

The Ramah Nesiya Educational Program

The Nesiya program here at Ramah has changed a lot since last summer. A major part of that change is the education piece. Each Nesiya will have a theme and a corresponding source book. The source book will be organized according to the days of the Nesiya.

Before leaving camp, each edah's staff will be trained to help us run the programming for their Nesiya. If possible, we will also meet with the edah as a whole and do a program that will kick off the theme for their Nesiya while still at camp. While on the Nesiya, campers will study a piece of the theme each day. Each day's programming will be organized to build on what was studied the day before and help work towards a better understanding of whatever the larger theme for the Nesiya is.

Programming on the Nesiya will be done in two ways. First, every day there will be 40 minutes of "formal" studying. This will usually include some kind of Sicha and activity. Throughout the day, on the trails, and at T'filot, we will also facilitate small components to our educational theme. Activities might include some kind of drama activity, movement exercise, writing exercises, or visual art.

Source books will all be organized similar to this one. They will include an introduction to the overall educational theme of the Nesiya, a set of texts for each day and a series of Chevruta, study partner, questions for each day. The texts will be given in English and Hebrew when possible, and will include traditional Jewish texts as well as poetry, modern literature, and other applicable sources.

The goal of the program is to facilitate learning and understanding of themes such as inspiration, tikkun olam, prayer, b'tzelem Elohim and responsibility. We are to act as guides to help campers and staff alike discover new and creative understandings of all these things in our lives.

We are using the natural world as our classroom, and this should never be forgotten. It is not a coincidence that such themes are being looked at on an outdoor program. The natural world is an ideal classroom in many ways for the study of Jewish related topics. It is the natural wonders of this world that have endured while people have not, and it is the same natural world around us that has inspired Jewish thinkers for thousands of years. It is incumbent upon us to relate all of our studying to this world around us, and in so doing relate ourselves to the world around us.

The Magic Touch
Staff Nesiya
Ramah New England
June 18-23, 2000

The commandments of the Torah are divided in to two kinds: Positive and Negative commandments. These are known as Mitzvot Asseh and Mitzvot Lo Taasseh. The question is often asked: Why is this mitzvah given in terms of what not to do while others tell us what to do? While there is no answer for this question for every mitzvah, a careful discussion of each mitzvah in terms of this question will yield some interesting insights.

As Environmental Jewish Educators this summer, it is important for us to understand the way mitzvot work and the way we are commanded to care for the earth, each other, and ourselves. The discussions and exercises this week will be focussed around two specific mitzvot concerning the environment and the place of mitzvot in general in our lives.

Deuteronomy teaches us "When you lay seige and battle against a city for a long time in order to capture it, you must not destroy its trees, wielding an ax against them. You may eat of them, but you must not cut them down." (20:19) This is the source of a law known as Bal Tashchit. Bal Tashchit means Do Not Destroy. It is a law that has been interpreted in many interesting ways. It is up to us to find how we connect to this Mitzvah Lo Taasseh. As we often do in the Jewish culture, we have taken this law and expanded it to discuss all kinds of waste and destruction. Some of the sources in this Choveret, Source Book, will help us to discuss the law of bal tashchit and how we understand it.

"And the Eternal, God, took the Adam and put him in the Garden of Eden to till it and to keep it." (Genesis 2:15) This important and often quoted line, from the book of Breishit, is a good starting point for our discussions. This line speaks about both tikkun olam, and our place in the world. In Avot d'Rabbi Nattan we are taught "He who buys grain in the market, to what is he similar? To a child who is cut off from his mother, and although it is taken to homes of wet nurses it is not satisfied. And he who buys bread in the market, to what is he compared? To a man who digs his own grave - a wretched, precarious existence. But he who eats of his own produce is like a child reared at his mother's breast." (30:6/29a) Through the general summer camp experience and the Nesiyyot we lead, we will have the chance to show campers how to connect to the Makom (place or God).

We will start our studies and exploration in the book of Breishit and study creation. The tellings of the creation of the world will help give grounding to our discussions. These two stories will set the scene and help us begin to discover our place in this world.

The Creation of the Earth and Humans

Activity Day 1 Have a volunteer read Genesis 1:1 - 2:3. When they are finished, ask the reader to briefly share how the text makes them feel. Have another volunteer read the same text as a “haunting” story which has dark scenes, or which speaks to the reader directly and threatens to undo itself if the text is not followed. Discuss the difference between the two readings. Have another person volunteer and do a dramatic reading in a different style that speaks to them and expresses some of his or her thoughts on the text. Discuss the different readings and how the same text offers itself to so many interpretations through style of reading, without even spending time on interpreting the words.

Activity Day 2 Stand in a circle. One person starts by using an imaginary object that they have thought of in their mind. They should not say what it is, but rather interact with it. For example, if it were a ball, one could throw it up and down, bounce it on the ground, etc. The one who started should turn to the person on his or her right and give the object over to them. The person who receives the object should continue to use it and then actively change it in to a new object, stretching, folding, and adding as necessary. This person should, in turn, hand it over to the person on his or her right. This should go all the way around the circle once. Since it often takes a group new at this sort of thing a while to really get the hang of it, go around a second time if people seem to be ready and wanting to be more creative and if time permits. Everyone should pay attention as the object goes around. The whole exercise should be done silently.

After the exercise is complete, have a brief discussion about creating, changing, and how in the exercise each person was both creator and receiver, and the process of changing something received to something wanted.

Chevruta Questions

The first telling of the creation of the world, Genesis (Breishit) 1:1 - 2:3 Day 1

1. Why did God create the world in the first place? Look at what God created and what the connection between all that God created might be.
2. What Logic can one find in the order of creation? What might we learn from this about God’s plan?
3. What does the text mean by “Dominion” (Yirdu) in Pasuk 26 of the first chapter? What can this piece of the text teach us about responsibility? Look at Rashi for an interesting interpretation.

The second telling of the creation of the world, Genesis (Breishit) 2:4 - 2:25, and how it relates to the first. Day 2

1. What is the difference between the creation of the human in the first and in the second version of the creation?
2. What is the relationship between the earth and the human being in the second version of the creation? How does this differ from the relationship between the earth and the human in the first version?
3. How do the two versions of creation told here compliment each other? What can we learn from this about our place in the world around us?

Tikkun Olam

Activity

Start by introducing Tikkun Olam, Fixing the World. Ask participants to share examples of tikkun olam. Encourage participants to think of many **different types** of tikkun olam, as well as specific examples. (5 minutes)

Split the group up in to smaller groups. Send each off to their own space for 10 minutes with the following assignment: Create a Public Service Announcement for TV or radio to encourage the viewer or listener to help a specific cause. The PSA should include a slogan and all people in the group should participate. After all groups have presented their PSA, everyone should comment and say what in each PSA they thought would get them to help whatever tikkun olam cause was talked about.

Chevruta Questions

1. There are a number of ways one is supposed to help the poor discussed in these texts. What are some of the different things we can learn from each text about the nature of tzedaka?
2. We are all familiar with the idea of city planning. How do Leviticus 25:8-12 and Mishnah Bava Batra 2:9 expand the idea? What other aspects of community are touched on here? What might these texts teach us about the connection between responsibility to each other? What do these texts have to do with responsibility to the land?
3. Which laws here protect certain social groups? Where in our modern lives do we see examples of lower classes affected more than others by "undesirable" site and facilities?
4. How does our responsibility to the earth mirror our responsibility to people?
5. How can we better serve all of God's creations, humans and earth?

Sources for Tikkun Olam

In 16th century Tsefat, Rabbi Isaac Luria observed that in his world, like ours, many things seemed to be wrong. People suffered from hunger, disease, hatred, and war. "Hal could God allow such terrible things to happen?" wondered Luria. "perhaps," he suggested, "it is because God needs our help." he explained his answer with a mystical story.

When first setting out to make the world, got planned to pour a Holy Light into everything in order to make it real. Guards prepared vessels to contain the Holy Light. But something went wrong. The light was so bright that the vessels burst, shattering into millions of broken pieces like dishes dropped on the floor. The Hebrew phrase which Luria used for this "breaking of the vessels" is sh'virat ha-kaylim.

Our world is a mess because it is filled with broken fragments. When people fight and hurt one another, they allow the world to remain shattered. The same can be said of people who have pantries filled with food and let others starve. According to Luria, we who live in a cosmic heap of broken pieces, and God cannot repair it alone.

That is why God created us and gave us freedom of choice. We are free to do whatever we pleased with our world. We cannot allow all things to remain broken or, as Luria urged, we can try to repair the mess. Luria's Hebrew phrase for "repairing the world" is tikkun olam. (**"Repairing the World" from Lawrence Kushner, The Book of Miracles, p. 47**)

How can you buy or sell the sky, the warmth of the land? ...If we do not own the freshness of the air and the sparkle of the water, how can you buy them?

Every part of this earth is sacred. Every shining pine needle, every sandy shore, every mist in the dark woods, every clearing and humming insect is holy. We are part of the earth and it is part of us. The perfumed flowers are our sisters; the deer, the horse, the eagle, these are our brothers. The rocky crests, the juices in the meadows, the body heat of the pony, and people- all belong to the same family.

This Shining water that moves in the streams and rivers is not just water but the blood of our ancestors. If we sell you land, you must remember that it is sacred, and you must teach your children that it is sacred and that each ghostly reflection in the clear water of the lakes tells of events and memories... The water's murmur is the voice of my father's father.

The rivers are our brothers, they quench our thirst. The rivers carry our canoes, and feed our children. If we sell you our land, you must remember, and teach your children, that the rivers are our

brothers and yours, and you must henceforth give the rivers the kindness you would give any brother.

You must teach your children that the ground beneath their feet is the ashes of our grandparents. So that they will respect the land, tell your children that the earth is rich with the lives of our kin. Teach your children... that the earth is our mother. Whatever befalls the earth befalls the children of the earth. If we spit upon the ground, we spit upon ourselves.

This we know; the earth does not belong to us; we belong to the earth. All things are connected. We are kin after all... **(Ted Perry, 1970, Speech often attributed to Chief Seattle, 1851)**

And the Eternal, God, took the Adam and put him in the Garden of Eden to till it and to keep it. **(Genesis 2:15)**

Count seven weeks of years [49]... Then blow the horn loudly, on the tenth day of the seventh month - the Day of Atonement - you will sound the horn throughout your land and you will make the fiftieth year holy. You will proclaim release throughout the land for all its inhabitants. It will be a jubilee for you: each of you will return to his holding and each of you will return to his family. That fiftieth year will be a jubilee for you: you will not sow, nor reap the aftergrowth or harvest the untrimmed vines. **(Leviticus 25:8-12)**

When you reap the harvest of your land, you will not reap all the way to the edges of your field, or gather the gleanings of your harvest. You will not pick up every last grape in your vineyard, or gather the fallen fruit of your vineyard. Leave them for the poor and the stranger: I the Eternal One am your God. **(Leviticus 19:9-10)**

When you reap the harvest in your field and overlook a sheaf in the field, do not turn back to get it; it will go to the stranger, the orphan and the widow - in order that the Eternal, your God may bless you in all your undertakings. **(Deuteronomy 24:19)**

Do not rob the poor, because he is poor: nor oppress the afflicted in the gate: for the Lord will plead their cause, and rob life those who rob them. Make no friendship with an angry man; and with a furious man thou shalt not go: lest thou learn his ways, and get a snare to thy soul. **(Proverbs 22:22-25)**

Carcasses, graves, and tanneries must be kept at fifty cubits' distance from a town. And a tannery may not be established except on the east side of town. Rabbi Akiva says, "One may set it up on any side, except on the west of it, but he must keep it at a distance of fifty cubits. (**Mishna Bava Batra 2:9**)

While the sage, Choni, was walking along a road, he saw a man planting a carob tree. Choni asked him: "How long will it take for this tree to bear fruit?"

"Seventy years," replied the man.

Choni then asked: "Are you so healthy a man that you expect to live that length of time and eat its fruit?"

The man answered: "I found a fruitful world because my ancestors planted it for me. Likewise I am planting for my children."
(Babylonian Talmud, Taanit 23a)

Bal Tashchit

Activity

Split the larger group in to two groups. Have one group act as an audience and have the other group together in front of them. The group "performing" should stand in a semi circle facing their audience. One participant should go to the middle of the semi circle and get in to a pose that he or she makes up on the spot. Another person should then come in and get in to a pose relating to the first person's presence and building on it. Then another person should do the same, relating to the first two, and so on. When they are finished the groups should switch. When the second group is finished everyone should sit in one big circle and discuss what they saw. Discuss the relationships between poses, the development of the scene, and how each pose might have seemed different as others were added to the surroundings or attached on to it.

Chevruta Questions

1. Looking at the sources, how has the law of bal tashchit changed from its original source in Deuteronomy 20:19-20? Why do you think this expansion of the law was made?
2. The law of bal tashchit is a negative commandment... do NOT destroy. How might we phrase a positive commandment, or series of commandments that would give us more guidance? Or is the commandment against destruction better to have? Talk about why you came up with your answers.
3. How does the passage from Deuteronomy 23:13-15 (notice that the law is a mitzvah asseh, a positive commandment) relate to the idea of destruction?
4. How is the law given here related to what we have discussed in our study of tikkun olam?

Sources for Bal Tashchit

“There will be an area beyond the military camp where you can relieve yourself. You will have a spade among your weapons; and after you have squatted, you will dig a hole and cover your excrement. For the Lord thy God walks in the midst of thy camp, to deliver thee, and to give up thy enemies before thee; therefore shall thy camp be holy: that She see in you no uncleanness, and turn away from thee.” **(Deuteronomy 23:13-15)**

“When you lay siege and battle against a city for a long time in order to capture it, you must not destroy its trees, wielding an ax against them. You may eat of them, but you must not cut them down. Are the trees of the field human to withdraw before you into the besieged city? Only a tree which you know does not yield food may be destroyed; you may cut them down for constructing siege works against the city that is waging war on you, until it has been captured.” **(Deuteronomy 20:19-20)**

“The root of the Mitzvah (of Bal Tashchit) is known to be for the sake of teaching our selves to love the good and beneficial, and to bond with it, and as a result of this the good will bond itself with us, and we will be distanced from every bad thing, and from every destroying thing; And this is the way of the righteous, and people of deeds love peace, and rejoice with good of the creations...”
(Sefer Hachinuch, Shoftim, Not to Destroy Food Trees)

“It is forbidden to cut down fruit-bearing trees outside a [besieged] city, nor may a water channel be deflected from them so that they wither, as it is said: 'You must not destroy its trees' (Deuteronomy 20:19) It [a fruit bearing tree] may be cut down, however, if it causes damage to other trees or to a field belonging to another man or if its value for other purposes is greater [than that of the fruit it produces]. The law forbids only wanton destruction.”

(Maimonides, Mishneh Torah; Judges, Laws of Kings and Their Wars 6:8-10)

...[D]estruction does not only mean making something purposelessly unfit for its designated use; it also means trying to attain a certain aim by making use of more things and more valuable things when fewer and less valuable ones would suffice; or if this aim is not really worth the means expended for its attainment. [For example] kindling something which is still fit for other purposes for the sake of light;... wearing down something more than is necessary... consuming more than is necessary...

On the other hand, if destruction is necessary for a higher and more worthy aim, then it ceases to be destruction and itself becomes wise creating. [For example] cutting down a fruit tree which is doing harm to other more valuable plants, [and] burning a vessel when there is a scarcity of wood in order to protect one's weakened self from catching cold... (Samson Raphael Hirsch, *Horeb: A Philosophy of Jewish Laws and Observances*, adapted by Shomrei Adamah)

Extra sources

“Rabbi Shimon ben Elazar says ‘Have you ever seen a wild beast or bird that possesses a craft? And none the less they sustain themselves without care, and were they not created to serve me? But I was created to serve my Maker. does it not follow that I should receive my maintenance without care? But I have performed my actions in evil and have forgone my support [and I have forfeited my right to support].’” (Mishna Kiddushin 4:14)

Rabbi Elazar ben Azaria said, If there be no [study of the] Law there is no good conduct, if there is no good conduct, if there be no good conduct there is no [study of the] Law; if there be no wisdom there is no fear [of God], if there be no fear [of God] there is no wisdom; if there be no understanding there is no knowledge, if there be no knowledge there is no understanding; If there be no flour there is no Torah, if there is no Torah there is no flour. (Mishna Avot 3:21)

He used to say, all who’s wisdom is greater than his deeds, to what is he similar? To a tree who’s branches are many, and who’s roots are few, and the wind comes and uproots and overturns it on to its face, as it is said:(Jeremiah 17:6) “For he shall be like a juniper tree in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh, but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, a salt land and not inhabited.” But all who’s works are greater than her wisdom, to what is he similar? To a tree who’s branches are few, and who’s roots are many, that even if all the winds that are in the world come and blow on it, there is no moving it from its place. As it is said:(Jeremiah 17:8) “And she shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out its roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but its foliage shall be green; and shall not be anxious in the year of drought, neither shall it cease from yielding fruit.” (Mishna Avot 3:22)

He who buys grain in the market, to what is he similar? To a child who is cut off from his mother, and although it is taken to homes of wet nurses it is not satisfied. And he who buys bread in the market, to what is he compared? To a man who digs his own grave - a wretched, precarious existence. But he who eats of his own produce is like a child reared at his mother’s breast. (Avot d’Rabbi Natan 30:6/29a)

... the Lord God had not sent rain upon the earth, and there were no people to till the soil... (Genesis 2:5)

Rabbi Simeon bar Yohai said:

Three things are equal in importance: earth, Humans, and rain. Rabbi Levi said: And these three each consist of three letters (in Hebrew), to teach that without earth, there is no rain, and without rain, earth cannot endure; while without either, humans cannot exist. (Midrash Genesis Rabbah 13.3)

EXAMINING OURSELVES AS LEADERS...

You are a leader. In your home, your family, in your community, in a business. You have responsibilities for others. All year long, you are responsible for evaluating whether those you lead are proceeding as they should. But on the morning of Yom Kippur, you have the opportunity to "self-correct," to examine yourself and how, in the past year, you might have exercised your leadership differently.

MEDITATION

Before Aaron, the High Priest, can ask for forgiveness for the whole congregation of Israel, he is told to scrutinize himself first. He is to bathe. He is to put on sacred garments. Standing in the *oliel moed*, the Tent of Meeting, he is to ask for forgiveness for himself. Only then can the circle widen—only then is he prepared to "make expiation for the whole congregation of Israel" (*Leviticus 16*)

RITUAL

All those who have leadership responsibilities are asked to come up to the Torah for the third *aliyah* on Yom Kippur. As you hear the words chanted, you, like Aaron, have this opportunity to ask for forgiveness for yourself before you ask for forgiveness for your community.

It is a time for introspection: where have you, as a leader, "missed the mark"? What decisions could you have made as a leader, but did not? Focus: given all that you know now, given all of your dreams of a more perfect world, how might you exercise your leadership in a different way?

NOTE: If group *aliyah* are not the custom in your community, you may choose to listen to the words of *Leviticus 16* as they are chanted on Yom Kippur, and focus on these concerns of leaders.

סלח לנו, מחל לנו, כפר לנו.

Slach lanu, m'chal lanu, kaper lanu...

🕯️ *Forgive us, pardon us, grant us atonement.*

EXAMINING OURSELVES AS LEADERS...

(continued)

BLESSING

(The person who is called to the Torah)

ברוך אתה ה' המבורך.

Barukh et Adonai ha'mivorakh.

Blessed are You, source of blessing.

(The congregation responds)

ברוך ה' המבורך לעולם ועד.

Barukh Adonai ha'mivorakh, l'olam u'ed.

Blessed are You, source of blessing forever.

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם,

אשר בך בנו מכל העמים, ותן לנו את תורתך.

ברוך אתה ה' נתון התורה.

Barukh atah, Adonai, elohейnu melekh ha'olam,

asher b'achar banu m'kol ha'amim v'natan lanu

et torat. Barukh atah, Adonai, noten ha'torah.

Blessed are You, Lord our God, sovereign of the universe who has chosen us from among all peoples by giving us Your Torah. Praised are You, Lord, who gives the Torah.

(After the portion is read, the person says)

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם, אשר בך בנו מכל העמים, ותן לנו את

תורתך. ברוך אתה ה' נתון התורה.

Barukh atah, Adonai, elohейnu melekh ha'olam,

asher natan lanu torat emet v'chayei olam

natah b'otcheinu. Barukh atah, Adonai noten

ha'torah.

Blessed are You, Lord our God, sovereign of the universe who has given us the Torah of truth, planting within us life eternal. Blessed are You, Lord, who gives the Torah.

TEACHING

And Aaron is to bring near the bull for the sin offering that is his, so that he may effect atonement on behalf of himself and for his household... Then he is to slay the hairy goat of the sin offering that is the people's... Thus he shall purge the Shrine of the uncleanness and transgression of the Israelites, whatever their sins... (*Leviticus 16:6, 15-16*)

Here I stand, humbly, trembling in Your presence, pleading on behalf of Your people Israel... Therefore... I plead for help as I seek mercy for myself and for those whom I represent... Accept my prayer as the prayer of one uniquely worthy and qualified for this talk... Draw Your veil of love over all our faults. (*Hibmini prayer*)

PREPARING OURSELVES TO DO SACRED WORK...

(continued)

Just as our sages raised their consciousness before engaging in sacred acts, we too can prepare ourselves for those everyday activities which we seek to elevate, as we discover how we can accomplish sacred purposes -- *avodah* -- in all that we do.

MEDITATION

Preparation, we learn, is what indicates that we want to make what we are about to do stand out. A *kavannah* is a meditative pause, an act of centering that allows us "to be fully present and aware of our place, our time...to feel God's presence."

הנני מוכן ומזומן.

Hineni mukhan u'mezuman.

I am here, ready, prepared.

RITUAL

Before you set out to do sacred work, pause, and compose your own brief *kavannah* which names the sacred work you are about to do and reflects the kind of intention you hope to keep in mind.

For instance, if you are about to drop off cans of food at the neighborhood food pantry or soup kitchen, you might create a *kavannah* such as this: "Source of Blessing, allow me to find small and large ways that I can make a difference in people's lives."

Or, if you are about to perform a medical procedure on a patient or seek treatment for yourself, your *kavannah* might be "Creator of the world, help and guide me to marvel in the wonder of the human body and to do all I can to sustain life."

BLESSING

Here are some ways you might begin a *kavannah* which prepares you to do the sacred work of your life:

מקור הברכות...

Mekor ha'brachot...

Source of Blessing, allow me to...

בורא העולם...

Borei ha'olam...

Creator of the world, help and guide me to...

רבונו של עולם...

Ribono shel olam...

Master of the Universe, make me aware of...

(As you conclude your *kavannah*)

הן בליבי להשבין להשכיל, לשמוע ולקבוע.

Hen b'libi lehavvein u'lehaskil, lishmoa u'limod u'lelamad.

Allow my heart to understand, to enlighten, to listen, to learn, and to teach.

Blessed are You God, who allows us to be fully present

TEACHING

All depends on the *kavannah* of the heart (Babylonian Talmud: *Megillah* 20a)

And Jacob awoke from his sleep and he said, "Surely there is God in this place and I, I did not know." (Genesis 28:16).

"And to serve God (*avodah*)" (Deuteronomy 11:13): This refers here to *study*. Just as serving at the altar is called *avodah*, so is *study* called *avodah*. Another interpretation of *avodah* refers to *prayer*. You might say,

"Does this not refer to Temple *avodah*?" The answer is no, since Scripture says, "*Avodah* do with all your heart and with all your soul." (Deuteronomy 11:13) Is there such a thing as Temple *avodah* in one's heart?

Therefore, *avodah* refers to *prayer*. Just as *service of the altar* is called *avodah*, so is *prayer* called *avodah*. (*Sifre Piska* 41)

I bow

My head over my typewriter

And start the ceremony

Of a prayer.

(David Ignatow from *Epiptogue*)

הנני מוכן.

Hineni mukhan.

I am prepared.

SEEING NATURAL WONDERS...

A story is told: I had seen spectacular mountains in the Alps and the Rockies in Colorado. I didn't think Yosemite would be much different. More mountains, maybe some waterfalls I thought, and it will all be nice – at least I'll get out of the city. Driving from San Francisco through the dry heat of the desert, we pulled into the heart of Yosemite as the sun began to set. We got out of the car and were astounded. What we saw: trees five times bigger than any we'd ever seen, spectacular rocks climbing to the heavens, waterfalls cascading into lush valleys. We were struck silent.

MEDITATION

השתחוו לה' בְּהִרְרַת קָדֶשׁ.

*Hishtachavu l'Adonai
b'hadrat kodesh.*

The world is God's
intensely holy place.

Hear God's voice in
the waters, in the
thunder. Hear God's
voice in the tall trees,
in the forest, in the
wilderness.

קול ה' בְּכֹחַ, קול ה' בְּהִרְרָה.

*Kol Adonai ba'ko'ach,
kol Adonai be'hadar.*

Hear God's voice in
power; hear God's
voice in beauty.

(Psalms 29:4)

RITUAL

In silence, take off (or
imagine taking off)
your shoes, allowing
your feet to touch the
ground. As you wit-
ness the majestic
beauty of high moun-
tains, vast deserts, sun-
rises, lightning and
shooting stars, take as
much time as you
need to acknowledge
that you stand on
holy ground.

BLESSING

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה עֲשֵׂה
מַעֲשֵׂה בְּרֵאשִׁית.

*Barukh atah oseh
ma'aseh b'reshit.*

Praised are You,
renewer of the works
of creation. Let me be
attentive to the won-
der of Your world.

הַלְלוּהוּ שֶׁמֶשׁ וּיְרֵחַ, הַלְלוּהוּ
כָּל כֹּכָבֵי אוֹר.

*Halleluhu shemesh
v'yarei'ach, Halleluhu
kol kokhvei or.*

Praised is God, sun
and moon, Praised is
God, all bright stars.

(Psalms 148:3)

TEACHING

And God called the
dry places "earth" and
the water-springs God
called "seas", and God
saw that it was good.
(Genesis 1:10)

The skies will rejoice,
the earth vibrate with
celebration, the sea
roar with its full
force, the fields sing
out, the trees of the
forest cry out in
ecstasy.

(Psalms 96:11-12)

Every blade of grass
has a guardian above
it. *(Zohar 1:34a)*

On seeing mountains,
hills, seas, rivers and
deserts, one should
say, "Blessed is the
One who creates."
*(Jerusalem Talmud:
Brakhot 9:1)*

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה שֶׁכַּחַח לֹא בְּעוֹלָמֵנוּ.

Barukh atah she'kakhah lo b'olamo.

Praised are You who has created
such beauty in Your world.

AL OLAM UMLO'O / NATURE

On seeing the wonders of nature:
 בָּרַךְ אֲתָהּ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם לְעֵשֶׂה מַעֲשֵׂה בְרָאשִׁית:
 Baruh atah adonay eloheynu meleh ha'olam
 oseh ma'asey vereshit.

On seeing the ocean:
 בָּרַךְ אֲתָהּ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם שֶׁעָשִׂה אֶת הַיָּם הַגָּדוֹל:
 Baruh atah adonay eloheynu meleh ha'olam
 she'asah et hayam hagadol.

On seeing a rainbow:
 בָּרַךְ אֲתָהּ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
 וְזָכַר הַקְּרִית וְנֹאֲמַן בְּבְרִיתוֹ וְקָם בְּמֵאֲמָרוֹ:
 Baruh atah adonay eloheynu meleh ha'olam
 zoher haberit vene'eman bivrito vekayam bema'amaro.

On seeing lightning or shooting stars, or hearing thunder:
 בָּרַךְ אֲתָהּ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם וּגְבֻרָתוֹ מְלֹא
 עוֹלָם:

Baruh atah adonay eloheynu meleh ha'olam
 shekho ugzurato maley olam.

On seeing something beautiful:
 בָּרַךְ אֲתָהּ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם שֶׁנִּכְהָה לוֹ בְּעוֹלָמוֹ:
 Baruh atah adonay eloheynu meleh ha'olam
 shekahah lo be'olamo.

On seeing a blossoming tree:
 בָּרַךְ אֲתָהּ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם שֶׁלֹּא חָסַר בְּעוֹלָמוֹ דָּבָר
 וְקָרָא בוֹ בְּרִיּוֹת טוֹבוֹת וְאֵילָנוֹת טוֹבִים לְהוֹת בָּתָּם בְּנֵי אָדָם:
 Baruh atah adonay eloheynu meleh ha'olam
 shelo hisar be'olamo davar uvava vo beniyot tovo ve'ilanot
 tovum lehanot bahem beney adam.

On smelling spices or fragrances:
 בָּרַךְ אֲתָהּ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא מִיְּנֵי הַשָּׂמִימִים:
 Baruh atah adonay eloheynu meleh ha'olam
 borey minney vesamim.

On seeing the wonders of nature:
 Blessed are you, SOURCE OF WONDER our God, the sovereign
 of all worlds, author of creation.

On seeing the ocean:
 Blessed are you, THE BOUNDLESS ONE our God, the sovereign
 of all worlds, who made the great sea.

On seeing a rainbow:
 Blessed are you, HARMONY our God, the sovereign of all
 worlds, who remembers the covenant, remains faithful to it,
 and fulfills its word.

On seeing lightning or shooting stars, or hearing thunder:
 Blessed are you THE CELESTIAL our God, the sovereign of all
 worlds, whose power and might fill the world.

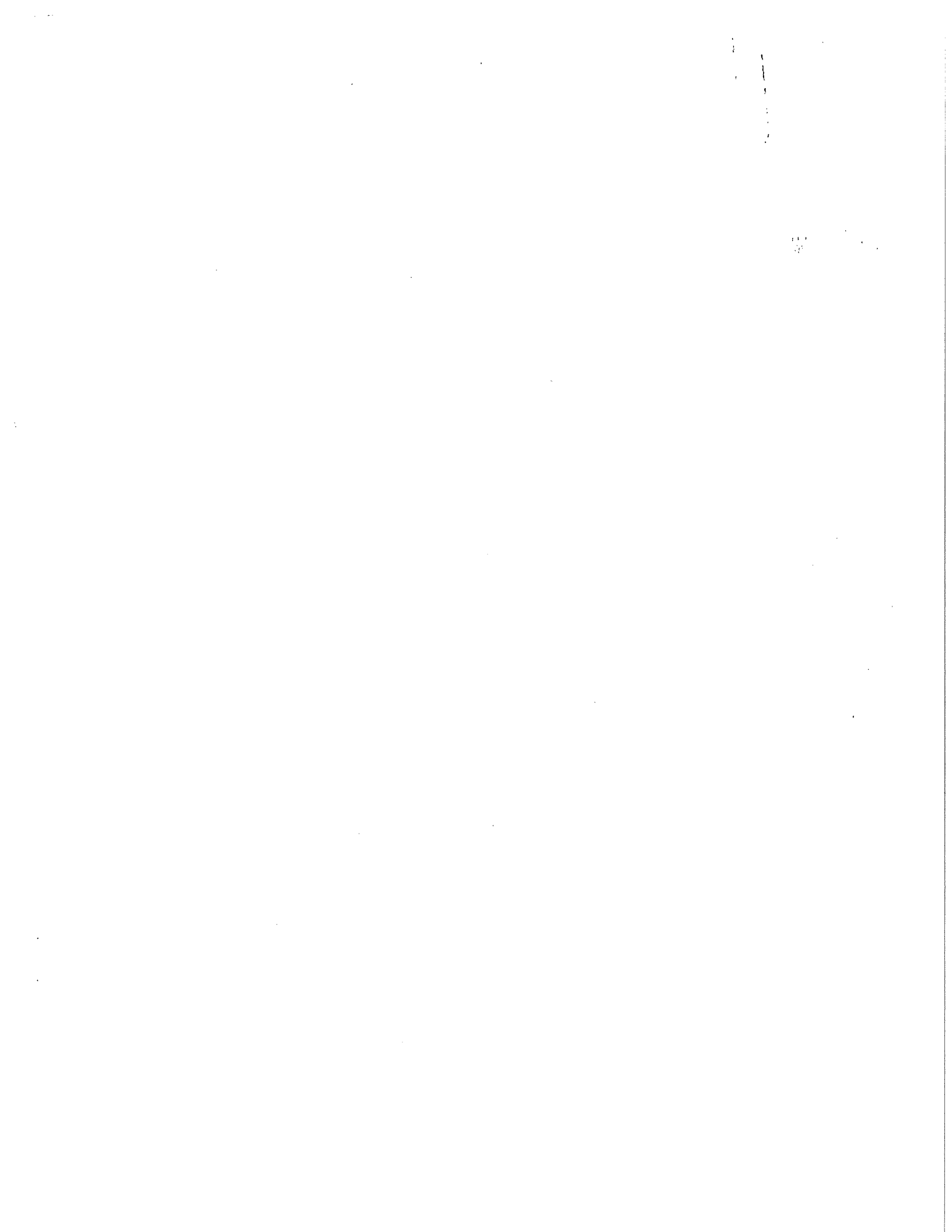
On seeing something beautiful:
 Blessed are you, THE RADIANCE our God, the sovereign of all
 worlds, whose universe holds such things.

On seeing a blossoming tree:
 Blessed are you, THE SUBLIME ONE our God, the sovereign of
 all worlds, who has withheld nothing from your world, and
 created beautiful creatures and goodly trees for people to
 enjoy.

On smelling spices or fragrances:
 Blessed are you, REVIVER our God, the sovereign of all worlds,
 who creates various spices.

Reciting at least one hundred blessings a day is an ancient Jewish custom. There are *bera'ot*/blessings for almost every imaginable circumstance. In blessings resides the capacity to transform action into mitzvah and ordinary things into gifts. And is that not the Jewish way: doing mitzvot and appreciating the gift of life? Reciting *bera'ot* draws us into this higher vision and action.



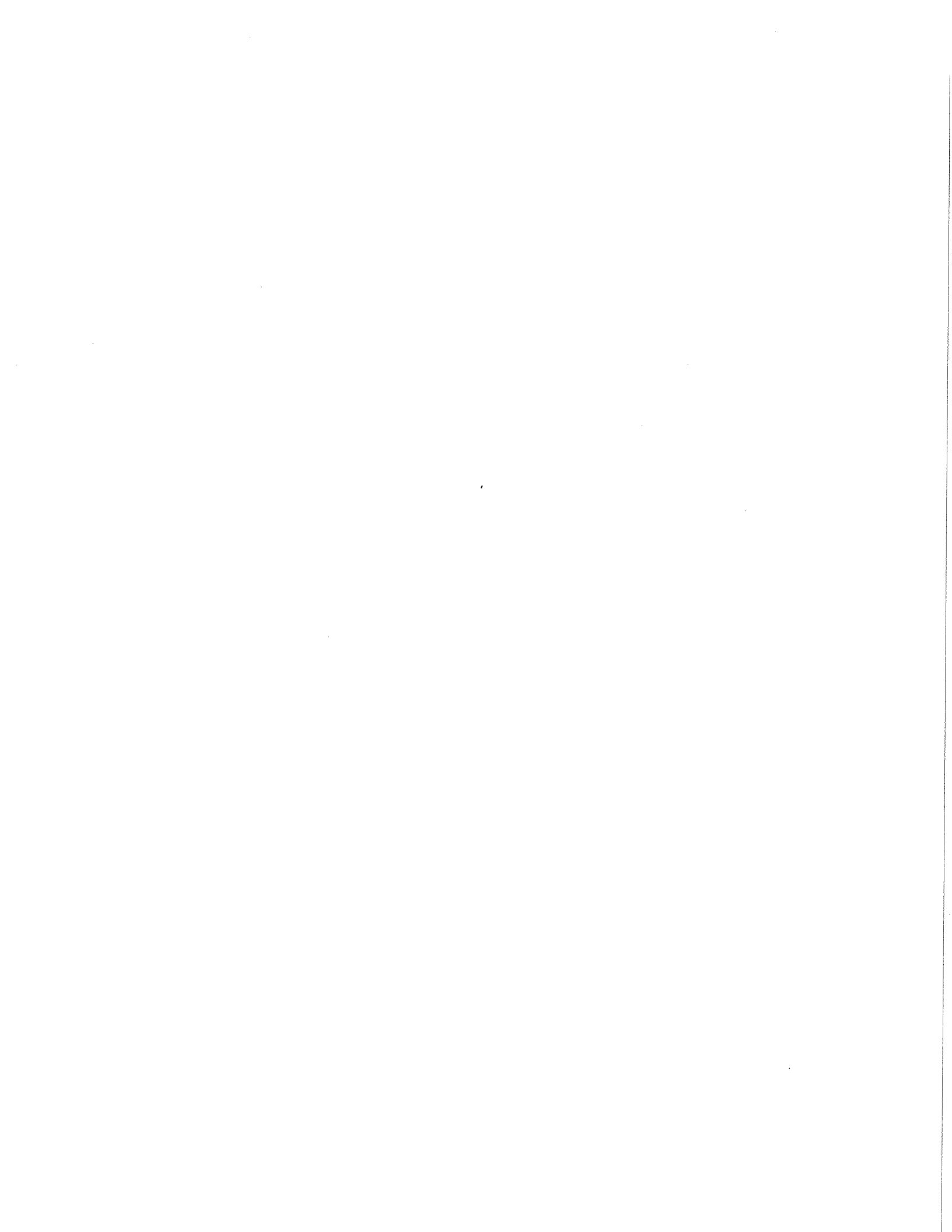


**I Am What I Am
and That Ain't All That I am
Bogrim Nesiya
July 17-19, 2000**

It is said in Torah that human beings are created in the image of God. "And God created the 'Adam' in his image, in the image of God God created him, male and female God created them." Breaishit 1:27 The idea that one is created in the image of something or someone else is complex and raises many questions. What does it mean to be created in the image of God? To be created in the image of something might also imply intention as to the future of that which is created.

Our lives are filled with images of what we should be, what we want to be, what we expect, and what others want us to be. These images help us make decisions. Because of our own images of what our futures might look like we make decisions that will bring us closer to that future.

Think about your relationship to your "Creator." Whether it be your parent, your teacher, sibling, or all of the above, think about who you are because of that person who helped to create the person you are. Now think about the people you are like. What responsibilities might being like someone, or being identified as being like someone, arise. What are your responsibilities to that person or being of any sort, in terms of relation directly to them, and what are your responsibilities as a representative of them and their work?



Chevritra Questions for I Am Who Created Me?

Leader Instructions: Split the action group you are working with into two even groups. Each group should form a circle. Give each group a different text from the book of Genesis. **DO NOT** tell them that the groups have different texts. Have each group review the questions here and all the sources. They should discuss the following questions in the small groups. Also, encourage participants to raise other points in the text from Genesis or the sources in the Source book that are interesting to them. After about 15 to 20 minutes of discussion on the Genesis text and other sources, reconvene the large group. Ask participants to share what was discussed in the smaller group. Go through the questions as well as the texts and cover each at least briefly to ensure familiarity for all participants with all the material. After reviewing the material, the participants should begin to notice that they did not all study the same text from Genesis. Reveal the difference officially; again to make sure that all understand what is going on. Now have two volunteers read the two Genesis texts. Discuss the differences in the texts and how those differences affect the answers to the questions. Add more questions to the discussion: How does the way we see ourselves and our responsibilities change depending on which text we learn from? Why does the Torah bring us both texts? Use the sources in the source book to help the discussion. The Mishna and Midrash are both full enough to warrant their own discussions.

1. What place in the world does the human have according to the story you received?
2. What part does God take in the creation of the humans?

3. Where is the man in relation to all else that is created?
4. Based on your knowledge of the story of creation, and the texts in front of you, what is unique about the creation of humans?

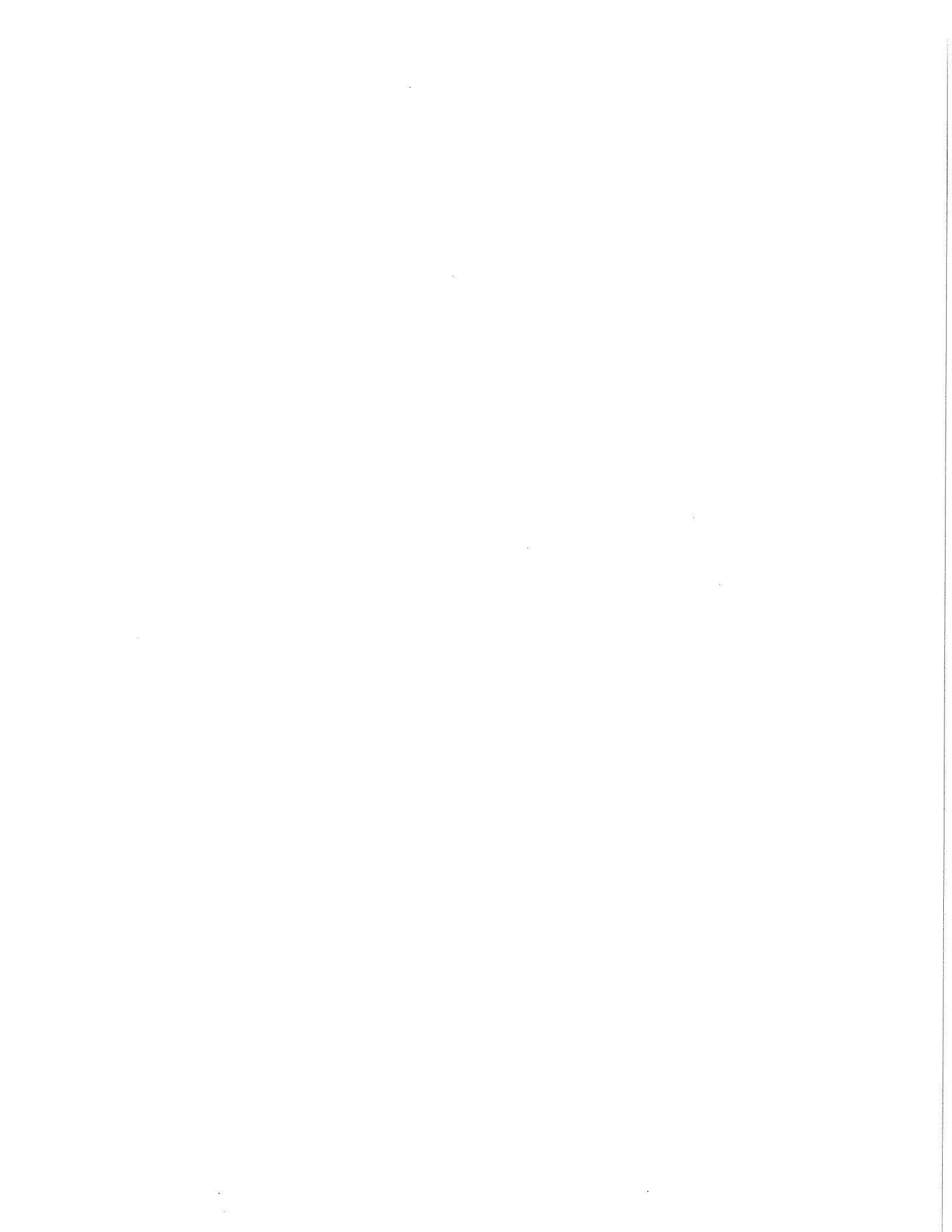
5. How is the human's role in the world affected by your answer to question number four?

Sources for
I Am Who Created Me?

Back and front You have set me and laid upon me Your hand. (**Psalm 139:5**)

Rashi makes an interesting note on "In the Image (lit: shadow) of God created him" (Genesis 1:27) He makes note that "The verse explains for you that the image which is fixed for him (the created being) is the image of his creator's likeness"

And God Said: Let us make man, etc. With whom did He take counsel? R. Joshua b. Levi said: He took counsel with the works of heaven and earth, like a king who had two advisers without whose knowledge he did nothing whatsoever. R. Samual b. Nahman said: He took counsel with the works of each day, like a king who had an associate without whose knowledge he did nothing. R. Ammi said: He took counsel with His own heart. It may be compared to a king who had a palace built by an architect, but when he saw it it did not please him: with whom is he to be indignant? Surely with the agent! Similarly, "And it grieved Him at His heart." (**Midrash Rabba, Genesis Rabba 8:3**)



Therefore was a single man only [first] created to teach thee that if anyone destroy a single soul from the human race, Scripture charges him as though he had destroyed a whole world, and whosoever rescues a single soul from the human race, Scripture credits him as though he had saved a whole world. (And [a single man only was first created] for the sake of peace in the human race, that no man might say to his fellow, 'My ancestor was greater than thy ancestor', and the heretics should not say, 'There are many powers in heaven', and [only one human being was first created] to proclaim the greatness of the Holy One, blessed be He, for man stamps many coins with one die and they are all alike one with the other, but the King of kings, the Holy One, Blessed be he, has stamped all mankind with the die of the first man and yet not one of them is like to his fellow. Therefore every one is duty bound to say, 'For my sake was the universe created'). (Mishna Sanhedrin 4:5)

Leader Instructions:

Activity: One In a Kazillion

Give each participant a piece of paper and a few crayons or markers. Have each person fold his or her paper in half and make a clear crease to separate the two sides. Have the participants draw a texture on one half of the paper, making sure to keep the other half clean. Tell participants to make the texture as intricate as the possible can, with as many layers as they can. This should take about ten minutes. If participants say they're done, they should be told to keep drawing until the time is up. Tell participants to draw constantly for the entire time. When time is called, ask participants to share what they see in their drawings. Did the drawing take on a certain life of its own? How did it develop? DO NOT tell participants what the second half of the paper is for. After the short discussion, tell participants to get their crayons and markers again and recreate the texture as best they can on the second half of the sheet. You will receive lots of complaining and "Why didn't you tell us!?" and "You told us to make it as detailed as possible!" Tell them to do their best and recreate the texture. Give about ten minutes to recreate the texture. Come back together and begin a discussion about what went in to recreating as opposed to creating the first texture. If the two images aren't exactly the same, which one needs to be fixed, why? This activity is meant to create an understanding about what it means to create something with a detailed plan, an original that is to be created again. How is this similar to and how does this differ from God's creating us in God's image?

7

Extra Sources

“Rabbi Shimon ben Elazar says ‘Have you ever seen a wild beast or bird that possesses a craft? And none the less they sustain themselves without care, and were they not created to serve me? But I was created to serve my Maker. Does it not follow that I should receive my maintenance without care? But I have performed my actions in evil and have forgone my support [and I have forfeited my right to support].’”

(Mishna Kidushin 4:14)

Rabbi Elazar ben Azaria said, If there be no [study of the] Law there is no good conduct, if there is no good conduct, if there be no good conduct there is no [study of the] Law; if there be no wisdom there is no fear [of God], if there be no fear [of God] there is no wisdom; if there be no understanding there is no knowledge, if there be no knowledge there is no understanding; If there be no flour there is no Torah, if there is no Torah there is no flour. (Mishna Avot 3:21)

He used to say, all who’s wisdom is greater than his deeds, to what is he similar? To a tree who’s branches are many, and who’s roots are few, and the wind comes and uproots and overturns it on to its face, as it is said: (Jeremiah 17:6) “For he shall be like a juniper tree in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh, but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, a salt land and not inhabited.” But all who’s works are greater than her wisdom, to what is he similar? To a tree who’s branches are few, and who’s roots are many, that even if all the winds that are in the world come and blow on it, there is no moving it from its place. As it is said: (Jeremiah 17:8) “And she shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out its roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but its foliage shall be green; and shall not be anxious in the year of drought, nei-

ther shall it cease from yielding fruit.” (Mishna Avot 3:22)

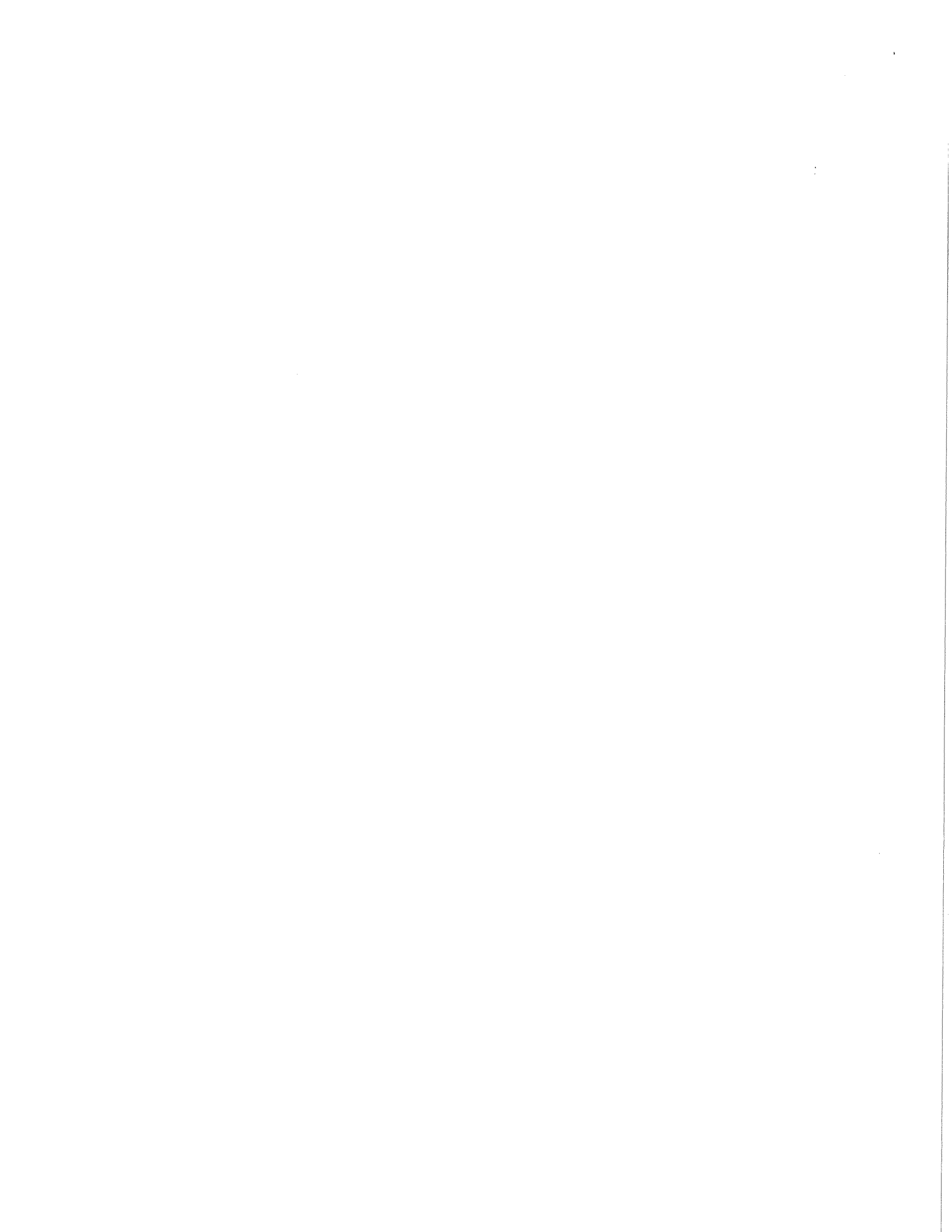
He who buys grain in the market, to what is he similar? To a child who is cut off from his mother, and although it is taken to homes of wet nurses it is not satisfied. And he who buys bread in the market, to what is he compared? To a man who digs his own grave - a wretched, precarious existence. But he who eats of his own produce is like a child reared at his mother’s breast. (Avot d’Rabbi Natan 30:6/29a)

... the Lord God had not sent rain upon the earth, and there were no people to till the soil... (Genesis 2:5)

Rabbi Simeon bar Yohai said:

Three things are equal in importance: earth, Humans, and rain. Rabbi Levi said: And these three each consist of three letters (in Hebrew), to teach that without earth, there is no rain, and without rain, earth cannot endure; while without either, humans cannot exist. (Midrash Genesis Rabbah 13.3)

Two men were sailing on a boat when one of them began taking animal skins out of his bag to let them dry. The skins stank and the second man asked the first to put the skins away. The first answered, “What I do at my own seat is not your business.” The second man thought for a moment and then took out a carpenter’s drill. He began drilling a hole under his seat. The first man jumped up and said, “Are you crazy? You’re going to kill us.” The second man replied, “What I do at my own seat is not your business.” (Adapted from Leviticus Rabbah 4:6 by Shomrei Adamah)



Glossary

Tikkun Olam: Hebrew phrase meaning fixing the World.

In 16th century T'sefat, Rabbi Isaac Luria observed that in his world, like ours, many things seemed to be wrong.

People suffered from hunger, disease, hatred, and war. "How could God allow such terrible things to happen?" wondered Luria. "Perhaps," he suggested, "it is because God needs our help." he explained his answer with a mystical story.

When first setting out to make the world, got planned to pour a Holy Light into everything in order to make it real. Guards prepared vessels to contain the Holy Light. But something went wrong. The light was so bright that the vessels burst, shattering into millions of broken pieces like dishes dropped on the floor. The Hebrew phrase which Luria used for this "breaking of the vessels" is sh'virat ha-kaylim.

Our world is a mess because it is filled with broken fragments. When people fight and hurt one another, they allow the world to remain shattered. The same can be said of people who have pantries filled with food and let others starve. According to Luria, we who live in a cosmic heap of broken pieces, and God cannot repair it alone.

That is why God created us and gave us freedom of choice. We are free to do whatever we pleased with our world. We cannot allow all things to remain broken or, as Luria urged, we can try to repair the mess. Luria's Hebrew phrase for "repairing the world" is tikkun olam. ("Repairing the World" from Lawrence Kushner, *The Book of Miracles*, p. 47)

Bal Tashchit: Hebrew phrase meaning do not destroy. It is a law from the Torah. It is a negative commandant, a commandment of what not to do. This law prohibits needlessly destroying or wasting resources, including a person's own property.

"When you lay siege and battle against a city for a long time in order to capture it, you must not destroy its trees, wielding an ax against them. You may eat of them, but you must not cut them down. Are the trees of the field human to withdraw before you into the besieged city? Only a tree which you know does not

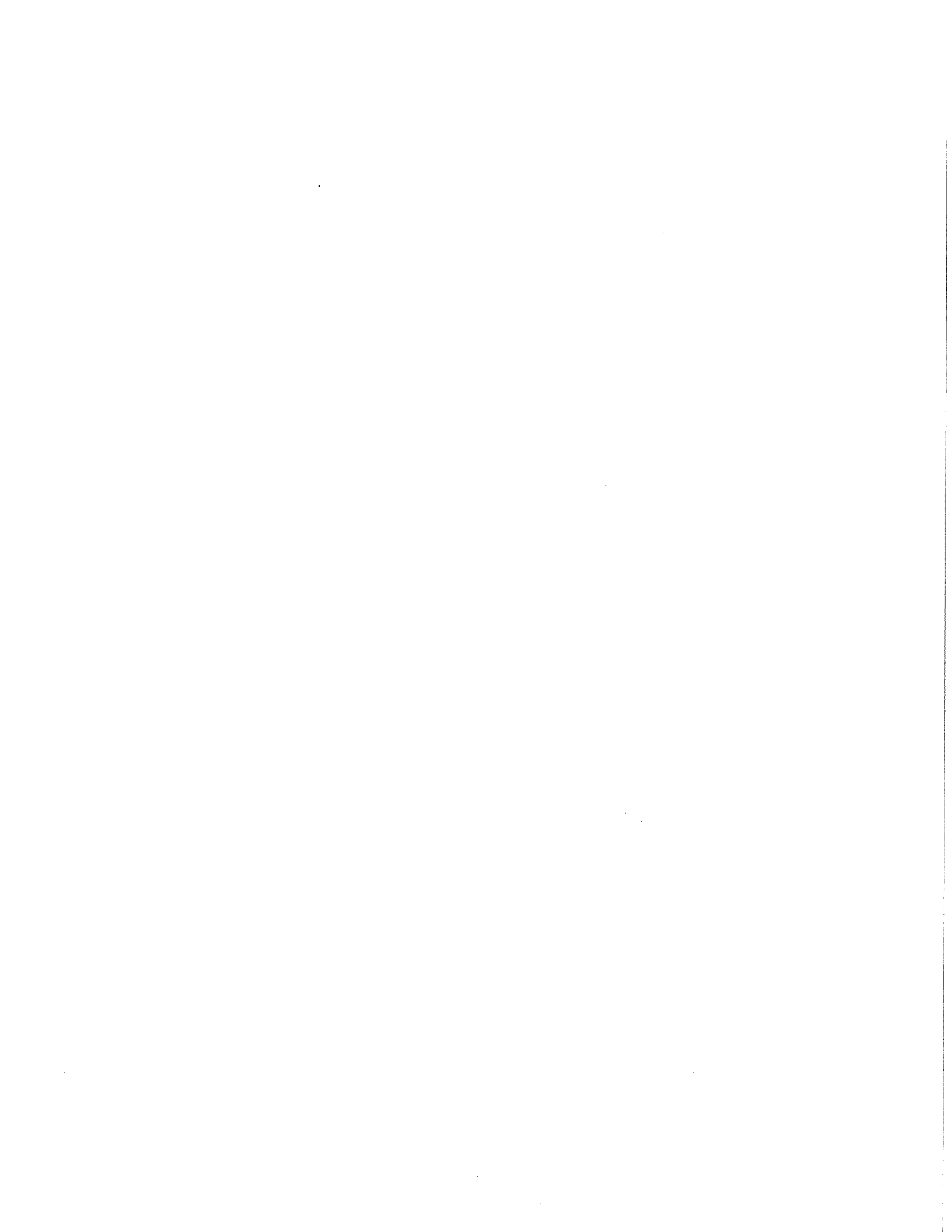
yield food may be destroyed; you may cut them down for constructing siege works against the city that is waging war on you, until it has been captured." (*Deuteronomy 20:19-20*)

Psolet: Hebrew word meaning waste.

Habitat: The physical place where a plant or animal can find the right food, shelter, water, temperature, and other things it needs for life.

8

9



Shoafim

ד'תש"ס

Nesiya 2000 תש"ס

July 10-12, 2000

Cape Cod National Seashore

פרקי אבות
Pirkei Avot

Ethics of the Fathers

Chapter 1

יד. הוא הִיָּה אומר:
אם אין אני לי, מי לי?
וכשאני לעצמי, מה אני?
ואם לא עכשיו, אימתי?

14 This was another favorite teaching of his:
If I am not for me, who will be?
If I am for myself alone, what am I?
And if not now, when?

— הלל
Hillel

The Giving Tree

By Shel Silverstein

Leader Instructions: On the first night of your Nesiya, when all campers are ready for bed and in their tents, the counselors should split up and each counselor should get in a different tent. Each counselor should read the following story by Shel Silverstein to the campers. Many of the campers will be familiar with the story. But even if all have heard it, have them get comfortable and listen. Do a dramatic reading of the story. One option, depending on the group dynamic, is to have the campers read. One can be the narrator, one the Tree, and one the Boy. When the story is finished ask the kids what they thought of it. Ask what they thought about different characters. You can even be as general as asking what they thought story was trying to teach. Whatever you do, don't force the discussion. Ask a few questions, and bring up a few ideas, but remember that if they don't want to talk you should let it go. The idea is to have a cozy bedtime reading, and some time with their tent.

Once there was a tree... and she loved a little boy.
And every day the boy would come and he would gather her leaves and make them into crowns and play king of the forest.
He would climb up her trunk and swing from her branches and eat apples.
And the would play hide-and-go-seek.
And when he was tired, he would sleep in her shade.
And the boy lover the tree... very much.
And the tree was happy.

But time went by.
And the boy grew older.
And the tree was often alone.
Then one day the boy came to the tree and the tree said, "come, Boy, come and climb up my trunk and swing from my branches and eat apples and play in my shade and by happy."

"I am too big to climb and play," said the boy. "I want to buy things and

have fun. I want some money. Can you give me some money?"

"I'm sorry," said the tree, "but I have no money. I have only leaves and apples. Take my apple, Boy, and sell them in the city. Then you will have money and you will be happy."

And so the boy climbed up the tree and gathered her apples and carried them away.
And the tree was happy.

But the boy stayed away for a long time... and the tree was sad.
And then one day the boy came back and the tree shook with joy and she said, "Come, Boy, climb up my trunk and swing from my branches and be happy."

"I am too busy to climb trees," said the boy. "I want a house to keep me warm," he said. "I want a wife and I was children, and so I need a house. Can you give me a house?"

"I have no house," said the tree. "The forest is my house, but you may cut off my branches and build a house. Then you will be happy."

And so the boy cut off her branches and carried them away to build his house. And the tree was happy.

But the boy stayed away for a long time. And when he came back, the tree was so happy she could hardly speak. "Come, Boy," she whispered, "come and play."

"I am too old and sad to play," said the boy. "I want a boat that will take me far away from here. Can you give me a boat?"

"Cut down my trunk and make a boat," said the tree. "Then you can sail away... and be happy."

And so the boy cut down her trunk and made a boat and sailed away. And the tree was happy... but not really.

And after a long time the boy came back again. "I am sorry, Boy," said the tree, "but I have nothing left to give you- My apples are gone."

"My teeth are too weak for apples," said the boy.

"My branches are gone," said the tree. "You cannot swing on them-"

"I am too old to swing on branches," said the boy.

"My trunk is gone," said the tree. "You cannot climb-"

"I am too tired to climb," said the boy.

"I am sorry," sighed the tree. "I wish that I could give you something... but I have nothing left. I am just an old stump. I am sorry..."

"I don't need very much now," said the boy, "just a quiet place to sit and rest. I am very tired."

"Well," said the tree, straightening herself up as much as she could, "Well, an old stump *is* good for sitting and resting. Come, Boy, sit down. Sit down and rest."

And the boy did. And the tree was happy.

the end

Rabbi Simcha Bunam 1762 - 1827

Leader Instructions: This activity is designed to give participants an action to go along with and enforce the delicate balance between responsibility to yourself and responsibility to the world or community. The first section is just a little background on Rabbi Simcha Bunam and may be skipped. The second section is a story about Rabbi Bunam and should be read to the campers. As always, you can ask a camper to volunteer to read. The story may spark some interesting comments. Try and help campers understand the idea of a hasidic story... few words and meanings on many different levels that are usually encrypted. Ask them to try to "crack the code" and see what they come up with for what the story is trying to teach. When the story *By Night* is finished being read and discussed, move on to the last section.

After presenting Rabbi Bunam's teaching the campers will be able to make their own cards. Use index cards and markers and have the campers write the phrase in big letters with drawings on one side of each card. Then fold the cards in half so that each card forms a little book. On the front, campers should decorate their cards, or write an opening to the saying. For example: "I must remember when I'm sad or down, or just burnt out by doing for others..." Then the inside of the card will complete the sentence with "The World was Created for Me." On the back cover campers again may decorate or write a word or phrase that speaks to them about either topic.

A little bit about Rabbi Simcha Bunam...

Simcha Bunam introduced a new trend in hasidism. He set rationality over ecstasy and feeling and designated the study of the Talmud and the Maharal's works as the foundation of hasidism. Study of Kabbala and the secrets of the Torah he set aside, on the ground that no one of his time was proficient in the wisdom of the Kabbala....

A fundamental precept of his hasidic approach was "to walk humbly," to cover up one's devoutness and conceal one's virtues from outsiders, putting on the appearance in public that one did not observe all the commandments. He was not strict about praying at the appointed times. This provoked much opposition from both mitnagdim and disciples of other hasidic rebbes. (*The Golden Tradition*, p99-100)

By Night

Two hours every night, as he lay in bed, Rabbi Bunam would listen to his disciple Mendel, later the rabbi of Kotsk, while he read to him out of the book of Splendor. Sometimes, Rabbi Bunam fell asleep for a little while, and the reading was interrupted. When he awoke, he himself [Rabbi Bunam] resumed it.

But once when he awoke, he said to his disciple: "Mendel, I have been thinking it over: Why should I go on living as I do? People keep coming to me and prevent me from serving God. I want to give up my service as a rabbi; I want to devote myself to the service of God." He repeated this again and again. His disciple listened and said nothing.

Finally, Rabbi Bunam dozed again. After a few breaths, he sat up and said: "Mendel, no rabbi has been permitted to do so, I am not permitted to do it either."

Know where you are...

One of Rabbi Bunam's most famous teachings was a system of reminding one's self who they were. Let's explain... Rabbi Bunam taught that each person should walk around with two cards in his or her pockets. One card should have written on it "I am of ashes and dust" while the other should have written on it "The world was created for me."

One card should be in the left pocket and one card should be in the right pocket. When one finds him or her self depressed, feeling like the world is against them, or that he or she is nothing, then one should reach in to the pocket with the card that has written on it "The world was created for me." This will remind one of the order of creation, that humans were created last and that all the earth has to offer is for humans. But, on the other hand, if one is high on themselves. If one thinks that he or she is on top of the world, or is without responsibility to others. If he or she thinks that the world can be used and

abused without end, then the card that has written on it "I am of ashes and dust" will remind him or her that we are each just a piece of a larger cycle of life. We, like everything else, return to the dust when our time on earth is done.

The answer here as to who we really are, and should be, lies between the two extremes. We cannot be only for ourselves... think always that all was created for us. Nor can we live lives that are only for others. Who we need to be is between the two extremes, just as putting one card in each pocket puts you in the middle, and lets you be both.

Psolet on my plate

OO WA OO WA OO WA OO OO (X2)

Each day I go to breakfast
Put oatmeal in my bowl
Fill up my glass with O.J.
Eat half my jell roll.

Chorus #1

I can't believe I took more than I ate
That's why I have so much psolet on my plate.

Take two bites of an apple
Drop raisins on the trail
Pull breadcrusts off my sandwich
I say it's 'cause they're stale.

Chorus #2:

Each night I ask the stars in the sky (Hey stars)
Why does the food on my plate pile up so high?

OO WA OO WA OO WA OO OO

But now I'm feelin' happy
I'm peaceful and serene
I'm a ba'al bal tash'chit
Because my plate is clean!

Chorus #3:

It's true! I took no more than I ate
That's why you'll never find psolet on my plate

Words by Adam Berman, Jodi Cohen and Ben Landman
To the tune of "Teenager In Love"

Habitat Song

Chorus

Habitat, habitat, have to have a habitat
Habitat, habitat, have to have a habitat
Habitat, habitat, have to have a habitat
Have to have a habitat to carry on.

The forest is a habitat, a multi-layered habitat
It's where the tallest trees are at,
It's where a bear can scratch her back,
It keeps the ground from rolling back,
renews the aquifers, in fact,
The forest is a habitat that we depend on.

Chorus

The river is a habitat, a flowing, changing
habitat,
It's where the freshest water's at,
for people, fish, and muskrats,
But when the people dump the trash
the river takes the biggest rap,
The river is a habitat that we depend on.

Chorus

The ocean is a habitat, a dark and salty habitat,
It's where the deepest water's at,
It's where the biggest mammal's at,
It's where our future food is at,
It keeps the atmosphere intact,
The ocean is a habitat that we depend on.

Chorus

People are different than foxes and rabbits,
Affect the whole earth with our bad habits,
Better to love it while we still have it,
Or rat-ta-tat-tat, our habitat's gone.

Words and Music by Bill Oliver

ALL GOD'S CRITTERS

Written by Bill Staines.

C

All God's critter's got a place in the choir,

G

C

C7

Some sing low and some sing higher,

F

C

Some sing out loud on the telephone wire,

C

D

C

And some just clap their hands, or paws, or anything they got, now.

Listen to the bass it's the one on the bottom,
Where the bullfrog groans and the hippopotamus
Moans and groans with a big to do,
And the old cow just goes moo.

(chorus)

The dogs and the cats they take up the middle,
The hummingbird hums and cricket fiddles,
The donkey brays and pony neighs,
And the old coyote howls.

(chorus)

Listen to the top where the little bird's singing
On the melody with a high note ringing,
And the hoot owl hollers over everything,
And the jay bird disagrees.

(chorus)

Extra sources

How can you buy or sell the sky, the warmth of the land? ...If we do not own the freshness of the air and the sparkle of the water, how can you buy them?

Every part of this earth is sacred. Every shining pine needle, every sandy shore, every mist in the dark woods, every clearing and humming insect is holy. We are part of the earth and it is part of us. The perfumed flowers are our sisters; the deer, the horse, the eagle, these are our brothers. The rocky crests, the juices in the meadows, the body heat of the pony, and people- all belong to the same family.

This Shining water that moves in the streams and rivers is not just water but the blood of our ancestors. If we sell you land, you must remember that it is sacred, and you must teach your children that it is sacred and that each ghostly reflection in the clear water of the lakes tells of events and memories... The water's murmur is the voice of my father's father.

The rivers are our brothers, they quench our thirst. The rivers carry our canoes, and feed our children. If we sell you our land, you must remember, and teach your children, that the rivers are our brothers and yours, and you must henceforth give the rivers the kindness you would give any brother.

You must teach your children that the ground beneath their feet is the ashes of our grandparents. So that they will respect the land, tell your children that the earth is rich with the lives of our kin. Teach your children... that the earth is our mother. Whatever befalls the earth befalls the children of the earth. If we spit upon the ground, we spit upon ourselves.

This we know; the earth does not belong to us; we belong to the earth. All things are connected. We are kin after all... (Ted Perry, 1970, Speech often attributed to Chief Seattle, 1851)

And the Eternal, God, took the Adam and put him in the Garden of Eden to till it and to keep it. (Genesis 2:15)

“Rabbi Shimon ben Elazar says ‘Have you ever seen a wild beast or bird that possesses a craft? And none the less they sustain themselves without care, and were they not created to serve me? But I was created to serve my Maker. does it not follow that I should receive my maintenance without care? But I have performed my actions in evil and have forgone my support [and I have forfeited my right to support].’” (Mishna Kiddushin 4:14)

Rabbi Elazar ben Azaria said, If there be no [study of the] Law there is no good conduct, if there is no good conduct, if there be no good conduct there is no [study of the] Law; if there be no wisdom there is no fear [of God], if there be no fear [of God] there is no wisdom; if there be no

understanding there is no knowledge, if there be no knowledge there is no understanding; If there be no flour there is no Torah, if there is no Torah there is no flour. (Mishna Avot 3:21)

He used to say, all who's wisdom is greater than his deeds, to what is he similar? To a tree who's branches are many, and who's roots are few, and the wind comes and uproots and overturns it on to its face, as it is said:(Jeremiah 17:6) "For he shall be like a juniper tree in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh, but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, a salt land and not inhabited." But all who's works are greater than her wisdom, to what is he similar? To a tree who's branches are few, and who's roots are many, that even if all the winds that are in the world come and blow on it, there is no moving it from its place. As it is said:(Jeremiah 17:8) "And she shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out its roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but its foliage shall be green; and shall not be anxious in the year of drought, neither shall it cease from yielding fruit." (Mishna Avot 3:22)

He who buys grain in the market, to what is he similar? To a child who is cut off from his mother, and although it is taken to homes of wet nurses it is not satisfied. And he who buys bread in the market, to what is he compared? To a man who digs his own grave - a wretched, precarious existence. But he who eats of his own produce is like a child reared at his mother's breast. (Avot d'Rabbi Natan 30:6/29a)

... the Lord God had not sent rain upon the earth, and there were no people to till the soil... (Genesis 2:5)

Rabbi Simeon bar Yohai said:

Three things are equal in importance: earth, Humans, and rain. Rabbi Levi said: And these three each consist of three letters (in Hebrew), to teach that without earth, there is no rain, and without rain, earth cannot endure; while without either, humans cannot exist. (Midrash Genesis Rabbah 13.3)

BLESSINGS FOR ALL OCCASIONS

Upon eating fruit of the tree:

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם, בורא פרי העץ

Blessed are you God, creator of the universe, who creates fruit of the tree.

Upon eating fruit of the ground:

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם, בורא פרי האדמה

Blessed are you God, creator of the universe, who creates fruit of the ground.

Upon smelling fragrant trees or shrubs:

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם, בורא עצי בשמים

Blessed are you God, creator of the universe, who creates fragrant trees.

Upon smelling fragrant herbs or plants:

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם, בורא עשבי בשמים

Blessed are you God, creator of the universe, who creates fragrant plants.

Upon seeing wonders of nature including, lightning, shooting stars, high mountains and a sunrise:

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם, עשה מעשה בראשית

Blessed are you God, creator of the universe, source of creation.

Upon hearing thunder or seeing a storm:

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם, שכחו וגבורתו מלא עולם

Blessed are you God, creator of the universe, who's strength and power fills the universe.

Upon seeing exceptionally beautiful creatures:

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם, שככה לו בעולמו

Blessed are you God, creator of the universe, who has such in the world.

Upon seeing exceptionally strange creatures:

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם, משנה הבריות

Blessed are you God, creator of the universe, who differentiates creatures.



BLESSINGS FOR ALL OCCASIONS

Upon seeing the ocean:

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם, שעשה את הים הגדול

Blessed are you God, creator of the universe, who made the great sea.

Upon seeing a rainbow:

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם, זוכר הברית, ונאמן בבריתו, וקיים במאמרו

Blessed are you God creator of the universe, who remembers the covenant, is faithful to it, and keeps Your promise.

Upon doing or seeing something for the first time:

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם, שהחינו וקימנו והגיענו לזמן הזה

Blessed are you God, creator of the universe, who grants us life, sustains us and helps us reach this day.

Upon rain or good news:

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם, הטוב והמטיב

Blessed are you God, creator of the universe, who is good and does good.



BAR / BAT MITZVAH: תּוֹרַת בָּר / בַּת

Becoming a Bar or Bat Mitzvah means becoming a son (*bar*) or daughter (*bat*) of "the commandment" (*mitzvah*). Traditionally understood as a time of taking on Jewish responsibilities, *Bar / Bat Mitzvah* is a time to ask yourself: What responsibilities do I have? To whom am I responsible—myself, my family, my community, other creatures, the land, the Creator of all? Your *Bar* or *Bat Mitzvah* is a time to reflect on your place in the world around you.

During your *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* ceremony, you will have the opportunity to speak to your family and your community about your vision of what being a responsible Jewish adult means. Express your concern and caring for the Earth. Talk about why you believe protecting the Earth is an important, Jewish thing to do!



IDEAS FOR BAR / BAT MITZVAH SPEECHES:

- Talk about the ecology of your *Torah* portion. In what natural setting does your portion of the *Torah* or *Hafarah* take place? In what landscape does the story unfold? What season is it? How do the people in your portion relate to the natural world around them? Are there any commandments given that involve human relationship to the natural world? What does the *Torah* teach about our relationship to the environment, to the Land of Israel, to animals? Ask your rabbi to help you. See [Torah and Flora](#) (resource list).

- Talk about what it means to fulfill the commandment *Lo'avadah ul'Shomrah*, to till and tend, to serve and protect the Earth (Genesis 2:15). Use some of the references in the Resource list to research Jewish traditions on the environment and talk about what keeping those traditions means today. Pick one thing that you can do for the Earth and explain how it is a Jewish commitment. See the previous section, "Jewish Principles for Caring for the Earth," for some ideas.

- If there are any holidays in your *Torah* portion, talk about how those holidays are connected to the cycles and rhythms of the Earth, and how that connection is meaningful to you. See *Seasons of Our Joy* (Resource list).

- Talk about *Shabbat* as an environmentally caring practice—a time when we do not interfere with the cycles of the world but choose to limit our actions and appreciate the world on its own terms. See *The Sabbath* (Resource list).

- Talk about how working to solve environmental problems is an important part of *Tikkun Olam*—repairing the world.





MITZVAH PROJECTS:

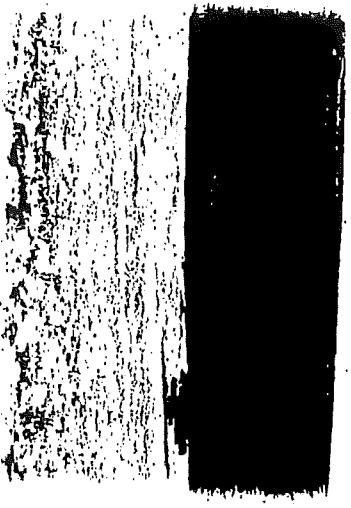
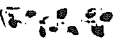
Mitzvah means "good deed" as well as commandment. Perhaps at the time of your *Bar/Bar Mitzvah* you would like to do a project that helps to solve one of the problems that concerns you. Here are a few ideas:

Involve your synagogue youth group in protecting the Earth.

- Clean a park in your neighborhood.
- Plant trees.
- Write letters to government officials.
- Arrange a field trip to a nature center.

Join Operation Noah by adopting an endangered species or habitat. Operation Noah is a campaign created by COEFL to involve the Jewish community in protecting endangered species and their habitats. Research what you and others can do to help and talk about it in your speech. (See Resource List.)

Become a recycling watchdog! Make sure your family, synagogue, and school recycle. If they don't, help them learn how. (See "Getting Started: Basic Principles of Environmental Caring.")



PREPARING FOR YOUR BAR OR BAT MITZVAH...

The months before a bar/bat mitzvah can be frenetic for both parents and teenagers. It may help to keep this thought in the back of your minds: you are all about to set out on a spiritual journey, a search for nothing less than the ultimate source of meaning in your lives.

PREPARING FOR YOUR BAR OR BAT MITZVAH...

(continued)

MEDITATION

(for *Bnai mitzvah*)

יהי רצון מלפניך...

Ye'hi ratzon mi'faneikha...

May it be Your will that as I study and review Torah, turning it and turning it and making it my own, I will find everything in it.

RITUAL

To keep perspective during the months before a bar or bat mitzvah, set a moment aside on the day your preparations officially begin: this might be when you receive a date for the bar or bat mitzvah, or on the day tutoring or classes begin. On index cards, parents and their children can write down one sentence which will be a reminder to them of one spiritual goal they might attain during this year of intense study and preparation. Post the index cards on the refrigerator, and keep on track by consulting the cards often.

BLESSING

(For parents and children, after posting the index cards)

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם
 אשר קדשנו במצוותיו וצונו לתקן ברכי תורתו.
*Borukh atah Adonai eloheinu melekh ha'olam
 asher kadeshanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivatanu la'asok
 b'divrei Torah.*

We praise You for the mitzvot which make our lives holy and for the mitzvot of studying the words of Torah.

May the words of Torah be sweet in our mouths and in the mouths of all Your people so that we, our children, and all the children of Israel may come to love You and study Torah for all the right reasons.

TEACHING

יהי אהודים אמות.

Adonai elohieichem emet

I, the Lord, am your God. (*Numbers 15:41*)
 Yehudah ben Tema taught at thirteen -- you gain responsibility for the mitzvot. (*Pirkei Avot 5:23*)

Ben Hay-Hay taught the reward is proportionate to the effort. (*Pirkei Avot 5:25*)

The sages...said, "One should always engage in the study of Torah, even if not for its own sake, for one who begins thus will end by studying for its own sake. Hence, when instructing the young... we teach them to serve God out of fear or for the sake of reward, till their knowledge increases and they have attained a large measure of wisdom. Then we reveal to them this mystical truth, little by little, and train them by easy stages till they have grasped and comprehended it, and serve God out of love." (*Maimonides, The Book of Knowledge, chaptre X5*)

נעשה ונשמע.

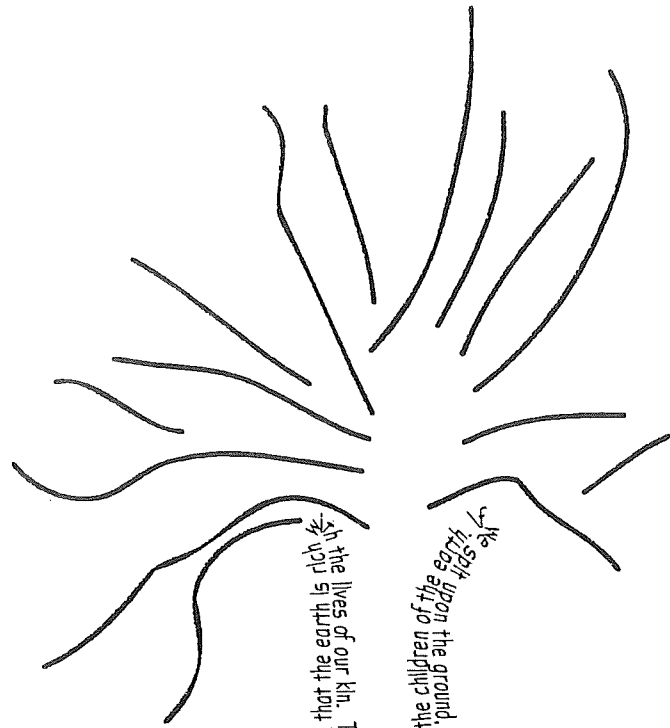
N'aseh v'nishma.

we do things, later we understand.

(continued on next page)

That Thing Called Prayer

Magshimim Nesiya
July 17-19, 2000



the earth is our mother.
the land, tell your children... that the earth is our mother.
the lives of our kin. Teach your children... that the earth is our mother.
Whatever befalls the earth befalls the children of the earth. We spit upon ourselves, if we spit upon the ground, we spit upon ourselves.

See First
Ted Perry, 1970. Speech also attributed to Chief Seattle, 1851

must teach your children that the ground beneath their feet is the ashes of our grandparents. So that they will respect the earth.

How can you buy or sell the sky, the warmth of the land? ...If we do not own the freshness of the air and the sparkle of the water, how can you buy them?

Teach your children that the shining water that moves in the streams and rivers is not just water but the blood of our ancestors. If we sell you land, you must remember that it is sacred, and you must teach your children that it is sacred and that each ghostly reflection in the clear water of the lakes tells of events and memories... The water's murmur is the voice of my father's father.

The rivers are our brothers, they quench our thirst. The rivers carry our canoes, and feed our children. If we sell you our land, you must remember, and teach your children, that the rivers are our brothers and yours, and you must never forget to give the rivers the kindness you would give any brother.

I Am Not a God

A Hasidic Tale About Rabbi Menahem Mendel of Kotsk

It was a bitter frosty winter. One night, Menahem Mendel, the old rebbe of Kotsk, sat all alone by his stove, deep in study of the Gemara. The windows were covered with frost. He was reciting aloud at the top of his voice. He did not see or hear a sleigh pulling up before his house and a man asking to see him.

In the vestibule, the rabbe's attendant dozed by the stove. When the man, dressed in a fur coat and covered with frost, entered, the attendant awoke and asked what he wanted.

The man put down the driver's whip near the door, shook off some of the ice, rubbed his hands. "I must see the rabbe, I have come from a village many miles away, on behalf of my only daughter who has been three days in labor. It is a matter of life and death. Let me see the rabbe."

So absorbed was the rebbe in his study, reciting so loudly, the attendant was afraid to enter. The man pleaded with him, even promising him gifts. But the attendant stood tiptoe at the door, listening. The man became impatient, as if he were on hot coals. He cajoled and he threatened, but it was no use. It was no small matter interrupting the rebbe at his studies! The man, seeing the attendant was afraid to enter, said: "I will go in myself." The attendant tried to stop him, they struggled; the man pushed the attendant aside, and threw open the door. He began to weep: "Sainted Rebbe, a daughter of Israel is in danger. She has been three days in labor. There is no doctor in the village and the weather is too frosty to bring her into town. Rebbe, have pity, pray for her!"

The rebbe looked at him, then he went to the door and shouted: "I am not a god. What do you want of me? Why are you pleading with me? Plead with God!"

He told the man to leave and returned to his studies. The man was so upset that the attendant tried to comfort him: "God will help. With God's help, your daughter will be all right. Don't worry, the rebbe knows what he's doing."

But the man would not be comforted. With renewed courage, once again he burst open the door to the rebbe's study and fell at the rebbe's feet, imploring him. The rebbe's wife and children came running to see what was the matter. The women, too, began weeping, and the rebbe's wife entreated: "Mendel, say something to him. It is a matter of life and death."

The rebbe did not reply, his head still bent over the Gemara. The man still lay on the floor, bleating like a calf. The neighbors, too, had come running. Then, pacing up and down his study, the rebbe shouted, "What do these village Jews think? Do they think I am a priest that they kiss my shoes? I am not a god. Go home, pray to God, and your daughter will be well."

But the man kept wailing. "Rebbe, help me; only you, sainted rebbe; I will stay here until you promise me that the birth will go well."

The study was full now. The neighbors were crying, some women even said the man was right to insist on the rebbe's blessing. The rebbe himself stood at a window, his head pressed against a frozen pane. The room was heavy with anguish. Then the rebbe cried out: "Fools, dolts, why have you come here? Do you think I am a god? That I can bring the dead back to life? You think that I, Mendel Kotsker, have influence in Heaven? That if I choose I can turn the frost into a heat wave? Fools, asses. Out! Out! Out!"

The attendant drove all the people out of the study, but the man would not leave. He remained on the floor, like a madman. The rebbe returned to the Gemara, his voice rising ever higher as if he wanted to blot out the incident. The man lay on the floor, perhaps an hour, sighing from time to time. When the rebbe finished, he put his kershief on the Gemara, and turned to the man. They looked at each other. Then the rebbe said, "Your horse must be frozen. Why are you waiting?" The man began to weep anew: "I cannot go home, rebbe, unless you help me!"

How can I help you?" asked the rebbe calmly. "I am not a doctor and certainly not a god. Go home. God will probably help you."

His word took effect. The man arose and said goodbye. He took his whip, got into his sleigh, and quickly drove away.

The next day the man returned, cheerful. The attendant asked, "Are congratulations in order?"

"Double congratulations. My daughter had two boys."

The rebbe received him with a smile; "Did you need my blessing?"

"Rebbe," replied the man, "Your last words yesterday helped. At the very moment you were telling me to go home my daughter gave birth."

Every blade of grass sings poetry to God without ulterior motives or alien thoughts- without consideration of reward. How good and lovely it is, then, when one is able to hear this song of the grasses. It is therefore a precious thing to conduct oneself with piety when strolling among them. (Rabbi Nachman of Bratslav)

Rabbi Nachman's Prayer

Master of the Universe

grant me the ability to be alone;

May it be my custom to go outdoors each day

Among the trees and the grass,

Among all growing things;

And, there may I be alone

to enter into prayer

There I may express all that is in my heart

Talking to you, the one to whom I belong.

The child of a certain rabbi used to wander in the woods. At first his father let him wander, but over time he became concerned. The woods were dangerous. The father did not know what lurked there.

He decided to discuss the matter with his child. One day he took him aside and said, "You know, I have noticed that each day you walk into the woods. I wonder, why do you go there?" The boy said to his father, "I go there to find God."

"That is a very good thing," the father replied gently. "I am glad you are searching for God. But, my child, don't you know that God is the same everywhere?"

"Yes," the boy answered, "but I am not." (Rabbi Nachman of Bratslav)

When you say "Blessed are You" ...you should think that He is standing before you, as it says, "I have placed the Lord before me always"; and you should have the fear of God on your face, and love of God within you, and speak with the full intention and concentration of your heart. (*Sefer HaRokeach*, quoted in *Reshit Hochmah, Sha'ar HaKedusha*, chap. 14, #32)

On Grace After Meals...

The tradition takes the feeling of satisfaction after a meal and, connecting it with God, turns it into thankfulness. Thus, the natural feeling is lifted up into the realm of spirituality. This happiness, now religious and spiritual, can be lifted up even further and carried into singing. (Yitzhak Buxbaum, *Jewish Spiritual Practices*, p. 272)

Before you say the Grace after Meals, have the *kavvanah* that God has been very kind to you in having given you this food to enliven you, and through this you will come to a joyful state of mind and to love of God. (*Derech Hayim*, 6-18)

To understand prayer, it is essential that we see it in a larger context. When reflected through the prism of Jewish worship, however, prayer is much more than that. It is an integral part of the complete religious life of a Jew- an essential part, but nevertheless only a part. It cannot be isolated from the rest except artificially, for it interweaves with everything else to create the harmonious whole that is Judaism. The other major components of a full Jewish life are study, ritual practice, and moral living. Although prayer is our way of communicating with God, we must remember that it is not the only way. All of these paths lead to God, and all of them are interconnected. (Reuven Hammer, *Entering Jewish Prayer*, p.3)

Prayer for Hope

Set all at peace with wisdom of heart.

Let all who seek truth find it in life and find the way to teach it.

Let all people both great and small be protected from destructive thought.

And may all see and live a truth which is good in Your eyes.

Through that truth let us live in peace and freedom with only the confines of Your will.

Blessed are you, Lord, our God who gives hope.

Chevruta Questions:
That Thing Called Prayer

1. What is prayer? Looking at some of the prayers and comments on prayer here, how would you describe prayer in one sentence?
2. What makes prayer "count"?
3. Look in the prayer book and see if you see any common themes, or basic categories of prayer. Are these all prayers, or is the "Prayer Service" Made up of more than just prayers?
4. What is the difference between blessing and prayer?
5. What is the purpose of the Amidah? What is it about... are there more than one meanings of the prayer?
6. What does a piece of the prayer service like the Shema do? What does saying this twice a day do for us?

Chevruta Questions:
Prayer and Me

1. Do you find any of the prayers speak to you more than others? Why?
2. According to Reuven Hammer, "Individual prayer may be mainly a way of communicating with God and expressing our feelings, reactions, and needs." Do you agree or disagree? Why?
3. What makes you enjoy and connect with prayer? What pushes you away from prayer?
4. What does prayer mean to you?

Extra sources

"Rabbi Shimon ben Elazar says 'Have you ever seen a wild beast or bird that possesses a craft? And none the less they sustain themselves without care, and were they not created to serve me? But I was created to serve my Maker. does it not follow that I should receive my maintenance without care? But I have performed my actions in evil and have forgone my support [and I have forfeited my right to support].'" (Mishna Kiddushin 4:14)

Rabbi Elazar ben Azaria said, If there be no [study of the] Law there is no good conduct, if there is no good conduct there is no [study of the] Law; if there be no wisdom there is no fear [of God], if there be no fear [of God] there is no wisdom; if there be no understanding there is no knowledge, if there be no knowledge there is no understanding; If there be no flour there is no Torah, if there is no Torah there is no flour. (Mishna Avot 3:21)

He used to say, all who's wisdom is greater than his deeds, to what is he similar? To a tree who's branches are many, and who's roots are few, and the wind comes and uproots and overturns it on to its face, as it is said:(Jeremiah 17:6) "For he shall be like a juniper tree in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh, but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, a salt land and not inhabited." But all who's works are greater than her wisdom, to what is he similar? To a tree who's branches are few, and who's roots are many, that even if all the winds that are in the world come and blow on it, there is no moving it from its place. As it is said:(Jeremiah 17:8) "And she shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out its roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but its foliage shall be green; and shall not be anxious in the year of drought, neither shall it cease from yielding fruit." (Mishna Avot 3:22)

He who buys grain in the market, to what is he similar? To a child who is cut off from his mother, and although it is taken to homes of wet nurses it is not satisfied. And he who buys bread in the market, to what is he compared? To a man who digs his own grave - a wretched, precarious existence. But he who eats of his own produce is like a child reared at his mother's breast. (Avot d'Rabbi Natan 30:6/29a)

... the Lord God had not sent rain upon the earth, and there were no people to till the soil... (Genesis 2:5)

Rabbi Simeon bar Yohai said:

Three things are equal in importance: earth, Humans, and rain. Rabbi Levi said: And these three each consist of three letters (in Hebrew), to teach that without earth, there is no rain, and without rain, earth cannot endure; while without either, humans cannot exist. (Midrash Genesis Rabbah 13.3)

Two men were sailing on a boat when one of them began taking animal skins out of his bag to let them dry. The skins stank and the second man asked the first to put the skins away. The first answered, "What I do at my own seat is not your business." The second man thought for a moment and then took out a carpenter's drill. He began drilling a hole under his seat. The first man jumped up and said, "Are you crazy? You're going to kill us." The second man replied, "What I do at my own seat is not your business." (Adapted from Leviticus Rabbah 4:6 by Shomrei Adamah)

BLESSINGS FOR ALL OCCASIONS

Upon eating fruit of the tree:

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם, בורא פרי העץ

Blessed are you God, creator of the universe, who creates fruit of the tree.

Upon eating fruit of the ground:

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם, בורא פרי האדמה

Blessed are you God, creator of the universe, who creates fruit of the ground.

Upon smelling fragrant trees or shrubs:

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם, בורא עצי בשמים

Blessed are you God, creator of the universe, who creates fragrant trees.

Upon smelling fragrant herbs or plants:

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם, בורא עשבי בשמים

Blessed are you God, creator of the universe, who creates fragrant plants.

Upon seeing wonders of nature including, lightning, shooting stars, high mountains and a sunrise:

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם, עשה מעשה בראשית

Blessed are you God, creator of the universe, source of creation.

Upon hearing thunder or seeing a storm:

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם, שכחו וגבורתו מלא עולם

Blessed are you God, creator of the universe, who's strength and power fills the universe.

Upon seeing exceptionally beautiful creatures:

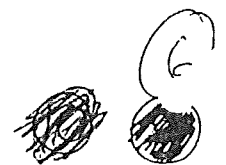
ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם, שככה לו בעולמו

Blessed are you God, creator of the universe, who has such in the world.

Upon seeing exceptionally strange creatures:

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם, משנה הבריות

Blessed are you God, creator of the universe, who differentiates creatures.



BLESSINGS FOR ALL OCCASIONS

Upon seeing the ocean:

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם, שעשה את הים הגדול

Blessed are you God, creator of the universe, who made the great sea.

Upon seeing a rainbow:

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם, זוכר הברית, ונאמן בבריתו, וקים במאמרו

Blessed are you God creator of the universe, who remembers the covenant, is faithful to it, and keeps Your promise.

Upon doing or seeing something for the first time:

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם, שהחינו וקימנו והגיענו לזמן הזה

Blessed are you God, creator of the universe, who grants us life, sustains us and helps us reach this day.

Upon rain or good news:

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם, הטוב והמטיב

Blessed are you God, creator of the universe, who is good and does good.



SEEING NATURAL WONDERS...

A story is told: I had seen spectacular mountains in the Alps and the Rockies in Colorado. I didn't think Yosemite would be much different. More mountains, maybe some waterfalls I thought, and it will all be nice – at least I'll get out of the city. Driving from San Francisco through the dry heat of the desert, we pulled into the heart of Yosemite as the sun began to set. We got out of the car and were astounded. What we saw: trees five times bigger than any we'd ever seen, spectacular rocks climbing to the heavens, waterfalls cascading into lush valleys. We were struck silent.

MEDITATION

השתחו' לה' בהדרת קדש.
*Hishtachavu l'Adonai
b'hadrat kodesh.*

The world is God's
intensely holy place.

Hear God's voice in
the waters, in the
thunder. Hear God's
voice in the tall trees,
in the forest, in the
wilderness.

קול ה' בכה, קול ה' בהדרה.
*Kol Adonai ba'ko'ach,
kol Adonai be'hadar.*

Hear God's voice in
power, hear God's
voice in beauty.
(Psalms 29:4)

RITUAL

In silence, take off (or
imagine taking off)
your shoes, allowing
your feet to touch the
ground. As you wit-
ness the majestic
beauty of high moun-
tains, vast deserts, sun-
rises, lightning and
shooting stars, take as
much time as you
need to acknowledge
that you stand on
holy ground.

BLESSING

ברוך אתה עשה
מעשה בראשית.

*Barukh atah oseh
ma'aseh b'reshit.*
Praised are You,
renewer of the works
of creation. Let me be
attentive to the won-
der of Your world.

הללוהו שמש וירח, הללוהו
כל ככבי אור.

*Halleluhu shemesh
v'yarei'ach, Halleluhu
kol kokhvei or.*

Praised is God, sun
and moon, Praised is
God, all bright stars.
(Psalms 148:3)

TEACHING

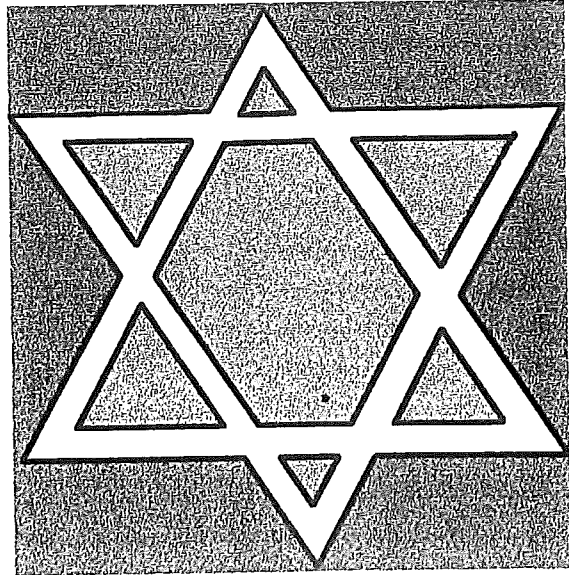
And God called the
dry places "earth" and
the water-springs God
called "seas", and God
saw that it was good.
(Genesis 1:10)

The skies will rejoice,
the earth vibrate with
celebration, the sea
roar with its full
force, the fields sing
out, the trees of the
forest cry out in
ecstasy.
(Psalms 96:11-12)

Every blade of grass
has a guardian above
it. *(Zohar 1:34a)*

On seeing mountains,
hills, seas, rivers and
deserts, one should
say, "Blessed is the
One who creates."
*(Jerusalem Talmud:
Brakhot 9:1)*

ברוך אתה שככה לו בעולמו.
Barukh atah she'kakhah lo b'olamo.
Praised are You who has created
such beauty in Your world.



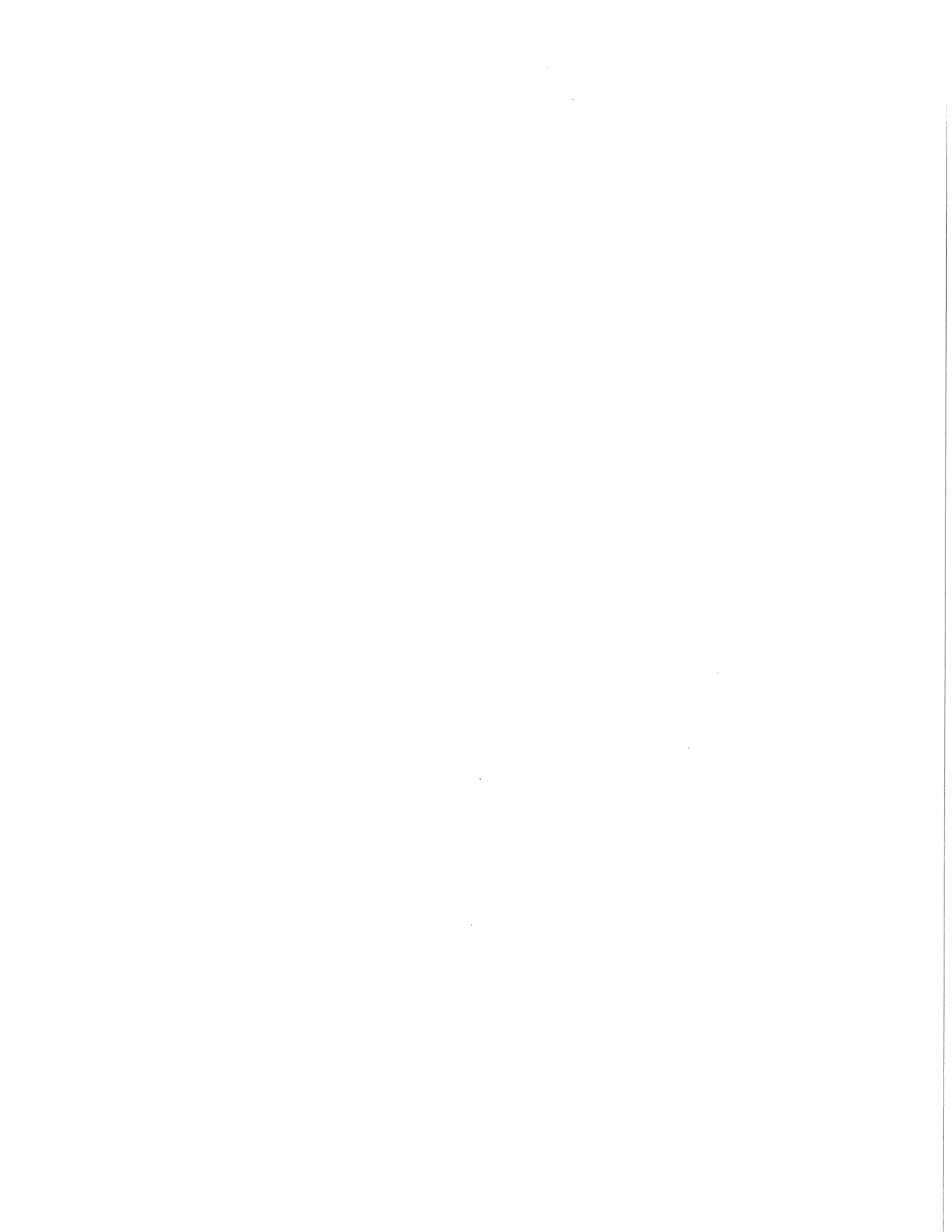
A song of ascents. I turn my eyes to the mountains; from where will my help come? My help comes from God, maker of heaven and earth. God will not let your foot give way; your guardian will not slumber; See, the guardian of Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps! God is your guardian, God is your protection at your right hand. By day the sun will not strike you, nor the moon by night. God will guard you from all harm; God will guard your life. God will guard your going and coming now and forever.

In a sense, prayer begins where expression ends. The words that reach our lips are often but waves of an overflowing stream touching the shore. We often seek and miss, struggle and fail to adjust our unique feelings to the patterns of texts... Words can only open the door, and we can only weep on the threshold of our incommunicable thirst after the incomprehensible. (Abraham Joshua Heschel in *Man's Quest for God*)

Prayer for Hope

Set all at peace with wisdom of heart. Let all who seek truth find it in life and find the way to teach it. Let all people both great and small be protected from destructive thought. And may all see and live a truth which is good in Your eyes. Through that truth let us live in peace and freedom with only the confines of Your will. May You, our God, be blessed as the giver of hope.

Personal Prayer Sheets...
Lampers write their own prayers
to use as centers.



Andrew

CAMPING STAFF OVERNIGHT ESSENTIALS
(sample list for 3 day/2night trip)

Clothing: (includes what you'll wear the day we leave)

- 2 shorts
- 2 T-shirts
- 1 long sleeved shirt
- 1 fleece/sweatshirt
- 3 underwear
- 3 pr. socks (not cotton)
- 1 warm hat
- 1 hat with a brim
- shoes for hiking
- shoes for relaxing
- raingear (jacket & pants)

Overnight staff list continued:

- Equipment:**
- 1 sleeping bag in stuff sack
 - Bandana
 - Water Bottles/Bladders
 - Day Pack
 - Toiletries: toothpaste & brush, hair brush, soap, towel
 - personal meds
 - flashlight
 - pen & paper
 - kippah
 - tefillin
 - tallis
 - siddur
 - sunscreen
 - bug repellent
 - swiss army knife
 - sunglasses
 - camera
 - personal ID (passport, driver's license)

CAMPING STAFF OVERNIGHT ESSENTIALS
(sample list for 3 day/2night trip)

Clothing: (includes what you'll wear the day we leave)

- 2 shorts
- 2 T-shirts
- 1 long sleeved shirt
- 1 fleece/sweatshirt
- 3 underwear
- 3 pr. socks (not cotton)
- 1 warm hat
- 1 hat with a brim
- shoes for hiking
- shoes for relaxing
- raingear (jacket & pants)

Overnight staff list continued:

- Equipment:**
- 1 sleeping bag in stuff sack
 - Bandana
 - Water Bottles/Bladders
 - Day Pack
 - Toiletries: toothpaste & brush, hair brush, soap, towel
 - personal meds
 - flashlight
 - pen & paper
 - kippah
 - tefillin
 - tallis
 - siddur
 - sunscreen
 - bug repellent
 - swiss army knife
 - sunglasses
 - camera
 - personal ID (passport, driver's license)

