

Being Created in the Image of God

בצלם אלוקים



Category of Activity	Peulat Shabbat
Grade Level	9th-11th Grades
Time	Forty-five minutes - One Hour
Method	Group Discussion, Text Analysis.
Size of Group	Eidah divided into Groups of 12-15 in each Group
Keywords	Image of God, Holiness, Holiness of the Body

GOALS

1. The campers will discuss the meaning of the idea "the image of God".
2. The campers will discuss the practical implications of being created in the image of God.

BACKGROUND

A significant part of our Jewish way of life including customs, Mitzvot, moral standards and ritual behaviors derives from the concept that we, human beings, are created in the image of God. The question is what, if anything, does this concept demand of us on a practical level? How can we maintain behavioral norms so as to maintain this sense of the of the image of God being a unique part of each of us?

These questions are central to Judaism as well as other faiths. In this program, we will discuss the significance of the idea that we are created in the image of God and the practical implications of that idea.

PLACE

1. A large indoor location to meet as an Eidah and enough rooms for small group discussions.
2. An outdoor location large enough for the Eidah to meet and a large enough area to separate into small groups for discussions. Preparation of Supplies and Resources One copy of the sources and discussion questions for each

PREPARATION OF SUPPLIES AND RESOURCES

One copy of the sources and discussion questions for each participant.

STAFF PREPARATION

1. The program leader should review the ideas and texts in this program with a senior education staff member so that he/she will be able to explain and train the Eidah staff.
2. The program leader should explain the program and its goals to the Eidah staff several days before the scheduled program date.
3. The program leader should review the staff responsibilities during the program, such as leading the small group discussion, helping campers stay focused on the discussion issues.
4. The program leader should make sure that the content ideas and discussion questions are clear to the Eidah staff by reviewing each step of the program and answering any questions.

SETUP PREPARATION

NONE

METHODOLOGY AND DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM

Shabbat Afternoon - Study of Texts, Discussions - (Forty-five - sixty minutes).

1. The program leader should introduce the program and its goals to the Eidah. The program leader should divide the campers into groups of 12-15 per group, sending each group to a designated discussion area.
2. The discussion leader should begin with text #1. A camper should read each text. After the text is read, the discussion leader should clarify that everyone understood the content of the text.

3. The program leader should lead a discussion based on this text, using the discussion questions following each text (See - Attachment - Resource Texts).

ATTACHMENTS- RESOURCE
TEXTS AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Text #1

וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים הִימָּנָה אָדָם בְּצַלְמֵנוּ בְּדְמוּתֵנוּ וְיָרְדוּ בְדִגְתַּי הַיָּם וּבְעוֹף
הַשָּׁמַיִם וּבַבְּהֵמָה וּבְכָל הָאָרֶץ וּבְכָל הַרְמֵשׂ הָרֶמֶשׂ עַל הָאָרֶץ:
וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הָאָדָם בְּצַלְמוֹ בְּצַלְמֵ אֱלֹהִים בָּרָא אֶת הָאָדָם בְּרָא אֶת
סֹפֵר בְּרֵאשִׁית פֶּרֶק א:כז

And God said "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. They shall rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, the cattle, the whole earth, and all the creeping things that creep on the earth". And God created man in his image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them". Genesis - 1:26-27

Discussion Questions

1. How do each of you understand the phrase "in our image" as it appears in the first line of this text?
2. How should the idea that we are created in the image of God affect our behavior as human beings? Extending help to others?

Text #2

(ה) מָה אֱנוֹשׁ בִּי תִזְכְּרֶנּוּ וּבְנֵי אָדָם בִּי תִפְקְדֶנּוּ:
(ו) וּתְחַסְּרֶנּוּ מַעֲטֵי מְאֹל הַיָּם וּכְבוֹד וְקִדְוָה תִּעֲשֶׂרְהוּ:
(ז) תִּמְשִׁלֶהוּ בְּמַעֲשֵׂי יָדֶיךָ כִּי לֹא שִׁמְתָה תַחַת רַגְלֶיךָ:
(ח) צִגָה וְאַלְפִים בָּלֵם וְגַם בְּהֵמוֹת שָׂדֵי:
(ט) צִפּוֹר שָׁמַיִם וְדָגֵי הַיָּם עֹבְרֵי אֲרָחוֹת יָמַיִם:
(י) יְהוָה אֱדַבְּרֵנּוּ מָה אֲדִיר שְׁמֶךָ בְּכָל הָאָרֶץ:
סֹפֵר תְּהִלִּים פֶּרֶק ח

What is man that you have been mindful of him,
Mortal man that you have taken note of him,
That you made him a little less than divine,
And adorned him with glory and majesty,
You have made him master over your handiwork,
Laying the world at his feet,
Sheep and oxen, all of them,
And wild beasts too,
The birds of the heavens, the fish of the sea,
Whatever travels the paths of the seas.
Psalms 8: 5-10

Discussion Questions

The verse from the Psalms argues that a human is a "little less than divine".

- a. According to the Psalmist, what does this verse say about us?
- b. How can we explain the phenomenon that people sometimes behave in animal like fashion (e.g. Nazis, terrorists, violent criminals)?

Text #3

When God created the first human, He took him and led him all around the trees of the Garden of Eden, and said to him: Behold My Works, how beautiful, how splendid they are. All that I have created, I created for your sake. Take care that you do not become corrupt and thus destroy My world. For once you become corrupt, there is no one after you to repair it". Ecclesiastics Rabbah 7:13

Discussion Question

This text suggests that it is forbidden to ruin God's creation because there may be no one to repair it after we are gone.

What are examples of how we ruin God's creations without thinking about the future consequences?

Additional texts and discussion questions :

וְשָׂרֵט לְנֶפֶשׁ לֹא תִתֵּן בְּבָשָׂרְכֶם וְכִתְּבֵת קַעֲקֹעַ לֹא תִתֵּן בְּכֶם אֲנִי יְהוָה
ספר ויקרא פרק י"ט:כח

"You shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor print any marks upon you".
Leviticus 19:28

Question:

Does the prohibition against injuring the body with a tattoo or body piercing make sense in view of the fact that we have been created in the image of God?

קדושים תהיו כי קדוש אני יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי הַיָּבִים:
ספר ויקרא פרק י"ט:ב

"You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy".
Leviticus 19:2

Questions:

1. Is there a connection between the need to maintain the sacredness of the body, and the fact that we have been created in God's image?
2. Based on these verses, what can we say about the use of alcohol, hallucinogens and any other kinds of elements that might injure the body or the soul?

This program was developed by SimRon Interactive Programming