



MOLDING MENSCHLICHKEIT

Biblical Values for a One-Room Schoolhouse

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Tina Sobo

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Preface

The inspiration for this curriculum stemmed from experience with values education at the URJ's 6 Points Sports Academy and from my love and appreciation for Temple Beth El in Muncie, IN. I served this congregation as their Student Rabbi during the 2012-2013 school year. I am grateful for my experiences at camp that deepened my understanding of values education and the importance of linking Jewish education to that which is relevant in students' lives. I owe Temple Beth El much gratitude for the care, guidance and opportunities they provided me during my year as Student Rabbi and for opening my eyes to a piece of the Jewish world I have never experienced, that of the one-room Jewish schoolhouse. It is my sincerest hope that this curriculum serves Temple Beth El, and other congregations like them, who take on the sacred task of training and guiding HUC students and their own year after year.

This curriculum would not be possible without the guidance I received from within HUC-JIR. I am grateful to all my professors and mentors within the HUC community for helping me grow in my role as an educator for the Jewish community. I would like to especially acknowledge Dr. Evie Rotstein in New York, Dr. Sam Joseph in Cincinnati and Dr. Michael Zelden in Los Angeles, and the entire IT team, for making it possible for my colleagues and me to study in the New York School of Education from the Cincinnati campus. Distance-learning has its challenges, and with your leadership and support, I am able to complete this program. I would also like to extend a special thank you to my Capstone advisor, Dr. Adrienne Leveen, whose insight into Bible and education has deepened the level of learning possible for students in the lessons of the curriculum in the many hours, emails and phone calls to advise from afar and in the brief windows of our New York visits. And finally, to Brian Nelson, my partner in crime here in Cincinnati, and to our many other classmates in New York who provided feedback, sharpened my understanding

of curriculum design and commented on various iterations of this project, may our discussions and collaborations continue well past our days at HUC!

Last, but certainly not least, many thanks to Matthew Sobo, my best friend and very, very soon to be husband, for helping keep me sane through this process, for being a sounding board for ideas and frustrations and for everything else you have done to make this year, and this project, go smoothly. I love you and appreciate all your support!

And one final note to all of those using this curriculum in any means: I hope that it serves well as a guide in your classrooms and schools. I hope that you learn something from the theories and lessons included. And, I welcome your comments, feedback and suggestions for improvement, that the spirit of collaboration continue as we all acknowledge that no curriculum is ever truly finished and must grow and develop with our students and our world.

Introduction

Topic

This curriculum will constitute a year-long course for a religious school in a very small congregation. The curriculum is written as a stand-alone year within the religious school. It will utilize biblical stories from Genesis as a lens for exploring core Jewish values, such as: hospitality, self-control and mindful obedience. An emphasis will be placed on the role of students' parents in the classroom learning environment, as both instructors and learners, as well as on family learning activities and the importance of on-going conversations and practice between sessions (e.g. through homework, that officially assigned and a general commitment to the lessons taught) in order to foster the importance of lifelong learning and a family commitment to a fulfilling Jewish lifestyle.

While this curriculum can be utilized as a single-year within a religious school, it strives to be a model for a multi-year curriculum of four to five years, in which this curriculum would constitute the first year. The following years might focus on the remaining books of the Torah or combine different selections of Jewish texts.¹ Within those years, one might revisit the values introduced in this curriculum to build upon what has already been learned and reflect on the students' and families' progress over time. With either a four- or five-year model, the entire curriculum would be completed approximately twice during a student's tenure. This would allow students to experience both the activities in the younger age-range and revisit the lessons in the older age-range.

¹ Students could study Exodus in year 2, Leviticus & Numbers in year 3, and Deuteronomy in year 4 for a four-year curriculum. One might also combine further, studying the Torah in years 1-3 and Prophets in year 4, and the megillot or other selections from the Writings (Ketuvim) in year 5, in a five-year model, for example.

Setting & Audience

Students

This curriculum is intended for use in a supplementary religious school at a small congregation with only one teacher and with parents who are willing and able to participate in the program on a regular basis as instructors and learners. Ideally, students will range in age from grades 1-7 (*b'nei mitzvah* year). The specific lessons provided will assume one cluster of students in a lower age group and one cluster of students that are older. Any given congregation can adjust the lessons to the needs of its students and families. Teenage students (post *b'nei mitzvah*) in the school might opt to either learn with the students and/or help facilitate learning among the younger students, whichever is appropriate for the particular school and student.

Sessions

The curriculum is structured as sixteen sessions of an hour and a half each, presumably on a Sunday morning. It is limited to an hour and half each to leave time for other parts of a religious education. The full school day's structure might include a short break (snack) followed by Hebrew language study, a short *t'filah* at the beginning or end of the day and/or additional elements that fit with the congregation's goals for its learners and the congregation's resources. Depending on the schedule for the surrounding day, a school might opt to insert a short break into the lessons, especially for the younger students.

The sixteen session outline is designed to work well in any of several scheduling models. It might serve as a one-semester curriculum in a school that meets every week or expanded to include additional sessions throughout the year. More likely it could serve as a year-long course in schools that meet on a bi-weekly basis.² In schools that meet monthly, lessons might be

² This is designed to be compatible with HUC-Cincinnati's pulpit guidelines for bi-weekly pulpits, which dictate 16-18 visits for students to the congregation, which generally translates to about 16 sessions of religious school.

combined into longer sessions, units might be omitted, or the sessions might be spread over two years to create a fitting model. An additional optional lesson is included to allow more flexibility to the curriculum. All lessons, topics, values and activities should be taken as suggestions and can be adapted to fit the needs of the school.

Greater Community

This curriculum assumes that children are living in an area where they are one of the only Jews in their other social groups: school, athletics, and other extra-curricular activities. This assumption is important because it means that students' "Jewish" lives are often viewed as separate from the "rest" of their lives. These students are not necessarily consciously forming their Jewish identities in these other realms of their life and do not have Jewish role models outside of the home and synagogue. Furthermore, students are often seen as the "other". Their otherness can limit a student's ability to ask the religious questions that they might have outside of the congregational community or their family. In addition, these students might also experience mild negative behavior towards their Jewishness,³ and almost definitely experience ignorance on the part of the greater community.⁴ The curriculum therefore strives to create a safe space for the questions and concerns students have, as well as provide role models of other adults and older students. Although not a written goal of the curriculum, one can aspire to aid students in building positive Jewish experiences that will further the construction of a strong Jewish identity that can withstand the challenges of their day to day lives.

³ I hesitate to go so far as calling it anti-Semitism

⁴ Such as teachers who insist that Passover is because the Jews "passed over" the Red Sea and marked off points on a seventh grade student's world religions test in Muncie, IN. This same student was bullied by a peer who insisted that nobody would sit with him (factually incorrect) because he was a "f---ing Jew." Unfortunately for this student, these examples are not extraordinary; he has dozens of them, as do other students.

Budget & Technology

Finally, since the intended use of this curriculum is in very small congregations, this curriculum strives to work within a limited budget and without special materials wherever possible. A congregation with a larger religious school budget can certainly supplement activities with additional resources and materials. Likewise, since not all congregations have access to internet and technology within the school, the three sample lessons in this curriculum refrain from using technology and online resources in the lessons themselves, but leave room for online resources in the homework assignments, such as posting journal entries to a class website or forum. A congregation that does have access to these resources is encouraged to include technology and online resources to deepen learning.

Rational: The Need for this Curriculum

The need for this curriculum results from the nature of the religious schools that it intends to serve. The curricular resources available to small congregations for reference or implementation are limited. Few of these resources readily apply to the very small congregations that this curriculum targets. Furthermore, there is a high turnover of educational leadership in the schools that leads to inconsistency in curriculum and curricular goals. Using this curriculum as part of a multi-year curriculum would promote consistency across years. As a stand-alone year, it provides a model and record for the next year.

Congregational Need

While there are resources available for “small congregations” from the Union for Reform Judaism (URJ) those resources may not be sufficient for the congregations intended by this curriculum. The definition of “small congregations” according to the URJ is any congregation of 150 membership units or less (URJ Small Congregations, n.d.). The congregations that I have served as a Student Rabbi, and many that my colleagues on the Cincinnati campus have served, are significantly smaller than 150 membership units, including many under 50 membership units. Often the resources for small congregations are insufficient for their needs, as even these resources assume a critical mass of people and resources that the targeted congregations do not have. This holds true especially for their religious schools.

On account of the average overall size, it is not surprising that the congregations that Cincinnati-based rabbinical students serve tend to have very small religious schools. In my personal experience, the congregations have had less than ten students and only one class.⁵ On the

⁵ The first congregation I served (Meir Chayim in McGehee, AR) restarted during that year after a long lapse. The school consisted of four students, ages 3-9, and one teacher, myself, and met less than once/month. The second congregation I have served (Temple Beth El in Muncie, IN) grew to seven students, ages 3-12, with one teen madrichah, and two special-needs students.

basis of conversations with my colleagues in Cincinnati, this is true for many of the congregations that we serve. From my personal experience, and from related experiences of other rabbinical students, this poses an interesting challenge to students, teachers and families in the congregation. These congregations must strive to engage all students at a level that is appropriate for them, with limited resources and often only one teacher. Running multiple lessons simultaneously could lead to losing the capacity to provide the guidance and individual attention that students need. At the same time, the limited enrollment, when viewed as an opportunity, enables unique benefits, especially under the one-room schoolhouse model described below, that allow for the individual attention and guidance for students and differentiated learning that allows students to excel to the best of their abilities.

Lack of Appropriate Existing Curricula

There are curricula in existence that are advertised as being compatible for small congregations. I have heard from congregational board members that other options are expensive or for congregations with larger religious schools than they have, or have a focus different from what the congregation is seeking for its religious school. This often leaves Student Rabbis implementing a curriculum designed for select grades with the whole school. In such a case the concern for developmental appropriateness is obvious, as the curriculum would be inappropriate for many, if not most, of the students. Alternatively, the Student Rabbi is allowed to teach what they wish, with whatever guidelines or stipulations the congregation gives. In this model, concerns for developmental appropriateness still arise, as well as concerns for the alignment of the curriculum within a year and certainly across years.

CHAI Curriculum

The URJ's Chai curriculum is one option that very small congregations attempt to use. One main issue with the Chai curriculum is that it assumes a critical mass of students in each grade.

On the Chai curriculum's website (found within the URJ's website) there are guidelines for the curriculum that it can be used for multi-age classrooms (Chai Curriculum, n.d.). In a list of guiding questions, the website suggests as a question to consider: "Will you combine two grades together or even three?" This inherently implies that the Chai curriculum is likely not appropriate for more than three grades combined together, especially with its levels loosely created with certain ages in mind. While two or three grade groupings might fit the needs of congregations in some years, it can quickly become inappropriate in a subsequent year. For example, Temple Beth El, of Muncie IN, used Level 4 with a group of boys in late elementary school taught by a parent for a couple years. However, one year significantly younger students joined the school, making the use of Level 5 inappropriate for all students in the school under the instruction of a single volunteer parent. Therefore, Chai might be used as a guide or on a temporary basis in very small congregations, but is not the best long-term option for those schools which do not have the minimum number of students in clumped grades, teachers and/or other resources (funding, space, etc.) to do so.

ISJL Curriculum

The Institute for Southern Jewish Life (ISJL) also has a curriculum. Many of the congregations that the ISJL serves are small congregations. The ISJL's curriculum is a spiral model, with lessons for every grade and many resources for the congregations. The curriculum includes lesson plans, teacher trainings, and three community visits for consultations per year (ISJL, n.d.). This model is useful for congregations that are within the range served by the ISJL that can make use of the trainings, seminars and community visits in addition to the written lesson plans. However, these lesson plans, like Chai, are designed for specific grades in progression. Like Chai, they could presumably be grouped and rotated within 2-3 grade clusters. Thus posing similar challenges as the Chai curriculum in terms of use and age-appropriate

instruction. In addition to the issues of use in a one-room schoolhouse that Chai has, this curriculum is, according to one congregant, too expensive for use in their congregation.

Educational Leadership Turnover

The challenge of building a curriculum for a small number of students is further compounded in student congregations because of the high turn-over of teachers in the schools.⁶ Some congregations have religious school principals or chairs, others do not have a designated role of this sort. Some congregations allow parents of a religious school children the opportunity of serving as principal while their children are in school, but pass the torch to another parent as their children age out of the school. This leaves most principals in the role for a handful of years, leaving just when they have gained a fair amount of experience. When the torch of teacher and principal is passed, often the obtained knowledge and curriculum used is not passed along in an organized fashion. The congregations therefore often do not have the benefit of veteran principals and/or teachers (with the specific students at the school). This curriculum therefore seeks to provide an example of good curriculum for a year that might be used as a basis for future years as well, in addition to being an aligned curriculum for the year provided.

⁶ Student Rabbis are only allowed to stay with a congregation for a maximum of two school years according to the Student Ministrations Committee (SMC) guidelines and HUC requirements. Other religious schools are served by local college students and/or parent volunteers and experience similar turnover.

Rationale: The Design of this Curriculum

This curriculum is created around two guiding models: values based education and a one-room schoolhouse model. By utilizing these models, the curriculum will address the concerns addressed above and might also aid in solving ancillary issues among the congregations, including, but not limited to, perceived repetition and inconsistency.

Values-Based Education

In a nutshell, the Values-based Education model is a theory of education in which focus is applied not only to the content being taught, but on the development of character in students. Under this model, a math teacher is no longer responsible for “just” math, but also whole-person development. The whole-person learning comes through an emphasis on identifying values and consciously incorporating them into instruction and the overall culture of the school.

The decision to follow a values-based model came from the advice of the congregational president of Temple Beth El (Muncie, IN), a congregation of less than 30 membership units. For their congregation, one of the most important aspects of education is *not as* focused on “covering X amount of topics/material,” but rather focused on guiding children to live according to Jewish ethical behavior (Eliades, 2013). These two categories are certainly not mutually exclusive, since the texts of Jewish tradition are the source of our ethics, but there is a clear recognition of the ultimate emphasis on raising students to lead Jewish lives as adults and remain active members of their Jewish communities. The school is thus focused on giving students the tools necessary to continue their development as Jews well past the *b’nei mitzvah* year. On the basis of this desired emphasis, this curriculum takes a modified values-based education approach which will focus on learning how to embody Jewish values by learning how to talk about those values and apply them in real life settings (International Values-based Education Trust, n.d.).

To facilitate real-life applicability and a situation for practicing values outside of school, a strong emphasis will be placed on family learning activities. Parts of the lessons will include only the students as the designated learners⁷ so that they have an opportunity to bond as a group and learn on an age-appropriate level, while other parts of the lessons will involve students' families to show a commitment to lifelong learning and help foster the family's Jewish identity together as a whole and not just the sum of the parts. The multi-generational learning will also provide a context for adults to practice and model the values they wish to inspire in their children.

Values-based education can help improve self-esteem and self-worth, as well as a sense of responsibility for one's own learning (International Values-based Education Trust, n.d.). Through the values-based education approach, students will thrive by developing a sense of pride and ownership of their Judaism as they move towards adulthood while also acquiring a base of Jewish knowledge. This will be reflected in the modeling that will occur through the year by teachers, parents/families, madrichim and older students as they work together to create a safe space in which students (and families) can bring their questions and learn about their Judaism. Quality relationships are essential to the academic success of children, and to their sense of agency, belonging and competence (Search Institute: Developmental Relationships, n.d.). This type of nurturing relationship can be found within most families. This curriculum seeks to build upon those relationships and use them to foster a sense of accomplishment among students.

One Room Schoolhouse Model

While many might bemoan low enrollment in religious schools and see the one room schoolhouse model as an antiquated topic best left for *Little House on the Prairie*, there is a resurgence in educational reform discussions of small school and one-room schoolhouse models,

⁷ During these parts, parents may be asked to lead the learning activity. The parents will be learning with their children as they teach, but the students will be the primary target of the learning activities.

even in urban areas where larger schools exist easily and there is no logistical need for a small school. When used for its strengths, there are several benefits to students and families that emerge from the one-room schoolhouse model. Learning can be individually tailored to their needs and preferences. Students develop interpersonal skills that will benefit them throughout their life. Families can benefit from the close community. The nature of the small school also leads to a sense of joint responsibility and intimacy among the whole community.

Student learning can be individually tailored to student's needs and preferences. The one-room schoolhouse model allows for focus on an individual student's need, with the flexibility to group a student according to current ability in a particular area without the appearance of "skipping grades" or "demoting" students (Greenberg, 1989). This allows students to be successful according to their ability in the classroom without stigma and without the need for special exemptions and placements. While in public schools this may mean a fifth grader doing middle school level math, in religious school this gives more freedom to provide information and activities at the level of a particular student, rather than at the level of "classroom textbooks," as larger schools use. This also means there is flexibility to group students with slightly older or slightly younger students, for both academic reasons and to encourage cooperation and interpersonal growth. Through differentiated learning, wherein content, process and/or product are modified to students' needs and abilities, this can be accomplished (Huebner, 2010). In dividing students into two groups, as the suggested lessons do, there will still be a variety in students' ability within the groups. It will be important for facilitators of the curriculum to keep this in mind and modify their instruction and assessment based on students' abilities.

Students develop interpersonal skills that will benefit them throughout their life. Professor Andrew Gulliford, of Fort Lewis College in Durango, Colorado is a leading expert on one-room

schools. He promotes the effectiveness of the one-room schoolhouse model for developing ego, character, personality and interpersonal skills for those in small schools (Wilgoren, 2000). With the greater adult to student ratio, and presumably a higher amount of individual attention provided by adults, students' interpersonal skills and moral development can more readily be assessed and reinforced by the teacher. Those actions might be missed or overlooked in the busy classroom of a larger school, where ratios are lower and age-ranges are smaller.

Families can benefit from the close community. Gulliford mentions, both historically and still today, how the one-room schoolhouse serves as a small scale community center for its families: where they can hold meetings, vote, have fundraisers and celebrations (Gulliford, 1991, p. 35). While many of these communal functions are served by a congregation, regardless of the religious school's presence, even in small congregations, the religious school families create an embedded community within the larger congregational community. This relationship building between families provides additional support and opportunity for establishing, and promotes continuation of moral education and increases the number of role models and mentors for students.

The nature of the small school also leads to a sense of joint responsibility and intimacy among the whole community. The tailored lessons and the inherent sense of responsibility for their own learning that students develop allows them to learn and understand concepts, instead of regurgitating information and "right answers" for a test (Deam, 2011). Pat Graham of a public one-room schoolhouse in Mt. Hamilton, CA speaks to the fact that her classroom can "create lifelong learners and not just kids who know the answers" (Rocheleau, 2003, p. 189). In addition to a learner's own responsibility for their learning, students develop a sense of responsibility to the community. In the American public one-room schoolhouses, students were often in charge of the basic upkeep of their school: if students did not sweep, dust, etc. the schoolhouse would be dirty.

Everyone in the community must come together to ensure the functionality of the schoolhouse, otherwise the schoolhouse would fall into disarray (Rocheleau, 2003, p. 124). In the same way, in a small congregation, there is likely not a hired custodian or other staff to help clean the classroom. Students will therefore develop a sense that these mundane tasks are not below them, and that their own responsibilities for tasks such as cleaning a chalkboard or caring for the space around them is just as important as the other lessons of the day.

The inherent caveat to this model is that in order for the one-room schoolhouse model to work, the teacher needs to be aware of their students, prepared for lessons, creative and flexible. Teaching in a one-room school is not an easy task. For this reason, the detailed lessons described in this curriculum, will provide examples of activities and strives to give alternatives (through different means and materials based on student needs and desires). The activities in these lessons should be seen as suggestions and must be adapted to the particular setting in which they will be used.

Solving Consistency Issues

This curriculum aspires to provide a concrete overall topic of study to help formalize the curriculum for congregations as a model of what might be done in other years, which might explore different topics. Over the course of these years, the threads of community-building and values based education will create consistency while broadening the base of knowledge through different topics studied. This should result in making completion of the religious school upon the *b'nei mitzvah* year a meaningful accomplishment for both students and families.

Facilitators: Required Background

To be as successful as possible, facilitators, ideally, will need both a background in Judaic knowledge and human development as well as a firm understanding of the content of the lessons. The facilitator must also have, or be able to quickly gain, an understanding of every child in the program, their strengths and weaknesses and their ability level and interpersonal skills. This will help the facilitator determine how each student might respond to lessons and how to appropriately give responsibility for learning to their students.

The facilitator will also need to assess the strengths and weaknesses of madrichim, if available, to determine how to establish their role among the rest of the students in the class, especially considering that madrichim were likely also students alongside the very students they are being asked to help teach. Depending on the structure of the school and the number of students, this transition could be challenging for madrichim and the students alike. The educator will serve as a guide in this transition for madrichim.

Information about students and madrichim might be gained in one or more different ways. It would be helpful for formal or informal “progress reports” to be made for each student. These files might be kept by the religious school principal or another trusted member of the community to pass on to teachers from year to year. Such a written lesson plan will help provide a sense of the progress of students, but should be understood to be subjective reports by those who wrote the evaluations. In addition to written records of some sort, it is highly encouraged that an incoming educator or educational leadership meet with the current (or outgoing) members of the school’s leadership wherever possible. In some religious schools it may even be possible for an incoming educator to meet with families prior to the beginning of the religious school year (on a first visit to a student pulpit, e.g.).

The facilitator will also need to rely on parents as a crucial part of the success of the curriculum. The parents (and any madrichim) who will be helping implement the curriculum should receive some training from the facilitator prior to the beginning of the year as to the expectations and resources available to them. The facilitator should also find times to meet with the parents throughout the year to provide guidance and further training and feedback as necessary. Constant communication with parents will be necessary for preparing for lessons and to maintain a two-directional feedback loop for their children.

Literature Review & Potential Resources for Facilitators

The following resources may be helpful for facilitators of this curriculum. The resources that are asterisked (*) are highly recommended, generally as the more concise and informative works in each category. The remainder of the resources generally provide deeper insight into the topic or further supplemental reading.

Resources on Child Development

*Chip Wood, *Yardsticks: Children in the Classroom Ages 4-14*. Northeast Foundation for Children (2007)

Yardsticks provides a specific listing of average developmental place and tasks by age from age 4 to 14. With its brief chapters on each age, divided by developmental progress, tasks and what the age-group benefits most from in the classroom, this is a good quick-reference for the specific children in a given classroom. A teacher might use this to get a vague sense of where children are before the year starts (if they have not met them previously) or as a reminder of what might be age-appropriate for given students throughout the school-year.

Teresa McDevitt and Jeanne Ormrod, *Child Development and Education*. Merrill (2010)
Provides information on the theories of child development, divided by categories of development instead of by age. This book provides a deeper understanding of the theories behind child development, as opposed to a specific list of abilities and needs. This depth can facilitate a teacher in understanding where and how to determine if a child is ahead or behind what is supposedly “normal” for their age, by identifying children in stages rather than age-groups and looking at arcs of development instead of points on the arc individually.

Resources on One-Room Schoolhouses

Andrew Gulliford, *America’s Country Schools*, Preservation Print (1991)

Gulliford provides a thorough history of American public one-room schoolhouses. He describes the interaction of the school and the community, the schools’ role in history and the current nature of the near 1,000 one-room public schools that remain today. This provides insight into how the schools function and why their students (and families) are still fighting to keep the schools open among pressure for consolidation to larger schools.

Wayne Fuller, *One-Room Schools of the Middle West*, University of Kansas (1994)

Paul Rocheleau, “The One-Room Schoolhouse Today” in *The One-Room Schoolhouse: A Tribute to a Beloved National Icon*.

Rocheleau’s chapter gives an outside perspective on six different existing one-room

schoolhouses for their unique characteristics and styles. This provides insight into how the nature and context of a school influence the teaching and learning that occur within its walls, which can be translated by the religious school educator to create the best one-room model for their context.

*Stephen Swidler, *Naturally Small: Teaching and Learning in the Last One-Room Schools*.

Swidler notes that in the world of educational reform, there is little to no appropriate critical study of the naturally occurring small and/or one-room school. He conducts two years of field research in rural Nebraska at two one-room schools, providing detailed description of the teaching and learning found in these two schools. He concludes, there are likely no generalizations possible across all one-room or small schools, but that these schools can “enable ambitious kinds of instruction” while “intertwining the community’s values” (113, 114). Although he works with a limited sample, he shows how the close relationship between teacher, students and community can foster deeper learning and thinking in students in a way that larger (and graded) schools cannot that likely generalizes to most one-room schools.

Deam, J. (2011, June 12). A one-room school fit for 21st century. *LA Times*. Retrieved from articles.latimes.com.

Gives an example of a one-room public school (one of 200 in the country at the time) in Decker, Mont, where teacher Creighton Teter is able to tailor lessons to his nine students and gives personal insight into the unique benefits and challenges of working in a non-traditional (graded) school. The students’ achievements seem to speak to the success of the school.

Wilgoren, J. (2000, August 6). The One-Room Schoolhouse. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from nytimes.com.

Teacher Linda Borntrager and her school provide an account of another one-room school, with the added skills that students learn within the school, such as flexibility and a higher focus on interpersonal skills. The parents comment that students develop better study skills than their graded-school counterparts, which are chalked up to individual attention and tailoring of lessons.

Kaesshaefer, M. Tales from a one-room schoolhouse.

<http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/article/tales-one-room-schoolhouse>

Provides an interview format insight into a 15-student school in rural Nevada. This article gives an additional example of a modern one-room schoolhouse in rural Nevada. The teacher, Lyn, speaks more than some of the other sources about how she uses technology in the classroom (including a SMART board). Lyn provides advice as to the

“rules she swears by” in teaching a one-room schoolhouse that can easily be adapted to the religious school classroom.

*Rabbi Julie Greenberg, *Surviving in the One-Room Schoolhouse* in *Reconstructing Jewish Education: A Process Guide*, 1989.

This article by Rabbi Greenberg discusses the advantages of the one-room school in a religious school setting (not a public school setting). She agrees with the sentiments of those found in the public schools, and adds that the one-room schoolhouse provides a closer approximation to the full community than a single-grade classroom does. She provides some specific suggestions that relate to a Jewish setting and some general ideas for teachers working in mixed-age and mixed-ability groups of students.

Resources on Values Based Learning & Teaching Values

International Values-Based Education Trust, valuesbasededucation.com

This website provides an introduction to values-based education. The website includes articles, videos, suggestions and examples of values-based education in use as well as materials and further materials and research findings.

*Neil Hawkes, *What is Values-based Education?* http://www.values-education.com/downloads/what_is.pdf

Neil Hawkes provides a summary of values-based education, most of which is reiterated from the website above in a short and informative article. He describes the basis for values-based education as well as key aspects and emphases of the model and its power within the educational setting.

Susan Freeman, *Teaching Jewish Virtues*, Berman House Publishing (1999)

This book contains chapters on many different Jewish values. Each chapter contains a variety of texts, resources, discussion questions and suggested activities for different ages and modalities related to the resources in the chapter. These activities can be used as is in the lessons of this curriculum or adapted to meet the needs of the congregation.

Barbara Kadden and Bruce Kadden, *Teaching Mitzvot*, ARE Publishing (2003)

Similar to the *Teaching Jewish Virtues* volume, this book provides similar resources around various mitzvot in Judaism. While not all of the chapters apply to the given curriculum, several of the values addressed in this curriculum are also explicit mitzvot in the Jewish tradition and are considered in this volume.

Resources for Teaching Bible to Children

Chaya Burstein, *The Kids' Cartoon Bible*, Jewish Publication Society (2002)

This volume contains very short, highly illustrated versions of many Biblical stories, though is somewhat selective in its stories. The cartoons for each story seem to give the “highlights” of stories and the main facts, while leaving much of the detail to the imagination or to the illustrations. It would most likely be good to use as supplementary for older children.

Seymour Rossel, *A Child's Bible: Lesson from the Torah*, Behrman House (1988)

This volume has about a two-page story for many of the major biblical stories, but not all of them. There are one-page illustrations included with each story, and the font is bigger. In addition, each story is followed by a few pages of activities and questions that might be used in the classroom and/or for discussion. This would be more readily used with younger children of reading age, or to be read to them. While this curriculum does not utilize the follow-up activities and questions as is, they might be adapted into use during the lessons or for homework/preparation before class.

*Ellen Frankel, *JPS Illustrated Children's Bible*, Jewish Publication Society (2009)

This volume contains most major biblical stories in about two to three pages with a one-page illustration accompanying each story. The stories are fairly accurate to the biblical text, omitting details that bog down the story for younger children and replacing exact translation for phrases and vocabulary more age appropriate to younger children. This volume would be good for use reading to the younger children or even for the older children in stories where the biblical text gets overly technical.

Design Principles Utilized

Nurtures Relationships and Community

This curriculum stresses the relationship both between students and between students and other adults in the congregation/religious school. In order for very small congregations to survive, they must recognize the importance of a close-knit, caring community (that usually describes the community). Students will benefit from being raised in a close community and will hopefully develop a desire to give back to that community as they grow older.

Speaks to Questions of Real Life

Judaism has to be relevant and applicable for any Jew, but particularly for a student who might feel that they have to defend being Jewish to a friend or public school-teacher. In order for the goal of gaining applicability in real life, the curriculum must speak to real life for its students.

Time for Reflection

Students need time to think and reflect on what they are learning in order to fully process and internalize the values. Values cannot be taught in a day, or a couple sessions. It takes a lifetime of practice to perfect the values that Judaism teaches us to embody. Our students are on the beginning of this path and need time to process their successes and their failures.

Radical Empathy

This curriculum strives to imagine the lives of the students who might engage in its lessons so that it is the most appropriate and understanding for them and will meet them where they are. This curriculum strives to allow students to be integral to themselves and meet them where they are currently.

Desired Results

Example Mission Statement of a Congregation

Our congregation seeks to form bonds between members that span generations and embrace Judaism and lifelong learning in a warm and caring environment while living strong Jewish lives. Our members can connect with one another in a way that can only be achieved in a small synagogue. We strive to reach out to our surrounding community while performing Tikkun Olam; we actively participate in the community. We foster and nurture our love and support for Israel. Above all, we are an accepting congregation. We welcome Jews from all walks of life as well as interfaith families.⁸

Priority Goal for the Religious School Learners

The religious school seeks to instill Jewish values and ethics in our children to help them live strong Jewish lives and feel a sense of pride towards their Jewish identity.

Enduring Understandings for the Curriculum

1. The Bible and our tradition teach values we must actively practice on an on-going basis.
2. Being Jewish is a source of pride.
3. Jewish learning is a lifelong process, it does not end at b'nei mitzvah.

Essential Questions

1. What importance does the Bible hold for me as a Jew?
2. What values does the Bible teach me?
3. What does it mean to be Jewish today?
4. What does it mean to be a part of this congregation? Class?

⁸ Based on the stated mission and introduction on the website of Temple Beth El (Muncie, IN)

Learning Outcomes (KDBB)

Know

Learners will be able to identify and explain core Jewish values and different ways of applying them in their own context.

While it is impossible to “teach” a value in a short time-frame, this curriculum will seek to introduce students to values in order that students can begin their path of practicing them daily. Each value will be introduced through a biblical story. Students will study that story through the lens of the value, and continue with their study of the value on an age-appropriate level over the course of the “unit” on that value/story. Learners will relate to biblical role models and be able to articulate how their own behavior is or is not emulating the actions of the biblical hero.

Do

Learners will apply Jewish values and teachings to real life situations and be able to identify these values in others’ behavior.

With the strong emphasis on Jewish action, the ultimate goal of the curriculum is to have students aspire to embody the values taught in the curriculum in their daily lives. Students will examine how they are already embodying the values studied and where they can further embody those values in their day to day behavior.

Belong

Learners will relate to role models biblical or real-life (peers, madrichim and family members) who share their own experiences trying to apply Torah to their lives.

In order for students to develop a lasting connection to Judaism, they must relate to other Jews. While a long-term relationship would be hard to create or assess in a short time-

frame, the individual relationships with those in the classroom can be a priority for facilitators.

Believe/Value

Learners will explore how embodying Jewish values can enrich their lives and the challenges posed by these same values. Learners will explore the benefit of their relationship to other Jews (*Am Yisrael*) while learning to apply Jewish values in their own lives, and while making ethical decisions.

While a facilitator cannot impose a belief that the core values taught are important in students, it is possible to assess their thinking about these values. Learning should be focused on the goal of enhancing students' thinking around these topics as much as around fostering specific behaviors or trends of behavior among students.

Assessment

Know

Learners will be able to identify and explain core Jewish values and different ways of applying them in their own context.

A possible means of assessing this outcome would be for students to define or explain the value in their own words. Younger students might be asked to give examples, older students might be asked to create a plan to embody/implement the value.

Do

Learners will apply Jewish values and teachings to real life situations and be able to identify these values in others' behavior.

Students will first be asked to identify the value in another person's behavior. Students will then create a plan or suggestion as to situations in their own lives in which the value might be demonstrated. Finally, students will enact the value in their own behavior and be able to describe why their behavior was an example of the value. While the first steps in this assessment will be part of the introduction and exploration of the value in class, a possible means of assessing the final step, personal implementation, might be to have older students maintain a journal (or similar format) between sessions identifying both when they saw the value enacted and when they embodied the value themselves, with an explanation as to why the specific behavior identified demonstrated the value. Younger students might be asked to complete an activity with their families that embraces the value and explain why it fits that particular value, instead of in a written form. If technology is available students might be able to use photos, video clips or audio clips to represent their values-based actions.

Belong

Learners will relate to role models (madrachim and family members) who share their own experiences trying to apply Torah to their lives.

A possible means of assessment for this outcome would be to observe interactions between students and their role models. One might also ask students in what situations they might consult their role models for help or advice. They might even create a profile of their role models as to how they embody the values the student finds important.

Believe/Value

Learners will explore how embodying Jewish values can enrich their lives and the challenges posed by these same values. Learners will explore the benefit of their relationship to other Jews (*Am Yisrael*) while learning to apply Jewish values in their own lives, and while making ethical decisions.

A possible means of assessment for students' beliefs and relationship with the core values being taught might be to have students add to their journals or reflections on the place of Jewish values in their lives and their connection to other Jews. A facilitator might also be able to observe students gravitating towards their role models beyond class time (such as at other congregational or communal events).

Suggested Learning Experience and Instruction

This curriculum is structured around values and group learning. Students will be grouped into multi-age groups where they can work together and build interpersonal skills. Working in small groups and in a small classroom will provide opportunities for individualized learning and cooperative learning, and should allow for constructivist teaching and student-driven learning activities. Learning activities will involve older students teaching or working with younger students, which can allow for students to gravitate towards their personal learning styles.

In an effort to involve families in learning, students might “present” their learning not just to the other students in the class, but also to the parents/families as well. In other areas, especially in a bi-weekly schedule, students might be given homework tasks to deepen their understanding in various areas in which their families might be asked to engage in the activity with the student.

Transformation into a Multi-Year Curriculum & the Selection of Genesis Texts

To facilitate this curriculum being used as the first of a four or five year curriculum, the focus of the scripted lesson plans is on the Book of Genesis. Additional years could focus on the other books of the Bible in order and/or other Biblical or Rabbinic texts, as suggested previously. Among the variety of options for textual focus, Genesis was selected as the beginning (always a good place to start), and as a book that is very conducive to story-telling, which is suitable for multi-age groups (Rosman, 1990). This story-model can be used with the other books of the Bible, and certainly with elements of Midrash and other Rabbinic texts, as well as Chassidic stories. This curriculum suggests interspersing some of these additional sources into the lessons to provide a survey of Jewish sources, especially if the entire curriculum focuses on Biblical texts, but their study as a whole is not explicit in this particular curriculum.

Incorporation of other Educational Elements

As mentioned in the introduction, this curriculum is intended to serve as the Judaic component of a religious school education. It is highly recommended to complement this curriculum with additional Hebrew language study and t'filah experiences. To link these “parts” of the day together, the educator might opt to highlight the value of study in t'filah prior to or following the learning. Hebrew instruction might include reinforcement of the vocabulary used in the lessons as well.

Assumed Facilities

The provided lessons assume that parents actively participate in learning alongside and with their students. It assumes that there is a location on site that the parents can meet with each other, discuss and prepare as well as where they or the madrichim can take the younger students when they are working with them. That is, that there is a second classroom, a part of a classroom, a social hall, etc. to aid in dividing up the groups. If this is not the case, the facilitator can decide to keep the group together (developmental appropriateness permitting), or create a yeshiva-like atmosphere in the space that one has.

Awareness and Inclusion

The individualization of the curriculum makes it particularly conducive to diverse learners. The one-room schoolhouse model automatically resolves some developmental issues because students are not grouped directly by age or grade as they are in many traditional schools, thus eliminating a need to “demote” or “hold back” students. Should a student be often grouped similar to younger students of a similar ability level, the stigma is removed by the constant regroupings of students for different lessons and projects, and by older students working with younger students on a regular basis. Movement-based and physical limitations are also easily included in this curriculum, again because of the individualization required.

Suggested Classroom Rituals

Classroom rituals are important for establishing a routine within the classroom. Such a routine is important with young students to ease anxiety as they will know what to expect each session when they arrive. The classroom rituals suggested to complement the lessons provided, and are included in the given lessons, include: beginning class with a “morning meeting,” including the blessing for study at the beginning of the day, including a moral dilemma in each sessions discussion, and an exit ticket at the end of the day. Any selection of these and/or other rituals that fit with the particular school should also be considered. Some additional rituals beyond the scope of this curriculum, but that might help link to it include: adding t’filah to the religious school day and learning the Hebrew for each value discussed or other related Hebrew words.

Morning Meeting

The “Morning Meeting” is an element from the Responsive Classroom model. Responsive Classroom suggests that the Morning Meeting is a “tool for building community, increasing student investment, and improving academic and social skills” and consists of a greeting, sharing, group activity and morning message (Morning Meeting Components, n.d.). This curriculum recommends modifying this model as a morning check-in for students. It allows students to practice hospitality and active listening as they greet each other in the morning and share *simchas* and sorrows before the day begins. This sharing may also influence how the educator approaches a student or topic during the session. The group can then continue with the blessing for study (or begin the meeting with the blessing for study). This morning meeting can transition into the set induction for the session. One might also include a discussion of the moral dilemma as the set induction for each session in this meeting time.

Blessing for Torah Study

The “Morning Meeting” would be an excellent place for the blessing for Torah study as the group begins its learning for the day. If the blessing is included in a *t’filah* prior to the curriculum, then one might choose not to repeat it here (or to move the Morning Meeting/check-in prior to *t’filah*). The blessing for study is as follows:

עֲבֹדָה , לְהִינּוּךְ עֲמִלּוֹ, שְׂרָדָה נו עֲכָנּוּ עֲסוֹק שְׂרֵי הָרוֹת.
 אֶתְהָ אֶל אֶתְהָ אֶתְהָ אֶתְהָ אֶתְהָ אֶתְהָ אֶתְהָ
 אֶתְהָ אֶתְהָ אֶתְהָ אֶתְהָ אֶתְהָ אֶתְהָ אֶתְהָ אֶתְהָ

Baruch atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech Haolam,

asher kidshanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu la'asok b'divrei Torah.

Blessed are You Adonai, our God, Sovereign of the Universe, who makes us holy through

God's Mitzvot and commands us to engage in the words of Torah.

Moral Dilemma

Moral dilemmas are situations that generally provide a conflict between two different values. They have no single correct answer and students will often have differing opinions on how to resolve the conflict. In posing a moral dilemma, students are asked to think about values in a concrete way while considering the abstract nature of the values' weight in their lives and how to handle potential moral dilemmas in their own lives. The idea of the moral dilemma is for students to articulate what values are at conflict. For younger students, they might express these in the form of concrete examples, whereas one might encourage older students to think more abstractly about the specific example. In the following curricular guide a possible moral dilemma related to the value at hand and/or the biblical story to be studied is provided. The educator might choose to use this dilemma or devise their own. The educator will likely want to expand the short description

into a brief story to flesh out the situation for younger students and/or give an opportunity for students to ask clarifying questions.

Since each student will have an individual answer, at a different depth of thought there are a few different models that might be useful based on the students. You might pose the dilemma and have students of similar ages go into *chevruta* to discuss, or discuss as a larger group. The educator might opt to have students write a response in a journal that can be returned to later in the year or session; this could be in addition to conversation or in place of a conversation. Either way, students should be encouraged to give reasoning for their responses. Students' responses should become more thoughtful and expressive of values as the year progresses.

The educator should select a time during the session to pose the moral dilemma. One might choose to include the moral dilemma as a set induction at the end of the Morning meeting or other morning ritual to set the tone for the day. This is the placement of the moral dilemma in the provided lesson plans. Alternatively, one might choose to end the session with the moral dilemma as a wrap-up to the discussion. The educator can then assess if there are elements of the session influencing students' thinking on the dilemma.

Exit Ticket

The “exit ticket” is a teaching technique that provides quick feedback to the educator at the end of a session. They are usually 1-3 questions about the lesson of the day that vary between assessing key concepts (Define a vocabulary term) to summative questions or reflective questions (What did you have the most trouble with, what is one question/idea you want to think more about). The educator might choose to use the same prompts each session so that students know what to

expect or to use similar type questions each session, but not necessarily the same question. The moral dilemma might consist of the exit ticket or a part thereof.

Suggested Course Outline

This outline suggests two sessions per unit (biblical story). The story and concepts might be introduced during the first session and in the second session one might reflect on practice during the time between sessions and deepen understanding of the values.

Sessions 1 & 2: Creation (Genesis 1-2)

Potential Value(s):	Potential Homework/Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our uniqueness as individuals • Community/קהילה • Preserving the world 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go on a nature trail – observe and record characteristics of different objects, plants and animals found in nature • Make a list of things that make you unique, make a list of things that make someone else in the class unique
Potential Key Terms/Concepts:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B'tzelem Elohim • Shabbat/שבת • Human beings are not alone (we need each other) • to work and to guard/לעבוד ולשמור 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do something special for Shabbat (at home, dinner) • Demonstrate the benefit of Shabbat (do 50 jumping jacks continuous, then do a set of 10, rest, 10, rest, etc. which is easier to do?) • Moral dilemma: Your friends are making fun of someone because of a disability/difference – What do you do?

Sessions 3 & 4: Adam and Eve (Gen 2-3)

Potential Value(s):	Potential Homework/Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obedience • Careful Listening • Free Will v. Obedience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a list of potential “rules” for our classroom for the year (to turn into a class <i>brit kehilah</i>) and consequences for straying from the <i>brit kehilah</i>
Potential Key Terms/Concepts:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commandment/מצווה • Garden of Eden/גן עדן • Tree of Life/עץ חיים • Free Will • Obedience • Bystander v. Witness/עד 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Rules are meant to be broken” – Discuss what we do to help overcome temptation • Careful listening – Like telephone have students retell a story to each other (who didn’t hear the first story), how does it change in the third rendition? • Moral dilemma: Your friend is breaking a rule at school. What do you do?

Sessions 5 & 6: Cain & Abel (Gen 4-5)

Potential Value(s):

- Generosity
- Self-Control

Potential Key Terms/Concepts:

- Midrash/מדרש
- Offering v. Sacrifice (various types of sacrifices)
- Sibling Rivalry
- Good/Bad
- Inclination/יצר הטוב/הרע

Potential Homework/Activities

- Reflect on what Cain did “wrong” – Why was his offering not accepted but Abel’s was
- Examine ways in which we can control our emotions
- Act out giving a gift (offering, sacrifice) freely versus begrudgingly – how does it feel to receive such a gift?
- Work on (or plan) a Tikkun Olam project
- Moral dilemma: You are shopping for a gift for someone and have twenty dollars in your pocket. You find something you want to buy for yourself, but you cannot get the gift your friend really wants and the thing for yourself, you can get a smaller gift and the thing for yourself – what do you buy?

Sessions 7 & 8: Noah (Gen 6-10)

Potential Value(s):

- Preparation
- Saving a Life/פיקוח נפש
- Regret

Potential Key Terms/Concepts:

- Righteousness & Tzaddik/צדיק
- Ark
- Pikuach Nefesh/פיקוח נפש

Potential Homework/Activities

- Reflect on the differences between preparing for daily activities and extraordinary/unexpected things
- Create a plan to be prepared
- Explore and define righteousness and the question of Noah’s righteousness
- Discuss what Noah might have thought after it started raining and the other animals and people died
- Visit an animal shelter to see how they are helping animals/volunteer for a day
- (Continue to) Work on a Tikkun Olam project
- Discuss: Does God have emotions? Was God regretful? What do we do when we are regretful
- Moral dilemma: Your and your friend are almost late for school, your friend falls and skins their knee as you walk out the door, if you wait while he/she cleans up, you will be late, if you don’t – you’ll be on time – What do you do?

Possible Expansion: Tower of Babel – Genesis 11

Potential Value(s):	Potential Homework/Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teamwork • Communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work on a building project separately (each person with different random materials) – who can build the highest; then work together – one group can talk, the other can't
Potential Key Terms/Concepts:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Babel • Human mission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss: Is mixing up the languages a punishment? What does God accomplish? • Did the people sin? • Moral Dilemma: You are working on a group project, one of your partners is not pulling their weight. You can “tattle” to the teacher, or do the extra work – what do you choose?

Sessions 9 & 10: Abraham & Sarah (Genesis 12-21, focus: 18)

Potential Value(s):	Potential Homework/Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hospitality/ הכנסת אורחים • Justice/ משפט • Self-Determination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create plans for enacting welcoming behaviors in various situations • Discuss empathy and how we can consider others' feelings
Potential Key Terms/Concepts:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Angel/Divine Beings • Empathy • Visiting the Sick/ ביקור חולים • Acceptable Lying 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite a guest over and make them feel welcome • Discuss: Abraham lies to kings about his wife/sister – Is this acceptable? Is it okay to lie sometimes? Is it okay to ask somebody else (your wife?) to lie? • Act out Hagar's “banishment” – was she rejected or was this the door to something new? Or could it be both? • Moral Dilemma: Your friend reveals a plan to do something without thinking it through – Do you step in?

Sessions 11 & 12: Isaac & Rebekkah (Gen 22-24)

Potential Value(s):

- Faith/Trust - אמונה
- Love/אהבה
- Hospitality Revisited

Potential Key Terms/Concepts:

- Midrash
- Offering v. Sacrifice
- “Test” / Theodicy
- Lying - Revisited

Potential Homework/Activities

- Define faith and trust. What does it mean to be faithful? Trusting? How are they related?
- How can we respond if we are not prepared to “be like Abraham”? Is blind-faith always a good thing? How are Abraham’s actions in the Akedah tempered by the bargaining scene before Sodom?
- Discuss: What are the limits of faith? What can we do in the name of faith?
- How is Rebekkah like Abraham in the previous discussion?
- Rebekkah and Isaac are the first couple where the word “love” is used – What does it mean to love – is this an emotion or a decision?
- Abraham apparently lies to his servants – Does he know what will happen or is he lying?
- Skit: Act out a skit for when a parent says “Because I said so”
- Moral Dilemma: Your teacher gives the same history test every year. Your friend’s older brother has his test from last year. Do you look at it while studying?

Sessions 13 & 14: Jacob, Esau & Rachel & Leah (Gen 25-36, focus 28)

Potential Value(s):

- Awareness
- Open Heart
- Dedication/Hard Work

Potential Key Terms/Concepts:

- Dream
- God/Holiness/כְּוֹנֵה
- Rivalry, Revisited
- Fear
- Favoritism
- Trickery

Potential Homework/Activities

- Share an experience where you felt God's presence
- Make a list of places that you might experience holiness
- Make a picture or story of what it looks like to "find God"
- Read a Chassidic story about praying/kavanah - Do a meditation outside
- Do a mindful eating exercise
- Jacob is sometimes called a trickster – Why is it important to have ancestors in the Bible who aren't perfect? Who do you look up to – what are their strengths and weaknesses?
- Moral Dilemma: Your parent/teacher seems to favor one child/student over another (favors you?)– Do you say something?

Sessions 15 & 16: Joseph (Gen 37-50, Focus: 37 and/or 45)

Potential Value(s):

- Identity
- Humility/עֲנוּוָה
- Equality
- Forgiveness/סְלִיחָה
- Love, Revisited

Potential Key Terms/Concepts:

- Identity
- Favoritism
- Nicknames

Potential Homework/Activities

- Write a statement of what it means to be Jewish
- Make a list of things that make us Jewish
- Make a mezuzah, or other identifiably Jewish craft
- How can we be proud of who we are without making others feel bad?
- Make a list of nicknames that people call you – what meaning/emotions do they hold?
- How can we balance natural "favorites" (best friends, etc.) with making people feel like equals?
- Act out forgiving someone for something, what makes an apology "real"?
- Moral Dilemma: Your friend intentionally hurt you while they were upset, and did nothing to make up for it – Do you hold a grudge against them?

Detailed Lesson Plans

Lesson Plan 3: Adam & Eve, Part 1, Genesis 2-3

Value

Thoughtful Obedience

Context

This will be the second unit of the course. Students may still need reminders as to the structure of the classroom and the flow of the session. While students have likely worked with each other in past years, they may still be adjusting to any changes in enrollment or teachers and to any adjustments in their own lives. Returning teachers should bear in mind that students can change from the end of one school year to the beginning of the next.

Core Concepts

- Adam and Eve disobeyed a rule that was made explicit to Adam.
- Adam and Eve experience the consequences of breaking the rules.
- People have the ability to influence others' behavior.
- Sometimes you have to rely on your own judgment when there are competing values.

Lesson Objectives

- Students will relate the story of Adam, Eve and the Serpent to their own lives.
- Students will articulate the relationship between free will and obedience
- Students will reflect on when, if ever, it is okay to “bend” rules or put fences around them
- Students will create a *brit kehilah* for the class along with consequences for straying from the *brit kehilah*

Overview

Time	Goal	Lower Grades	Upper Grades
00-15	Community	Morning Meeting	
15-40	Relate/Articulate	Brainstorm lists	Study Biblical Text
40-45	Relate	Listen to Story	Share Story
45-70		Don't be the snake	"But I don't want to"
70-85	Create <i>Brit Kehilah</i>	<i>Brit Kehilah</i>	
80-90	Recap & Homework		
	Homework:	Create 3 “journal” entries of an experience following or breaking a rule.	Make note of any time that you disagree with an adult's rule or judgment

Suggested Homework for Parents:

Have parents work through the text that the older students will be studying below as preparation for their own discussion on the theme of obedience versus free will.

Additional Question/Food for Thought: In the Biblical story, Adam and Eve are punished for eating from the tree. However, the implied punishment is immediate death – some commentators say that because they ate from the tree, Adam and Eve became mortal and *will* die (just as inevitable as immediate death). Are there times when you enforce strict punishment for behaviors? When you let behaviors slide? When you mediate the punishment you said you’d give? What influences your behavior/decisions in each of these cases?

Detailed Agenda

00-15	Community	Morning Meeting
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All students are together with the teacher. Parents, might use this time to discuss the role of rules in their family’s routine or discuss the “homework” text.

- Greet students
- Check-in – simchas and sorrows (each student can share a brief piece of personal news)
- Blessing for study
- Moral dilemma posed to students: Your school clearly does not allow cheating in the classroom. You are in the middle of a very difficult test and you see that a classmate has notes on the floor and is looking at them! What do you do?
 - Remind all students that there is no “correct” answer and they should be thoughtful and deliberate in their responses.
 - Have older students sit in chevruta and discuss for a couple minutes and then write down the tensions in the situation and their response and reasoning in their journals.
 - Have younger students sit with the teacher and discuss as a group. Help students think about the consequences of various actions.

15-40	Relate/Articulate	Brainstorm lists	Study Biblical Text
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YOUNGER STUDENTS:

Materials: Index cards, writing implements, tape, board (or just on table)

- What rules do you follow at home? At school? (Make a Venn Diagram)
 - Have students write rules (or write for them) on index cards (or similar) and tape onto board into a Venn Diagram
- Why are these rules important? [They keep us safe, they help us learn]
- Categorize:
 - Have students “move” the rules into two different categories – those that are easy to follow and those that are more difficult. If students do not agree – you might choose to let them make a “spectrum” and put them in the middle.

- Why are some rules easier to follow than others? [We don't want to hurt each other, etc.]
- What makes us want to break rules? [Because it's fun, we like to...]

OLDER STUDENTS

Materials: Handouts for story (Story form or Biblical text), "Puppets" – handmade, dolls, etc.

- Study Genesis 2:4-3:24 - *** Because of the large quantity of Biblical text to give students the whole story, it might be beneficial, based on the level of the students, to give them an excerpted text while providing the context before and after (such as the handout included below), providing a "story form" (child's version, see resources listed in Introduction) of the Biblical text or the option of studying either.
- Potential Guiding Questions
 - There is a lot going on in the story. Have students read a couple verses at a time and create an outline of the story as they go. Pay special attention to the command not to eat from the tree.
 - Check for understanding: Follow the thread of the command – Who was commanded to do what? How did the command change throughout the story? How might that have influenced Adam and Eve's behavior? How have you, or might you, react differently to a rule made by a parent or teacher versus a rule made by a friend, sibling or peer?
 - Return to the moral dilemma - Think about your own experience
 - What if you were in a situation where you saw that a rule was not enforced? What would you do? Would you keep following the rule? Would you test another rule? If you got away with something in one setting (school) would you try it in another setting (home, religious school, etc.)?
 - What if you were in a situation and saw that a rule wasn't enforced for someone else – you saw the teacher let the student "get away" with cheating – would you break the rule too?
 - What if you were in a situation and you could aid someone into breaking a rule or help remind them to follow it – what would you do? What was your response to the moral dilemma? Would you answer differently after our discussion?
 - Take a few minutes to review your story outline and prepare to use puppets to tell the story to younger students.

40-45	Relate	Listen to Story	Share Story
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- Older students relate the biblical story to younger students

45-70		Don't be the snake	"But I don't want to"
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YOUNGER STUDENTS:

- Ask students – What does the snake do in the story? [Convince Eve to eat the fruit]
- What does Eve do after eating the fruit? [Gives Adam the fruit]
- Why might Eve have eaten the fruit? [Curious, exploring, wanted knowledge, she wasn't commanded not to by God]
- What might Adam have been thinking while Eve ate the fruit? [Thinking about whether to stop her or not]
- Why might Adam have eaten the fruit? [Nothing happened to Eve, he wanted knowledge/was curious too]
- What happens next? [All three get punished]
- We talked before about how some rules are easier to follow than others. The rules that were hard to follow we said were because [its fun, we want to do it, our friends encourage us, etc.].
 - Take one example of a rule at the time and see who/what is the “snake”
 - Example Difficulty: It is hard not to talk in class because my friend talks to me a lot. The students might identify that: The friend is like the “snake” because he/she tempts the student into breaking the rule.
 - Example Difficulty: It is hard not to eat candy from the candy dish because it is right there on the coffee table and you can sneak a piece easily. The students might identify that: The candy dish/our sweet tooth is like the snake because it tempts us into breaking the rule.
 - Once students seem to get the hang of figuring out what/who makes breaking rules tempting – ask them if they might have been the “snake” to someone else? Start with a personal example. (I've been like the snake because I leave the candy in reach...)
 - Have students draw/act out/rewrite/re-describe their examples where they were the snake and transform them into eliminating (or overcoming) the snake.
 - You might also allow students to create a video on a phone/computer to consider later.
- Wrap up by reiterating the following points:
 - Rules are important, but they can be hard to follow
 - There are temptations that lead us to use our free will to break the rules

- We can use our free will to overcome those temptations when we know something is wrong.

OLDER STUDENTS:

- Have students describe a time when they *really* didn't want to follow a rule (and whether or not they ultimately did). Ask students to identify in their story what made them act the way they did.
 - Relate to the yetzer hatov (good inclination/impulse)/yetzer hara (bad inclination) (good angel, bad angel in cartoons) – what makes the yetzer hatov win?
- Ask students if there was a time when they knowingly disobeyed a rule *for a good reason*. Ask students to identify what made them act the way they did.
 - Relate to the notion of commandments “superseding” others: Saving a life is more important than Shabbat, etc. What deems a “good enough” reason to break a rule? What happens when adults do not agree with our decision?
 - Did Eve have a good enough reason to break the rule? Adam?
- Ask students if there was a time that there was rule that was preventative – Like in the story where the commandment goes from don't eat to don't even touch? Why might adults make rules that could be broken (are “unnecessary”) in order to ensure that something else happens?
 - Example: No TV until homework is done (If there's time for 1 hour of homework and 1 hour of TV, why does the order matter?)
 - Ex. Younger kids have to stay out of the kitchen when the oven is open – They would be perfectly safe in some areas of the kitchen, but lest they wander near the hot oven.
 - Relate to the notion of “Fences around the Torah” – some things are *so* important that we need to be really careful so we make extra barriers. Our tradition sometimes felt this way about the laws given in the Torah. Yet, it can backfire (Well if I can touch the tree, I can eat from it...). What are your thoughts on this idea?

70-85	Create <i>Brit Kehilah</i>	<i>Brit Kehilah</i>
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Materials: Board or big piece of paper, Poster board, markers

- We've been doing a lot of talking about rules today, and we have now spent enough time together to be a community. We are going to commit to the rules that we, as a class, can follow throughout the year.
 - Refer to the notion of “brit” – God made a covenant, a brit, with our ancestors, whereby if they followed God, God would bless them. We are going to make a

brit among ourselves. If we follow it, we grow in holiness and will earn some tangible rewards too. If we don't follow it, there are consequences.

- Brainstorm a list of potential rules. Allow think time. Write everything. Encourage students to frame things positively (Listen to others instead of Don't interrupt)
- If there are "obvious" things missing from the list, ask questions to guide students towards those areas (How should we treat each other?)
- Assuming the list is long – asks students to categorize different things into "headings" (Be respectful. Pay attention, instead of specific actions).
- If time – Allow students to begin to create a final draft – make it colorful and unique, but still readable. Leave room for everyone to sign. Depending on the length of the list, it may be helpful to include examples under big headings to help remind students what being respectful means.
- Wrap-Up: Next time we will brainstorm consequences to breaking the *brit kehillah*.

80-90	Recap & Homework		
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- Check for understanding – Ask students to share one thing they learned from today's session or one question they still have about today's session.
- Homework:
 - Younger students – Create three "journal" entries of an experience following or breaking a rule. Depending on age/ability, this may be written, drawn, photographed, etc.
 - Older students – Make note of any time (up to about 3-5) that you disagreed with an adults rule or judgment. Why did you disagree? What did you do? What happened as a result? Can breaking a rule be a positive action? When/Why?

Abridged Genesis 2:4-3:24 – Adam & Eve

And What Was That Rule Again?

Translation from the Women's Torah Commentary

[illegible]

תֵּאָכַל יִי וְיִמָּעַץ, *Knowle
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may
not eat,
for the
moment
you eat
of it
you*

יָמוּת אֵל עֵל, מָנוּ: י, יָמוּת יָמוּת -- *shall be doomed to die."*

תָּמָּה כִּי כִּי כִּי כִּי
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תֹּמָה מוֹת.

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אֱלֹהִים, אֱלֹהִים

כִּי-הוּא

כִּי-הוּא

כִּי-הוּא, כִּי-הוּא

כִּי-הוּא, כִּי-הוּא

18 Then God YHWH considered, "It is not good that the man be alone – I will make him a help-mate." ... **21** Then,

throwing the man into a profound slumber, so that he slept,

Go YHWH took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh in

וְהָיָה כִּי-הוּא, כִּי-הוּא
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כִּי-הוּא, כִּי-הוּא
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כִּי-הוּא, כִּי-הוּא

that place. **22** Now God YHWH built up the rib taken from

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the man into a woman, and brought her to the man, ...

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כִּי-הוּא, כִּי-הוּא

כִּי-הוּא, כִּי-הוּא

25 Now the two of them were naked, the man and his wife,

כִּי-הוּא, כִּי-הוּא

כִּי-הוּא, כִּי-הוּא

כִּי-הוּא, כִּי-הוּא

and they were not ashamed. **3:1** Of all the wild animals that

כִּי-הוּא, כִּי-הוּא

כִּי-הוּא, כִּי-הוּא

כִּי-הוּא, כִּי-הוּא

God YHWH made, the serpent was the most cunning. *It said*

כִּי-הוּא

כִּי-הוּא, כִּי-הוּא

כִּי-הוּא, כִּי-הוּא

כִּי-הוּא, כִּי-הוּא

to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You may not eat of any

כִּי-הוּא, כִּי-הוּא

כִּי-הוּא, כִּי-הוּא

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 אֱלֹהִים, יְיָ
 יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ הֵן, אֵל-

any tree in the Garden we may eat the fruit, 3 but God said,

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שׁוֹמֵר לֹא יָמוּת וְכִי יֵאָכֵל מִן הָעֵץ יָמוּת
וְכִי יֵאָכֵל מִן הָעֵץ יִפְתָּח עֵינָיו וְהָיָה כִּי יֵאָכֵל מִן הָעֵץ יִפְתָּח עֵינָיו וְהָיָה

not [even] touch it, or you will die.” 4 But the serpent said to

וְהָיָה כִּי יֵאָכֵל מִן הָעֵץ יִפְתָּח עֵינָיו וְהָיָה
וְהָיָה כִּי יֵאָכֵל מִן הָעֵץ יִפְתָּח עֵינָיו וְהָיָה

the woman, “You most certainly will not die! 5 On the

וְהָיָה כִּי יֵאָכֵל מִן הָעֵץ יִפְתָּח עֵינָיו וְהָיָה
וְהָיָה כִּי יֵאָכֵל מִן הָעֵץ יִפְתָּח עֵינָיו וְהָיָה

contrary: God knows that when you do eat of it, your eyes

וְהָיָה כִּי יֵאָכֵל מִן הָעֵץ יִפְתָּח עֵינָיו וְהָיָה
וְהָיָה כִּי יֵאָכֵל מִן הָעֵץ יִפְתָּח עֵינָיו וְהָיָה

will be opened and you will be like gods, knowing all

וְהָיָה כִּי יֵאָכֵל מִן הָעֵץ יִפְתָּח עֵינָיו וְהָיָה
וְהָיָה כִּי יֵאָכֵל מִן הָעֵץ יִפְתָּח עֵינָיו וְהָיָה

things.” 6 So when the woman saw how good to eat the

עֵץ הַיָּדָבָר יִמּוֹן יָבֵשׁ עֵץ הַחַיִּים
וְעֵץ הַיָּדָבָר יִמּוֹן יָבֵשׁ עֵץ הַחַיִּים

how desirable the insight was that the tree would bring, she took some of its fruit and ate; and then she gave some to her man who was with her, and he ate. **7** Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and, realizing that they were naked, they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves skirts.

8 At the breezy time of the day, they heard the sound of God

YHWH walking about in the Garden; and the man and his
woman hid themselves from God YHWH among the trees. **9**

But God WHWH called out to the man, saying, “Where are you?” **10** He said, “I heard the sound of You in the Garden; I

was afraid because I was naked, so I hid myself.” **11** Then

[God] said, “Who told you that you were naked? *Did you*

eat the fruit of the tree that I forbade you to eat?" **12** *The*

man said, “The woman whom You gave me, she gave me the

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 הָאִשָּׁה אָמַר הֵאֵלָּה זֶה שָׁרָרְתָּה בְּדִי, וְאֵת
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woman, “What is this that you have done?” And the woman

said, “The serpent tricked me into eating it.”

וְאֵת הַנָּחָשׁ אָמַר הֵאֵלָּה זֶה שָׁרָרְתָּה בְּדִי, וְאֵת
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 הָאִשָּׁה אָמַר הֵאֵלָּה זֶה שָׁרָרְתָּה בְּדִי, וְאֵת

14 Then God YHWH said to the serpent, “Because you did this, you –out of all the beasts, all the wild animals – are

יָדָּהּ בְּעָרְפָּךָ וְעָלְתָּ עַל הָאָדָם כַּדָּבָר
 אֲשֶׁר אָמַרְתִּי לְךָ, וְעָלְתָּ עַל הָאָדָם כַּדָּבָר

under a curse: on your belly shall you crawl, eating dust all

הַיָּמִים שְׁעֶיךָ וְעָלְתָּ עַל הָאָדָם כַּדָּבָר
 אֲשֶׁר אָמַרְתִּי לְךָ, וְעָלְתָּ עַל הָאָדָם כַּדָּבָר

the days of your life. 15 And between you and the woman,

וְעָלְתָּ עַל הָאָדָם כַּדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר אָמַרְתִּי לְךָ, וְעָלְתָּ
 עַל הָאָדָם כַּדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר אָמַרְתִּי לְךָ, וְעָלְתָּ
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 עַל הָאָדָם כַּדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר אָמַרְתִּי לְךָ, וְעָלְתָּ
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They shall strike at your head, and you shall strike at their

heel.” **16** And to the woman, [God] said, “I am doubling and

redoubling your toil and your pregnancies; with anguish

shall you bear children, yet your desire shall be for your

man, and he shall rule over you.” **17** Now to the man, [God]

said, “Because you hearkened to your wife and ate of the tree

about which I commanded you, saying, ‘Do not eat of it,’ the

soil is now cursed on your account: Only through anguish

shall you eat of it, as long as you live. **18** It shall sprout

thorns and thistles for you, when you would eat the plants of

the field! **19** By the sweat of your brow shall you eat bread,

till you return to the earth – that earth you were taken from;

עָפָר

for dust
you are,
and to dust
you shall
return.”

Lesson Plan 6: Cain & Abel, Part 1, Genesis 4-5

Potential Value(s):

- Generosity
- Self-Control

Potential Key Terms/Concepts:

- Midrash
- Offering v. Sacrifice
- Sibling Rivalry
- *Yetzer Hatov/Hara*

Potential Homework/Activities

- Reflect on what Cain did “wrong” – Why was his offering not accepted but Abel’s was
- Examine ways in which we can control our emotions
- Act out giving a gift (offering, sacrifice) freely versus begrudgingly – how does it feel to receive such a gift?
- Work on (or plan) a Tikkun Olam project
- Moral dilemma:

Value

Self-Control & Generosity

Context

Students should now be familiar with classroom routine and might be demonstrating greater reflection in their work as they become more comfortable. This lesson will introduce Cain & Abel through the lens of generosity and giving freely, with an eye towards self-control. Self-control helps you express your anger in non-lethal ways. The biblical story discusses murder, the facilitator should adapt the lesson to be sensitive to the children’s needs and abilities. The Tikkun Olam project that is started as part of this unit might be continued into the next unit, or this unit might be extended beyond two sessions.

Core Concepts

- Abel gives more freely and generously while Cain apparently gives the bare minimum.
- Cain is driven only by his emotions. When do we rely on emotions and when do we need to reign them in?
- The emotions and intentions behind the characters’ actions affects how their gifts are accepted.

Lesson Objectives

- Students will relate the story of Cain & Abel to their own lives.
- Students will articulate the relationship between emotion/intention and action
- Students will brainstorm ways they can make a difference in the community by being generous

Overview

Time	Goal	Lower Grades	Upper Grades
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00-15	Community	Morning Meeting	
15-40	Relate/Articulate	Molding faces	Study Biblical Text
40-45	Relate	Listen to Story	Share Story
45-70		Match faces to characters	Intentions
70-85	Brainstorm	Brainstorm ideas for a school Tikkun Olam project	
80-90	Recap & Homework		
	Homework:	Create 3 “journal” entries of controlling emotions	Set an intention each day

Potential Homework for Parents

Study the Biblical text together in groups. This text is particularly problematic as it is very terse and does not explain in much detail the emotion or intentions of the characters. You might want to consider these additional Midrashim and ancient interpreters on the passage – What questions are they answering about the Biblical text? Do you agree with them? Would you say something else?

- And it came to pass after some days that Cain brought to the Lord an offering of the fruit of the ground.” (Gen 4:3). There are here two indictments of this self-lover [Cain]. One is that he made an offering to God “after some days” and not right away; the other that it was “of the fruit” but not “of the first fruit.” (Philo, The Sacrifices of Cain and Abel 52)
- He [Cain] killed Abel with a stone. (Jubilees 4:31)
- [After the incident of the sacrifices] Cain said to his brother Abel, “Come, let us both go out into the field.” And it came to pass that when they had gone into the field Cain cried out to Abel, “It is my view that the world was not created with divine love and is not arranged in keeping with people’s good deeds, but justice is corrupted – for why else was your sacrifice accepted with favor and mine not?” Able said to Cain: “No it is my view that the world was indeed created with divine love and is altogether arranged in keeping with people’s good deeds. But it was because my deeds have been better than yours that my sacrifice was accepted with favor and your sacrifice was not.” (Targum Neophyti Gen 4:8)

Detailed Agenda

00-15	Community	Morning Meeting
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All students are together with the teacher. Parents, might use this time to review their skit for the younger students or study the above text.

- Greet students
- Check-in – simchas and sorrows (each student can share a brief piece of personal news)
- Blessing for study

- Moral dilemma posed to students: You are shopping for a gift for someone and have twenty dollars in your pocket. You find something you want to buy for yourself, but you cannot get the gift your friend really wants and the thing for yourself, you can get a smaller gift and the thing for yourself – what do you buy?
 - Remind all students that there is no “correct” answer and they should be thoughtful and deliberate in their responses.
 - Have older students sit in chevruta and discuss for a couple minutes and then write down the tensions in the situation and their response and reasoning in their journals.
 - Have younger students sit with the teacher and discuss as a group. Help students think about the consequences of various actions.

15-40	Relate/Articulate	Molding faces	Study Biblical Text
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YOUNGER STUDENTS

Materials: Playdough (1 or 2 cans per student), Plates

- Give each student a can or two of Playdough (or similar modelling compound for gluten allergies)
- Have students verbally brainstorm a list of common emotions, have each student select 1 or 2 from the list (preferably without overlap) and make that face out of Playdough, on their plates or 3-D, whichever they choose/are able.
- Parents should guide students where necessary to help differentiate the faces – Try having a student have their friend or an adult make the face they are creating to have a visual example
- IF extra time: You might ask students how they react to these different faces – what if they walked in a room and a friend were making them? Their parent? A teacher?
- Do not clean up the Playdough – keep the faces

OLDER STUDENTS

Materials: Handout

- Study the Biblical text: Gen 4:1-16
- Guiding Questions
 - What happens in the story?
 - What do you imagine Cain & Abel’s life was like?
 - Why might God have preferred one offering/gift over the other?
 - What does God attempt to do after Cain’s offering is rejected?
 - What is Cain’s response? Why? What is wrong with his response? *** Address the murder to the level appropriate with the group, have students discuss explicitly how and if this part of the story will be included in their retelling, or if they will end the story with offerings and God’s response to Cain.
 - What is missing from the text that we would normally like in a story?

- Have students work in pairs to act out the story in a skit. The only rule is that they must follow the script of the biblical story. Make sure each student has a chance and encourage students to “redo” the skit in different ways multiple times, as time permits – after each skit consider the following questions for reflection
 - What was added to the story?
 - What was still left untold?
 - What emotions did the actors put into the story?
 - What intentions did the characters have?
- Pick which skit to use to tell the story to the younger students

40-45	Relate	Listen to Story	Share Story
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- Perform skit for younger students with the preface that it diverges from the biblical story a bit

45-70		Match faces to characters	Intentions
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YOUNGER STUDENTS:

Materials: “Story version” of the text

- Return to your faces – which faces would you put with each character at key parts of the story?
 - Read the story pausing at various parts and ask students to point to the face that best matches the characters. Students do not have to agree. Have them explain why they selected the face/emotion that they did.
 - What was Cain’s face like when he gave his gift to God?
 - Have students pretend to give a gift (random object in room) to another student with different “faces” – How does the recipient feel about the gift?
 - Do you think that it might have been *how* Cain gave his gift that mattered more than *what* Cain gave?
 - How do you feel when giving gifts?
 - *** Addressing the murder:
 - If students are too young or it is deemed inappropriate by the parents, have older students stop the story after the offerings, but before the scene in the field.
 - Cain’s response
 - What does Cain do after his gift is not accepted?
 - Is this appropriate?
 - Explain that it is never right to physically hurt someone because you are upset – What is a better way that Cain might have treated to his brother?

- Has there ever been a time that maybe you broke something or said something really mean because you were upset? [Allow students to give examples]
- What are some better ways we can address our feelings – that don't involve physically hurting someone or something, or even saying something mean?
- Reiterate that Cain's behavior was *wrong* and he is severely punished for what he does. The Bible teaches us real life stories – which sometimes means that not everyone in the Bible is perfect. We can learn from their (and our own) mistakes!

OLDER STUDENTS:

Materials: Trash Can, Soft Ball

- Intentions are Everything:
 - We do things with good, bad or other intentions all the time. Let's explore how intentions can affect our behavior
 - Set up the trash can at a slightly challenging distance, and use some kind of marker (tile on floor, etc.) as a "throw line" – have students take turns making shots
 - Round 1 Intention: Make the Basket
 - Round 2 Intention: Make a Cool Shot
 - Round 3 Intention: Be as Silly as Possible (while still being safe)
 - Which round of baskets did we make the most baskets (as a class) – Why do you think this was? How did our intention change the "success" of our behavior?
 - How do you think intention changes your own behavior in other situations?
 - Correcting a friend's mistake (a teacher's mistake?), e.g. '
 - How might Cain have addressed his situation with a better intentions? What intentions can we try to set for ourselves during the day that will help us act better than Cain did in this story?

70-85	Brainstorm	Brainstorm ideas for a school Tikkun Olam project
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- We talked a lot today about emotions and intentions – in relation to Cain and Abel's gifts to God.
- What are some ways that we can emit good intentions and emotions into the world? [Lead students toward Tikkun Olam if possible], or run with their own ideas
- Tikkun Olam is repairing the world – It is our responsibility to make the world a better place – and by doing so – we can bring positive emotions to others. However – we can fulfil this responsibility with Cain's intentions – of doing the minimum or doing it unhappily, or with Abel's intentions – doing more and doing it gladly. Which do you think God will "accept" more readily? [Being like Abel]

- What are some things that we could do as a class to help out the community around us?

80-90	Recap & Homework		
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- Have students share one idea, insight or question they have on the basis of the lesson
- Homework:
 - Younger students: Pay attention to your emotions. Write down (talk to your parents over breakfast, draw a picture, etc.) how you feel each morning. Before you go to bed, do the same. Discuss in next session how our feelings at the beginning of the day might have affected how we acted during that day/felt at the end of the day.
 - Older students: Begin each day by setting an “intention” for the day – Start simple (be patient with X in X class, etc.), if you are successful – extend the scope of your intention. Write 3 journal entries reflecting on your intentions, why you set them, your perceived success/progress, etc.
 - Parents – Do the same as your students

Genesis 4:1-4:16 – Cain & Abel

You Got Made and Did What...?

Translation from the Women's Torah Commentary

<p>וַיִּהְיֶה כֹּה־עַד וַיִּהְיֶה אִתָּהּ; וַתַּהַר, וַתֵּלֶד בֶּן־אָדָם. וַתֹּאמֶר, אֲדָמָה - אֲדָמָה, אֲתָתִי יֵשׁ - אֲתָתִי.</p>	<p>4:1 The man now was intimate with his wife; she became pregnant and gave birth to Cain, saying, “Both I and YHWH</p>
<p>בָּרְאוּ אִתָּתִי אִישׁ. וַתִּשָּׁרָץ, וַתֵּלֶד שֵׁנִי, אָבֶל. וַיִּהְיֶה אָבֶל, רֹעֵה צֹאן, וְכַיִן, חֹדֵר אֲדָמָה.</p>	<p>have made a man.” 2 She then continued, giving birth to his brother Abel. Abel became a shepherd, while Cain tilled the</p>
<p>אֲדָמָה.</p>	<p>soil.</p>
<p>וַיְהִי יוֹם, וַיָּבֵא כַּיִן, מִפְּרִי אֲדָמָה, וַיִּזְרֹק לַיהוָה. וְאָבֶל, מִפְּרִי צֹאן, וַיִּזְרֹק לַיהוָה.</p>	<p>3 [One day,] in the course of time, Cain brought some of his harvest as an offering to YHWH, 4 and Abel, too, brought</p>
<p>וַיִּזְרֹק אָבֶל, מִפְּרִי צֹאן, וַיִּזְרֹק לַיהוָה. וַיִּזְרֹק כַּיִן, מִפְּרִי אֲדָמָה, וַיִּזְרֹק לַיהוָה.</p>	<p>[an offering] from among the choice lambs of his flock and</p>
<p>וַיִּזְרֹק אָבֶל, מִפְּרִי צֹאן, וַיִּזְרֹק לַיהוָה. וַיִּזְרֹק כַּיִן, מִפְּרִי אֲדָמָה, וַיִּזְרֹק לַיהוָה.</p>	<p>their fattest parts. YHWH approved Abel and his offering, 5</p>
<p>וַיִּזְרֹק אָבֶל, מִפְּרִי צֹאן, וַיִּזְרֹק לַיהוָה. וַיִּזְרֹק כַּיִן, מִפְּרִי אֲדָמָה, וַיִּזְרֹק לַיהוָה.</p>	<p>but did not approve Cain and his offering. Cain was filled</p>
<p>וַיִּזְרֹק אָבֶל, מִפְּרִי צֹאן, וַיִּזְרֹק לַיהוָה. וַיִּזְרֹק כַּיִן, מִפְּרִי אֲדָמָה, וַיִּזְרֹק לַיהוָה.</p>	<p>with rage; his face fell. 6 YHWH then said to Cain, “Why are</p>
<p>וַיִּזְרֹק אָבֶל, מִפְּרִי צֹאן, וַיִּזְרֹק לַיהוָה. וַיִּזְרֹק כַּיִן, מִפְּרִי אֲדָמָה, וַיִּזְרֹק לַיהוָה.</p>	<p>you so angry? Why your fallen face? Would you not do well</p>
<p>וַיִּזְרֹק אָבֶל, מִפְּרִי צֹאן, וַיִּזְרֹק לַיהוָה. וַיִּזְרֹק כַּיִן, מִפְּרִי אֲדָמָה, וַיִּזְרֹק לַיהוָה.</p>	<p>to lift it? For if you do not do well – sin is a demon at the</p>
<p>וַיִּזְרֹק אָבֶל, מִפְּרִי צֹאן, וַיִּזְרֹק לַיהוָה. וַיִּזְרֹק כַּיִן, מִפְּרִי אֲדָמָה, וַיִּזְרֹק לַיהוָה.</p>	<p>door; you are the one it craves, and yet you can govern it.”</p>

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 בְּנֵי אֶבְרָם

8 Cain now thought about his brother Abel... Then, when they were in the field, Cain turned on his brother Abel and killed

him. 9 Then YHWH said to Cain, “Where is your brother

Abel?” And he replied, “How should I know; am I my

brother’s keeper?” 10 And [God] said, “What have you

done? Your brother’s blood is shrieking to Me from the

ground! 11 Now you are cursed by this very soil, which has

opened its mouth to receive your brother’s blood from your

hands. 12 When you till the soil, no longer shall it give you

its yield. You shall become a rootless wanderer on the earth.”

13 Cain then said to YHWH, “My punishment is too heavy

to bear! 14 Seeing as now You have expelled me from the

face of the soil and I must hide from Your face, I am become

a rootless wanderer on the earth, and anyone who finds me

might kill me!” 15 “Not so,” said YHWH. “Should anyone

kill you, I will not be angry with him; but if you do not do right,

sin is crouching at the door; it desires to have you, but you must master it.

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Cain a sign, that none who came upon him would kill him.

16 Cain then went away from before YHWH, and settled in

Lesson Plan 9: Abraham & Sarah, Genesis 18

Value

Hospitality/Welcoming Guests – הכנסת אורחים

Context

Students should be familiar with the rituals of the class (opening and concluding) by this point and the expectation of homework is set and reinforced. This lesson will comprise the introductory lesson for the unit, with the following lesson spent engaging with the value on a deeper level.

Core Concepts

- Hospitality is a core value of Judaism, taught to us by Abraham
- There are many different types of actions that we can perform that demonstrate hospitality
- Part of being able to welcome a guest is being able to understand what the guest might be feeling.

Lesson Objectives

- Introduce the core value of hospitality
- Uncover Judaism's example of welcoming guests by meeting our biblical hero
- Identify the value to examples in our own lives
- Create a plan to bring hospitality into our week

Overview

Time	Goal	Lower Grades	Upper Grades
00-15	Build Community/ Safe space	Participate in morning meeting	
15-40	Introduce value Uncover example	Adults put on a skit, followed by discussion	Read story about Abraham & 3 “men”
40-45	Biblical Story	Listen to story	Share story with lower grades
45-70	Identify examples	Students put on skit for parents	Students share stories
70-85	Create plan	Families make a plan for your family IF only older student – write a personal plan	
80-90	Recap & Homework	Families share plans	
	Homework:	Post a picture or drawing of being welcoming	Post a blog entry reflecting on the success of their plan

Homework for parents:

Have parents read and discuss the texts the older students will be looking at, possibly with the addition of the following text, in order to inform their own learning on the topic. If the previous lesson allows, they might study in a group then, or review the texts with a partner as homework.

The Maharal, Pathways of the World Chapter. 4

One welcomes guests because one honors the human who was created in the image of God, and this is considered to be a great thing, like rising early to go to the Beit Midrash which one does to honor the Torah.

However, when Rav Dimi says that welcoming guests is greater than rising early to the Beit Midrash, he understands it the following way: Rising early to study Torah is the way we honor Torah, but when you welcome a guest it is tantamount to honoring God. For when one brings a guest into their home and honors him because he was created in the image of God, then it is as if they are honoring the Divine presence Herself, which is greater than honoring the Torah. Know that these statements only refer to welcoming guests who are new faces to one's home.

Remember, however, that Rav said that welcoming guests is even greater than receiving the face of the Divine presence. His statement is consistent, for none can encounter the face of God directly as it is written, "No human may see My face and live." (Exodus 32:20) So, indirect contact cannot be compared to what happens when one welcomes and honors a guest who appears as a new face and the host attaches himself completely to this image of God...

Guiding Questions:

- 1) According to the text, how do the different opinions relate welcoming a guest to the study of Torah? Keep in mind that studying Torah was the center of Rabbinic life.
- 2) The text stipulates that the parallel exists only for “new faces” – Do you agree? Where might they have put welcoming an old friend? Where would you put different guests in the comparison?
- 3) What does it mean to meet a new face as the “image of God” (or even as a direct encounter with God)? What would this look like in your life? In your home?
- 4) How can you help your child see each person as an image of God?

Detailed Agenda

00-15	Build Community/ Safe space	Participate in Morning Meeting	None
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All students are together with the teacher. Parents, might use this time to review their skit for the younger students or study the above text.

- Greet students
- Check-in – simchas and sorrows (each student can share a brief piece of personal news)
- Blessing for study
- Moral dilemma posed to students: At lunch, your friend gets the idea spray paint your school's mascot on your rival school's football field before the big game tomorrow. He

thinks this is a great idea and is going to buy the paint after school. You know he could get in trouble, but it would be a funny prank. Do you say something? If so, to who?

- Remind all students that there is no “correct” answer and they should be thoughtful and deliberate in their responses.
- Have older students sit in chevruta and discuss for a couple minutes and then write down the tensions in the situation and their response and reasoning in their journals.
- Have younger students sit with the teacher and discuss as a group. Help students think about the consequences of various actions.

15-40	Introduce value Uncover Judaism’s example	Adults put on a skit, followed by discussion	Read story about Abraham & 3 “men”	Props for skit, copies of story or Tanakh
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YOUNGER:

- Materials: Props for skits, means for making a list
- Allow the adults (parents, madrichim) to put on a skit (or comparable) as an example for welcoming a guest into their house for dinner (complete with kids if possible). The skit might include greeting the guest at the door, accepting a gift from the guest, introducing them to the rest of the family, giving a tour of the house, etc. There should be several clear examples of good things to do to welcome a guest.
- Review the skit with children – madrichim/parents might ask the following questions:
 - Who were the main characters in the skit?
 - What did the characters do?
 - What value were they presenting [Welcoming guests]
 - Have you done this kind of thing before when you had guests over?
 - If you were the guest, how might you have felt?
 - If you were the family, how might you have felt? Were there things that might be hard to do?
 - How might you have felt if the host did not do [the things they listed]?
- Brainstorm a list on a poster/board of things that we already do to welcome guests

OLDER:

- Materials: Copies of story or Tanakh and texts below
- Students will sit with facilitator and read/discuss the story of Abraham welcoming the three men/angels (Genesis 18:1-15).
- Check for student understanding:
 - What is going on in the text?
 - Who are the major characters in the story?
 - What do they do?
 - What value is presented by the text? [Welcoming guests]
 - How do Abraham and Sarah reflect this value in their own way?
 - What does it mean in the context of the Bible?

- Why is it important for the Bible to show Abraham as a good person?
- What does it mean for us?
 - What is the purpose of inviting guests?
 - Who do we invite as guests? Would you do this for a stranger?
 - What does this text teach us about welcoming guests?
 - What is Abraham and Sarah's "reward"?
 - How do you already act like Abraham in your own life?
 - What of Abraham's behavior would you like to adopt into your life?
- If the students' abilities allow, you might use the following Rashi

<p>At the entrance of the tent: to see whether there were any passersby whom he would bring into his house. — [from B. M. 86b]</p> <p>When the day was hot: (B.M. 86b) The Holy One, blessed be He, hid the sun so as not to trouble him with passerbys, but since He saw that Abraham was troubled that no one was coming, He brought the angels to him in the likeness of men. — [from Gen. Rabbah 48:9, Exod. Rabbah 25:2]</p>	<p>פתח להאָה: לראות אם יש עובר ושב ויכניסם בביתו:</p> <p>כחום מויה: הוציא הקב"ה חמה מגרתיקה שלא להטריחו באורחים, ולפי שראהו מצטער שלא היו אורחים באים, הביא המלאכים עליו בדמות אנשים:</p>
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- Possible guiding questions
 - What does Rashi's first comment add to the story? Why was Abraham sitting outside?
 - In Rashi's second comment, what is going on? How do the God and Abraham react? Does this make Abraham's gesture towards the guests more profound?
- Choose how to present the story to younger students
 - Options might include a skit, telling the story, using puppets, making illustrations, etc.

40-45	Biblical Hero	Listen to story	Share story with lower grades	None
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- Have the older students present the biblical story to the younger students on the basis of their study.

45-70	Identify examples	Students put on skit for parents	Students share stories	None
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YOUNGER:

- Have younger students identify how Abraham acted like their parents in the parents' skit.
- Have younger students act out examples of how to welcome new members/guests, where they switch who is the newbie. Begin by reenacting times they have already welcomed guests, and continue with new examples of things they could do in the future.

- 1. Welcoming a new student into their class at school
- 2. Their new friend is coming over to play (and doesn't want to play the same game as you)
- 3. They see someone new at synagogue that they don't know
- Have students identify good things in their skits

OLDER:

- For additional discussion:
 - B. Shabbat 127b:
 - Mishnah: One is allowed to remove four or five large bundles of straw or wheat in order to make room for guests on Shabbat and to prevent people from leaving the learning community on Shabbat because of being overcrowded.
 - Gemara: Rabbi Yochanan said, "Welcoming guests is as great as rising early to go to the Beit Midrash (communal study hall), as it is taught in the Mishnah: "In order to make room for guests on Shabbat and to prevent people from leaving the Beit Midrash." Rabbi Dimi from Nahardea said, "Welcoming guests is greater, because the Mishnah teaches it first and then talks about making room for students."
 - Guiding Questions
 - What do we know about the Rabbis, studying and Shabbat? [they like to study and the action given would not be acceptable on Shabbat, which is very important]
 - So what does this passage teach us about hospitality?
 - What assumptions are they making about Shabbat?
 - What is the relationship between Shabbat and hospitality?
- Have older students share a story of times when they were welcomed by a group (or weren't welcomed by a group).
 - How did this make them feel?
 - What would they have done differently if they were the one doing the welcoming?

70-85	Create plan	Families make a plan for your family IF only older student – write a personal plan	None
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FAMILIES WORKING TOGETHER

- Make a plan for how you might be able to welcome a guest into your house, or in another setting (preferably that could be used prior to the following session)
- Consider:
 - How have we acted like Abraham in the past? What behaviors can we learn from Abraham?

- How can we make our guest feel most comfortable?
- How can we balance our own needs with our guest's needs?

85-90	Recap & Homework	Review, questions, comments		
	Homework:	Post a picture or drawing of being welcoming	Post a blog entry reflecting on the success of their plan	

- Have a few minutes for clarifications, questions, final comments
- Give homework assignment (verbal or written)
- Closing: share (verbal or written) one thing you are taking away about hospitality that you learned today

Genesis 18:1-18:15 – Abraham & Sarah

Who is at the Door?

Translation from the Women's Torah Commentary

וְהָאֵלֹהִים הֵיכָלָם יֹהֵא, וְיִנִּי יֵרָא; וְהָאֵלֹהִים הֵיכָלָם יֹהֵא, וְיִנִּי יֵרָא; וְהָאֵלֹהִים הֵיכָלָם יֹהֵא, וְיִנִּי יֵרָא;	1 YHWH appeared to him [Abraham] at the oaks of Mamre
וְהָאֵלֹהִים הֵיכָלָם יֹהֵא, וְיִנִּי יֵרָא; וְהָאֵלֹהִים הֵיכָלָם יֹהֵא, וְיִנִּי יֵרָא;	
וְהָאֵלֹהִים הֵיכָלָם יֹהֵא, וְיִנִּי יֵרָא; וְהָאֵלֹהִים הֵיכָלָם יֹהֵא, וְיִנִּי יֵרָא;	as he was sitting at the entrance of the tent at about the hottest
וְהָאֵלֹהִים הֵיכָלָם יֹהֵא, וְיִנִּי יֵרָא; וְהָאֵלֹהִים הֵיכָלָם יֹהֵא, וְיִנִּי יֵרָא;	time of the day. 2 Looking up, he saw: lo—Three men
וְהָאֵלֹהִים הֵיכָלָם יֹהֵא, וְיִנִּי יֵרָא; וְהָאֵלֹהִים הֵיכָלָם יֹהֵא, וְיִנִּי יֵרָא;	
וְהָאֵלֹהִים הֵיכָלָם יֹהֵא, וְיִנִּי יֵרָא; וְהָאֵלֹהִים הֵיכָלָם יֹהֵא, וְיִנִּי יֵרָא;	standing opposite him! Seeing [them], he ran from the
וְהָאֵלֹהִים הֵיכָלָם יֹהֵא, וְיִנִּי יֵרָא; וְהָאֵלֹהִים הֵיכָלָם יֹהֵא, וְיִנִּי יֵרָא;	
וְהָאֵלֹהִים הֵיכָלָם יֹהֵא, וְיִנִּי יֵרָא; וְהָאֵלֹהִים הֵיכָלָם יֹהֵא, וְיִנִּי יֵרָא;	entrance of the tent to meet them, and, bowing down to the
וְהָאֵלֹהִים הֵיכָלָם יֹהֵא, וְיִנִּי יֵרָא; וְהָאֵלֹהִים הֵיכָלָם יֹהֵא, וְיִנִּי יֵרָא;	
וְהָאֵלֹהִים הֵיכָלָם יֹהֵא, וְיִנִּי יֵרָא; וְהָאֵלֹהִים הֵיכָלָם יֹהֵא, וְיִנִּי יֵרָא;	ground, 3 he said, “My lords, if I have found favor in your
וְהָאֵלֹהִים הֵיכָלָם יֹהֵא, וְיִנִּי יֵרָא; וְהָאֵלֹהִים הֵיכָלָם יֹהֵא, וְיִנִּי יֵרָא;	
וְהָאֵלֹהִים הֵיכָלָם יֹהֵא, וְיִנִּי יֵרָא; וְהָאֵלֹהִים הֵיכָלָם יֹהֵא, וְיִנִּי יֵרָא;	sight, please do not pass your servant by. 4 Let a little water
וְהָאֵלֹהִים הֵיכָלָם יֹהֵא, וְיִנִּי יֵרָא; וְהָאֵלֹהִים הֵיכָלָם יֹהֵא, וְיִנִּי יֵרָא;	
וְהָאֵלֹהִים הֵיכָלָם יֹהֵא, וְיִנִּי יֵרָא; וְהָאֵלֹהִים הֵיכָלָם יֹהֵא, וְיִנִּי יֵרָא;	be brought; then wash your feet and recline under a tree, 5 and
וְהָאֵלֹהִים הֵיכָלָם יֹהֵא, וְיִנִּי יֵרָא; וְהָאֵלֹהִים הֵיכָלָם יֹהֵא, וְיִנִּי יֵרָא;	
וְהָאֵלֹהִים הֵיכָלָם יֹהֵא, וְיִנִּי יֵרָא; וְהָאֵלֹהִים הֵיכָלָם יֹהֵא, וְיִנִּי יֵרָא;	let me bring a bit of bread and you can restore yourselves.
וְהָאֵלֹהִים הֵיכָלָם יֹהֵא, וְיִנִּי יֵרָא; וְהָאֵלֹהִים הֵיכָלָם יֹהֵא, וְיִנִּי יֵרָא;	
וְהָאֵלֹהִים הֵיכָלָם יֹהֵא, וְיִנִּי יֵרָא; וְהָאֵלֹהִים הֵיכָלָם יֹהֵא, וְיִנִּי יֵרָא;	Then you can go on – now that you have come across your
וְהָאֵלֹהִים הֵיכָלָם יֹהֵא, וְיִנִּי יֵרָא; וְהָאֵלֹהִים הֵיכָלָם יֹהֵא, וְיִנִּי יֵרָא;	
וְהָאֵלֹהִים הֵיכָלָם יֹהֵא, וְיִנִּי יֵרָא; וְהָאֵלֹהִים הֵיכָלָם יֹהֵא, וְיִנִּי יֵרָא;	servant.” And they responded: “Very well, do as you
וְהָאֵלֹהִים הֵיכָלָם יֹהֵא, וְיִנִּי יֵרָא; וְהָאֵלֹהִים הֵיכָלָם יֹהֵא, וְיִנִּי יֵרָא;	
וְהָאֵלֹהִים הֵיכָלָם יֹהֵא, וְיִנִּי יֵרָא; וְהָאֵלֹהִים הֵיכָלָם יֹהֵא, וְיִנִּי יֵרָא;	propose.”
וְהָאֵלֹהִים הֵיכָלָם יֹהֵא, וְיִנִּי יֵרָא; וְהָאֵלֹהִים הֵיכָלָם יֹהֵא, וְיִנִּי יֵרָא;	
וְהָאֵלֹהִים הֵיכָלָם יֹהֵא, וְיִנִּי יֵרָא; וְהָאֵלֹהִים הֵיכָלָם יֹהֵא, וְיִנִּי יֵרָא;	וְהָאֵלֹהִים הֵיכָלָם יֹהֵא, וְיִנִּי יֵרָא; וְהָאֵלֹהִים הֵיכָלָם יֹהֵא, וְיִנִּי יֵרָא;

“Hurry, knead three measures of wheat flour and bake some
 עֵס עֵס עֵס. זֶה סֵם סַל-סֵם

פֿאַר אַ פֿאַרשטאַנדן - פֿאַר אַ פֿאַרשטאַנדן
 פֿאַר אַ פֿאַרשטאַנדן - פֿאַר אַ פֿאַרשטאַנדן

וַיַּבֶּן-יְהוָה יָדָיו בְּעֵבֶר וּבְאֵרֶם וַיַּחֲזֵק בְּחֵמָה, who quickly prepared it. **8** He took sour milk and [sweet] milk

לְיָמֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ יוֹסֵף
אֲשֶׁר הָיוּ לְיָמֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ

[illegible]

פֶּן אָפּ מַעַל
 וְנִשְׁכַּח
 ה'

him. 11 Abraham and Sarah were old, well advanced in years;
 יְתוֹנֶהֱ אֲבְרָהָם וְסָרָה יָמָם
 אֲבְרָהָם וְסָרָה יָמָם

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