

## Solelim Hunger Banquet - V'Achalta V'Savatah Shabbat July 27th, 2013

Assembled by Vad Shabbat Solelim, with help from the NFTY website

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Program Type: Peulat Shabbat

Starting at 5:30, 45 minutes long

Groups: Edah (campers + staff) has been pre-organized into low-income, middle-income and high-income groups

We will be simulating the economic divisions in our world and how they impact hunger through a "banquet" and discussion connected to the parsha/sukkot through the words "veachalta vesavata," and how after the harvest on sukkot we give a portion to the poor.

**Overall Goal:** Give the campers an empathy-based understanding of world hunger and how our Judaism can connect us to this issue.

### **Supplies Needed:**

Chadar is providing rice and beans and cake

Plates

Silverware

5 benches from the moadon need to be brought to the migrash by the gan

### **Setup:**

Location - Migrash by the Gan, rain location - Moadon

Low income: seated on the floor

Middle income: benches

High income: picnic tables

### **Staff Prep and Roles:**

Rafi, Penina and Rachel will bring and serve the food/cutlery stuff from the chadar

Aaron, Emily, Marcus, Jonas and Noah will bring benches

Aliza, Melanie, Tamar and Miktzoim will set up picnic tables and work on getting campers to the peula on time while the other staff members set up

During the Peula Roles (handed out on a separate sheet)

### **Instructions for Running the Program:**

- Split up by bunks
- Emily will read who in each bunk will be sitting where. Be sure to not say what income they are, just where they are sitting.

- **(5 minutes)** everyone is seated and served (or not served), (floor gets nothing, benches get rice and beans, tables get cake). eating proceeds
- **(15 minutes)** While everyone is eating staff members in each income group should be asking these discussion questions to the campers around them:
  - Low-Income questions:
    - How does it feel to watch your friends eat while you have nothing?
    - Do you think this is fair?
    - What would be like if this happened every day? If you lived this way? How do you feel about it?
  - Middle-Income questions:
    - How does it feel watching the people with nothing? How does it feel to not have as much as the people with the cake?
    - This happens in real life. Do you think we should do something about it? What could we do? How do you feel about it?
  - High-Income questions:
    - Do you feel like you deserve to have more than the people around you?
    - Do you have the urge to share? To keep the cake for yourself?
    - Do you think it's fair?
    - This happens in real life. How does that make you feel?
- **(25 minutes)** After the 15 minutes are up, Aaron, Emily and Penina will have scripts to ask different people to stand up and share their handouts with their background stories, and will do a variety of other things to provoke the campers to understand.

## SCRIPT

Aaron:

-Raise your hand if you've ever felt like things were unfair for no reason.

-Raise your hand if you thought today's meal was fair.

-Raise your hand if you have ever been hungry.

Penina:

-Today we have created an example of poverty. You may think hunger is about too many people and too little food. Not true. Our rich and bountiful planet makes enough to feed every woman, man, and child on earth. Everyone on earth has the same basic needs. It is only our circumstances--where we live and the culture we are born into--that differ. Each person's place is randomly determined. As each of us walked in the door here today, we chose--at random--your lot. Look around, and you can see that equality and balance don't exist here. While the United States may be one of the wealthiest countries on earth, 30 million Americans do not get enough to eat. Now we would like to introduce you to the three segments of this world.

Emily:

[MOVE NEAR THE HIGH-INCOME GROUP]

If you are sitting over here, you represent the 15 percent of the world's population with a per capita income of \$9,400 or more. You are fortunate enough to be able to afford a nutritious daily diet. As a group, you consume 70 percent of all the grain grown in the world, most of it in the form of grain-fed meat.

Since most of you exceed your daily requirement of calories, you face health problems such as heart disease and diabetes. But most of you don't worry about getting health care. You have access to the best medical care in the world.

Your children are born destined to go to school; You and your family live in a comfortable and secure home. You own at least one car and probably two televisions. When you take your annual two-week vacation, you don't worry about your job disappearing. It's a good life because you have access to everything you need and you have the security to enjoy it.

Aaron:

[MOVE NEAR THE MIDDLE-INCOME GROUP]

If you are sitting here, you represent roughly 30 percent of the world's population. You earn between \$765 and \$9,400 a year. The levels of access and security you enjoy vary greatly. You are the folks who live on the edge. For many, it would take losing only one harvest to drought, or a serious illness, to throw you into poverty.

You probably own no land and may work as a day laborer, which pays a paltry amount, but it's better than nothing. Although your village has electricity, you must ration your use. Your children may go to school--for a few years, anyway--especially if they are boys. You hope that eventually you can save enough to move back home and make a better life for your family. Or maybe you are a migrant farmworker in the U.S. South, living in a mobile home with no running water. Even though you work long hours performing back-breaking work, you cannot afford nutritious food for your children.

Through no fault of your own, you were born into this harsh life. You hope that your children will have an opportunity to do better. If only you could get some skills training, you might have a chance at a higher-paying job. So, like everyone stuck in the middle, you feel squeezed, and you just hope that the bottom doesn't fall out from your world.

Penina:

[MOVE NEAR THE LOW-INCOME GROUP]

If you are sitting on the floor, you represent the majority of the world's population - roughly 55 percent. Your average income is less than \$765 a year - about \$2 a day - although many of you earn much less. Most of you are from poor countries such as Ethiopia, Bangladesh, Haiti, or Cambodia. Every day is a struggle to meet your family's basic needs.

Finding food, water and shelter can consume your entire day. For many of you women, it would not be uncommon to have to walk five to 10 miles every day to get water, spend several more hours working in the fields, and of course taking care of the children. Many of you are frequently hungry. It is quite likely that you don't get the minimum number of calories your hardworking life requires. Many of you are homeless or living in structures so flimsy that a hard rain or strong wind can cause a major catastrophe. Even though education is the single most powerful weapon against poverty, school is a luxury few of your children will ever experience. Most girls don't even bother to dream about school. Adequate health care is out of the question for many of you in this group. For most of you, early death is all too familiar, with many mothers expecting to lose one or two children before they turn five. Basic education could help save many of these children. Evidence shows that each additional year a mother spends in primary school reduces her children's risk of premature death by about eight percent.

Not surprisingly, many of the countries where you live also have the largest foreign debts. Your governments are forced to throw money into a bottomless pit of debt payments, instead of spending money on essential services like education and healthcare. For example, in Zambia, the government spends four times more on debt servicing than on education. Every woman, child and man in that country owes \$700 in debt to the world. In Nicaragua it is \$1000. In both these countries, that is more than twice the average annual income.

If you are lucky enough to work, you are probably a tenant farmer who must give your landowner 75 percent of your harvest. Or perhaps you get occasional work as a day laborer at a large plantation producing crops such as bananas, sugar, or coffee for export. You reap few benefits from these crops; you'd prefer to grow food that your children could eat.