 16
   - Set up the story
     - After the parting of the sea the people complain to Moses and Aaron that they are hungry. At least there was food in Egypt.
     - God hears and says food will be provided food each day twice as much on the sixth day.
     - The people are still complaining.
   - God answers Begin reading verses 11-15
     - God answers in the morning with what?
   - Verses 16-20
     - What are God's instructions?
   - Verse 21
     - Did they all listen?
   - Verse 22-26
     - What are the new instructions?
   - Verse 27
     - Did they listen?
   - Verse 28-31
     - How does God react?
   - Verses 32-35
     - What do they do with the Manna?
     - How long will it last?

Conclusion

There is a long history of bread in our tradition. The Challah we use on Shabbat is a powerful symbol that connects our weekly schedule with Torah, the ancient Tabernacle and God.

Challah

Exodus 25

23 And thou shall make a table of acacia-wood: two cubits shall be the length thereof, and a cubit the breadth thereof, and a cubit and a half the height thereof. 24 And thou shall overlay it with pure gold, and make thereto a crown of gold round about. 25 And thou shall make unto it a border of a handbreadth round about, and thou shall make a golden crown to the border thereof round about. 26 And thou shall make for it four rings of gold, and put the rings in the four corners that are on the four feet thereof. 27 Close by the border shall the rings be, for places for the staves to bear the table. 28 And thou shall make the staves of acacia-wood, and overlay them with gold, that the table may be borne with them. 29 And thou shall make the dishes thereof, and the pans thereof, and the jars thereof, and the bowls thereof, wherewith to pour out; of pure gold shall thou make them. 30 And thou shall set upon the table showbread before Me always.

Leviticus 24

5 And thou shall take fine flour, and bake twelve cakes thereof: two tenth parts of an ephah shall be in one cake. 6 And thou shall set them in two rows, six in a row, upon the pure table before the LORD. 7 And thou shall put pure frankincense with each row that it may be to the bread for a memorial-part, even an offering made by fire unto the LORD. 8 Every Sabbath day he shall set it in order before the LORD continually; it is from the children of Israel, an everlasting covenant

Exodus 16

11 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 12 'I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel. Speak to them, saying: At dusk ye shall eat flesh, and in the morning you shall be filled with bread; and ye shall know that I am the LORD your God.' 13 And it came to pass at even, that the quails came up, and covered the camp; and in the morning there was a layer of dew round about the camp. 14 And when the layer of dew was gone up, behold upon the face of the wilderness a fine, scale-like thing, fine as the hoar-frost on the ground. 15 And when the children of Israel saw it, they said one to another: 'What is it?'--for they knew not what it was. And Moses said to them: 'It is the bread which the LORD has given you to eat. 16 This is the thing which the LORD has commanded: Gather of it every man according to his eating; an omer a head, according to the number of your persons, shall you take it, every man for them that are in his tent.' 17 And the children of Israel did so, and gathered some more, some less. 18 And when they did mete it with an omer, he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack; they gathered every man according to his eating. 19 And Moses said to them: 'Let no man leave of it till the morning.' 20 Notwithstanding they listened not to Moses; but some of them left of it until the morning, and it bred worms, and rotted; and Moses was wroth with them. 21 And they gathered it morning by morning, every man

according to his eating; and as the sun waxed hot, it melted. **22** And it came to pass that on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for each one; and all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses. **23** And he said to them: 'This is that which the LORD has spoken: Tomorrow is a solemn rest, a holy Sabbath to the LORD. Bake that which you will bake, and seethe that which ye will see; and all that remained over lay up for you to be kept until the morning.' **24** And they laid it up till the morning, as Moses bade; and it did not rot, neither was there any worm. **25** And Moses said: 'Eat that today; for today is a Sabbath to the LORD; today you shall not find it in the field. **26** Six days you shall gather it; but on the seventh day is the Sabbath, in it there shall be none.' **27** And it came to pass on the seventh day, that there went out some of the people to gather, and they found none. **28** And the LORD said to Moses: 'How long will you refuse to keep My commandments and My laws? **29** See that the LORD has given you the Sabbath; therefore He gave you on the sixth day the bread of two days; abide you every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day.' **30** So the people rested on the seventh day. **31** And the house of Israel called the name of Manna; and it was like coriander seed, white; and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey. **32** And Moses said: 'This is the thing which the LORD has commanded: Let an omerful of it be kept throughout your generations; that they may see the bread wherewith I fed you in the wilderness, when I brought you forth from the land of Egypt.' **33** And Moses said to Aaron: 'Take a jar, and put an omerful of manna therein, and lay it up before the LORD, to be kept throughout your generations.' **34** As the LORD commanded Moses, so Aaron laid it up before the Testimony, to be kept. **35** And the children of Israel did eat the manna forty years, until they came to a land inhabited; they did eat the manna, until they came to the borders of the land of Canaan.

Havdalah Lesson Plan

Core Concepts

- Havdalah as separation
- To understand the blessings and concepts of the Havdalah ceremony.

Essential Questions

- What does Havdalah mean?
- How do we use wine, candles, and spices differently in Havdalah than on Friday night?

Approach

1. Begin with the blessing for Torah study
2. What do we know about Havdalah?
    - In this section the information will be shared and some common ground will be found. This will be a general conversation and questions we addressed later through text study and discussion.
3. In hevrutah discuss the Havdalah sets brought in to today's session.
    - How did you acquire them?
        - Gifts, Homemade, purchased…
    - Who uses them?
        - Mother, Father, everyone…
    - Do you have other versions of these items?
        - Do you ever use those?
        - Why/why not?
    - Why do you use this one?
4. How do these objects reflect the "schools" of Ohaliab and Bezalel?
5. Return to entire group and discuss the highlights from each table.
    - Discuss any
        - Similarities/differences between tables
        - Personal connections to
            - Rituals
            - Objects
6. Introduce handout and read the Genesis section.
        - What does Havdalah mean? (Separation)
        - What are we separating?
            - Ordinary/holy
            - One week to the next
            - Light/darkness
        - According to this passage when does the day end?

- The day begins in the evening

7. Introduce and read the blessing for the wine
   - This is the same blessing for wine as all other days except for Shabbat evening.
     - Connecting the beginning with the ending of Shabbat
     - We use the differently on Havdalah
       - We fill the cup to overflowing (overflowing joy)
       - We extinguish the flame with the wine
8. Introduce and read the blessing for the spices
   - Why do we use spices?
     - Maimonides: fragrance of spices was to cheer the soul, saddened by the departing of Shabbat
9. Introduce and read the blessing for the candle
   - The translation is "lights of fire"
   - This is plural (we must use more than one wick)

Conclusion

Havdalah is a celebration of separation. We use many of our senses to mark this distinction. We taste, we see, and we smell special items during this ritual. As we separate the holy Shabbat from the rest of the week we are giving ourselves reminders of the gift of Shabbat and ways to look forward to its return.

Havdalah

Genesis 1

1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. 2 Now the earth was unformed and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the spirit of God hovered over the face of the waters. 3 And God said: 'Let there be light.' And there was light. 4 And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness. 5 And God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day.

Blessings for Havdalah

Wine

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְּרִי הַגָּפֶן

Barukh atah Adonai Elohaynu melekh ha-olam, borei p'riy ha-gafen. (Amein)
Blessed are You, Lord, our God, King of the Universe, who creates the fruit of the vine.

Spices

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא מִינֵי בְשָׂמִים(אָמֵן)
Barukh atah Adonai Elohaynu melekh ha-olam, borei minei b'samim. (Amein)
Blessed are You, Lord, our God, King of the Universe, who creates varieties of spices. (Amen)

Fire

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא מְאוֹרֵי הָאֵש(אָמֵן)
Barukh atah Adonai Elohaynu melekh ha-olam, borei m'orei ha-eish. (Amein)
Blessed are You, Lord, our God, King of the Universe, who creates the lights of the fire. (Amen)

Havdalah

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם הַמַּבְדִּיל בֵּין קֹדֶשׁ לְחֹל
בֵּין אוֹר לְחֹשֶׁךְ בֵּין יִשְׂרָאֵל לָעַמִּים בֵּין יוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי לְשֵׁשֶׁת יְמֵי הַמַּעֲשֶׂה
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ הַמַּבְדִּיל בֵּין קֹדֶשׁ לְחֹל

Barukh atah Adonai Elohaynu melekh ha-olam, ha-mavdil bayn kodesh l'chol bayn or

l'choshekh, bayn yisrael la-amim, bayn yom ha-sh'vi'i l'shayshet y'may ha-ma'aseh,
Barukh atah Adonai, ha-mavdil bayn kodesh l'chol. (Amein)

Blessed are You, Lord, our God, King of the Universe, who distinguishes between the sacred and the secular, between light and dark, between Israel and the nations, between the seventh day and the six days of labor Blessed are You, Lord, who distinguishes between the sacred and the secular. (Amen)