

From Our Roots to Ourselves:

Learning from Women in the Bible

A Curriculum by Arianna Gordon

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Rationale

“We want to bring the women of the Torah from the shadows into the limelight, from their silences into speech, from the margins to which they have often been relegated to the center of the page—for their sake, for our sake and for our children’s sake.”¹ This quote from Dr. Tamara Eskenazi explains her reasoning for her work as co-editor on The Torah: A Woman’s Commentary. In the last several decades there have been many books and articles published that discuss women’s roles in the Bible. Scholars have wondered where women were at Sinai, their relationship with God, and if they actually did have a voice. As we study the stories of our matriarchs, we are giving voice to those women that for so long had none.

Women have not been entirely invisible in Jewish life—they have been mothers, teachers, volunteers and leaders of the community. Recently, however, women have been granted a more recognized place within Judaism. Women are being ordained as rabbis and invested as cantors at an increasingly high rate; women are presidents of congregations and sit as chairs of congregational committees. In the light of the feminist movement, and the rise of women’s involvement in the Jewish community, women have a greater interest in learning about their own Jewish history. Though women’s increased role in Judaism may have opened the door for women to study their history, it is not just women leaders who are interested in learning. Jewish women across the board are looking for greater meaning in their religious lives. Women are looking back into our roots, seeking out other women’s stories, and

¹ Selfon, Roseanne. “Were Women at Sinai?” <http://www.urj.org/torah/ten> (October 19, 2006)



deeper, more meaningful connections, this curriculum seeks to connect them to God, Judaism, Jewish study and Jewish women.

This curriculum provides an opening to discuss some of the difficult issues they are facing in their lives. Concerns such as self-esteem, body issues and relationships will be dealt with through the lens of Jewish texts. The stories of the women in the Bible provide some parallels to issues we confront in our modern society. Within our ancient texts, we read about difficult and powerful relationships women faced, their struggles for power and sexual pressures. These issues are not unlike like issues that many teenagers face regularly. We will use the text as a basis for our conversation and reflect on how the women in the Bible handled various situations. Moving from the past to the present, we will discuss parallels teens face between the text and their own lives, or contemporary society. Discussing these issues in our lives, and developing strategies for successfully dealing with them, will help teenage girls develop into stronger, more confident Jewish women.

This curriculum is particularly designed for girls in order to provide a safe space for girls to study texts together, ask questions, share anxieties and explore their own stories and their developing identities and values. Having these conversations in an all female classroom may make it easier for girls to share true feelings and to feel less self-conscious. Studies have shown that single sex classes are beneficial for girls. One study has shown that, “single-sex schools had not only superior academic achievement, but also had higher educational aspirations, more confidence in their abilities, and a more positive attitude toward academics.”²

² Valerie Lee and Anthony Bryk. “Effects of single-sex secondary schools on student achievement and attitudes.” *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 78:381-395, 1986

This curriculum will be shaped by the following enduring understandings:

1. Ancient, sacred Jewish texts invite us to shape and challenge our contemporary views.
2. The experiences of a variety of women in the Bible teach us how relationships, self esteem and power influence our lives.
3. The relationship Biblical woman had with God suggests how we might develop our own relationship with God.

This course will provide teenagers the opportunity to consider how Jewish texts can be relevant to their identity as young modern Jewish women. In addition to learning how to engage with these texts, they will also have the chance to discuss issues that are of great concern in their world. It is my hope that as they engage with Tanach, they will also connect with other Jewish women, and with Judaism. Adolescence today begins at a younger age than it used to. Young teenage girls are engaging in dangerous behaviors they see on television and in magazines. This curriculum provides a connection for adolescent girls to Jewish culture and teaches them Jewish values, giving them tools to counter the messages they are regularly receiving from popular culture, and enabling them to live lives that are whole and holy.

Enduring Understandings

1. Ancient, sacred Jewish texts invite us to shape and challenge our contemporary views.
2. The experiences of a variety of women in the Bible teach us how relationships, self esteem and power influence our lives.
3. The relationship Biblical woman had with God suggests how we might develop our own relationship with God.

Message to the Educator

Dear Educator,

Welcome to “From Our Roots to Ourselves: Learning from Biblical Women.” This curriculum is written for adolescent girls, and is intended for a religious school setting, but I believe it can easily be adapted for other ages and other settings. It is a text based curriculum that is structured around issues confronting adolescents today. For that reason, it is important that the classroom be a safe space where everyone is comfortable sharing their stories, opinions and perspectives. As the educator, it is necessary for you to create this environment, and encourage every student to participate in a supportive non-judgmental atmosphere.

You will see in almost every unit (and sometimes within a lesson itself) a “Note to the Teacher.” These notes include things to watch out for in that specific unit, questions that may arise, sensitivities to be aware of, as well as suggestions I may have.

You will also notice throughout this curriculum that students are asked to journal. This is a way for students to reflect and express what they are experiencing in writing. It is also a way for them to keep track of their development throughout the year. I suggest that you provide a notebook for each student that stays in the classroom. Students will then have the ability to look back on what they wrote at the beginning of the year, and see how their perspective has changed. It also provides them with evidence of their learning to take away with them at the end of the year.

I hope that you have a great year. Enjoy learning from our women in the Bible, and from each other!

Sincerely,

Arianna Gordon

Bibliography

Aschkenasy, Nehama. *Woman at the Window*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1998.

In her book, Aschkenasy tells the stories of Biblical women, emphasizing the recurring themes present throughout so many of their stories. She illustrates how women were generally seen as instruments of procreation in antiquity while men were seen as the shapers of history. Yet, Aschkenasy also examines how women used language in creative ways to overcome the constraints of their lives.

Bodin Cohen, Deborah. *Lilith's Ark*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2006.

Deborah Bodin Cohen presents a collection of connected midrashim intended for teenage girls. This book fuses text, commentary and historic detail to create midrashim that girls and women will find relevant in today's world. Her midrashim remind us that the young Biblical women faced challenges that are not unlike those young women face today: first love, developing identities and sexualities, sibling rivalry and spirituality.

Brenner, Athalya. *A Feminist Companion to Genesis*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993.

This is a compilation of academic essays regarding the role of women in biblical texts.

Bronner, Leila Leah. *From Eve to Esther*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1994.

This book focuses on female biblical figures in the ancient rabbinic writings of midrash and Talmud.

Fields, Harvey. *A Torah Commentary for Our Times*. New York: URJ Press, 1990.

This multi-volume commentary includes insights of ancient, medieval and modern commentators.

Frankel, Ellen. *The Five Books of Miriam*. San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 1996.

In a unique presentation, Frankel weaves together the voices of Biblical women, with Jewish mothers and daughters of past and present to explore what the Torah means to women. Frankel incorporates Biblical text, midrash and her own imagination as these women discuss the details of their lives and analyze the Biblical stories.

Freedman, Rabbi Dr. H, trans. *Midrash Rabbah Genesis II*. London: Soncino Press, 1951.

This book provides midrashim on the book of Genesis. These midrashim provide alternative interpretations, fill in the gaps, or layer meanings to the original text.

Friedman, Richard Elliott. *Commentary on the Torah*. San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 2001.

This commentary on the Torah includes the original Hebrew text of the Torah, a complete new translation of these five books of the Bible and commentary that aims to show how each passage illuminates the Torah as a whole. This commentary includes archeological discoveries that enhance our understanding of the text, as well as medieval and modern commentaries. Friedman seeks to make religious scholarship accessible to everyone who is interested, and this is one example in his ongoing endeavor.

Frymer-Kensky, Tikva. *Reading the Women of the Bible*. New York: Schocken Books, 2002.

Frymer-Kensky offers creative readings of the stories of Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, Dinah, Tamar, Deborah, Ruth, Jezebel and other biblical heroines. In this book, the women of the Bible emerge as victors, victims, virgins or voices of God. An underlying theme of this book is that the women of the Bible are represented as metaphors for Israel itself.

Goldstein, Elyse, ed. *The Women's Torah Commentary*. Woodstock: Jewish Lights Publishing, 2003.

In this book, more than 50 women rabbis come together to offer their own inspiring commentaries on the 54 weekly Torah portions.

Lieber, David, ed. *Etz Hayim: Torah Commentary*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2001.

This Torah commentary includes modern drashim, as well as discussions of legal traditions, archeological findings and textual interpretations.

Me'am Loez. (Aryeh Kaplan, trans). *The Torah Anthology*. New York: Maznaim Publishing Corp, 1977.

This commentary on the Torah was purposely written in an easy style so that the common person could access it.

Ogden Bellis, Alice. *Helpmates, Harlots, Heroes*. Louisville: John Knox Press, 1994.

Ogden Bellis has compiled the stories of many of the biblical women, and structured this book according to the organization of the books of the Bible. She summarizes and interprets each of their stories in addition to presenting some questions and concerns for women today.

Plaut, W. Gunther, ed. *The Torah: A Modern Commentary*. New York: URJ Press, 2005.

This Torah commentary offers a gender-sensitive version of the JPS translation, as well as gender-neutral God language. This volume has been reorganized by Torah portion.

Shahar, Ravi, ed. *A Glimpse Behind the Mask*. Jerusalem: Feldheim Publishers, 1993.

This commentary on the book of Esther includes rabbinic interpretation.

Sheres, Ita. *Dinah's Rebellion*. New York: Crossroad, 1990.

Sheres retells Dinah's story, then analyzes it in depth before using it as a modern parable.

Sonsino, Rifat. *The Many Faces of God*. New York: URJ Press, 2004.

This book picks up where *Finding God* left up, examining more contemporary images of God.

Sonsino, Rifat and Daniel Syme. *Finding God: Selected Responses*. New York: URJ Press, 2002.

This book contains essays presenting significant Jewish thinkers answers to the questions, What is God? How can we know God? How does God fit into my life?, and other difficult theological questions.

The JPS Torah Commentary. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1996.

This five volume Torah commentary offers extensive commentaries from the traditional rabbinic text, Mishnah, Midrash and Talmud. Additionally, this commentary presents inter-textual commentary relating each book to other biblical books, and evidence from modern archaeological discoveries.

PRE-UNIT: INTRODUCTION

Goals for Unit:

To introduce students to one another.

To introduce students to the concepts of “text study” and *chevruta*.

To develop a safe environment in the classroom which allows for students to share their perspectives honestly and comfortably.

Objectives for Unit

Students will be able to name all of the other students in the class.

Students will be able explain what a *brit* is, and why it is important for the class.

Students will be able to identify some key figures from the Bible.

Note to Teacher

These two lessons are a way of introducing the students to each other and to the material you will be studying over the course of the year. Though I have structured it into two lessons, you should adjust it to best fit the needs of your class. Perhaps your class will need more time to get to know each other; or perhaps both of these lessons can be combined into one. These are merely suggested activities, please use them flexibly. However, I do think it is important for students to get to know one another before beginning the rest of the curriculum and that a safe space is created within the classroom. So much of the curriculum is based in group discussion and a willingness to share one’s opinions, that it is crucial for students to understand and to respect that this classroom is a comfortable, non-judgmental atmosphere.

Lesson 1: An Introduction

Guided Timeline:

5 minutes	Activity 1: Welcome
25 minutes	Activity 2: Mixers
25 minutes	Activity 3: Creating a Brit
5 minutes	Activity 4: Conclusion

Activity 1: Welcome

Welcome the students to the class. Explain to them a little bit about what they should expect from this class, including some of the topics we will be learning together.

Activity 2: Getting to Know You--Mixers

This is an opportunity for students to get to know each other, and for you to get to know the students. It is also a chance to begin building community within the classroom. Some mixers you consider doing include-

Name game-Student should sit in a circle. Have the first student say her name, and then a food that begins with the same letter (i.e. Lisa Lollipop). Then the following student must say the first student's name, and then her own. This should continue around the circle until the last person must say everyone's name.

Ball toss-Have students stand in a circle. Each student must say her name, and then toss a small ball to someone else. Make sure that every student gets the ball. You could time this game, and keep playing this game until students are able to do it quickly and you reach a set goal time.

Two truths and a lie-Each student must share two things that are true about themselves and one thing that is false. The rest of the class must guess what is true and what is not. This is a good way of getting to know each other a little better.

Activity 3: Creating a Brit

Explain to students the concept of a *brit*, or covenant.

In order for this year to be successful, and for everyone to get the most out of each class, it is necessary for the group to get along, work well together and respect each other. Furthermore, because so much of the class is based in group discussion it is

important that everyone's opinions are heard. We are trying to create a safe, supportive, non-judgmental environment.

Ask the students for suggestions about rules for the class *brit*. If they need some help, share with them some ideas that you have.

Let this be a discussion. Allow students to ask clarifying questions, add or subject rules, suggest rules for the teacher and discuss why a rule may or may not be a good idea.

Eventually a copy of this *brit* should be written and put up somewhere in the classroom, so that it is always available to be referred back to and so that students are always reminded of their own rules and guidelines for behavior.

Materials:

Paper
Pens
Butcher Paper
Markers

Lesson 2: An Introduction Continued

Guided Timeline:

10 minutes	Activity 1: Set Induction
10 minutes	Activity 2: What is <i>Chevruta</i> ?
15 minutes	Activity 3: Practicing <i>Chevruta</i> Study
15 minutes	Activity 4: Introduction to Biblical Figures
5 minutes	Activity 5: Conclusion

Activity 1: Set Induction

Review names in order to make sure that everyone knows each others names.

Activity 2: What is *Chevruta*?

This year, when we study text, we will work with a partner, or in small groups. It is traditional in Judaism to study Jewish texts with a partner. Generations of Jews have recognized the benefit of having someone to study with, someone to share ideas with—to learn from and to teach. We call this person a *chevruta*, which comes from the Hebrew word *chaver*, meaning “friend.”

The following is a list of “good feature” of *chevruta* study:

- Taking turns reading the text out loud;
- Articulating your interpretation of the text;
- Listening closely to your *chevruta*;
- Asking for help and/or looking up what you don’t know or understand;
- Probing your *chevruta*’s interpretation and/or statements;
- Helping your *chevruta* better articulate what s/he is trying to say;
- Challenging your *chevruta*’s interpretation and/or statement;
- Weighing and articulating the pros and cons of various interpretations;
- Paying attention to what helps your *chevruta* learn;
- Letting your *chevruta* know what helps you learn;
- Developing some shared norms for how you will work together and strategies to improve working together;
- Developing strategies to negotiate disagreements;
- Revising your interpretation when faced with compelling information in the text and/or from your partner;

- Being willing to defend an interpretation that you find compelling.³

These are just suggestions, and helpful ways to think about what it means to be in study in *chevruta*, but there is no right or wrong way.

Activity 3: Practicing Chevruta Study

Give students the text from the Mishnah, Tractate Avot—*Aseh lecha rav, v'kenah lecha chaver v'hevei dan et kol ha'adam l'chaf z' chut*—“Find for yourself a teacher, acquire for yourself a friend and judge everyone favorably.”

Have students practice *chevruta* study with this short text.

- What does it mean?
- What are different ways it can be interpreted?
- Why might we be starting our class with this text?
- Why do you think it might be helpful to study this way?
- How should we use this text throughout the year?

Activity 4: Introduction to Biblical Figures

This year, we will be studying many women from the Bible, but you probably already know more figures from the Bible than you realize.

- Who are figures from the Bible that you already know? (include both men and women)
- What do you know about them?
- When and where have you learned about these people?
- What do they have in common?
- What are some of their differences?

Activity 5: Conclusion

This year we will be discussing some of these questions more deeply. We will be looking at women in their context and then discussing them in our context as well.

Have students write down any questions, thoughts or concerns they have as this class begins. They might also write questions they would like answered throughout the year.

Materials:

Paper
Pens

³ Sharon Feiman-Nemser, “Beit Midrash for Teachers” – pages 168-169

UNIT 1: RELATIONSHIPS

Goals for Unit:

- To help students see the many different relationships they are in.
- To engage students in discussion about characteristics that help to create a caring relationship.
- To help students develop an understanding about the types of relationships they would like to be in.
- To help students develop relationships with each other.
- To develop a safe environment in the classroom which allows for students to share their perspectives honestly and comfortably.

Understandings for Unit:

Ancient Jewish texts can serve as openings for discussions about relevant, contemporary issues.

Like us, the women of the Bible were simultaneously involved in multiple relationships, including wife, mother, daughter, sister and friend. These many relationships and the roles they played in each had an impact on who these women were. Similarly, our relationships play a part in our identity and our self understanding.

Essential Questions for Unit:

- What kinds of relationships am I in?
- What kinds of relationships do I want in my life?
- What are the qualities found in a good relationship?
- How do the different relationship I am in impact my self identity?

Objectives for Unit:

- Students will be able to define different types of relationships.
- Students will be able describe relationships that they are in.
- Students will be able to identify characteristics found in caring relationships.
- Students will be able to describe relationships that women in the Bible were a part of.

Assessment:

Group discussion
Journaling
Debate
Text presentations (skits, art, etc)
Naming activity
Friendship scenarios
Bibliodrama
Survey

Memorable Moment

Sharing our Stories

Unit 1: Relationship Resources

Texts:

Genesis 2:15-3:24 text

Genesis 2:15-3:24 commentaries

Genesis 12:1-20, 16:1-16, 18:1-15, 20:1-14, 21:1-10 text

Genesis 29:16-20:24 text

Rachel and Leah midrash

Ruth text

Handouts:

Pictures of Eve

Friendship scenarios

Bibliodrama

Lesson 1: A Start to Our Relationship

Objectives:

Students will be able describe different types of relationships.
Students will be able to identify relationships that they are currently in.

Guided Timeline:

10 minutes	Activity 1: Set Induction
20 minutes	Activity 2: Affinity Grouping Exercise
15 minutes	Activity 3: Journaling
15 minutes	Activity 4: Wrap Up

Activity 1: Set Induction

Ask students-What kinds of relationships do we have?
Challenge them to think broadly and creatively about the types of relationships that we find in our lives.

Activity 2: Creating a Caring Relationship--Affinity-Grouping Exercise

Ask students-What characteristics are found in a caring relationship?
They should think about any of the relationships they listed in the previous activity when answering this question.

Have students write their answers on post-it notes, with one characteristic/quality per post-it (each student should write 5-6 characteristics).
Then students should put their post-its up on the wall.
Divide students into small groups.

Without talking, students should categorize the post-its.

Once they have finished categorizing the post-its, the group should label each category of post-its.

Finally, each group should write a statement (1-2 sentences) that defines what a caring relationship is.

Activity 3: Journaling

Have students spend time writing individual in their journals, answering the questions—

- What kinds of relationships do I have in my life right now?
- What are my roles in them?
- How do I feel in them?
- How are they different from one another?

Activity 4: Wrap up

Ask students-

- What sort of relationships can we think of that are found in the Bible?
- Who had these relationships?

Try to get students to identify some of the women we will study in this unit, and to begin thinking about the notion that they were involved in multiple relationships. Likewise, at any point in our lives we are engaged in multiple relationships, and have different roles in each of them.

Over the next several lessons, we will learn about many different women in the Bible and discuss the different relationships they were a part of. We will discuss how those relationships affected who they were, and we will discuss how your relationships impact you. In addition we will start to come up with a sketch of the types of relationships that we find meaningful, and that we want to be a part of in our lives.

Materials:

Journals
Pens
Post-its
Paper

Lesson 2: Eve-A Woman of Many Faces

Objectives:

Students will be able to identify Eve, and the different relationships she was in.
Students will be able to explain how Eve was portrayed in commentaries and through artistic images.

Students will be able to defend their own perspectives about who Eve was.

Guided Timeline:

10 minutes	Activity 1: Set Induction
30 minutes	Activity 2: Text Study
20 minutes	Activity 3: Debate
10 minutes	Activity 4: Conclusion

Activity 1: Set Induction

Ask students—

- Who is Eve?
- What do you know about her?
- What is her role?
- How is she generally portrayed?

Activity 2: Defining Eve--Text Study

In *chevruta*, have students read Genesis 2:15-3:24.

After reading the original text discuss again-

- Who is Eve?
- What is her role?
- How is she portrayed?
- What more did you learn about Eve?

Then have students read commentaries and midrash (see attached) about Eve and ask the same four questions again.

- Who is Eve?
- What is her role?
- How is she portrayed?
- What more did you learn about Eve?

Finally, have students look at different images of Eve (see attached) and ask students the same four questions.

- Who is Eve?
- What is her role?
- How is she portrayed?
- What more did you learn about Eve?

Activity 3: Defending her Role

Have students make a list of the different roles Eve played, and the different relationships that Eve was in.

Then, have the students (either individually or with a partner/small group) pick one of these roles or relationships to represent.

Using the texts, as well as their own opinions, have the students explain why their role/relationship was of primary importance to Eve.

Students should engage in a debate, defending their role. They should be able to explain and justify why the role they picked was Eve's primary role.

After all of the presentations, students may vote on who was the most convincing, and which role they believe was Eve's primary role.

Activity 4: Conclusion

Even though you each represented just one side of Eve in this debate, why might it be important to learn about all the different relationships she was in and roles she played?

Materials:

Genesis 2:15-3:24 text

Genesis 2:15-3:24 commentaries

Pictures of Eve

Eve: Genesis 2:15-3:24

¹⁵ וַיִּקַּח יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָאָדָם וַיִּנְחֵהוּ בְּגַן־עֵדֶן לַעֲבֹדָה
וּלְשִׁמְרָהּ: ¹⁶ וַיֹּצֵר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים עַל־הָאָדָם לֵאמֹר מִכָּל־עֵץ־הַגָּן
אֲכַל תֹּאכַל:

¹⁷ וּמִעֵץ הַדְּעִת טוֹב וְרָע לֹא תֹאכַל מִמֶּנּוּ כִּי בְיוֹם אֲכָלְךָ
מִמֶּנּוּ מוֹת תָּמוּת:

¹⁸ וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים לֹא־טוֹב הָיִיתָ הָאָדָם לְבַדּוֹ אֶעֱשֶׂה־לּוֹ
עֵזֶר כְּגַדּוֹ:

¹⁹ וַיִּצַּר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים מִן־הָאָדָמָה כָּל־חֵית הַשָּׂדֶה וְאֵת
כָּל־עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וַיָּבֵא אֶל־הָאָדָם לִרְאוֹת מִה־יִּקְרָא־לּוֹ וְכָל־
אֲשֶׁר יִקְרָא־לּוֹ הָאָדָם נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה הוּא שְׁמוֹ:

²⁰ וַיִּקְרָא הָאָדָם שְׁמוֹת לְכָל־הַבְּהֵמָה וּלְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וּלְכָל־
חַיַּת הַשָּׂדֶה וּלְאָדָם לֹא־מָצָא עֵזֶר כְּגַדּוֹ:

²¹ וַיִּפֹּל יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים תְּרַדְמָה עַל־הָאָדָם וַיִּישָׁן וַיִּקַּח אֶחָת
מִצַּלְעָתָיו וַיִּסְגֶּר בָּשָׂר תַּחַתְנָה:

²² וַיִּבֶן יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הַצֶּלַע אֲשֶׁר־לָקַח מִן־הָאָדָם לְאִשָּׁה
וַיָּבֵאָה אֶל־הָאָדָם:

²³ וַיֹּאמֶר הָאָדָם זֹאת הִפְעַם עָצָם מֵעֲצָמֵי וּבָשָׂר מִבָּשָׂרִי
לְזֹאת יִקְרָא אִשָּׁה כִּי מֵאִישׁ לָקַחָהּ זֹאת:

²⁴ עַל־כֵּן יַעֲזֹב־אִישׁ אֶת־אָבִיו וְאֶת־אִמּוֹ וְדָבַק בְּאִשְׁתּוֹ וְהָיוּ
לְבָשָׂר אֶחָד:

²⁵ וַיְהִיו שְׁנֵיהֶם עֶרוּמִים הָאָדָם וְאִשְׁתּוֹ וְלֹא יִתְבַּשְּׁשׁוּ:

3:1 וְהִנָּחַשׁ הָיָה עָרוֹם מִכָּל חַיַּת הַשָּׂדֶה אֲשֶׁר
עָשָׂה יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־הָאִשָּׁה אַף כִּי־אָמַר אֱלֹהִים
לֹא תֹאכְלוּ מִכָּל־עֵץ הַגָּן:

² וַתֹּאמֶר הָאִשָּׁה אֶל־הִנָּחַשׁ מִפְּרִי עֵץ־הַגָּן נֹאכַל:

³ וּמִפְּרִי הָעֵץ אֲשֶׁר בְּתוֹךְ־הַגָּן אָמַר אֱלֹהִים לֹא תֹאכְלוּ
מִמֶּנּוּ וְלֹא תִגְעוּ בּוֹ פֶּן־תָּמוּתוּן:

⁴ וַיֹּאמֶר הִנָּחַשׁ אֶל־הָאִשָּׁה לֹא־מוֹת תָּמוּתוּן:

⁵ כִּי יָדַע אֱלֹהִים כִּי בְיוֹם אֲכַלְכֶּם מִמֶּנּוּ וּנְפַקְחוּ עֵינֵיכֶם
וְהָיִיתֶם כְּאֱלֹהִים יֹדְעֵי טוֹב וָרָע:

⁶ וַתֵּרָא הָאִשָּׁה כִּי טוֹב הָעֵץ לְמֹאכַל וְכִי תֹאוֹה־הוּא לְעֵינָיִם
וַנְּחַמֵּד הָעֵץ לְהִשְׁכִּיל וַתִּקַּח מִפְּרִיו וַתֹּאכַל וַתֵּתֶן גַּם־לְאִישָׁהּ

עֹמָה וַיֹּאכַל:

7 וַתִּפְקַחְנָה עֵינֵי שְׁנֵיהֶם וַיֵּדְעוּ כִּי עִירַמְסָם הֵם וַיִּתְּפְרוּ עָלֶיהָ
תֹּאנָה וַיַּעֲשׂוּ לָהֶם חֲגֹרֹת:

8 וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ אֶת־קוֹל יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים מִתְּהַלֵּךְ בְּגֵן לְרִיחַ הַיּוֹם
וַיִּתְּחַבֵּא הָאָדָם וְאִשְׁתּוֹ מִפְּנֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים בְּתוֹךְ עֵץ הַגֵּן:

9 וַיִּקְרָא יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶל־הָאָדָם וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ אַיֶּכָּה:

10 וַיֹּאמֶר אֶת־קִלְךָ שָׁמַעְתִּי בְּגֵן וְאִירָא כִּי־עִירַמְסָם אֲנֹכִי וְאִתְּחַבֵּא:

11 וַיֹּאמֶר מִי הַגִּיד לְךָ כִּי עִירַמְסָם אֶתָּה הַמְּן־הָעֵץ אֲשֶׁר

צִוִּיתִיךָ לִבְלֹתִי אֲכַל־מִמֶּנּוּ אֲכַלְתָּ:

12 וַיֹּאמֶר הָאָדָם הָאִשָּׁה אֲשֶׁר נָתַתָּה עִמָּדִי הִוא נָתְנָה־לִּי

מִן־הָעֵץ וַאֲכַל:

13 וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים לָאִשָּׁה מַה־זֹּאת עָשִׂית וַתֹּאמֶר הָאִשָּׁה

הִנְחַשׁ הִשְׂאֵנִי וַאֲכַל:

14 וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶל־הַנָּחַשׁ כִּי עָשִׂית זֹאת אֲרוּר

אַתָּה מִכָּל־הַבְּהֵמָה וּמִכָּל חַיַּת הַשָּׂדֶה עַל־גִּחְוֹנְךָ חֶלֶד וְעִפּוֹר

תֹּאכַל כָּל־יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ:

15 וְאִיבָהּ אִשִּׁית בֵּינְךָ וּבֵין הָאִשָּׁה וּבֵין זֶרְעָהּ וּבֵין זֶרְעָהּ

הִוא יִשׁוּפֶךָ רֹאשׁ וְאַתָּה תִּשׁוּפֶנּוּ עֲקֹב: ס

16 אֶל־הָאִשָּׁה אָמַר הַרְבֵּה אֲרַבָּה עֲצָבוֹנְךָ וְהִרְנֶנְךָ בְּעֶצֶב

חֲלָדֵי בָנִים וְאֶל־אִשְׁךָ תִּשׁוּקֶתְךָ וְהִוא יִמְשַׁל־בְּךָ: ס

17 וְלָאָדָם אָמַר כִּי־שָׁמַעְתָּ לְקוֹל אִשְׁתְּךָ וַתֹּאכַל מִן־הָעֵץ

אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִיךָ לֵאמֹר לֹא תֹאכַל מִמֶּנּוּ אֲרוּרָה הָאָדָמָה

בְּעִבּוֹרְךָ בְּעֶצְבוֹן תֹּאכְלֶנָּה כָּל יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ:

18 וְקוֹץ וְדַרְדַּר תַּצְמִיחַ לְךָ וְאֲכַלְתָּ אֶת־עֵשֶׂב הַשָּׂדֶה:

19 בְּזַעַת אַפֶּיךָ תֹּאכַל לֶחֶם עַד שׁוֹבֶכֶת אֶל־הָאָדָמָה כִּי מִמֶּנָּה

לִקְחַת כִּי־עִפּוֹר אֶתָּה וְאֶל־עִפּוֹר תִּשׁוּב:

20 וַיִּקְרָא הָאָדָם שֵׁם אִשְׁתּוֹ חוּוָה כִּי הִוא הִיְתָה אִם כָּל־חַי:

21 וַיַּעַשׂ יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים לָאָדָם וּלְאִשְׁתּוֹ כַּתְּנוֹת עוֹר וַיִּלְבָּשֵׁם: פ

22 וַיֹּאמְרוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים הֵן הָאָדָם הִיָּה כְּאָחֶד מִמֶּנּוּ לִדְעוֹת

טוֹב וְרַע וְעַתָּה פְּנִי־שִׁלַּח יָדוֹ וְלָקַח גַּם מֵעֵץ הַחַיִּים וַאֲכַל

וְחַי לְעֹלָם:

23 וַיִּשְׁלַחְהוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים מִן־עֵדֶן לְעַבְדֹת אֶת־הָאָדָמָה אֲשֶׁר

לָקַח מִשָּׁם:

24 וַיִּנְרַשׁ אֶת־הָאָדָם וַיִּשְׁכֵּן מִקְדָּם לְגִן־עֵדֶן אֶת־הַכְּרִבִּים וְאֵת

לְהַט הַחֲרִב הַמִּתְהַפֶּכֶת לְשָׁמֵר אֶת־הַרְדֵּךְ עֵץ הַחַיִּים: ס

2:15 The LORD God took the man and placed him in the garden of Eden, to till it and tend it. ¹⁶ And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you are free to eat; ¹⁷ but as for the tree of knowledge of good and bad, you must not eat of it; for as soon as you eat of it, you shall die." ¹⁸ The LORD God said, "It is not good for man to be alone; I will make a fitting helper for him." ¹⁹ And the LORD God formed out of the earth all the wild beasts and all the birds of the sky, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that would be its name. ²⁰ And the man gave names to all the cattle and to the birds of the sky and to all the wild beasts; but for Adam no fitting helper was found. ²¹ So the LORD God cast a deep sleep upon the man; and, while he slept, He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh at that spot. ²² And the LORD God fashioned the rib that He had taken from the man into a woman; and He brought her to the man. ²³ Then the man said, "This one at last Is bone of my bones And flesh of my flesh. This one shall be called Woman, For from man was she taken." ²⁴ Hence a man leaves his father and mother and clings to his wife, so that they become one flesh. ²⁵ The two of them were naked, the man and his wife, yet they felt no shame.

3:1 Now the serpent was the shrewdest of all the wild beasts that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say: You shall not eat of any tree of the garden?" ² The woman replied to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the other trees of the garden. ³ It is only about fruit of the tree in the middle of the garden that God said: 'You shall not eat of it or touch it, lest you die.'" ⁴ And the serpent said to the woman, "You are not going to die, ⁵ but God knows that as soon as you eat of it your eyes will be opened and you will be like divine beings who know good and bad." ⁶ When the woman saw that the tree was good for eating and a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable as a source of wisdom, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave some to her husband, and he ate. ⁷ Then the eyes of both of them were opened and they perceived that they were naked; and they sewed together fig leaves and made themselves loincloths. ⁸ They heard the sound of the LORD God moving about in the garden at the breezy time of day; and the man and his wife hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. ⁹ The LORD God called out to the man and said to him, "Where are you?" ¹⁰ He replied, "I heard the sound of You in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked, so I hid." ¹¹ Then He asked, "Who told you that you were naked? Did you eat of the tree from which I had forbidden you to eat?" ¹² The man said, "The woman You put at my side -- she gave me of the tree, and I ate." ¹³ And the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done!" The woman replied, "The serpent duped me, and I ate." ¹⁴ Then the LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you did this, More cursed shall you be Than all cattle And all the wild beasts: On your belly shall you crawl And dirt shall you eat All the days of your life. ¹⁵ I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your offspring and hers; They shall strike at your head, And you shall strike at their heel." ¹⁶ And to the woman He said, "I will make most severe Your pangs in childbearing; In pain shall you bear children. Yet your urge shall be for your husband, And he shall rule over you." ¹⁷ To Adam He said, "Because you did as your wife said and ate of the tree about which I commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it,' Cursed be the ground because of you; By toil shall you eat of it All the days of your life: ¹⁸ Thorns and thistles shall it sprout for you. But your food

shall be the grasses of the field; ¹⁹ By the sweat of your brow Shall you get bread to eat, Until you return to the ground -- For from it you were taken. For dust you are, And to dust you shall return." ²⁰ The man named his wife Eve, because she was the mother of all the living. ²¹ And the LORD God made garments of skins for Adam and his wife, and clothed them. ²² And the LORD God said, "Now that the man has become like one of us, knowing good and bad, what if he should stretch out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever!" ²³ So the LORD God banished him from the garden of Eden, to till the soil from which he was taken. ²⁴ He drove the man out, and stationed east of the garden of Eden the cherubim and the fiery ever-turning sword, to guard the way to the tree of life.

Looking at Eve in Commentary

From JPS Torah Commentary-Genesis:

3:1

The serpent approaches the woman, rather than her husband, because she has not received the prohibition directly from God. Therefore, she is more vulnerable and more susceptible to the serpent's sinister verbal manipulations.

3:6

The woman was not a temptress. She does not say a word to her husband, but simply hands him the fruit, which he accepts and eats. The absence of any hint of resistance or even hesitation on his part is strange. It should be noted, that in speaking to the woman, the serpent consistently used the plural form. This suggests that the man was all the time within ear's reach of the conversation and was equally seduced by its persuasiveness. In fact, the Hebrew text here literally means, "She also gave to her husband *with her*," suggesting that he was a full participant in the sin, thereby refuting in advance his later excuse.

3:16

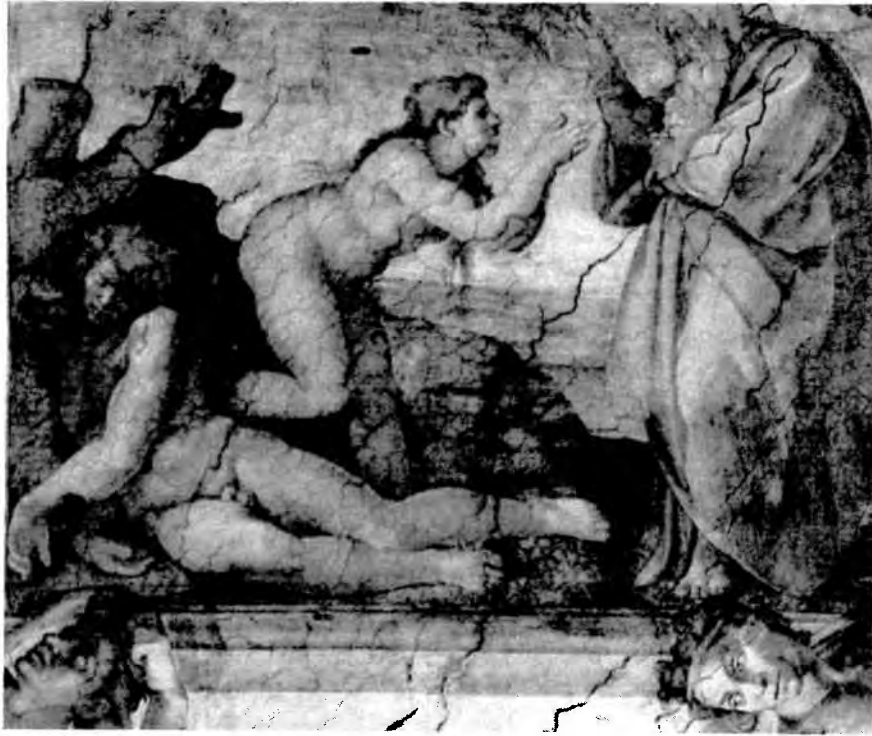
It is clear from the description of woman in 2:18, 23 that the ideal situation, which before this existed, was the absolute equality of the sexes. The new state of male dominance is regarded as an aspect of the deterioration of the human condition that resulted from defiance of divine will.

From the Wisdom of Ben Sira:

From a woman was the beginning of sin,
And because of her we all died.

Because Eve had tempted Adam to eat of the fatal fruit, some early Fathers of the Christian Church held her and all subsequent women to be the first sinners, and especially responsible for the expulsion from the Garden of Eden/Fall from Grace.

Images of Eve







Lesson 3: Sarah-The First Matriarch

Objectives:

Students will be able to identify Sarah.

Students will be able to describe the relationships Sarah was in.

Students will be able to describe how Sarah's different relationships impact our understanding of her.

Students will be able to describe their ideal relationship.

Students will be able to describe what Abraham and Sarah valued most highly in their relationship.

Guided Timeline:

10 minutes	Activity 1: Set Induction
20 minutes	Activity 2: Text Study
20 minutes	Activity 3: My Ideal Partner
10 minutes	Activity 4: Journaling
5 minutes	Activity 5: Conclusion

Activity 1: Set Induction

Ask students-

- Who are our matriarchs and patriarchs?
- What does this title mean?
- What role did these people play?
- How do you think it affected how they acted in their lives?

Today, we are going to learn about one woman we call a matriarch, and see from the text if we can determine what this title means. We will also explore the different relationships that Sarah was in and ask ourselves which we believe was her primary role and which she believed was her primary role.

Activity 2: A Woman with Many Roles--Text Study

Divide students into small groups. Give each group a different section of the Biblical text, telling the story of Sarah.

Group 1-Genesis 12:1-20

Group 2-Genesis 16:1-16

Group 3-Genesis 18: 1-15

Group 4-Genesis 20: 1-14
Group 5-Genesis 21: 1-10

Each group should read only their assigned sections and discuss their verses. All groups should use the following questions to guide their discussions—

- What relationships was Sarah involved in?
- What was her primary role?
- Was Sarah a good mother? If yes, what qualities made her one? If no, why not?
- Was Sara a good wife? If yes, what qualities made her one? If no, why not?
- How does Sarah act differently in different relationships?
- How might Sarah's multiple relationships affect her identity?
- How do Sarah's multiple relationships impact our understanding of her?

Then, each group should decide how they want to present their section of text to the rest of the class in order to teach it to them. They could act it out, write a poem, or create a piece of art. They should include answers to the above questions in their teaching.

After all the students have had an opportunity to share their presentations, have a class discussion about the last two questions in more detail.

- How might Sarah's multiple relationships affect her identity?
- How do Sarah's multiple relationships impact our understanding of her?

Activity 3: My Ideal Partner

Sarah is so often thought of as Abraham's wife, and partner. Though she certainly had other relationships and roles, this was an important one. But in looking at the text, we must ask ourselves, was theirs the ideal relationship? How balanced was their partnership? And what can we learn from them?

First, however, we will think about our own ideals in partnerships/future spousal relationships.

On a note card, have each student create a "Want Ad" for their ideal partner. What and who are they looking for? Have them be as specific as possible.

Have each student share their "Want Ads," putting some of the characteristics listed on the boards. Try to notice the physical characteristics versus personality characteristics.

Then discuss—

- How realistic are these ideals?
- What is our model when it comes to this type of relationship?
- What do we value most highly (i.e. partnership, equality, dependence, independence)?
- What can we learn from Abraham and Sarah's relationship?
- What do they seem to value most?

Activity 4: Journaling

Sarah longed to be a mother for most of her life, and was ecstatic when she finally learned she was going to become one. One understanding of Isaac's name attributes it to Sarah. Because Sarah was so old when she heard she was going to have a child, she laughed when she heard the news and this is where the name Isaac, meaning "he laughs" comes from. Sarah may have given her son his name, but all mothers/parents give their children some legacy.

Have students write individually in their journals, answering the questions-

- How did my mother's/my parent's religious identity impact me?
- How do I want to impact the next generation?

Activity 5: Conclusion

Have students share some of their responses from their journal writing.

Materials:

Genesis 12:1-20, 16:1-16, 18:1-15, 20:1-14, 21:1-10 text
Journals
Pens
Note cards

Sarah: Genesis 12:1-20, 16:1-16, 18:1-15, 20:1-14, 21:1-10

Genesis 12:1-20 The LORD said to Abram, "Go forth from your native land and from your father's house to the land that I will show you. ² I will make of you a great nation, And I will bless you; I will make your name great, And you shall be a blessing. ³ I will bless those who bless you And curse him that curses you; And all the families of the earth Shall bless themselves by you." ⁴ Abram went forth as the LORD had commanded him, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he left Haran. ⁵ Abram took his wife Sarai and his brother's son Lot, and all the wealth that they had amassed, and the persons that they had acquired in Haran; and they set out for the land of Canaan. When they arrived in the land of Canaan, ⁶ Abram passed through the land as far as the site of Shechem, at the terebinth of Moreh. The Canaanites were then in the land. ⁷ The LORD appeared to Abram and said, "I will assign this land to your heirs." And he built an altar there to the LORD who had appeared to him. ⁸ From there he moved on to the hill country east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; and he built there an altar to the LORD and invoked the LORD by name. ⁹ Then Abram journeyed by stages toward the Negeb. ¹⁰ There was a famine in the land, and Abram went down to Egypt to sojourn there, for the famine was severe in the land. ¹¹ As he was about to enter Egypt, he said to his wife Sarai, "I know what a beautiful woman you are." ¹² If the Egyptians see you, and think, 'She is his wife,' they will kill me and let you live. ¹³ Please say that you are my sister, that it may go well with me because of you, and that I may remain alive thanks to you." ¹⁴ When Abram entered Egypt, the Egyptians saw how very beautiful the woman was. ¹⁵ Pharaoh's courtiers saw her and praised her to Pharaoh, and the woman was taken into Pharaoh's palace. ¹⁶ And because of her, it went well with Abram; he acquired sheep, oxen, asses, male and female slaves, she-asses, and camels. ¹⁷ But the LORD afflicted Pharaoh and his household with mighty plagues on account of Sarai, the wife of Abram. ¹⁸ Pharaoh sent for Abram and said, "What is this you have done to me! Why did you not tell me that she was your wife? ¹⁹ Why did you say, 'She is my sister,' so that I took her as my wife? Now, here is your wife; take her and begone!" ²⁰ And Pharaoh put men in charge of him, and they sent him off with his wife and all that he possessed.

Genesis 16:1-16 Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. She had an Egyptian maidservant whose name was Hagar. ² And Sarai said to Abram, "Look, the LORD has kept me from bearing. Consort with my maid; perhaps I shall have a son through her." And Abram heeded Sarai's request. ³ So Sarai, Abram's wife, took her maid, Hagar the Egyptian -- after Abram had dwelt in the land of Canaan ten years -- and gave her to her husband Abram as concubine. ⁴ He cohabited with Hagar and she conceived; and when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was lowered in her esteem. ⁵ And Sarai said to Abram, "The wrong done me is your fault! I myself put my maid in your bosom; now that she sees that she is pregnant, I am lowered in her esteem. The LORD decide between you and me!" ⁶ Abram said to Sarai, "Your maid is in your hands. Deal with her as you think right." Then Sarai treated her harshly, and she ran away from her. ⁷ An angel of the LORD found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, the spring on the road to Shur, ⁸ and said, "Hagar, slave of Sarai, where have you come from, and where are you going?" And she said, "I am running away from my mistress Sarai." ⁹ And the angel of the LORD said to her, "Go back to your mistress, and submit to her harsh treatment." ¹⁰ And the angel of the LORD said to her, "I will greatly increase your offspring, And they shall be too many to count." ¹¹ The angel of the LORD said to her further, "Behold, you are with child And shall bear a son; You shall call him Ishmael, For the LORD has paid heed to your suffering. ¹² He shall be a wild ass of a man; His hand against everyone, And everyone's hand against him; He shall dwell alongside of all his kinsmen." ¹³ And she called the LORD who spoke to her, "You Are El-roi," by which she meant, "Have I not gone on seeing after He saw me!" ¹⁴ Therefore the well was called Beer-lahai-roi; it is between Kadesh and Bered. -- ¹⁵ Hagar bore a son to Abram, and Abram gave the son that Hagar bore him the name Ishmael.

Genesis 18:1-15 The LORD appeared to him by the terebinths of Mamre; he was sitting at the entrance of the tent as the day grew hot. ² Looking up, he saw three men standing near him. As soon as he saw them, he ran from the entrance of the tent to greet them and, bowing to the ground, ³ he said, "My lords, if it please you, do not go on past your servant. ⁴ Let a little water be brought; bathe your feet and recline under the tree. ⁵ And let me fetch a morsel of bread that you may refresh yourselves; then go on -- seeing that you have come your servant's way." They replied, "Do as you have said." Abraham hastened into the tent to Sarah, and said, "Quick, three seahs of choice flour! Knead and make cakes!" ⁶ ⁷ Then Abraham ran to the herd, took a calf, tender and choice, and gave it to a servant-boy, who hastened to prepare it. ⁸ He took curds and milk and the calf that had been prepared and set these before them; and he waited on them under the tree as they ate. ⁹ They said to him, "Where is your wife Sarah?" And he replied, "There, in the tent." ¹⁰ Then one said, "I will return to you next year, and your wife Sarah shall have a son!" Sarah was listening at the entrance of the tent, which was behind him. ¹¹ Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in years; Sarah had stopped having the periods of women. ¹² And Sarah laughed to herself, saying, "Now that I am withered, am I to have enjoyment -- with my husband so old?" ¹³ Then the LORD said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh, saying, 'Shall I in truth bear a child, old as I am?' ¹⁴ Is anything too wondrous for the LORD? I will return to you at the time next year, and Sarah shall have a son." ¹⁵ Sarah lied, saying, "I did not laugh," for she was frightened. But He replied, "You did laugh."

Genesis 20:1-14 Abraham journeyed from there to the region of the Negeb and settled between Kadesh and Shur. While he was sojourning in Gerar, ² Abraham said of Sarah his wife, "She is my sister." So King Abimelech of Gerar had Sarah brought to him. ³ But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night and said to him, "You are to die because of the woman that you have taken, for she is a married woman." ⁴ Now Abimelech had not approached her. He said, "O Lord, will You slay people even though innocent?" ⁵ He himself said to me, 'She is my sister!' And she also said, 'He is my brother.' When I did this, my heart was blameless and my hands were clean." ⁶ And God said to him in the dream, "I knew that you did this with a blameless heart, and so I kept you from sinning against Me. That was why I did not let you touch her. ⁷ Therefore, restore the man's wife -- since he is a prophet, he will intercede for you -- to save your life. If you fail to restore her, know that you shall die, you and all that are yours." ⁸ Early next morning, Abimelech called his servants and told them all that had happened; and the men were greatly frightened. ⁹ Then Abimelech summoned Abraham and said to him, "What have you done to us? What wrong have I done that you should bring so great a guilt upon me and my kingdom? You have done to me things that ought not to be done. ¹⁰ What, then," Abimelech demanded of Abraham, "was your purpose in doing this thing?" ¹¹ "I thought," said Abraham, "surely there is no fear of God in this place, and they will kill me because of my wife. ¹² And besides, she is in truth my sister, my father's daughter though not my mother's; and she became my wife. ¹³ So when God made me wander from my father's house, I said to her, 'Let this be the kindness that you shall do me: whatever place we come to, say there of me: He is my brother.'" ¹⁴ Abimelech took sheep and oxen, and male and female slaves, and gave them to Abraham; and he restored his wife Sarah to him.

Genesis 21:1-10 The LORD took note of Sarah as He had promised, and the LORD did for Sarah as He had spoken. ² Sarah conceived and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken. ³ Abraham gave his newborn son, whom Sarah had borne him, the name of Isaac. ⁴ And when his son Isaac was eight days old, Abraham circumcised him, as God had commanded him. ⁵ Now Abraham was a hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him. ⁶ Sarah said, "God has brought me laughter; everyone who hears will laugh with me." ⁷ And she added, "Who would have said to Abraham That Sarah would suckle children! Yet I have borne a son in his old age." ⁸ The child grew up and was weaned, and Abraham held a great feast on the day that Isaac was weaned. ⁹ Sarah saw the son whom Hagar the Egyptian had borne to Abraham playing. ¹⁰ She said to Abraham, "Cast out that slave-woman and her son, for the son of that slave shall not share in the inheritance with my son Isaac."

Lesson 4-5: Am I My Sister's Keeper?
(This lesson is intended to be taught over 2 lessons)

Objectives:

Students will be able to identify times when they feel jealous and how to deal with it.
Students will be able to describe the importance of and how to be a good friend or sibling.

Students will be able to identify Rachel and Leah.

Students will be able describe the complexities in Rachel and Leah's relationship.

Guided Timeline:

10 minutes	Activity 1: Set Induction
15 minutes	Activity 2: Group Discussion
30 minutes	Activity 3: Scenarios
10 minutes	Activity 4: Discussion
25 minutes	Activity 5: Bibliodrama
20 minutes	Activity 6: Text Study
10 minutes	Activity 7: Conclusion

Activity 1: Set Induction

Have students free-write about an experience in which they felt competitive or jealous of someone.

- What was the scenario?
- How did it make them feel?
- What did they do to cope with those feelings?

Make sure students know that they will be sharing these scenarios.

After a few minutes of writing, have them turn to a partner and share their experiences.

Come back together as a class, and have a few volunteers share what they had written.

*****Try to get a sense from the class if most of the scenarios were about sibling or friend issues—since that is what will be discussing today.**

Activity 2: Oh, Jealousy—Group Discussion

Discuss-

- What makes us feel jealous or competitive?
- How do we handle our jealousy?
- What can we do when we start to feel jealous?
- Is it always wrong to have these feelings? Why or why not?

Some things to think about and to share with students during this conversation:

Understand the emotion. Jealousy is usually a combination of fear and anger; a fear of losing something, and anger that someone is "moving in on" something that you feel belongs only to you

Allow yourself to actually 'feel' the emotion in a healthy way. When you start feeling jealous, ask yourself: is it more fear based, or more anger based?

Communicate your feelings. Sharing your true feelings with someone without blaming them can create a deep sense of connection between the two of you and open up a dialogue about the path of your relationship. Instead of saying, "you shouldn't have done that", say, "I felt terrible when you did that." Use "I" instead of "You".

Identify what your jealousy is teaching you. Jealousy can alert you to what you want, and what is important to you. Ask yourself, 'Why am I jealous over this? What is making me jealous? What am I trying to keep? Why do I feel threatened?'

Jealousy is not the same thing as love. Sometimes, people think that by feeling jealous about someone, they are loving them. Jealousy is not love, it's the fear and anger of losing love. Jealousy disappears when you are truly loving yourself and others for whatever experience you're having.

Learn to be happy yourself and what you have. Everyone is different and each person has their good and bad qualities. Realize that you have the potential to create a better future.⁴

Activity 3: Friendship Scenarios

We are often jealous and competitive of our friends, even when they are our good friends. Some of the experiences you shared illustrate this. So, today we are going to spend a little bit of time talking about friendship.

Discuss-

- What is friendship?
- What are some qualities you look for in a friend?
- How might friendship be more important at this age than it was when you were younger?

Then, divide the class into groups, giving each group a scenario.

Each group should discuss what they would do in the situation they are given, and how they would respond, as a friend.

Then, the groups should prepare to role-play this scenario in two different ways-

1. How could someone respond in a positive way?
2. How could someone respond in a harmful way?

⁴ "How to Handle Jealousy." <http://www.wikihow.com/Handle-Jealousy>

Students should then come back together and present their scenarios both ways to the rest of the class. After each group has presented, the class should discuss the situation they have seen. Among the debriefing questions, you might include-

- What did the friend do that was positive?
- What did the friend do that was negative?
- What else might have been done?
- How can someone be a good friend in this situation?

Activity 4: A Good Friend is Hard to Find-Discussion

Pose the questions to students-

- There is a saying that “in order to have good friends, you have to be a good friend.” What do you think this saying means? Do you think it is true?
- Sometimes people say that a true friend is someone who knows everything about you and still likes you. What do you think this means? Do you think it is true?

Activity 5: Bibliodrama

“Most simply described, Bibliodrama is a form of role-playing in which the roles played are taken from biblical universe. The roles may be those of characters who appear in the Bible, either explicitly and by name. Bibliodrama may call forth figures whose presence may be inferred from an imaginative reading of the text. In Bibliodrama the reservoir of available roles may also include certain objects or images which can be embodied in voice and action. Places can speak. Or animals may speak. In Bibliodrama one may give expression to spiritual figures...Bibliodrama breaks down the barrier between reader and text. It invites a kind of creative participation in the meaning-making process that can lead both to insight into the Bible and into the self. Bibliodrama is also an extraordinary instrument for creating community. As a group process, it allows people to play together in a non-competitive way”⁵

First, give parts to those students who would like them, but do not force anyone to take part—assure students that it is fine to watch.

Then, read the story of Rachel and Leah (see attached) as a class.

Stop at some points during the reading to ask questions—anyone can answer, and they may answer in any persona (i.e., the person playing Leah does not always have to answer as Leah, nor does she have to be the only one answering for Leah.)

Questions that you might ask are along the lines of—

- How do you feel right now?

⁵ Pitzele, Peter. “What is Bibliodrama?” <http://www.bibliodrama.com/bibpurpose.htm>

- What are you thinking?
- Why did you marry Jacob?
- Rachel, did you help trick Jacob? Why or why not?

Pause in the reading frequently, and keep the questions broad enough to allow everyone who would like to, to participate. Make sure that students give their answers in “I” statements.

Activity 6: Sisters or Competitors?--Text Study

Now that students have read the text, and have a certain emotional connection with the women and perhaps a bias towards one understanding of the text, have students work in *chevruta*, looking at some midrashim about Rachel and Leah.

Discuss-

- How does this midrash interpret their relationship?
- How are Rachel and Leah portrayed?
- How does it change your understanding?
- Were Rachel and Leah behaving competitively or as good friends/sisters? What evidence is there for your answer?

Activity 7: Conclusion

In looking at Rachel and Leah we discussed the concepts of friendship and of jealousy. Sometimes those concepts are very intertwined.

- What can you learn from these women about relationships?

Materials:

Friendship scenarios
 Bibliodrama
 Genesis 29:16-20:24 text
 Rachel and Leah midrash

Friendship Scenarios

How would you respond to this situation:

- How would you respond in a positive way?
- How would you respond in a harmful way?

Prepare to act out the scenario each way.

Scenarios:

1. Your friend starts acting in ways that you think are wrong (drugs, stealing, being rude, etc.).
2. Your friend keeps saying or doing something that hurts your feelings.
3. Your friend invites you to go swimming, but calls back an hour later to cancel. You find out your friend went swimming with someone else.
4. You and your best friend have romantic feelings toward the same person.
5. Two friends of yours are fighting with each other. They demand that you choose between them. You don't want to lose either of them.
6. Your friend wants to spend more time with you than you want to spend with him or her. You like this person very much, but you want to have other friends also.
7. Your friend is about to fail a class and begs you to help him/her cheat on the final exam.

Rachel and Leah: Genesis 29:16-30:24

Now Laban had two daughters; the name of the older one was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. ¹⁷ Leah had weak eyes; Rachel was shapely and beautiful. ¹⁸ Jacob loved Rachel; so he answered, "I will serve you seven years for your younger daughter Rachel." ¹⁹ Laban said, "Better that I give her to you than that I should give her to an outsider. Stay with me." ²⁰ So Jacob served seven years for Rachel and they seemed to him but a few days because of his love for her. ²¹ Then Jacob said to Laban, "Give me my wife, for my time is fulfilled, that I may cohabit with her." ²² And Laban gathered all the people of the place and made a feast. ²³ When evening came, he took his daughter Leah and brought her to him; and he cohabited with her. ²⁴ Laban had given his maidservant Zilpah to his daughter Leah as her maid. ²⁵ When morning came, there was Leah! So he said to Laban, "What is this you have done to me? I was in your service for Rachel! Why did you deceive me?" ²⁶ Laban said, "It is not the practice in our place to marry off the younger before the older. ²⁷ Wait until the bridal week of this one is over and we will give you that one too, provided you serve me another seven years." ²⁸ Jacob did so; he waited out the bridal week of the one, and then he gave him his daughter Rachel as wife. ²⁹ Laban had given his maidservant Bilhah to his daughter Rachel as her maid. ³⁰ And Jacob cohabited with Rachel also; indeed, he loved Rachel more than Leah. And he served him another seven years. ³¹ The LORD saw that Leah was unloved and he opened her womb; but Rachel was barren. ³² Leah conceived and bore a son, and named him Reuben; for she declared, "It means: 'The LORD has seen my affliction'; it also means: 'Now my husband will love me.'" ³³ She conceived again and bore a son, and declared, "This is because the LORD heard that I was unloved and has given me this one also"; so she named him Simeon. ³⁴ Again she conceived and bore a son and declared, "This time my husband will become attached to me, for I have borne him three sons." Therefore he was named Levi. ³⁵ She conceived again and bore a son, and declared, "This time I will praise the LORD." Therefore she named him Judah. Then she stopped bearing.

30:1 When Rachel saw that she had borne Jacob no children, she became envious of her sister; and Rachel said to Jacob, "Give me children, or I shall die." ² Jacob was incensed at Rachel, and said, "Can I take the place of God, who has denied you fruit of the womb?" ³ She said, "Here is my maid Bilhah. Consort with her, that she may bear on my knees and that through her I too may have children." ⁴ So she gave him her maid Bilhah as concubine, and Jacob cohabited with her. ⁵ Bilhah conceived and bore Jacob a son. ⁶ And Rachel said, "God has vindicated me; indeed, He has heeded my plea and given me a son." Therefore she named him Dan. ⁷ Rachel's maid Bilhah conceived again and bore Jacob a second son. ⁸ And Rachel said, "A fateful contest I waged with my sister; yes, and I have prevailed." So she named him Naphtali. ⁹ When Leah saw that she had stopped bearing, she took her maid Zilpah and gave her to Jacob as concubine. ¹⁰ And when Leah's maid Zilpah bore Jacob a son, ¹¹ Leah said, "What luck!" So she named him Gad. ¹² When Leah's maid Zilpah bore Jacob a second son, ¹³ Leah declared, "What fortune!" meaning, "Women will deem me fortunate." So she named him Asher. ¹⁴ Once, at the time of the wheat harvest, Reuben came upon some mandrakes in the field and brought them to his mother Leah. Rachel said to Leah, "Please give me some of your son's mandrakes." ¹⁵ But she said to her, "Was it not

enough for you to take away my husband, that you would also take my son's mandrakes?" Rachel replied, "I promise, he shall lie with you tonight, in return for your son's mandrakes." ¹⁶ When Jacob came home from the field in the evening, Leah went out to meet him and said, "You are to sleep with me, for I have hired you with my son's mandrakes." And he lay with her that night. ¹⁷ God heeded Leah, and she conceived and bore him a fifth son. ¹⁸ And Leah said, "God has given me my reward for having given my maid to my husband." So she named him Issachar. ¹⁹ When Leah conceived again and bore Jacob a sixth son, ²⁰ Leah said, "God has given me a choice gift; this time my husband will exalt me, for I have borne him six sons." So she named him Zebulun. ²¹ Last, she bore him a daughter, and named her Dinah. ²² Now God remembered Rachel; God heeded her and opened her womb. ²³ She conceived and bore a son, and said, "God has taken away my disgrace." ²⁴ So she named him Joseph, which is to say, "May the LORD add another son for me."

Looking at Rachel and Leah in Commentary

From Midrash Rabbah:

And when Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister. (Genesis 30:1) Rabbi Isaac observed, "It is written, *Let not your heart envy sinners* (Proverbs 23: 17), yet you say, *Rachel envied her sister!* This, however, teaches that she envied her good deeds, reasoning: 'Were she not righteous, would she have borne children?'" (Midrash Rabbah - Bereishit 71,6)

From Eichah Rabbah:

Rachel, to spare Leah humiliation on her wedding night, when Jacob thought he was sleeping not with Leah but with his beloved Rachel, hid under the bed. When Jacob spoke to Leah, Rachel answered in her own voice from under the bed.

From A Torah Commentary for Our Times:

A great Chasidic rabbi, Levi Isaac of Berdichev (1740-1809)...explained that when Rachel learned that Laban planned to trick Jacob by giving him Leah as a bride instead of herself, she decided to do all that she could to save her sister from shame. So she taught Leah all of the secret signs of love between herself and Jacob. In this way Rachel was sure that Jacob would take Leah as his wife and not reject her. Rachel was willing to sacrifice her own happiness for the sake of her sister. When Jacob learned of Rachel's sensitivity toward her sister and her concern about her being humiliated, his love for Rachel increased (p.77).

From Lilith's Ark:

Leah writes:

In the year leading up to the wedding, Rachel and I barely spoke. Nearly past the age for marriage myself, I grew increasingly bitter when I looked at Rachel. She did not appreciate Jacob. Her self-pity angered me. I did not understand the depth of her desperation until the day before her wedding.

Rachel approached me with an irrational plan, a dubious scheme filled with risk. She wanted me to marry Jacob in her place. The bridal veil, she reasoned, would hide my identity. At first, I thought that Rachel was joking and was angry at her insensitivity. But then Rachel repeated herself. She truly hoped to trade places with me. My desire for Jacob and my fear of never marrying overpowered my good sense. I pushed logic aside and agreed to conspire with Rachel. When my father quickly agreed to Rachel's plan, I convinced myself that it would work.

Rachel and Leah: A Bibliodrama

Parts:

Narrator

Jacob

Group of Men

Laban

Rachel

Leah

Narrator: A long, long time ago, in a town called Haran, there was a man named Laban. He had two daughters. The older was named Leah, and the younger daughter was Rachel. Everyone said that Rachel was beautiful, but they said that Leah had weak eyes. One day a man named Jacob came to Haran, and saw a group of men gathered at a well.

Jacob: Do you know Laban?

Group of Men: Yes, we do. And there is his daughter Rachel, coming with the flock of sheep.

Narrator: Jacob drew water for Rachel, and for her sheep, and told her that they were cousins. Rachel ran home to tell her father the news, and Laban ran out to greet his nephew. Jacob stayed in Haran, and fell in love with Rachel.

Laban: Jacob, you have been here for a month, you should not watch over my animals for nothing, just because we are family. How should I pay you?

Jacob: I will work for you for seven years. Then, please let me marry your daughter Rachel.

Laban: It is better that she marry you than a stranger. We have a deal.

Narrator: So Jacob worked for seven years for Rachel but they flew by for him because of his love for her. At the end of seven years Laban threw a great party and at the end of the night, he took his daughter Leah to Jacob's tent. In the morning Jacob saw that it was Leah and not Rachel with him!

Jacob: What have you done to me!! I was meant to marry Rachel! Why did you trick me?

Laban: It is not our custom to for the younger daughter to marry before the older daughter. You may marry Rachel as well, if you serve me for another seven years.

Narrator: So Jacob made this promise to Laban and married Rachel a week later. Though he was married to both sisters, he loved Rachel more than he loved Leah. But God saw that Leah was unloved so God provided Leah with a son, while Rachel did not have any children.

Leah: I will name my son Reuben, for it means “Adonai has seen my suffering.” It also means “now my husband will love me.”

Narrator: Leah had another child, a short time later.

Leah: This is because Adonai heard that I was not loved and has given me this son also, so I will name him Simeon.

Narrator: Leah had a third son

Leah: This time my husband will become more attached to me, after all I have given him three sons.

Narrator: The third son was therefore named Levi. Then Leah had a fourth son,

Leah: This time I will praise Adonai and call him Judah.

Narrator: When Rachel saw that she was giving Jacob no children, she became incredibly envious of her sister.

Rachel: Jacob, give me children or I shall die!!

Narrator: Jacob became furious with Rachel—

Jacob: Can I take the place of God, who has denied you children?

Rachel: Then take my maid, Bilah, and have children with her, on my behalf.

Narrator: So Rachel gave Jacob Bilhah as a concubine and Bilhah became pregnant, and had a son.

Rachel: God has heard my cry and given me a son, I will name him Dan.

Narrator: Bilhah had a second son, whom Rachel named Naphtali. Meanwhile, Leah saw that she had stopped bearing children, so she gave her maid Zilpah to Jacob as a concubine. And Zilpah became pregnant and had a son.

Leah: What luck! I will name him Gad.

Narrator: Zilpah then had a second son and Leah named him Asher, meaning “women will deem me fortunate.”

Narrator: One day, during the time of the wheat harvest, Reuben brought his mother, Leah some of the crop from the field.

Rachel: Leah, could I have some of your son’s crop?

Leah: Wasn’t it enough that you took away my husband? Would you also take away my son’s crop?

Rachel: I promise, I will give you Jacob tonight, in return for the crop.

Narrator: That night, when Jacob came home from the field, Leah was there to greet him.

Leah: You are to sleep with me tonight; I have hired you in exchange for my son’s crop.

Narrator: So Jacob went with Leah; and God paid attention to Leah and she was given a fifth son.

Leah: God has given me my reward for having given my maid to my husband, I will name him Issachar.

Narrator: When Leah had a sixth son, she said,

Leah: This time my husband will praise me, for I have given him six sons

Narrator: So she named him Zebulun. Last, she bore him a daughter, and named her Dinah. Then God remembered Rachel, and gave Rachel a child. Rachel had a son.

Rachel: God has finally taken away my disgrace.

Narrator: So Rachel named her son Joseph, which is to say, “May the LORD add another son for me.”

Lesson 6: Between Mothers and Daughters

*****Note to Teacher:** I believe that discussing mother and daughter relationships is important. I think that this conversation is especially necessary to have with teenage girls, as this is a time when this relationship becomes even more complex. However, I also believe that it is critically important to be sensitive to the make-up of your class. If you are aware that some students do not have mothers, or that this topic may be painful for any reason, I suggest that you seriously consider whether or not to teach this lesson. If you choose not to teach Ruth through the lens of mother-daughter relationships, you may think about teaching the book of Ruth and discussing the idea of dependent and independent relationships. Was Ruth dependent on Naomi? Was she dependent on Boaz? Was Naomi dependent on Ruth? When might it be good to have a relationship in which we are dependent on someone? When might we choose to be more independent in our relationships? These are some essential questions that you might take into account if you choose to go the alternative route.

Objectives:

Students will be able to recognize the challenges that they may face in their relationships with their mothers.

Students will be able to recognize what they appreciate in their relationship with their mothers.

Students will be able to identify Ruth.

Guided Timeline:

5 minutes	Activity 1: Introduction
15 minutes	Activity 2: Letters
25 minutes	Activity 3: Text Study
20 minutes	Activity 4: Listening
10 minutes	Activity 5: Conclusion

Activity 1: Introduction to the Day

Before this session, invite the mothers of the students in the class to join you for today's session. The theme of the day is "Mothers and Daughters," so it is appropriate for mothers and daughters to learn together for a day.

Use this note to introduce students and mothers to the theme and rationale of the day—

Mothers and daughters often have a bond that transcends other relationships, but it is this bond that sometimes can cause the mother-daughter relationship to be difficult. “You may love your mother. You may even like her. Nevertheless, there resides in each daughter the need to be different, to improve on the old model, to be your own unique model. Mothers and daughters are natural allies and natural enemies. Loving your mother represents the best and worst of times. No relationship is as highly charged as that between mother and daughter or as riddled with expectations that could detonate a single misstep, a word without warning that wounds or enrages. And no relationship is as bustling with possibilities of goodwill and understanding.”⁶

Deborah Tannen explains in her book, “You’re Wearing That?” that communication between mothers and daughters is often tricky. What a mother perceives as caring a daughter finds critical. Mothers and daughters find in each other the source of great comfort but also of great pain. We talk to each other in better and worse ways than we talk to anyone else.

“A mother’s questions and comments which seem to imply that a daughter should do things another way can spark disproportionate responses because they bring into focus one of the central conundrums of mother daughter relationships: the double meaning of connection and control. Many mothers and daughters are as close as any two people can be. Any word or action intended in the spirit of connection can be interpreted as a sigh that the other person is trying to control you. Another reason that a small comment or suggestion can grate: It can come across as a vote of no confidence... Unaccountable as this may seem to mothers, the smallest remark can bring into focus the biggest question that hovers over nearly all conversations between mothers and daughters: Do you see me for who I am? And is who I am okay? When mothers comments to daughters (or for that matter daughters comments to mothers) seem to answer that question in the affirmative, it’s deeply reassuring; all’s right with the world. But when their words seem to imply that the answer is no, there’s something wrong with what you are doing... Tone of voice can make a difference. Choice of words can make a difference. Conversations between mothers and daughters can be the best or the worst... Daughters want mother’s approval –they don’t want advice. While they want mother’s blessing, they don’t always think what their mothers have to say counts... A key to a better rapport with either a mother or a daughter is to find the right balance between closeness and distance – and that is a challenge.”⁷

Activity 2: Letters to My Mother/My Daughter

Conversation between mothers and daughters is so essential. However, it can also be extremely challenging. Therefore, we will start by putting our feelings and our words onto paper first.

⁶ Gordon, Barbara, MSW. Excerpt from a paper given about mother daughter relationships.

⁷ Ibid.

Have both mothers and daughters write a letter to each other. (They will share these letters with each other later in the lesson.) Allow them some freedom with what they write, but some guidelines may be—

- What I admire about you the most is...
- I am most annoyed when you....because....
- I envy this about you....
- This is how I would like to be like you....
- This is one thing I would like to change/improve in our relationship....

Activity 3: Understanding Ruth-- Text Study

In small groups, have mothers and daughters read the Ruth text. Discuss—

- Why did Ruth follow Naomi? (Was it for her own benefit or to support Naomi?)
- What kind of advice does Naomi offer Ruth?
- How does Ruth seem to interpret this advice? (i.e. helpful, intrusive, etc)
- How would you interpret this advice?
- Do Ruth and Naomi achieve a “balance between closeness and distance?” If yes, how do they do that? If no, how might they have achieved that balance?
- How can we understand 4:13-17? What might be multiple understandings to these verses?
- How might these verses change our understanding of Ruth and Naomi’s relationship?
- What can we learn from these women about our mother/daughter relationships?

Come back together as a class to share some answer to the questions, and some thoughts about this text and mother/daughter relationships.

Activity 4: Listening to Each Other

Have mothers and daughters find their own space in the classroom where they can talk and listen to each other.

Then, they should read their letters to each other, one at a time. After reading each letter, they should ask clarifying questions, or discuss any points further. These are some questions that may guide the discussion if mothers and daughters need some direction--

- What do you admire the most?
- What bugs you the most?
- How can I change my behavior so that it will annoy you less?
- How can we communicate better?

The goal of this is to allow mothers and daughters to have a place to communicate with each other. Sometimes just finding the time is part of the difficulty, in addition to finding the words. We are providing the time, and we have already asked them to find the words when they wrote the letter. Clearly, a relationship is not going to change within one hour, but perhaps this conversation can open the door for further communication.

Activity 5: Conclusion

As a group, debrief the day—

- What was it like to read your letter?
- What was it like to hear your mother's/daughter's letter?
- What have you learned from this experience (include the entire day) about how we might communicate better?

Thank everyone for participating in the day!

Materials:

Paper

Pens

Ruth text

*****For next lesson: assign relationship survey to students.**

For this assignment, students will need to interview three people about different types of relationships, asking them three questions.

- 1. What are specific qualities that make for a positive, caring relationship?**
- 2. What are specific qualities that make for a negative, unhealthy relationship?**
- 3. What type of relationship are you reporting about (marriage, sibling, friendship, etc)?**

The Book of Ruth

Ruth 1:1 In the days when the chieftains ruled, there was a famine in the land; and a man of Bethlehem in Judah, with his wife and two sons, went to reside in the country of Moab. ² The man's name was Elimelech, his wife's name was Naomi, and his two sons were named Mahlon and Chilion -- Ephrathites of Bethlehem in Judah. They came to the country of Moab and remained there. ³ Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died; and she was left with her two sons. ⁴ They married Moabite women, one named Orpah and the other Ruth, and they lived there about ten years. ⁵ Then those two -- Mahlon and Chilion -- also died; so the woman was left without her two sons and without her husband. ⁶ She started out with her daughters-in-law to return from the country of Moab; for in the country of Moab she had heard that the LORD had taken note of His people and given them food. ⁷ Accompanied by her two daughters-in-law, she left the place where she had been living; and they set out on the road back to the land of Judah. ⁸ But Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Turn back, each of you to her mother's house. May the LORD deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me! ⁹ May the LORD grant that each of you find security in the house of a husband!" And she kissed them farewell. They broke into weeping ¹⁰ and said to her, "No, we will return with you to your people." ¹¹ But Naomi replied, "Turn back, my daughters! Why should you go with me? Have I any more sons in my body who might be husbands for you? ¹² Turn back, my daughters, for I am too old to be married. Even if I thought there was hope for me, even if I were married tonight and I also bore sons, ¹³ should you wait for them to grow up? Should you on their account debar yourselves from marriage? Oh no, my daughters! My lot is far more bitter than yours, for the hand of the LORD has struck out against me." ¹⁴ They broke into weeping again, and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law farewell. But Ruth clung to her. ¹⁵ So she said, "See, your sister-in-law has returned to her people and her gods. Go follow your sister-in-law." ¹⁶ But Ruth replied, "Do not urge me to leave you, to turn back and not follow you. For wherever you go, I will go; wherever you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God my God. ¹⁷ Where you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. Thus and more may the LORD do to me if anything but death parts me from you." ¹⁸ When Naomi saw how determined she was to go with her, she ceased to argue with her; ¹⁹ and the two went on until they reached Bethlehem. When they arrived in Bethlehem, the whole city buzzed with excitement over them. The women said, "Can this be Naomi?" ²⁰ "Do not call me Naomi," she replied. "Call me Mara, for Shaddai has made my lot very bitter. ²¹ I went away full, and the LORD has brought me back empty. How can you call me Naomi, when the LORD has dealt harshly with me, when Shaddai has brought misfortune upon me!" ²² Thus Naomi returned from the country of Moab; she returned with her daughter-in-law Ruth the Moabite. They arrived in Bethlehem at the beginning of the barley harvest.

Ruth 2:1 Now Naomi had a kinsman on her husband's side, a man of substance, of the family of Elimelech, whose name was Boaz. ² Ruth the Moabite said to Naomi, "I would like to go to the fields and glean among the ears of grain, behind someone who may show me kindness." "Yes, daughter, go," she replied; ³ and off she went. She came and gleaned in a field, behind the reapers; and, as luck would have it, it was the piece of land belonging to Boaz, who was of Elimelech's family. ⁴ Presently Boaz arrived from Bethlehem. He greeted the reapers, "The LORD be with you!" And they responded, "The LORD bless you!" ⁵ Boaz said to the servant who was in charge of the reapers, "Whose girl is that?" ⁶ The servant in charge of the reapers replied, "She is a Moabite girl who came back with Naomi from the country of Moab. ⁷ She said, 'Please let me glean and gather among the sheaves behind the reapers.' She has been on her feet ever since she came this morning. She has rested but little in the hut." ⁸ Boaz said to Ruth, "Listen to me, daughter. Don't go to glean in another field. Don't go elsewhere, but stay

here close to my girls. ⁹ Keep your eyes on the field they are reaping, and follow them. I have ordered the men not to molest you. And when you are thirsty, go to the jars and drink some of *the water* that the men have drawn." ¹⁰ She prostrated herself with her face to the ground, and said to him, "Why are you so kind as to single me out, when I am a foreigner?" ¹¹ Boaz said in reply, "I have been told of all that you did for your mother-in-law after the death of your husband, how you left your father and mother and the land of your birth and came to a people you had not known before. ¹² May the LORD reward your deeds. May you have a full recompense from the LORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have sought refuge!" ¹³ She answered, "You are most kind, my lord, to comfort me and to speak gently to your maidservant -- though I am not so much as one of your maidservants." ¹⁴ At mealtime, Boaz said to her, "Come over here and partake of the meal, and dip your morsel in the vinegar." So she sat down beside the reapers. He handed her roasted grain, and she ate her fill and had some left over. ¹⁵ When she got up again to glean, Boaz gave orders to his workers, "You are not only to let her glean among the sheaves, without interference, ¹⁶ but you must also pull some *stalks* out of the heaps and leave them for her to glean, and not scold her." ¹⁷ She gleaned in the field until evening. Then she beat out what she had gleaned -- it was about an ephah of barley -- ¹⁸ and carried it back with her to the town. When her mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned, and when she also took out and gave her what she had left over after eating her fill, ¹⁹ her mother-in-law asked her, "Where did you glean today? Where did you work? Blessed be he who took such generous notice of you!" So she told her mother-in-law whom she had worked with, saying, "The name of the man with whom I worked today is Boaz." ²⁰ Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, "Blessed be he of the LORD, who has not failed in His kindness to the living or to the dead! For," Naomi explained to her daughter-in-law, "the man is related to us; he is one of our redeeming kinsmen." ²¹ Ruth the Moabite said, "He even told me, 'stay close by my workers until all my harvest is finished.'" ²² And Naomi answered her daughter-in-law Ruth, "It is best, daughter, that you go out with his girls, and not be annoyed in some other field." ²³ So she stayed close to the maidservants of Boaz, and gleaned until the barley harvest and the wheat harvest were finished. Then she stayed at home with her mother-in-law.

Ruth 3:1 Naomi, her mother-in-law, said to her, "Daughter, I must seek a home for you, where you may be happy. ² Now there is our kinsman Boaz, whose girls you were close to. He will be winnowing barley on the threshing floor tonight. ³ So bathe, anoint yourself, dress up, and go down to the threshing floor. But do not disclose yourself to the man until he has finished eating and drinking. ⁴ When he lies down, note the place where he lies down, and go over and uncover his feet and lie down. He will tell you what you are to do." ⁵ She replied, "I will do everything you tell me." ⁶ She went down to the threshing floor and did just as her mother-in-law had instructed her. ⁷ Boaz ate and drank, and in a cheerful mood went to lie down beside the grainpile. Then she went over stealthily and uncovered his feet and lay down. ⁸ In the middle of the night, the man gave a start and pulled back -- there was a woman lying at his feet! ⁹ "Who are you?" he asked. And she replied, "I am your handmaid Ruth. Spread your robe over your handmaid, for you are a redeeming kinsman." ¹⁰ He exclaimed, "Be blessed of the LORD, daughter! Your latest deed of loyalty is greater than the first, in that you have not turned to younger men, whether poor or rich. ¹¹ And now, daughter, have no fear. I will do in your behalf whatever you ask, for all the elders of my town know what a fine woman you are. ¹² But while it is true I am a redeeming kinsman, there is another redeemer closer than I. ¹³ Stay for the night. Then in the morning, if he will act as a redeemer, good! let him redeem. But if he does not want to act as redeemer for you, I will do so myself, as the LORD lives! Lie down until morning." ¹⁴ So she lay at his feet until dawn. She rose before one person could distinguish another, for he thought, "Let it not be known that the woman came to the threshing floor." ¹⁵ And he said, "Hold out the shawl you are wearing." She held it while he measured out six measures of barley, and he put it on her back. When she got back to the town, ¹⁶ she came to

her mother-in-law, who asked, "How is it with you, daughter?" She told her all that the man had done for her; ¹⁷ and she added, "He gave me these six measures of barley, saying to me, 'Do not go back to your mother-in-law empty-handed.'" ¹⁸ And Naomi said, "Stay here, daughter, till you learn how the matter turns out. For the man will not rest, but will settle the matter today."

Ruth 4:1 Meanwhile, Boaz had gone to the gate and sat down there. And now the redeemer whom Boaz had mentioned passed by. He called, "Come over and sit down here, So-and-so!" And he came over and sat down. ² Then Boaz took ten elders of the town and said, "Be seated here"; and they sat down. ³ He said to the redeemer, "Naomi, now returned from the country of Moab, must sell the piece of land which belonged to our kinsman Elimelech. ⁴ I thought I should disclose the matter to you and say: Acquire it in the presence of those seated here and in the presence of the elders of my people. If you are willing to redeem it, redeem! But if you will not redeem, tell me, that I may know. For there is no one to redeem but you, and I come after you." "I am willing to redeem it," he replied. ⁵ Boaz continued, "When you acquire the property from Naomi and from Ruth the Moabite, you must also acquire the wife of the deceased, so as to perpetuate the name of the deceased upon his estate." ⁶ The redeemer replied, "Then I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I impair my own estate. You take over my right of redemption, for I am unable to exercise it." ⁷ Now this was formerly done in Israel in cases of redemption or exchange: to validate any transaction, one man would take off his sandal and hand it to the other. Such was the practice in Israel. ⁸ So when the redeemer said to Boaz, "Acquire for yourself," he drew off his sandal. ⁹ And Boaz said to the elders and to the rest of the people, "You are witnesses today that I am acquiring from Naomi all that belonged to Elimelech and all that belonged to Chilion and Mahlon. ¹⁰ I am also acquiring Ruth the Moabite, the wife of Mahlon, as my wife, so as to perpetuate the name of the deceased upon his estate, that the name of the deceased may not disappear from among his kinsmen and from the gate of his home town. You are witnesses today." ¹¹ All the people at the gate and the elders answered, "We are. May the LORD make the woman who is coming into your house like Rachel and Leah, both of whom built up the House of Israel! Prosper in Ephrathah and perpetuate your name in Bethlehem! ¹² And may your house be like the house of Perez whom Tamar bore to Judah -- through the offspring which the LORD will give you by this young woman." ¹³ So Boaz married Ruth; she became his wife, and he cohabited with her. The LORD let her conceive, and she bore a son. ¹⁴ And the women said to Naomi, "Blessed be the LORD, who has not withheld a redeemer from you today! May his name be perpetuated in Israel! ¹⁵ He will renew your life and sustain your old age; for he is born of your daughter-in-law, who loves you and is better to you than seven sons." ¹⁶ Naomi took the child and held it to her bosom. She became its foster mother, ¹⁷ and the women neighbors gave him a name, saying, "A son is born to Naomi!" They named him Obed; he was the father of Jesse, father of David. ¹⁸ This is the line of Perez: Perez begot Hezron, ¹⁹ Hezron begot Ram, Ram begot Amminadab, ²⁰ Amminadab begot Nahshon, Nahshon begot Salmon, ²¹ Salmon begot Boaz, Boaz begot Obed, ²² Obed begot Jesse, and Jesse begot David.

Lesson 7: Relating to Each Other

Objectives:

Students will be able to define qualities that are found in caring, healthy relationships. Students will be able to describe how sharing personal stories can help develop deeper relationships within the class.

Guided Timeline:

10 minutes	Activity 1: Set Induction
20 minutes	Activity 2: Reports from Survey
30 minutes	Activity 3: Sharing our Stories
5 minutes	Activity 4: Conclusion

Activity 1: Set Induction

We have read stories of women in the Bible who are wives, mothers, daughters, sisters, etc.

- What qualities did we read about in these stories that made these relationships caring and positive?
- What qualities did we read about that we find negative?

Have students work in *chevruta* to make look through the texts we have studied and make lists of qualities.

Activity 2: Reports from Survey

****Survey needs to be assigned before this lesson!**

Have students interview three people about different kinds of relationships.

4. What are specific qualities that make for a positive, caring relationship?
5. What are specific qualities that make for a negative, unhealthy relationship?
6. What type of relationship are you reporting about (marriage, sibling, friendship, etc)?

In class, have students share the characteristics that they found, putting them on the board, or on large sheets of paper in two columns. Add the qualities found in the Bible (Activity 1) to this list.

Then discuss-

- Are there some qualities we might move to the other column? Why or why not?

- What qualities might we add to these lists?
- Does having all the qualities in this list make a good relationship? Why or why not?
- Do all the qualities apply to all relationships? Why or why not?
- How can we apply this to our lives?

Activity 3: Sharing our Stories

As a way of developing deeper relationships within the class, each student will have an opportunity to share their story. They should be allowed a few minutes each to share whatever they wish, preferably about important relationships in their lives. They could talk about mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, friends, boyfriends, grandparents, etc. They may either share one particularly meaningful experience, or just tell us why this person is important to them. If they do not feel comfortable talking about a relationship, they may talk about whatever they wish. It is also important that every member of the class know that if they need to they are allowed to pass on their turn. Part of developing class relationships is sharing ourselves, but another significant part is listening to what others are sharing. We grow together as a group by listening and caring for one another.

Activity 4: Conclusion

- How did it feel listening to everyone's stories?
- Why might we have done this?

Throughout the rest of the year, it will be important to remember how to listen and act respectfully. We will continue to share things about ourselves that require a comfortable and safe environment. We all have the responsibility to make sure that everyone feels welcome and free to say whatever they wish to say without any judgment, and with our support.

Materials:

Texts from this unit

UNIT 2: BEAUTY/BODY IMAGE

Goals for Unit:

- To engage students in a discussion about what beauty means.
- To help students develop a healthy, comfortable body image.
- To engage students in Biblical texts, and discussions about these texts.
- To develop a safe environment in the classroom which allows students to share their perspectives honestly and comfortably.

Understandings for Unit:

Ancient Jewish texts can serve as openings for discussions about relevant, contemporary issues.

Beauty can describe appearance as well as someone's intellect, character and wisdom.

Essential Questions for Unit:

- What is beauty?
- How can other people make us feel beautiful?
- How can we make ourselves feel beautiful?

Objectives for Unit:

- Students will be able to define beauty.
- Students will be able to identify examples of beauty in biblical texts.
- Students will be able to describe today's standards of beauty, and how it affects them.

Assessment

- Journaling
- Regular Class Discussion
- Magazine Survey and Discussion
- Fashion Debate
- Magazine Collage

Notes to Teacher:

In 2004, Dove released a study that they used to launch their “Campaign for Real Beauty.” Among the findings of the study were the following statistics:

- Only two percent of women describe themselves as beautiful.
- Sixty-three percent strongly agree that society expects women to enhance their physical attractiveness. Forty-five percent of women feel women who are more beautiful have greater opportunities in life.
- More than two-thirds (68%) of women strongly agree that "the media and advertising set an unrealistic standard of beauty that most woman can't ever achieve."
- The majority (76%) wish female beauty was portrayed in the media as being made up of more than just physical attractiveness.
- Seventy-five percent went on to say that they wish the media did a better job of portraying women of diverse physical attractiveness, including age, shape and size.⁸

With statistics telling us that only 2% of women would describe themselves as beautiful, addressing the issues of beauty, body image and self esteem in adolescent girls becomes even more crucial. This unit seeks to provide openings for students to engage in important conversations about how they view themselves, and others. Biblical text is used as a basis for looking at beauty, but significant time is devoted to how these young women see themselves, as well as how we can help to make sure that perspective is a positive one.

This unit, which encourages students to be honest about their feelings of self and others, may be uncomfortable for teenage girls. The goal of this unit and of the curriculum in general is to develop a safe environment in your classroom which allows for students to share their perspectives honestly and comfortably.

Some of these lessons are designed as one longer lesson meant to be taught in one two hour session or over the course of two sessions. It is therefore up to you, as the teacher, to decide how to break up these lessons, so that they best fit your class and the timing of your class session.

⁸ “Only Two Percent of Woman Describe Themselves as Beautiful: New Global Study Uncovers Desire for Broader Definition of Beauty”<http://www.campaignforrealbeauty.com/press.asp?section=news&id=110>

Unit 2: Beauty Body Image Resources

Articles:

- “How Seventeen Undermines Young Women”
- “Only Two Percent of Women Describe Themselves as Beautiful”
- “Fashion Industry Suggests Guidelines for Healthy Models”
- “Furor Over Anorexic Models Hits U.S. Fashion Week”
- “Fashion Industry Launches Inquiry into Health of Models”
- “Pressure Mounts for Ban on Zero Size Models”

Texts:

- Genesis 29
- Genesis 29 midrash
- Esther
- Esther midrash

Handouts:

- Lesson 1 handout-words from Genesis 29
- Magazine survey
- Esther study guide

Lesson 1: Beginning our Beauty Talks

Objectives:

Students will be able to describe the times they feel the best and worst about themselves.

Students will be able to define what they mean when using the word “beautiful.”

Students will be able to identify Rachel and Leah.

Guided Timeline:

15 minutes	Activity 1: Set Induction
20 minutes	Activity 2: Reflective Writing and Sharing
15 minutes	Activity 3: Introduction to Rachel and Leah
5 minutes	Activity 4: Conclusion

Activity 1: Set Induction

Write the word beautiful on the board in large letters.

Ask students what comes to mind when they hear this word. Spend several minutes writing down everything they say on the board.

Explain that for the next several lesson we will be discussing the idea of beauty and body image and reading about it in the Bible. Many women in the Bible were described using words similar to those written on the board and we are going to explore what was meant in the text when we are told someone is beautiful. In addition, we will examine our own perspectives on beauty.

Activity 2: Journaling

Students will spend time individually writing in their journals on the questions, “When do I feel my best? When do I feel my worst?”

Ask students to spend some time thinking about specific moments they can identify and try to be as descriptive as they can.

Then, students should share with each other each other what made them feel their best or worst. (Students only need to share the pieces of their writing they are comfortable presenting.)

Activity 3: Introduction to Rachel and Leah

Read Genesis 29: 1-18, focusing on verses 16-18.

Point out Hebrew words for “weak eyes” and “beautiful of form.”

- What do these terms mean?
- How do we interpret them?
- How would you feel if you were Rachel?
- How would you feel if you were Leah?
- Where else are these words used? (Share handout to explore the meanings in other verses)

Activity 4: Conclusion

Write questions for Rachel and Leah. What would you ask them and want them to answer?

In our next session we will continue talking about Rachel and Leah, looking at commentaries about this text, and discussing whether their beauty mattered.

Materials:

Paper

Pens

Student Journals

Genesis 29:1-18 text

List of where else terms עיני רכות and יפת-תאר ויפת מראה appear in Bible

Rachel and Leah: Genesis 29: 1-18

א וַיֵּשֶׁא יַעֲקֹב רַגְלָיו וַיֵּלֶךְ אֶרְצָה בְּנֵי־קְדָם:

1 Then Jacob went on his journey, and came to the land of the children of the east.

ב וַיֵּרָא וְהִנֵּה בְּאֵר בְּשָׂדֶה
וְהִנֵּה־שָׁם שְׁלֹשָׁה עֲדָרֵי־צֹאן רֹבְצִים עָלֶיהָ כִּי מִן־הַבְּאֵר הָיָה יִשְׁקוּ
הָעֲדָרִים וְהָאֶבֶן גְּדֹלָה עַל־פִּי הַבְּאֵר:

2 And he looked, and behold a well in the field, and, lo, three flocks of sheep lying there by it. - For out of that well they watered the flocks. And the stone upon the well's mouth was great.

ג וַנִּאָּסְפוּ־שָׁמָּה כָּל־הָעֲדָרִים וַיִּגְלְלוּ
אֶת־הָאֶבֶן מֵעַל פִּי הַבְּאֵר וְהִשְׁקוּ אֶת־הַצֹּאן וְהִשְׁיבוּ אֶת־הָאֶבֶן עַל־פִּי
הַבְּאֵר לְמַקְוָה:

3 And there were all the flocks gathered; and they rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the sheep, and put the stone back upon the well's mouth in its place.

ד וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם יַעֲקֹב אַחֵי מַאֲיֵן אַתֶּם וַיֹּאמְרוּ מִחָרָן
אַנְחָנוּ:

4 And Jacob said to them: 'My brothers, where are you from?' And they said: 'We are from Haran.'

ה וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם הֲיַדְעֶתֶם אֶת־לָבָן בֶּן־נָחוֹר וַיֹּאמְרוּ יָדַעְנוּ:

5 And he said to them: 'Do you know Laban, the son of Nahor?' And they said: 'We know him.'

ו וַיֹּאמֶר
לָהֶם הַשְּׁלוֹם לוֹ וַיֹּאמְרוּ שְׁלוֹם וְהִנֵּה רָחֵל בָּתּוֹ בָּאָה עִם־הַצֹּאן:

6 And he said to them: 'Is it well with him?' And they said: 'It is well; and, behold, Rachel his daughter comes with the sheep.'

ז וַיֹּאמֶר

הֵן עוֹד הַיּוֹם גָּדוֹל לֹא-עֵת הָאֶסֶף הַמְקִינָה הַשְּׂקוּ הַצֹּאן וּלְכוּ רְעוּ:

7 And he said: 'Lo, the day is still great; it is not time for the cattle to be gathered; water the sheep, go and feed them.'

וַיֹּאמְרוּ לֹא נוֹכֵל עַד אֲשֶׁר יֵאָסְפוּ כָּל-הַעֲדָרִים וְגִלְלוּ אֶת-הָאֶבֶן מֵעַל פִּי

ח

הַבְּאֵר וְהִשְׁקִינוּ הַצֹּאן:

8 And they said: 'We cannot, until all the flocks are gathered together, and they roll the stone from the well's mouth; then we water the sheep.'

ט עוֹדְנוּ מְדַבֵּר עִמָּם וְרַחֵל | בָּאָה עִם-הַצֹּאן אֲשֶׁר
לְאִבֵיהָ כִּי רָעָה הוּא:

9 While he was still speaking with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep; for she tended them.

י וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר רָאָה יַעֲקֹב אֶת-רַחֵל בַּת-לֵבָן אַחֵי אִמּוֹ
וְאֶת-צֹאן לֵבָן אַחֵי אִמּוֹ וַיֵּגֶשׁ יַעֲקֹב וַיִּגַּל אֶת-הָאֶבֶן מֵעַל פִּי הַבְּאֵר וַיִּשְׂקֶה
אֶת-צֹאן לֵבָן אַחֵי אִמּוֹ:

10 And it came to pass, when Jacob saw Rachel the daughter of Laban his mother's brother, and the sheep of Laban his mother's brother, that Jacob went near, and rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the flock of Laban his mother's brother.

יא וַיִּשָּׂק יַעֲקֹב לְרַחֵל וַיִּשָּׂא אֶת-קוֹלוֹ וַיִּבְדֵּן:

11 And Jacob kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice, and wept.

יב וַיִּגֵּד

יַעֲקֹב לְרַחֵל כִּי אַחֵי אִבֵיהָ הוּא וְכִי בֶן-רִבְקָה הוּא וַתֵּרָץ וַתִּגֵּד לְאִבֵיהָ:

12 And Jacob told Rachel that he was her father's brother, and that he was Rebekah's son; and she ran and told her father.

יג ויהי כשמע לבן את שמע | יעקב בן-אחיתו ויָרַץ לקראתו ויחבק-לו
וינשק-לו ויביאהו אל-ביתו ויספר ללבן את כל-הדברים האלה:

13 And it came to pass, when Laban heard the tidings of Jacob, his sister's son, that he ran to meet him, and embraced him, and kissed him, and brought him to his house. And he told Laban all these things:

יד ויאמר לו לבן אֵךְ עֲצָמֵי וּבָשָׂרִי אַתָּה וַיֵּשֶׁב עִמּוֹ חֹדֶשׁ יָמִים:

14 And Laban said to him, Surely you are my bone and my flesh. And he dwelled with him for a month.

טו ויאמר
לבן ליעקב הכי-אחי אתה ועבדתני חנם הגידה לי מה-משפךתך:

15 And Laban said to Jacob, Because you are my brother, should you therefore serve me for nothing? Tell me, what shall your wages be?

טז וילבן שתי בנות שם הגדלה לאה ושם הקטנה רחל:

16 And Laban had two daughters: the name of the elder *was* Leah, and the name of the younger *was* Rachel.

יז ועיני לאה
רפוא ורחל היתה יפת-תואר ויפת-מראה:

17 And Leah's eyes were weak; but Rachel was of beautiful form and fair to look upon.

יח ויאהב יעקב
את-רחל ויאמר אעבדך שבע שנים ברחל בתך הקטנה:

18 And Jacob loved Rachel; and said, I will serve you seven years for Rachel your younger daughter.

Where Do the Terms יפת-תאר ויפת מראה and עיני רכות appear in the Bible?

Job 40:27

הֲרֵבָה אֵלַיךְ תַּחֲנוּנִים אִם-יִדְבֵּר אֵלַיךְ רַכּוֹת:

Will he make many supplications unto you? Or will he speak soft words to you?

Deuteronomy 21:11

וְרָאִיתָ בְּשִׁבְיָהּ אִשָּׁה יִפְת־תֶּאֶר וְחִשְׁקָתָּ בָּהּ וְלִקְחָתָּ לָּךְ לְאִשָּׁה:

And you see among the captives a beautiful woman and you desire her and would take her to wife,

Esther 2:7

וַיְהִי אִמּוֹן אֶת־הַרְפָּסָה הִיא אֶסְתֵּר בַּת־דָּדָו כִּי אֵין לָהּ אָב וְאִם וְהַנְּעָרָה יִפְת־תֶּאֶר וְטוֹבֶת מְרֵאָה וּבְמוֹת אָבִיהָ וְאִמָּהּ לִקְחָהּ מֵרֵדְכַי לוֹ לְבַת:

He was foster father to Hadassah – that is, Esther – his uncle's daughter, for she had neither father nor mother. The maiden was shapely and beautiful; and when her father and mother died, Mordecai adopted her as his own daughter.

Genesis 12:11

וַיְהִי כִּפְאֶשֶׁר הִקְרִיב לְבוֹא מִצְרַיִמָּה וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־שָׂרַי אִשְׁתּוֹ הִנֵּה־נָא יָדַעְתִּי כִּי אִשָּׁה יִפְת־מְרֵאָה אַתָּ:

As he was about to enter Egypt, he said to his wife Sarai, "I know what a beautiful woman you are."

Genesis 39:6

וַיַּעֲזֹב כָּל־אֶשְׁרֵי־לוֹ בְּיַד־יוֹסֵף וְלֹא־יָדַע אֶתּוֹ מֵאוּמָה כִּי אִם־הִלָּחֵם אֶשְׁרֵי־הוּא אוֹכַל וַיְהִי יוֹסֵף יִפְת־תֶּאֶר וַיִּפֶּה מְרֵאָה:

He left all that he had in Joseph's hands and, with him there, he paid attention to nothing save the food that he ate. Now Joseph was well built and handsome.

Genesis 41:2

וְהָנָה מִן־הָאָרְ עֲלֹת שֶׁבַע פָּרוֹת יְפֹת מְרֹאָה וּבְרִיאַת בָּשָׂר
וַתִּרְעֶינָה בְּאָחוּ:

When out of the Nile there came up seven cows, handsome and sturdy, and they grazed in the reed grass.

1 Samuel 17: 42

וַיִּבֹט הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי וַיִּרְאֶה
אֶת־דָּוִד וַיִּבְזֶהוּ כִּי־הָיָה נָעַר וְאֲדָמְנִי עִם־יָפֶה מְרֹאָה:

When the Philistine caught sight of David, he scorned him, for he was but a boy, ruddy and handsome.

2 Samuel 14: 27

וַיִּנְלְדוּ לְאַבְשָׁלוֹם שְׁלוֹשָׁה בָנִים
וַיְהִי אֶחָת וּשְׁמֶהָ תָמָר הִיא הָיְתָה אִשָּׁה יְפֹת מְרֹאָה:

Absalom had three sons and a daughter whose name was Tamar; she was a beautiful woman.

**Additionally, some form of the word רכות is found in Genesis 18:7, Genesis 33:7, Deuteronomy 20:8, Deuteronomy 28:54, 2 Samuel 3:39, 2 kings 22:19, 2 Chronicles 34:27, Proverbs 4:3, Proverbs 15:1, Ezekiel 17:22

Lesson 2-3: Competing to be Beautiful
(This lesson is intended to take place over 2 sessions.)

Objectives:

Students will be able to state how of beauty and body image are impacted by the fashion and entertainment industries.
Students will be able to identify healthier behaviors and attitudes regarding beauty and body image.

Guided Timeline:

10 minutes	Activity 1: Set Induction
20 minutes	Activity 2: Introducing Commentary
55 minutes	Activity 3: Debate
15 minutes	Activity 4: Body Image

Activity 1: Set Induction

Have students summarize Genesis 29:1-18. How are Rachel and Leah described?

Activity 2: Introducing Commentary

Read commentaries and midrashim for Genesis 29 text in small groups.
Have each group answer guiding questions as they study together.
Join back together as a larger group to share some of the answers.

Activity 3: A Model Debate

Recently there has been a debate within the fashion industry over whether or not models should have to weigh a certain amount in order to work. Class will be divided in half, and each group will be provided with articles regarding this issue. Groups have time to read, research, and structure their argument. (30 minutes)

Class will join back together for the debate and follow-up discussion. (25 minutes)

Alternate Activity 3: Magazine Survey

An article written by Kimberly Phillips, entitled “How Seventeen Undermines Young Women” states that “Seventeen Magazine reinforces the cultural expectations that an adolescent woman should be more concerned with her appearance, her relations with other people and her ability to win approval from men than with her own ideas or her expectations for herself.”⁹

Have students work in small groups filling out a magazine survey for several different fashion magazines.

Then discuss—

- Based on your research, how does the magazine promote independence or the notion that women should be concerned with their appearance, relationships, and winning approval?
- What is the main message the magazine is sending?
- In what ways does/doesn't this magazine represent reality?
- How are the issues explored in this magazine issues that teenage girls are concerned with?
- Why is this magazine appealing to teenage girls?
- How do you feel when you look through this magazine? Does it have any impact on your self-esteem?

Activity 4: Shaping Our Body Image

There are so many different types of people living on earth, and everyone is unique—we all are different sizes, shapes, colors, and have different personalities. The people we see in these magazines and on television are such a small percentage of women.

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the average U.S. woman is 5'3" tall and weighs 152 pounds. The average size of a model is 5'10" and 110 pounds. It is not surprising that almost two-thirds of girls describe themselves as being unhappy with their bodies.

Share statistics from Dove's Real Beauty Campaign Study.

⁹ Phillips, Kimberly. “How Seventeen Undermines Young Women.” This article originally appeared in the January/February 1993 edition of *Extra!*, the bimonthly magazine of media criticism published by the media watch group [FAIR](http://www.mediaawareness.ca). Reprinted with permission on www.mediaawareness.ca

Discuss—

- What makes a body healthy?
- Why do we think we should look a certain way?
- How can we change our attitudes and our behaviors so that we are more satisfied with ourselves?

Materials:

Genesis commentaries

Model debate articles

Magazines

Magazines survey handouts

“How Seventeen Undermines Young Women” article

Dove’s Real Beauty Campaign article

Paper

Pens

Study Sheet for Genesis 29

"Leah had weak eyes" (Gen. 29:17). Rav said: That they were weak was no disgrace to her, but cause for praise. For at the crossroads she used to hear people say, "Rebekah has two sons, and Laban has two daughters--the older daughter should wed the older son, and the younger, the younger son." So she sat at the crossroads asking all passersby, "The older one--what kind of person is he?" and was told, "A cunning hunter" [Gen. 25:27], a wicked man, given to robbing people." "And the younger--what kind of person is he?" "A quiet man, dwelling in tents" (ibid.). At this, Leah wept so much that her eyelids seemed to disappear. (From Book of Legends, based on Midrash Rabbah - Bereishit 70:16)

"The story of Rachel and Leah is, on one level, the story of the rivalry between two sisters for the love of one husband. Beneath the rivalry is the story of the struggle for self-esteem. Leah is not as beautiful as Rachel. Her eyes are described as רַחֵמָה, usually translated as "weak" but the more usual meaning is "tender" or "soft." Perhaps Rachel is more outwardly beautiful, but Leah is more sensitive and kind. All the children she produced for Jacob cannot make him love her. Rachel enjoys Jacob's love but for a long time she lack the one her society requires for a woman to gain respect." (From Helpmates, Harlots and Heroes by Alice Ogden Bellis)

"My elder sister Leah's eyes were so sensitive that, when the first sliver of sun shone into our room, she would awake with a startle....In truth, I did not resent being woken up early. First think in the morning, I was privy to a secret, to a marvel that neither Leah nor I could explain. For just a few minutes each morning, Leah's eyes sparkled like twin emeralds in clear, deep water. Her eye lashed curled unnaturally inward, though, reminding us that soon her eyes' clarity would soon disappear. As we dressed, Leah's right eye began to wander upward, making her appear increasingly dimwitted. By the time Leah finished braiding my hair, her right eye focused straight to the sky. Her eyes began oozing tears, for her eyelashes were curled so far inward that they could not keep out sand or dust. By the end of the day, her eyes looked like two mismatched rocks caught in stale water...Our mother, Adinah, climbed the ladder to our room each morning... We slept in a room that had belonged to our Aunt Rebekah. 'Rebekah has your beauty, Rachel, and your brilliance, Leah,' she would say. I felt like responding, 'Please, just once tell me that I am also smart.' I did not have the courage, though, to speak my true feelings." (From Lilith's Ark by Deborah Bodin Cohen)

"Why does the Torah say that Leah has 'weak eyes'? Is this a judgment of her beauty or her sight? Leah adds: I was always described as having "tender" or "weak" eyes; my younger sister Rachel, on the other hand, was always called "shapely and beautiful." Although Jacob preferred beautiful Rachel and worked seven years to win her, it was me he married first—or rather my *eyes*, which were the only part of me he saw over my veil. In fact, it was *his* eyes that proved weak, so that he, like his father, chose the wrong sibling." (The Five Books of Miriam by Ellen Frankel)

Questions to Consider:

- How is Rachel portrayed in each of these texts?
- How is Leah portrayed in each of these texts?
- What is beauty according to each of these texts?
- How do these commentators connect beauty with self-esteem?
- How do these commentaries impact your understanding of Rachel, Leah and Jacob?

How Seventeen Undermines Young Women

By Kimberly Phillips

*This article originally appeared in the January/February 1993 edition of **Extra!**, the bimonthly magazine of media criticism published by the media watch group FAIR. Reprinted with permission.*

Harvard professor Carol Gilligan, studying the psychological development of teenage girls in 1988, found that they experience a major drop in self-esteem as they reach adolescence. Only 29 percent of teenage girls said that they "felt happy the way I am," as opposed to 60 percent of nine-year-old girls. Gilligan suggests that this adolescent crisis in confidence is due to the conflict between the image that a girl has of herself and what society tells her a woman should be like.

Seventeen, the most widely read magazine among teenage girls in the United States, claims to "encourage independence" and help each reader "become this wonderful person that she dreams she will be." But far from encouraging independence, **Seventeen** only reinforces the cultural expectations that an adolescent woman should be more concerned with her appearance, her relations with other people and her ability to win approval from men than with her own ideas or her expectations for herself.

An average issue of **Seventeen** contains about eight to 12 fashion and beauty features, taking up two-thirds of the magazine's editorial content. There is usually one story about a new exercise or fitness regime, one story in which an "average-looking girl gets a makeover, numerous pages of makeup tricks and techniques, mini-stories on what's new in the fashion world, and the feature fashion spreads, which are usually four to six pages long.

For a magazine aimed at an audience of teenage girls, **Seventeen** does a lot of reporting on men. In 1992, 61 of the celebrities profiled in **Seventeen's** "Talent" section were men, while only 20 were women. Every issue of **Seventeen** has a column called "Guy Talk," in which a columnist named Robert Love expounds upon the male view of relationships and women. One of only two articles in 1992 about eating disorders among teenage girls was written by a man, giving his perceptions of "My Sister's Battle with Anorexia." The whole July 1992 issue was devoted to describing "One Hundred Guys We Love." (Perhaps as a follow-up, the August issue ran an article called "Hello, I Love You: How to Write a Knockout Fan Letter.")

Even the fashion and beauty stories are centered around men. A fashion spread in the February 1992 issue called "A Little Romance" featured a blonde, blue-eyed model wearing stylish clothing trying to "find Monsieur Right in France," which, according to the captions that accompany the story, is "all about flair -- looking tres cute -- and searching like crazy!" In April 1992, a fashion spread featuring young women in short bloomers and cowboy boots was captioned "How to Rustle Up a Ranchero..." The August 1992 issue ran a fashion spread called "Romance 101," which had photographs of a young woman gazing adoringly at her boyfriend. A caption read, "Making the honor roll can have some hidden perks -- like John begging me to cram for the English midterm with him...."

In keeping with this trivialization of intellectual pursuits, an average issue of **Seventeen** has only two or three full-length articles on non-beauty topics. These

articles almost invariably deal with a teenage girl's relations with other people, rather than ways for her to be happy with her own life. There are articles about how to find the right boyfriend, whether it's by taking a special **Seventeen** quiz ("What's Your Guy Style," 7/92) or by consulting the horoscopes ("The Love Scope," 2/92). Then there are articles about how to fit into the social structure at school ("Popularity: What's the Secret?" 10/92). The fiction stories that **Seventeen** publishes usually deal with the same kinds of topics.

In 1992, there was not one article about the abortion debate. There were no full-length articles about the "Year of the Woman." Aside from one full-length article about sexual harassment (9/92), political issues were minimized and crammed into a three-paragraph column, which frequently shared the page with another column about makeup or trendy clothing. Even environmental issues were turned into beauty issues, as in the opening line of an article on ozone depletion (1/92): "The environment's in trouble -- and the more it suffers, the tougher it is on your skin."

By assuming that skincare is the first thing on their minds, magazines like **Seventeen** are telling young women that their minds are unimportant. By teaching young women that the most important things in a woman's life should be her looks and her relationships to men, they only serve to reinforce the drop in self-esteem reported in Gilligan's study.

ONLY TWO PERCENT OF WOMEN DESCRIBE THEMSELVES AS BEAUTIFUL **New Global Study Uncovers Desire for Broader Definition of Beauty**

NEW YORK, September 29, 2004 - Dove® unveils a groundbreaking new study today that discusses the implications of a global society that narrowly defines beauty by the images seen in entertainment, advertising and fashion runways and the startling impact this has on women. The result: only two percent of thousands of women from 10 countries around the world consider themselves beautiful. Does this mean that we live in a world where women are not beautiful or does it mean that women around the world are calling for a broader definition of beauty?

Dove, as a global beauty brand and responsible marketer, wants to investigate these issues and understand women's views on beauty. With these concerns in mind, Dove partnered with Dr. Nancy Etcoff, Harvard University professor and author of "Survival of the Prettiest," and Dr. Susie Orbach, London School of Economics, visiting professor and author of "Fat is a Feminist Issue," to develop *The Real Truth About Beauty: A Global Report*, which explores the relationship women have with beauty. Specifically, Dove's mission is to determine how women define beauty; their level of satisfaction with their own beauty; and its impact on their sense of well-being.

"The Real Truth About Beauty: A Global Report makes it clear that it is time to lift the quota system on images of beauty," says Etcoff. "This study uncovers that beauty is never going away and has enormous power. Beauty should not be reduced to a political or cultural problem but understood as a basic human pleasure."

Beauty: The Eye of the Beholder

The Real Truth About Beauty: A Global Report uncovers startling information about how women physically perceive and define their look. Supporting the current and narrow definition of beauty, the respondents are hesitant to claim ownership of the word "beauty," with more than 40 percent strongly agreeing that they do not feel comfortable describing themselves as beautiful.

Furthermore, only five percent feel comfortable describing themselves as pretty and a mere nine percent feel comfortable describing themselves as attractive. Additionally, just 13 percent of women say they are very satisfied with their beauty; 12 percent say they are very satisfied with their physical attractiveness; 17 percent are very satisfied with their facial attractiveness; and only 13 percent are very satisfied with their body weight and shape. In fact, in a society captivated by diet and makeover programs, a third of women around the world are very or somewhat dissatisfied with their body weight. The women of Japan have the highest levels of dissatisfaction at 59 percent - followed by Brazil (37%), United Kingdom (36%) and the United States (36%), Argentina (27%) and the Netherlands (25%).

Pop Culture's Beauty Mark

Having assessed how women think about as well as evaluate their own beauty and appearance, the study asks women about social issues emerging from mass media and pop culture. From Brazil to the Netherlands to Argentina - across cultures, ages, ethnicities and race - women make it clear they believe there is a one-dimensional and narrow, physical definition of beauty. The findings show that the ideas of beauty and physical attractiveness are largely synonymous, and although both are highly valued by society, both are rendered almost impossible to attain.

Respondents said they felt pressure to try and be that "perfect" picture of beauty:

- Sixty-three percent strongly agree that women today are expected to be more attractive than their mother's generation.
- Sixty percent strongly agree that society expects women to enhance their physical attractiveness.

- Forty-five percent of women feel women who are more beautiful have greater opportunities in life.
- More than half (59%) strongly agree that physically attractive women are more valued by men.

The study explores the degree to which mass media has played a role in portraying and communicating a narrow definition of beauty:

- More than two-thirds (68%) of women strongly agree that "the media and advertising set an unrealistic standard of beauty that most women can't ever achieve."
- Well over half of all women (57%) strongly agree that "the attributes of female beauty have become very narrowly defined in today's world."

Women around the World Unite

The traditional definition of beauty, based only on physical appearance, is powerfully communicated through the mass media and has been assimilated through popular culture. It is this ideal that many women measure themselves against and aspire to attain. However, women around the world would like to see media change in way it represents beauty.

For example, women feel they are surrounded and bombarded with images that are unrealistic:

- The majority (76%) wish female beauty was portrayed in the media as being made up of more than just physical attractiveness.
- Seventy-five percent went on to say that they wish the media did a better job of portraying women of diverse physical attractiveness, including age, shape and size.

The Real Truth About Beauty: A Global Report uncovers that women recognize beauty is more than just physical - it includes character, passion and presence. And, in order to influence a cultural shift in popular culture and mass media, it is necessary to come together and stake a claim to redefine beauty.

"What women in this study tell us is that a sense of legitimacy and respect is wrapped up with beauty in today's world. Whether this sentiment dismays or delights us, it poses a serious challenge," says Orbach. "And it is this in the first instance: For the idea of beauty to become truly democratic and inclusive, then beauty itself must be revitalized to reflect women in their beauty as they really are rather than as portrayed in the current fictions that dominate our visual culture."

So What is Beautiful?

How are the women of the world defining beauty and what do they really want to see as society continues to evolve? The study finds two-thirds of women strongly agree that physical attractiveness is about how one looks, whereas beauty includes much more of who a person is. Women rate happiness, confidence, dignity and humor as powerful components of beauty, along with the more traditional attributes of physical appearance, body weight and shape, and even a sense of style. The respondents also see beauty in many different forms:

- Seventy-seven percent strongly agree that beauty can be achieved through attitude, spirit and other attributes that have nothing to do with physical appearance.
- Eighty-nine percent strongly agree that a woman can be beautiful at any age.
- Eighty-five percent state every woman has something about her that is beautiful.

Not only do women agree that happiness is the primary element in making a woman beautiful, but they strongly agree that they themselves feel most beautiful when they are

happy and fulfilled in their lives (86%). Furthermore, 82 percent of women agree that "If I had a daughter, I would want her to feel beautiful, even if she is not physically attractive."

In conclusion, the study demonstrates that authentic beauty is a concept lodged in women's hearts and minds and seldom articulated in popular culture or affirmed in the mass media. As such, it remains unrealized and unclaimed - an idea of beauty that is a narrower, functional definition of "physical attractiveness."

However, this study clearly outlines women's views about the true components of beauty and affirms that, while they include physical attractiveness, they also include happiness, kindness, wisdom, dignity, love, authenticity and self-realization. Through this study, the possibilities for the beautiful to be known, found and represented have been infinitely extended and the ways in which female beauty can be defined have been profoundly deepened.

The Campaign for Real Beauty

Sparked by the results of the global study, Dove is launching a major initiative designed to provoke discussion and encourage debate about the nature of beauty. The Campaign for Real Beauty asks women to give serious thought to a host of issues surrounding beauty, such as society's definition of it, the quest for "perfection," the difference between beauty and physical attractiveness, and the way the media shapes our perceptions of beauty.

The Campaign for Real Beauty uses various communication vehicles to invite women to join in the discussion about beauty and share their views of it with women around the world:

- **Advertising:** A global advertising campaign, launching October 2004, will question whether "model" attributes, such as youth, slimness, and symmetrical features, are required for beauty - or are completely irrelevant to it. Each ad presents an image of a woman whose appearance differs from the stereotypical physical ideal, and asks the reader/viewer to judge the woman's looks by checking off a box.
 - "Wrinkled? Wonderful?" features Irene Sinclair, 95, of London, England with a wrinkled face and asks: "Will society ever accept old can be beautiful?"
 - "Gray? Gorgeous?" features Merlin Glozer, 45, of London, England with a natural mane of gray hair and asks: "Why aren't women glad to be gray?"
 - "Oversized? Outstanding?" features Tabatha Roman, 34, of New York, NY a plus-size woman and asks: "Does true beauty only squeeze into a size 6?"
 - "Half empty? Half full?" features Esther Poyer, 35, of London, England with small breasts and asks: "Does sexiness depend on how full your cups are?"
 - "Flawed? Flawless?" features Leah Sheehan, 22, of London, England with freckles and asks: "Does beauty mean looking like everyone else?"

Each ad will direct readers/viewers to a special web site (www.campaignforrealbeauty.com) where they can cast their votes.

- **Web site:** At www.campaignforrealbeauty.com, women can cast their votes on the questions raised in the ad campaign and engage in an ongoing dialogue about beauty by posting to discussion boards, hearing what women around the world are saying, and downloading research studies about beauty.
- **Billboards:** Mobile billboards will be placed in major cities challenging women's notions of beauty by encouraging them to cast their votes. A featured interactive billboard, located in New York's Times Square, highlighting the "Wrinkled? Wonderful?" ad will keep a running tally of the vote submitted for that issue.
- **Panel discussions:**
 - The Campaign for Real Beauty launches in New York City on September 29 with a kick-off panel discussion about beauty, co-hosted by American Women in Radio and Television®, and featuring **Dr. Nancy Etcoff** of Harvard University; **Mindy Herman**, former CEO, E! Entertainment Television; **Andi Bernstein**, Vice President, Special Projects, Oxygen Media

and additional media and beauty industry leaders, moderated by **Jamie Colby**, Correspondent and Anchor, Fox News Channel.

- Dove is furthering the panel discussions on a grassroots level by partnering with the Woodhull Institute for Ethical Leadership, a not-for-profit educational organization that provides ethical leadership training and professional development for women, for two special weekend workshops to be held in Atlanta (October 8-10) and Chicago (November 12-14).
- **The Dove Self-Esteem Fund:** Dove has established the Dove Self-Esteem Fund to raise awareness of the link between beauty and body-related self-esteem. The new initiative continues an ongoing effort by Dove to fund programs that raise self-esteem in girls and young women. The Dove Self-Esteem Fund in the US is working through the Unilever Foundation to sponsor *uniquely ME!*, a partnership program with Girl Scouts of the USA that helps build self-confidence in girls ages 8-14 with resources and program activities. The Dove Self-Esteem Fund also supports *BodyTalk*, an educational program for schools in the United Kingdom and Canada.

About The Real Truth About Beauty: A Global Report

The Real Truth About Beauty: A Global Report was conducted by research firm StrategyOne in collaboration with Dr. Nancy Etcoff and the Massachusetts General Hospital/ Harvard University, and with the expert consultation of Dr. Susie Orbach of the London School of Economics. The study is based on quantitative data collected from a global survey of 3,200 women from Argentina, Brazil, Canada, France, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Portugal, United Kingdom, and the United States.

Fashion industry suggests guidelines for healthy models

By Samantha Critchell, The Associated Press

NEW YORK - The American fashion industry says it wants its models to be healthy, not anorexic, not bulimic and not chain-smokers. To help models achieve that, the Council of Fashion Designers of America on Friday released a list of recommendations as part of a new health initiative.

The panel that formulated the guidelines included CFDA president Diane von Furstenberg, nutritionist Joy Bauer, modeling agent Louis Chaban, fitness trainer David Kirsch and Dr. Susan Ice, vice president and medical director of Philadelphia's Renfrew Center, which is dedicated to eating disorders.

The guidelines were issued three weeks before designers start showcasing their fall collections during New York's Fashion Week, which starts Feb. 2.

Italian government officials also got involved in this too-skinny model debate, apparently prompted in part by Spain's move and by the death in November of Brazilian model Ana Carolina Reston, who weighed 88 pounds when she died. In a December deal with the Italian fashion industry, designers agreed not to hire models younger than 16 and to require all models to submit medical proof that they do not suffer from eating disorders.

"The CFDA Health Initiative is about awareness and education, not policing. Therefore, the committee is not recommending that models get a doctor's physical examination to assess their health or Body Mass Index to be permitted to work," according to a statement from the CFDA. "Eating disorders are emotional disorders that have psychological, behavioral, social, and physical manifestations, of which body weight is only one."

Steven Kolb, executive director for the CFDA, told The Associated Press that the designers' understanding of the issue as explained to them by health specialists is that BMI is only one factor in a long list of criteria to identify eating disorders.

"A lot of the girls who work the runway are genetically thin. You go backstage and you see a lot of girls eating a lot of food and they're not gaining weight," Kolb said.

Kolb, however, anticipated the question about voluntary guidelines being a strong enough statement to turn-around the trend of too-thin models.

"As an industry, fashion has always been concerned about health. Here at the CFDA, we've been in the forefront in terms of efforts (like) Fashion Targets Breast Cancer and HIV/AIDS awareness," he said. "As the issue of underweight models became global, we, as a group, outside of what other countries have done, decided to do something. I actually think it was a really responsible move."

But Dr. Cynthia Bulik, a professor at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a former president of the Academy of Eating Disorders, said she'd like the fashion industry to adopt stricter standards in order to protect two groups: the models and the girls who look up to them.

"I've asked patients about what they see when they see models. They say, 'I look at their skinny arms, their hip bones and their flat stomachs and then I look at myself and say I'm too fat,'" Bulik says. "It zeros in on their self-esteem and their perceived inadequacies, and these are girls who are already underweight."

Michael Vollbracht, the creative director at Bill Blass, which will stage its next runway show Feb. 6, agrees that the industry has an obligation to showcase apparel models who are also role models. He also expects it will take time for industry eyes to adjust to a less-thin thin model.

"Thin is always in; it's how you show clothes," Vollbracht said. But then those size 0 styles are plucked by stylists for Hollywood actresses who then feel fat - and then diet - when they can't fit into the tiny garments, and there are so many girls and women who look up to the stars. It's a perpetual cycle, he said.

Vollbracht pointed out that in the 1980s and early '90s, top models Claudia Schiffer and Cindy Crawford had more curvaceous figures. "Heroin chic changed a lot of things," he said. "It'll take some time to change back."

The Illinois-based Academy of Eating Disorders offered its own counter-suggestions to the CFDA, using a minimum BMI of 18.5 for models over 18. That would translate into a 5-foot-9 female model weighing more than 126 pounds. An alternative formula for models between the ages of 16 and 18 would call for a 5-foot-9 teen girl to weigh more than 117 pounds.

Furor Over Anorexic Models Hits U.S. Fashion Week

Eating-disorders experts urge designers to shun rail-thin young women

URL of this page: http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/news/fullstory_44774.html (*this news item will not be available after 05/03/2007)

FRIDAY, Feb. 2 (HealthDay News) — As the U.S. fashion season kicks off Friday in New York City, the headline-grabbing controversy over dangerously thin models will link arms with haute couture on the runway.

The furor began in earnest last year with the deaths of two young models from anorexia nervosa and has since escalated, prompting fashion-show bosses in Europe to ban girls under a certain body mass index from working the shows.

In mid-January, the Council of Fashion Designers of America (CFDA) issued its own "Health Initiative," stressing voluntary measures to "create an atmosphere that supports the well-being of these young women."

But that may not be enough to protect models — and the millions of girls and women who emulate them, critics charge.

Too often, "guidelines are things that people just hang on a wall," said Lynn Grefe, chief executive officer of the National Eating Disorders Association.

While she's pleased that the CFDA has "opened a dialogue" on the issue, Grefe said she's waiting to see how these voluntary rules get implemented.

"Right now, I'm not sure how they are going to handle it if they have an anorexic girl in the shows," Grefe said. Given that most eating-disorder sufferers hide the problem, "How are designers going to know about it? And who's going to tell the girl?" she said.

The issue gained renewed prominence with the eating-disorders deaths in 2006 of two young models — Luisel Ramos, of Uruguay, and Ana Carolina Reston, of Brazil, who was 5 feet 8 inches tall and weighed 88 pounds when she died. Reston reportedly lived on a diet of apples and tomatoes in the weeks before her death.

The outcry over these deaths led to a move in September by government officials in Madrid to ban models with a body-mass index (BMI) of less than 18 from performing in city-sponsored fashion shows.

Milan followed suit, with a similar ordinance passed by government officials last month to restrict runway models to BMIs of 18.5 or more. (For reference, a 5-foot-9 woman with a BMI of 18.5 would weigh 125 pounds). Italian designers have also agreed to demand that all models submit medical proof that they don't suffer from an eating disorder as a condition to work.

The CFDA, which recently appointed designer Diane von Furstenberg as its president, hasn't gone that far. Instead, the group is asking the fashion industry to get better educated about the signs of eating disorders, to have models who are "identified" as having a disorder seek medical help, to ban models under the age of 16 from all runway shows, and to have healthy snacks available backstage at all times.

The council does not advocate any BMI cutoff for runway models. According to its Jan. 12 statement, the group's initiative "is about awareness and education, not policing. Therefore, the [CFDA] committee is not recommending that models get a doctor's physical examination to assess their health or body mass index to be permitted to work."

A representative of the CFDA said the group isn't offering further comment on the issue until after a public meeting in New York City on the problem, scheduled for Feb. 5.

But, BMI-linked policing of future New York shows may still come. On Jan. 31, a Democratic New York state assemblyman, Jose Rivera, said he would propose that a state advisory board be formed to craft guidelines to prevent eating disorders among models and performers under the age of 18. The measure may get support from the state Senate's majority leader, Republican Joseph Bruno, who last year revealed that his granddaughter suffers from anorexia nervosa.

New York City councilwoman Gale Brewer has also said that she plans to introduce a resolution on Friday to keep models with BMIs under 18.5 off the runways. "Women are encouraged to mutilate their bodies in the industry," Brewer told the *New York Sun* on Thursday.

Health experts fault new guidelines

Experts on eating disorders say tougher measures by the fashion industry are desperately needed.

"I feel the new [CFDA] guidelines really fell short," said Dr. Harry Brandt, director of the Center for Eating Disorders at Sheppard Pratt Health System in Towson, Md. His clinic sees more than 800 inpatients a year and treats thousands more for anorexia and bulimia on an outpatient basis.

"I believe that within the industry there has been an implicit encouragement of dramatic measures to maintain a certain body weight for models," he said. "The fashion industry needs to take steps to ensure the health of their employees and, in a broader societal context, to take appropriate measures to see to it that we are providing realistic images to girls."

Images in fashion and gossip magazines of ultra-thin models and celebrities *do* have an impact on girls' self-image, Brandt said. "We see it in our work with patients on a daily basis," he said. "Patients describe the intense pressure they feel to be thin, to be considered successful and attractive in our culture."

According to the National Eating Disorders Association (NEDA), more than 10 million American girls and women may be affected by eating disorders such as anorexia or bulimia, which carry the highest death risk of any psychiatric illness. And a 2000 British study drew a strong link between women viewing rail-thin models in magazines and an increased tendency for eating disorders.

One fashion industry insider agrees these images can do harm.

"The majority of women look at magazines, and they do *not* see themselves reflected," said Emme, a plus-size supermodel who made fashion history in the 1990s as the first full-figured model ever awarded a major cosmetics contract (Revlon). She's also a long-time NEDA ambassador, calling for more industry action on eating disorders.

The New York-based model said much more needs to be done to empower young models to retain control of their own bodies. "They are so impressionable, and you don't know where these pressures are coming from," Emme said. While she does not support a BMI cutoff, she does support stronger industry self-regulation. "I want us to say, 'That is too thin, and, no, you will not walk in my show,'" she said.

Emme said she was shocked recently by photos sent to her of especially emaciated models appearing in a glossy fashion layout. "I was horrified to look at these pictures," she said, describing the models as "bags of bones dressed in haute couture."

"I was astonished, too, that these girls were booked, that there were obviously people around to see them, that they had to be fitted for the clothes. So, all of this had to be *approved*," Emme said. "And these girls are skeletal."

Some skinny models born that way, editor says

Of course, not every model has an eating disorder, and the fashion world does have its defenders. Memsor Kamarake, a former stylist and modeling agency executive, is now fashion director at *Vibe* magazine. Speaking from the Paris runway shows this week, he said he's against any BMI threshold for models.

"At the end of the day, just making sure that models are healthy should be the first priority," Kamarake said. "I think that when we get into this territory of 'this certain body type is right, this isn't,' that it opens the door to something a bit scary."

He also believes that many super-thin models are genetically geared to stay skinny and healthy. He cited the example of a model used in a recent *Vibe* photo shoot, a willowy 16-year-old named Chanel Iman.

"I saw her on the set, and she had a plate of food and ate all day," Kamarake said. "We actually were teasing her about it, but she said, 'I eat like this all the time.'"

So, Kamarake added, "if [a model] has accomplished something, why should we not include her? Because her body type makes people uncomfortable?"

But the Center for Eating Disorders' Brandt called that argument "a cop-out."

"Yes, there are exceedingly thin people who are perfectly healthy and normal – I'm the first to acknowledge that weight falls on a bell curve of distribution," Brandt said. "But the reality is that, in the modeling industry, there are case examples of very famous models who've come forward only later to say, 'I had to starve myself to maintain my appearance.'"

That's why the CFDA's pledge to help models who are "identified" as having a problem won't work, Brandt said. "Nobody goes to their employer and says, 'Oh, by the way, I have a significant health problem, and I probably shouldn't be doing this job.' That's just not the way it works."

Brandt believes models below a certain BMI should undergo mandatory medical reviews to check for eating disorders – a relatively easy diagnosis, he said.

All of this means that models, rather than clothes, could face the toughest scrutiny during the New York shows, which conclude Feb. 9.

"I really hope that this is not just a case of 'let's satisfy the public by saying we are going to educate people,' " Emme said. "I want to know what else they are going to do. We are going to find out next week where we are with designers really self-regulating."

But Kamarake appeared dubious about industry-wide change.

"I can't imagine a designer who's doing shows now who isn't thinking about the controversy," he said. But other heated issues have also come and gone, he noted.

"Remember the whole controversy about fur use? I'm sure designers *think* about it, but there's still a lot of lynx around. There's still a lot of chinchilla out there."

HealthDay

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Fashion industry launches inquiry into health of models

By Martin Hickman, Consumer Affairs Correspondent

Published: 24 March 2007

The fashion industry has acknowledged concerns over thinness on the catwalk by announcing an independent inquiry into the health of models.

A British Fashion Council panel will examine whether designers and agencies are imposing dangerous physical standards on their representatives.

Sitting in judgement will be eating-disorder organisations, health professionals, model agencies, academics, designers, retailers and models. Chaired by Denise Kingsmill, who led a government inquiry into women's pay, the panel is the industry's answer to critics of so-called "size zero" models.

Last month, the Culture Secretary, Tessa Jowell, entered the debate by calling for extremely thin women to be kept off the catwalk. She asked the fashion industry to take action to stop urging unrealistic physical shapes on women.

The current controversy about thin models was prompted last summer by the death of the Uruguayan model Luisel Ramos, 22, who died in August of heart failure after not eating for several days in an attempt to stay thin. A second model, Ana Carolina Reston, a Brazilian who suffered from anorexia nervosa, died last year.

In September, Madrid Fashion Week stoked the dispute by banning models with a body mass index of less than 18. But in February, London Fashion Week - which is owned and run by the British Fashion Council - resisted imposing a similar limit. Instead, it urged designers to use only healthy-looking models aged over 16. Debate about the issue overshadowed the commercial showcase for British designers.

The BFC said yesterday that the inquiry would be completed by late summer in time for London Fashion Week in September and would recommend practical measures to tackle any problems. Hilary Riva, the chief executive, said: "The British Fashion Council has established this panel to review current practice and issue clear guidance on model health and age so that, as an industry, we can ensure we are behaving responsibly and in the interests of those models who work in this country."

Baroness Kingsmill, the former deputy chair of the Competition Commission, said she was "delighted" the council had initiated the investigation. She promised that her inquiry would "separate fact from supposition and speculation" in an "emotive and volatile" area. The debate about the US size zero, the equivalent of British size four, was caused by celebrities dieting to a skinny size.

Marcelle D'Argy Smith, a former editor of Cosmopolitan, welcomed the inquiry but doubted the fashion industry would change. "I think the inquiry is a good initiative but I think the fashion industry isn't going to do it. I think they've been pushed into this. I think they have to make the right noises," she said.

She complained that, despite months of controversy, magazine models were still stick thin. She said: "They have got legs like my arms. Nothing has happened. If Sophia Loren walked down the red carpet today she would be laughed off."

* Asda is to label its UK-made clothes with a Union flag. Around one million garments per year will carry the "Made in the UK" label. The supermarket chain will introduce country-of-origin labels for all George garments in the coming year. Asda was one of three clothing retailers heavily criticised last year over the treatment of clothing workers in Bangladesh.

PRESSURE MOUNTS FOR 'BAN' ON ZERO SIZE MODELS

15.09.06 (from thissilondon.co.uk)

A few days ago in Madrid, it was announced that only healthy-looking mannequins would be permitted to strut their stuff at the city's annual style event. Anyone with a body mass index of less than 18 was banned.

Now organisers of London Fashion Week, which begins on Monday, are being urged to impose similar rules.

That would leave in-demand models such as Lily Cole, Erin O'Connor, Alek Wek and Eva Herzigova kicking their heels.

But health agencies are adamant that legal steps must be taken to protect the health of the catwalk queens.

Steve Bloomfield, a spokesman for the Eating Disorders Association, said: "We do think legislation is needed.

"This is about protecting the young women and men who work in the fashion industry, as well as those who are at risk of an eating disorder and can be influenced by the pictures that they see.

"The fashion industry is there to make money and there is no legislation to protect models. It basically exploits people who are underweight and forces others to follow suit."

The Madrid initiative followed the death of 22-year-old Luisel Ramos during a fashion show in Uruguay last month. The emaciated model died of a heart attack moments after stepping off the catwalk - a result of having eaten nothing but green leaves, washed down with Diet Coke, for three months.

To put the Madrid limits into context, a BMI of 18.5 or below is classed as underweight by the World Health Organisation.

A model who is 5ft 9in would have to weigh a minimum 8st 12lb to be classed as healthy.

At present, the average 5ft 9in catwalk model weighs a mere 7st 12lb - a BMI of only 16.

'A lot to be said for beautiful curves'

And Spain's best-known model Esther Canadas, with an estimated BMI of only 14, failed to qualify for the show by a wide margin.

The world's fashion capital, Milan, is proposing to impose similar rules with the city's mayor, Letizia Moratti, confirming as much this week.

Sarah Watkinson, managing director of the outsize modelling agency 12 Plus UK, agrees that legislation is needed to protect the health of models - and those aspiring to emulate their favourite catwalk stars.

"I definitely encourage any formal move made to promote the use of curvy, healthy-looking women on the catwalks," she said.

"One of the biggest problems is that some designers especially like to use incredibly thin girls to wear their clothes because they like the shock aspect. These days more and more very skinny, size zero models are being used.

"It would be far better to have women of a realistic size and weight on the catwalk who look healthy and purport to a healthy body image. It is vital for schoolgirls who might aspire to look like these models to have a range of size 10, 12 and 14 women to look towards, instead of comparing themselves with women who look starved.

"There is a lot to be said for beautiful curves."

The Storm agency, which discovered Kate Moss, begged to differ. A spokesman dismissed the planned rules as "useless" while claiming that the company would not use "someone who was really underweight or too thin."

A spokesman for designer Allegra Hicks said: "We would never dream of using models under a British size 10."

"A ban on the size zero model should be compulsory across the fashion industry. Size zero is not feminine and not healthy."

Asda uses Coleen McLoughlin - a size 12 with a BMI of over 20 - as the face of its George clothing range. A spokesman said: "The reason we use Coleen is that she is real. Customers are aspirational but they want to be able to identify with our models. Banning size zero models is the way forward."

A spokesman for the fashion house Biba said: "It is beyond my comprehension that we would want to show girls on the catwalk who have the BMI of a ten-year-old."

"I agree with what they have done in Spain and think it should be emulated here. We use a lot of young models but certainly not a size zero."

Lesson 3: Magazine Survey

Content:	How many pages are spent on it?	What is the theme or focus of the spreads or stories?
Fashion		
Skin Care		
Make-Up		
Exercise		
Celebrities		
Quizzes		
Advice		
Other Articles		
Advertising		

Lesson 4-5: My Image of Beautiful
(This lesson is intended to take place over two sessions)

Objectives:

- Students will be able to describe Esther and Vashti.
- Students will be able to assess how these biblical characters may serve as models for them.
- Students will be able to create their own image of beauty

Guided Timeline:

10 minutes	Activity 1: Set Induction
25 minutes	Activity 2: Text Study
10 minutes	Activity 3: Classifying Qualities
20 minutes	Activity 4: Group Discussion
20 minutes	Activity 5: Magazine Collage
15 minutes	Activity 6: Sharing our Collage
15 minutes	Activity 7: Journaling
15 minutes	Activity 8: Conclusion

Activity 1: Set Induction

Have students pair up, and stand facing each other.

- What is the first thing they notice about their partner?

Discuss—

- When we meet people for the first time, what is the first thing we ask them?
- What is the first thing we look at when we see them?
- How much do we judge a person based on appearance?

Activity 2: A Beauty Context-- Text Study

Introduce the Book of Esther—it is a book that is the basis for the celebration of Purim, and that is when it is read. We will read this text, focusing on the two female characters, and the descriptions given of them in the Book of Esther, as well as in other commentaries.

In partners or small groups, have students read from the Book of Esther and read commentaries about the text.

Have them use the study guide questions to steer their reading and direct their discussion.

Activity 3: Classifying qualities

On post-it notes have students write out how they would describe Esther and Vashti (one description per post-it). Use one color post-it for Esther and one for Vashti.

After students have written their descriptions, have them put their post-its on the wall and divide the class into two groups.

One group will work with the Vashti post-its and the other with the Esther post-its. Each group should group the qualities into categories and then name the category.

Activity 4: What is Beautiful?—Group Discussion

Discuss—

- How did you group the categories?
- What kinds of qualities did you see in these women?
- Are some better to have than others? Why?
- Which of these qualities do you see in yourself?
- Which of these qualities would you like to strengthen in yourself?
- How can you do that?

Activity 5: What Beauty Looks Like to Me—A Magazine Collage

We have been reading about images of beauty in the Bible and discussing the idea that beauty is not just about appearance. A couple of lessons ago we discussed the fashion and entertainment industries idea of beauty, which we are constantly subjected to in magazines and on television. Now we are going to take their images of beauty and create our own. Based on what we have learned, from biblical text and commentaries and from our discussions, what does your image of beauty look like?

Have students use magazines in any creative way to create their personal vision of beauty. They will use their image to teach others about what they have learned and what is important to know about beauty and body image.

Activity 6: Sharing our Collages

Once students finish their collages, they will have the opportunity to share their creations with each other and explain their rationale as well as their learning. Make sure that students reference how their learning impacted this collage—did their vision

of beauty change? Is that reflected in the collage? Where are the Biblical women represented within this picture? Students should also be given the chance to ask each other questions about their collages.

Activity 7: Journaling—Our Role Models?

Have students write in their journals, reflecting on the questions—

- Should these Biblical characters be role models for me? Why or why not?
- What can I learn from them (for good or for bad)?
- Which character can I identify with more than the others?

Have students share some of their answers.

Activity 8: Conclusion-Real Beauty

In this unit we discussed the concepts of beauty and body image, in biblical texts, in our world today, and in our own lives. Among the questions we discussed were—

- How is the biblical idea of beauty different or similar to your idea of beauty?
- How can you develop a healthy body image? Why is this important?
- How often do we judge people based on first appearance? Can we ever look beyond what someone looks like when we first meet them?

Revisit some of these questions, in a concluding conversation. Ask students if or how their answers to these questions may have changed as a result of their learning.

As part of Dove’s “Real Beauty” campaign, they asked people to consider what true beauty means. They suggested that beauty comes in all shapes and sizes, and goes much further than the skin. Perhaps beauty is love, a good friend, etc.

Create your own “Real Beauty” campaign. On one large poster board, have each student add their own conclusions to the sentence “Real Beauty is...”

Materials:

Esther text and study sheet
2 colors of post-its
Magazines
Constructions Paper
Scissors
Glue
Markers
Student Journals
Poster board

Texts from Esther

Esther 1:5-12 ⁵ At the end of this period, the king gave a banquet for seven days in the court of the king's palace garden for all the people who lived in the fortress Shushan, high and low alike. ⁶ *There were hangings of white cotton and blue wool, caught up by cords of fine linen and purple wool to silver rods and alabaster columns; and there were couches of gold and silver on a pavement of marble, alabaster, mother-of-pearl, and mosaics.* ⁷ Royal wine was served in abundance, as befits a king, in golden beakers, beakers of varied design. ⁸ And the rule for the drinking was, "No restrictions!" For the king had given orders to every palace steward to comply with each man's wishes. ⁹ In addition, Queen Vashti gave a banquet for women, in the royal palace of King Ahasuerus. ¹⁰ On the seventh day, when the king was merry with wine, he ordered Mehuman, Bizzetha, Harbona, Bigtha, Abagtha, Zethar, and Carcas, the seven eunuchs in attendance on King Ahasuerus, ¹¹ to bring Queen Vashti before the king wearing a royal diadem, to display her beauty to the peoples and the officials; for she was a beautiful woman. ¹² But Queen Vashti refused to come at the king's command conveyed by the eunuchs. The king was greatly incensed, and his fury burned within him.

Esther 2:1-4 Some time afterward, when the anger of King Ahasuerus subsided, he thought of Vashti and what she had done and what had been decreed against her. ² The king's servants who attended him said, "Let beautiful young virgins be sought out for Your Majesty." ³ Let Your Majesty appoint officers in every province of your realm to assemble all the beautiful young virgins at the fortress Shushan, in the harem under the supervision of Hege, the king's eunuch, guardian of the women. Let them be provided with their cosmetics. ⁴ And let the maiden who pleases Your Majesty be queen instead of Vashti." The proposal pleased the king, and he acted upon it.

Esther 2:9 ⁹ The girl pleased him and won his favor, and he hastened to furnish her with her cosmetics and her rations, as well as with the seven maids who were her due from the king's palace; and he treated her and her maids with special kindness in the harem.

Esther 2:12-17 When each girl's turn came to go to King Ahasuerus at the end of the twelve months' treatment prescribed for women (for that was the period spent on beautifying them: six months with oil of myrrh and six months with perfumes and women's cosmetics, ¹³ and it was after that that the girl would go to the king), whatever she asked for would be given her to take with her from the harem to the king's palace. ¹⁴ She would go in the evening and leave in the morning for a second harem in charge of Shaashgaz, the king's eunuch, guardian of the concubines. She would not go again to the king unless the king wanted her, when she would be summoned by name. ¹⁵ When the turn came for Esther daughter of Abihail -- the uncle of Mordecai, who had adopted her as his own daughter -- to go to the king, she did not ask for anything but what Hegai, the king's eunuch, guardian of the women, advised. Yet Esther won the admiration of all who saw her. ¹⁶ Esther was taken to King Ahasuerus, in his royal palace, in the tenth month, which is the month of Tebeth, in the seventh year of his

reign. ¹⁷ The king loved Esther more than all the other women, and she won his grace and favor more than all the virgins. So he set a royal diadem on her head and made her queen instead of Vashti.

Esther Study Sheet

“Reserved. Modest. Quiet. Humble. Self-controlled. Hidden. These adjectives probably don’t conjure up images of a heroine. They don’t seem to describe the type of person who would put her life on the line for others, be a public figure, a political entity and a person of control and power. But they are. These are the very words that describe Queen Esther, a woman whose body, mind, soul and actions affected reality and changed the world...”

She was chosen for her exceptional beauty and yet, it was actually what the king didn’t see that attracted him to her. The former queen, Vashti, was a woman who garnered her attention by displaying her undressed body at royal gatherings. While her body itself was attractive, that was her only positive quality. When she was unable to flaunt her figure due to a horrific skin rash and boils, she had nothing to show for herself and in her refusal to display herself, not only lost her position as queen, but her life as well.

While Esther was supposedly chosen as queen because of her external beauty, the commentators note that it was miraculous that she was found to be attractive, as her physical appearance actually was actually quite unflattering. The Talmud tells us that Esther was actually of a greenish complexion, but that she had a “thread of grace” that was upon her (Talmud, Megillah 13a). We are taught that when one’s internal is elevated and beautiful, so then it will show through to the external, so that she can be seen as nothing other than beautiful.”

(From “Esther: Hidden Beauty” By Sara Esther Crispe)

“And he had brought up Hadassah.” Is she called Hadassah and called Esther? We have learned, R. Meir said: Her right name was Esther, but she was called Hadassah, because the righteous are called thus, as it is written [Zechariah, i. 8]: “He was standing among the *myrtle*-trees.” R. Jehudah said: Her right name was Hadassah. Why was she called Esther? Because she *concealed* her words, as it is written [ii. 10]: “Esther told nothing.” R. Nehemiah said: Her right name was Hadassah. Why was she called Esther? Because the nations called her for her beauty “star”. B. Azzai said: Esther was not tall or short, but of moderate size, like a myrtle. R. Joshua b. Kar’ha said: Esther’s complexion was yellow, but she had a thread of grace.

(From Babylonian Talmud, Tractate Megillah 13a)

““Why was she called Esther? It means ‘beautiful moon.’ This was the name which the non-Jews used to call her in the palace (to describe her beauty).’ Likewise, it might be suggested that the name Hadassah was give to her to describe her righteousness.

(From A Glimpse Behind the Mask by Ravi Shahar)

“As we encounter Vashti in chapter one, we learn the following about her: She is beautiful and headstrong. She throws a good party. She refuses to have her appearances before the king regulated solely by his desires. For this last offense, Vashti pays dearly, losing her crown and incurring perpetual banishment from the king’s presence. By contrast, Esther is presented at first as the perfect foil to Vashti. Whereas Vashti was willful and independent, Esther is passive and submissive.”

(From “The Mirror Has Two Faces”

By Wendy Amsellem)

Questions to Consider:

- How is Vashti described in the Biblical text? In these texts?
- How is Esther described in the Biblical text? In these texts?
- How would you describe each of these women?
- What do we know about these women besides what they look like? How do these descriptions play into your understanding of them?
- What does it mean to be beautiful according to the Book of Esther?
- What does it mean to be beautiful according to these commentators?
- How would you define beauty?

UNIT 3: USING POWER

Goals for Unit:

- To engage students in Biblical texts and discussions about these texts.
- To engage students in discussions about different types of power.
- To help students understand that everyone has power, and to engage students in discussions about how that power can be used.

Understandings for Unit:

The women of the Bible offer examples of different types of power, both positive and negative, that can serve as openings for discussions about contemporary issues, and are models for us to learn from.

Everyone has power, how we use that power and over what sphere we have that power differs from person to person.

Understanding the varying types of power, as well as our own, can help us understand an individual's multi-layeredness.

Essential Questions for Unit:

- Who has power?
- What does it mean to have power?
- How do we use our power?
- Over what sphere do we have power?

Objectives for Unit:

- Students will be able to define power.
- Students will be able to identify how various women in the Bible use different types of power.
- Students will be able to describe how they use power.

Assessment:

Group discussion
Chart
Determining a way to apply power in numbers
Creative retelling of Biblical women's stories
Journaling
Magazine quiz
Trial
Finding ourselves on the chart

Memorable Moment

Self Defense class

Notes to Teacher:

As in previous units, some of these lessons are designed for a one hour lesson and others are meant to be taught over two or three one hour lessons. It is up to you as the teacher to break up the lesson in such way as best fits the needs of your class.

In the first lesson, students are asked to work together to determine a definition of power. This is not an easy task, even if we have a general understanding of what power is. According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, power is "possession of control, authority or influence of others." Wikipedia defines power as "the ability or potential to bring about significant change in people's lives through action of oneself or of others." Both of these definitions apply to the Biblical women we will be studying in this unit. For these women power was about producing an effect, whatever their mode of power was.

This unit looks at four different models of power seen in the Bible. For each of these models there are positives and negatives. One of the goals in this unit is to help students see the many layers within each of these Biblical women and how their actions can be interpreted as both positive and negative simultaneously. It is important that models of power are not taught as better or worse than others. Interpreting the Biblical women through the type of power they use offers another layer of our understanding to their lives and actions. We can then try to understand our own lives in this multi-layered way. How is the way we use power both positive and negative? What are the many different layers we see within ourselves, our friends and our family members? How can we learn from these women in the Bible how to behave, or how what not to do?

For each of the different models of power and women of the Bible that we study, we will answer five specific questions and complete a chart. At the end of this unit, when the chart is filled in, we will place ourselves within it, determining which type of power we use as our default as well as how we can learn from these women to use power differently in the future.

The questions that will be answered on the chart are:

- What model of power is this?
- How can women access power?
- What is gained with power?
- What is lost?
- What is the impact on me?

I have titled each lesson, according to the model of power that I interpreted within the Biblical text. However, this is just one interpretation. It is certainly not the only one and it may not even be the best one. Please feel free to interpret these women with different models of power and encourage your students to do the same.

Unit 3: Using Power Resources

Articles:

“Taking a New Look - The Enduring Significance of the American Woman Suffrage Movement”
Images of Ads

Texts:

Numbers 27:1-11 text
Genesis 27:1-28:9 text
Genesis 38:1-30 text
Genesis 38:1-30 commentaries-Tamar
Genesis 34: 1-24 text
Genesis 34:1-24 commentaries-Dinah
Exodus 15:20-21 text
Exodus 15:20-21 commentaries-Miriam
Judges 4 text
Deborah commentaries

Handouts:

Chart
Magazine power quiz
Leadership assessment quiz and scoring

Model of Power Chart

	Zelophehad's Daughters	Rebecca	Tamar	Dina	Deborah	Miriam
What model of power is this?						
How can women access power?						
What is gained with power?						
What is lost with power?						
What is the impact on me?						

Lesson 1: Power in Numbers

Objectives:

- Students will be able to give a definition of power.
- Students will be able to identify Zelophehad's daughters.
- Students will be able to give examples of when power in numbers is used today.
- Students will be able to identify the benefits and drawbacks to this model of power.

Guided Timeline:

10 minutes	Activity 1: Set Induction
20 minutes	Activity 2: Text Study
10 minutes	Activity 3: Filling in the Chart
15 minutes	Activity 4: Modern Interpretations
15 minutes	Activity 5: Using Power in Numbers
5 minutes	Activity 6: Conclusion

Activity 1: Set Induction

Brainstorm with students what they think the word power means. Who has power? What is power? From this brainstorming session, create a class definition of power.

Explain that for the next several lessons we will be looking at different types of power and studying the stories of women in the Bible who used their power in very different ways.

Activity 2: Zelophehad's Daughters-A Text Study

Read the story of Zelophehad's daughters (Numbers 27:1-11) in partners. Then discuss this text using the following questions as a guide—

- What did Zelophehad's daughters do?
- Why is this story unique?
- How did they use their power?
- How were they successful or unsuccessful?

Activity 3: Determining Types of Power—Filling in the Chart

Have each student fill in the chart individually for the daughters of Zelophehad. Students will have different answers and those responses should be shared with the rest of the class. The questions to be answered are—

- What model of power is this?
- How can women access power?
- What is gained with power?
- What is lost?
- What is the impact on me?

Activity 4: A Modern Interpretation—The Women’s Suffrage Movement

One way we can interpret the story of Zelophehad’s daughters is that they were successful because of their determination and their number. Because they presented a united front to Moses, they were able to accomplish their goal. This can be seen as an example of power in number. But there are many other more modern examples of women using power in numbers. One such example is the suffrage movement. This too, was a long fight, over many years, but women eventually won the vote. There are many organizations founded today for the purpose of making a difference—this too can be seen as an example of power in number.

Have students read the article about the Women’s Suffrage Movement. Discuss—

- How did these women use their power?
- What did they accomplish?
- What is similar to the story of Zelophehad’s daughter’s? What is different?
- What can I take away from each of these stories?
- What are other examples of people using power in numbers?

Activity 5: Using Power in Numbers

How can we use this type of power today, in our class?
Brainstorm ways that we can make a difference as a class, using our power as a group. Perhaps we might form our own organization, or raise money as a group for a specific cause that we all find important, or maybe we will decide to educate another class about a certain topic, or petition for some change within the school.

Activity 6: Conclusion

Discuss—

- Which of you feel like you generally default to this model of power?
- What are the benefits of it?
- What are the drawbacks?

Materials:

Numbers 27:1-11 text

Chart

Women's Suffrage Movement Article

Daughters of Zelophehad: Numbers 27:1-11

א ותקרבנה בנות צלפחד בן־חפר בן־גלעד בן־מכיר בן־מנשה למשפחת
מנשה בן־יוסף ואלה שמות בנותיו מחלה נעה וחגלה ומלכה ותרצה:
ב ותעמדנה לפני משה ולפני אלעזר הכהן ולפני הנשיאים וכל העדה
פתח אהל־מועד לאמר: ג אבינו מת במדבר והוא לא־היה בתוך העדה
הנועדים על־יהוה בעדת־קרח כִּי־בטאוּ מת ובנים לא־היו לו: ד למה
יגרע שם־אבינו מתוך משפחתו כִּי אין לו בן תנה־לנו אחזה בתוך אחי
אבינו: ה ויקרב משה את־משפטן לפני יהוה: פ [רביעי] ויאמר יהוה
אל־משה לאמר: ז כן בנות צלפחד דברת נתן נתן להם אחזת נחלה
בתוך אחי אביהם והעברת את־נחלת אביהן להן: ח ואל־בני ישראל
תדבר לאמר איש כִּי־מות ובן אין לו והעברתם את־נחלתו לבתו:
ט ואם־אין לו בת ונתתם את־נחלתו לאחיו: י ואם־אין לו אחים ונתתם
את־נחלתו לאחי אביו: יא ואם־אין אחים לאביו ונתתם את־נחלתו
לשאריו הקרב אליו ממשפחתו וירש אתה והיתה לבני ישראל לחקת
משפט כאשר צוה יהוה את־משה:

The daughters of Zelophehad, of Manassite family -- son of Hopher son of Gilead son of Machir son of Manasseh son of Joseph -- came forward. The names of the daughters were Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. ² They stood before Moses, Eleazar the priest, the chieftains, and the whole assembly, at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, and they said, ³ "Our father died in the wilderness. He was not one of the faction, Korah's faction, which banded together against the LORD, but died for his own sin; and he has left no sons. ⁴ Let not our father's name be lost to his clan just because he had no son! Give us a holding among our father's kinsmen!" ⁵ Moses brought their case before the LORD. ⁶ And the LORD said to Moses, ⁷ "The plea of Zelophehad's daughters is just: you should give them a hereditary holding among their father's kinsmen; transfer their father's share to them. ⁸ "Further, speak to the Israelite people as follows: 'If a man dies without leaving a son, you shall transfer his property to his daughter. ⁹ If he has no daughter, you shall assign his property to his brothers. ¹⁰ If he has no brothers, you shall assign his property to his father's brothers. ¹¹ If his father had no brothers, you shall assign his property to his nearest relative in his own clan, and he shall inherit it.' This shall be the law of procedure for the Israelites, in accordance with the LORD's command to Moses."

Taking a New Look - The Enduring Significance of the American Woman Suffrage Movement by Robert Cooney

(<http://www.mith2.umd.edu/WomensStudies/ReadingRoom/History/Vote/enduring-significance.html>)

Women vote today because of the woman suffrage movement, a courageous and persistent political campaign which lasted over 72 years, involved tens of thousands of women and men, and resulted in enfranchising one-half of the citizens of the United States. Inspired by idealism and grounded in sacrifice, the suffrage campaign is of enormous political and social significance yet it is virtually unacknowledged in the chronicles of American history.

Had the suffrage movement not been so ignored by historians, women like Lucretia Mott, Carrie Chapman Catt and Alice Paul would be as familiar to most Americans as Thomas Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt or Martin Luther King, Jr. We would know the story of how women were denied the right to vote despite the lofty words of the Constitution, how women were betrayed after the Civil War, defeated and often cheated in election after election, and how they were forced to fight for their rights against entrenched opposition with virtually no financial, legal or political power.

If the history of the suffrage movement was better known, we would understand that democracy for the first 150 years in America included half of the population. And we would realize that this situation changed only after the enormous efforts of American citizens in what remains one of the most remarkable and successful nonviolent efforts to change ingrained social attitudes and institutions in the modern era.

For women *won* the vote. They were not given it, granted it, or anything else. They won it as truly as any political campaign is ultimately won or lost. And they won it, repeatedly, by the slimmest of margins, which only underscores the difficulty and magnitude of their victories. In the successful California referendum of 1911, the margin was one vote per precinct! In the House, suffrage passed the first time by exactly the number needed with supporters coming in from the hospital and funeral home to cast their ballots. In the Senate it passed by two votes. The ratification in Tennessee, the last state, passed the legislature in 1920 by a single vote, at the very last minute, during a recount.

Without Violence and Death

Women were a poor, unarmed and disenfranchised class when they first organized to gain political power in the mid-1800s. The struggle for the ballot took over 70 years of constant, determined campaigning, yet it didn't take a single life, and its achievement has lasted. Compare this with male-led independence movements. Without firing a shot, throwing a rock, or issuing a personal threat, women won for themselves rights that men have launched violent rebellions to achieve. This deliberate rejection of violence may be one of the reasons the movement has not received the attention lavished on other, bloody periods of American history-or on the suffrage movement in Britain. But it should not deceive us; this struggle was waged every bit as seriously as any struggle for equality, and we would do well to consider how

women were able to do what men have rarely even tried, changing society in a positive and lasting way without violence and death.

The movement's many nonviolent strategies deserve closer inspection particularly because they repeatedly offered suffragists the way out of strategic binds, dead ends, discouragements and immobility. The nonviolent approach was a logical strategy as a remarkable number of prominent suffrage leaders, from Lucretia Mott to Alice Paul, were Quakers and pacifists, exponents of nonresistance and opponents of war and violence. They were clear about their goals: not victory over men, but equality; not constant war, but reconciliation.

Like the now-celebrated civil rights movement, women suffrage records the recent and useful experiences of ordinary citizens forced to fight for their own rights against tremendous odds and social inequities. Here are models of political leadership, of women organizers and administrators, activists and lobbyists. Here are the first women lawyers and doctors and ministers, the first women candidates, the first office-holders. Here are stories of achievement, of ingenious strategies and outrageous tactics used to outwit the opponents and make the most of limited resources. Here are new definitions and images of women in our national life which give a more accurate picture of the past and which help explain the way American women are treated today.

The suffrage movement included many Americans whose talents and abilities would have made them prime candidates for national office had the political system, and their opportunities been equal. Women like Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, Lucy Stone, Frances Willard, Jane Addams, Louise Bowen, Ida W. Wells-Barnett, Carrie Chapman Catt, Mary Church Terrell, Alice Paul and others proved themselves, even without the franchise, to be politically competent, highly influential and widely respected leaders with few equals among their male contemporaries.

The suffrage movement offers a unique window onto the emergence of women into American political life. This is where many of the intelligent, active, politically oriented women of the time, denied the right to participate directly in national politics, went. They put their energy into attacking social problems directly and organizing among themselves, locally and nationally, for their own rights.

The Best and the Brightest

Yet despite all of this, the suffrage movement has been routinely and consistently ignored, and when it has not been ignored it has been substantially misrepresented. The result is the misconception today-- when there is any conception at all--of the suffrage movement as being essentially an old, passive, white, upper-class, naive, inconsequential cause, one hardly worthy of attention much less respect. It is treated as a lone curiosity with nothing to teach us, or worse, as a target for clever academics to critique. Fortunately, there are some notable exceptions, but this attitude and the lack of accurate information available lie at the heart of the problem.

A new look at the American woman suffrage movement reveals an entity far different from any popular conception. Not a dour, old-woman cause benevolently recognized by Congressional gods, but a movement of female organizers, leaders, politicians, journalists, visionaries, rabble rousers, and warriors. It was an active, controversial, multi-faceted, challenging, passionate

movement of the best and brightest women in America, from all backgrounds, who, in modern parlance, boldly went where no woman had ever gone before.

But rather than acknowledging this, and recognizing that women had to fight for their rights because for the first 150 years American "democracy" actually included half of the population, many academics and historians have chosen to ignore, discount, marginalize, ridicule and/or dismiss the entire 72-year, nationwide, *successful* suffrage movement. In many history textbooks, the entire movement is summed up in one sentence: "In 1920, Congress gave women the right to vote."

Eleanor Flexner noted this censorship in her landmark book *Century of Struggle: The Woman's Rights Movement in the United States*, and quoted the late historian Arthur Schlesinger chiding his colleagues back in 1928 for neglecting women. Schlesinger wrote:

"An examination of the standard histories of the United States and of the history textbooks in use in our schools raises the pertinent question whether women have ever made any contributions to American national progress that are worthy of record. If the silence of the historians is to mean anything, it would appear that one-half of our population have been negligible factors in our country's history...any consideration of woman's part in American history must include the protracted struggle of the sex for larger rights and opportunities, a story that is in itself one of the noblest chapters in the history of American democracy."

After Schlesinger wrote this, the civil rights movement added another "noble chapter" to American history, and helped create a new context and vocabulary with which to analyze earlier movements for social change.

Obliterated the Whole Story

The suffrage movement stands as a lasting affirmation of our country's democratic promise for it re-emphasizes the importance of the most fundamental democratic value, the right to vote. Flexner wrote of this in 1975:

"Recently there has been a tendency to low-rate the winning of woman suffrage as something less than the great achievement it seemed to those who carried on the struggle....Yet full political citizenship was, for women as for any other group arbitrarily deprived of it, a vital step toward winning full human dignity and the recognition that women, too, are endowed with the faculty of reason, the power of judgment, the capacity for social responsibility and effective action. As a matter of fact, the opposition to woman suffrage itself bears witness, in a perverse kind of way, to its significance; nothing unimportant would have been so bitterly resisted. If one thinks of those, white and black, who laid down their lives only a few years ago in order that southern black men and women could register to vote, and then actually *vote*, it seems clear that their efforts and sacrifices were no idle exercise in gallantry and that, without the vote, no social or legal reform was either possible, or lasting.

"The achievement of the vote for women was extraordinarily difficult, infinitely more so than most people realize, since those who ought to have included it in the history of this country simply obliterated the whole story."

So completely and so quickly was the story lost that it was virtually unknown to the next generation. Suffrage leader Gertrude Foster Brown tells of interviewing one of the women who

persuaded the Illinois legislature to grant presidential suffrage in 1913, a key breakthrough in the struggle for national suffrage. She ends her article with this anecdote:

"As I sat with Mrs. Booth and her husband some years ago and they told me the tale of the winning of Illinois, he, strangely enough, remembering better than she the details of the long struggle, it was the listening young people who marked for us how far the world has moved since then. Their son and daughter, then grown, sat round-eyed and enthralled by the story. They had never heard it. Did women, just because they were women, ever have to fight against such incredible odds? And was it their mother who had played the leading role on such a stage? Like most young people they had always taken her for granted--retiring, thoughtful, quiet and kind, just a mighty nice mother--and suddenly they saw her a general, a heroine in one of the great dramas of the world. For this Illinois victory was the turning point in the enfranchisement of twenty-five millions of women."

The Larger Story is Democracy

You need not be a feminist, female, or even political to enjoy learning about the suffrage movement. For while the subject is woman suffrage, the larger story is about democracy, and how a powerless class in America won concessions and guarantees from those in power without threatening them with violence or death. We approach this topic not as women or men but as students of American history. We see the woman suffrage movement as a topic of its own, worthy of study and rich with content, apart from the whole field of women's history, notable women, women of achievement, feminist theory or other more general topics where it has previously resided.

Men were suffragists. The suffrage movement both included men as supporters and depended on men for their votes. Even when state measures were lost, the suffrage question often received tens of thousands of male votes of approval, and ultimately, a virtually all-male Senate and House had to approve the amendment, along with 36 virtually all-male state legislatures. Courageous men risked ridicule and worse to actively support women's rights, and they offer far better role models today than many better-known political and military figures.

The suffrage movement also offers us a new cultural heritage, covering not only historical figures and events, but extraordinary personalities, intense relationships, colorful experiences and legendary exploits. Students will find a new view of American history, fuller and richer with new heroes. Next to George Washington and his cherry tree we can set young Carrie Chapman Catt driving a wagon across the prairie by "dead reckoning" or brave Lucretia Mott trusting her own safety to a member of the mob roused against her. We can honor Sojourner Truth no less than Patrick Henry, and Alice Paul no less than Woodrow Wilson.

The suffrage movement holds a particular relevance now as it has helped lead us as a country and a people to where we are today. It celebrates rights won and honors those who helped win them. It is both an example of history suppressed and misunderstood and a lesson of history triumphant. It puts women back into our national history as participants. It reminds us of the necessity of progressive leaders, organizers, and visionaries in every local community. It is the origin of the yet-unpassed Equal Rights Amendment. It exposed the misplaced fears and prejudices of anti-suffragists, and offers a sobering reminder that too many of these same foolish, reactionary attitudes of 100 years ago still exist today. Clearly the wider goal of women's true equality and freedom has not yet been achieved, but the victorious woman

suffrage movement offers a new generation of activists a solid base on which to build the future.

Harriot Stanton Blatch summarized the movement's legacy best when she wrote: "Perhaps some day men will raise a tablet reading in letters of gold: "All honor to women, the first disenfranchised class in history who unaided by any political party won enfranchisement by its own effort alone, and achieved the victory without the shedding of a drop of human blood. All the honor to the women of the world!"

Model of Power Chart

	Zelophehad's Daughters	Rebecca	Tamar	Dina	Deborah	Miriam
What model of power is this?						
How can women access power?						
What is gained with power?						
What is lost with power?						
What is the impact on me?						

Lessons 2-3: Power in Manipulation
(This lesson is intended to take place over 2 sessions.)

Objectives:

Students will be able to identify the types of power used by Rebecca and Tamar.
Students will be able to retell the stories of the Biblical women we have studied.
Students will be able to provide their own interpretation for the stories we have studied.

Guided Timeline:

15 minutes	Activity 1: Set Induction
35 minutes	Activity 2: Jig-Saw Text Study
35 minutes	Activity 3: Retelling their Stories
20 minutes	Activity 4: Magazine Power Quiz
15 minutes	Activity 5: Filling in the Chart

Activity 1: Set Induction

Have students begin by journaling, answering the questions—

- When do you feel like you have power?
- How do you use that power?

Then allow students to share some of their responses.

Activity 2: Jig-saw Text Study

Today we will begin looking at a different type of power, by studying two different Biblical women. One of them is very well known—Rebecca (one of the matriarchs); and the other is a character who is part of a story that is often left out of our teaching—Tamar.

The class will first be divided into two groups. One group will receive the Biblical text from Genesis 27:1-28:9 and some commentaries about Rebecca; and the second group will read Genesis 38:1-30, as well as some commentaries about Tamar.

Each group should discuss—

- What is happening in the text?
- What kind of power is being used?
- How do the commentaries add to or change our understanding?

After each group has had an opportunity to discuss the text, the groups will re-divide, so that half the group has learned about Rebecca and the other half has studied Tamar. Now, the students will teach each other about their texts.

Activity 3: Retelling their stories

Have students choose any creative medium (art, drama, story-telling, poetry) and pick one woman's story to retell. They should incorporate their own interpretation as a part of this project. Students should feel free to interpret the woman's story or type of power differently than how it was done in class. This project is intended to show us how the students see these women.

Students should then regroup to share their projects with the class, offering explanations for their interpretation, or answering any questions.

Activity 4: Magazine Power Quiz

Students will be given a "Seventeen Magazine"-type quiz about different models of power that they would use in several scenarios. Each student should take the quiz individually. Discuss the answers together as a class.

After each student has taken the quiz, and circled the answers she thinks best applies to her, the class should discuss—

- What model of power does each answer seem to represent?
- When would you use one model of power as opposed to another?
- Do you notice that there is one model that you tend to use more often than others?

It is important that in this discussion, no model of power is made out to seem better or worse than others. Each one of us uses all of these models at different points in our lives and under different circumstances. The goal of this activity, and of this unit in general, is to gain a better self-understanding. When do you use certain models of power versus others? Would other models be more effective in certain situations? This activity is in no way intended to be judgmental, we are seeking to understand the multi-layeredness of ourselves and of the Biblical women we are studying.

Activity 5: Conclusion--Filling in Chart

Together as a class, fill in the chart for Rebecca and Tamar, answering the five questions:

- What model of power is this?
- How can women access power?
- What is gained with power?

- What is lost?
- What is the impact on me?

Materials:

Chart
Pens
Genesis 27:1-28:9 text
Genesis 38:1-30 text
Magazine power quiz
Markers
Paper
Paint

Rebekah: Genesis 27:1-28:9

א ויהי כִּי־זָקֵן יַצְחָק וַתִּכְהֶינּוּ עֵינָיו מִרְאֹת וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־עֵשָׂו בְּנֵוֹ הַגָּדֹל וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו בְּנִי וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו הֲנִי: ב וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה־נָא זָקַנְתִּי לֹא יָדַעְתִּי יוֹם מוֹתִי: ג וְעַתָּה שְׂאֵנָא כְּלִיד תִּלְיֵד וְקִשְׁתֵּד וְצֵא הַשָּׂדֶה וְצוּדָה לִי צִידָה [צִיד]: ד וַעֲשֵׂה־לִּי מִטְעָמִים כַּאֲשֶׁר אֲהַבְתִּי וְהִבִּיאָה לִּי וְאֶכְלָה בְּעִבּוֹר תִּבְרַכְךָ נַפְשִׁי בְטָרִם אָמוֹת: ה וּרְבֵקָה שָׁמְעַת בְּדָבָר יַצְחָק אֶל־עֵשָׂו בְּנֵוֹ וַיִּלְדָּה עֵשָׂו הַשָּׂדֶה לְצוּד צִיד לְהַבִּיא: ו וּרְבֵקָה אָמְרָה אֶל־יַעֲקֹב בְּנֵה לְאִמֹּךָ הִנֵּה שָׁמְעַתִּי אֶת־אֲבִיד מִדָּבָר אֶל־עֵשָׂו אֲחִיד לְאִמֹּר: ז הִבִּיאָה לִּי צִיד וַעֲשֵׂה־לִּי מִטְעָמִים וְאֶכְלָה וְאֶבְרַכְכָּה לִפְנֵי יְהוָה לִפְנֵי מוֹתִי: ח וְעַתָּה בְנִי שָׁמַע בְּקֻלִּי לְאֲשֶׁר אָנִי מַצְנֶה אֹתָךְ: ט לָךְ־נָא אֶל־הַצֹּאן וְקַח־לִּי מִשָּׁם שְׁנֵי גְדֵי עֵאִים טֹבִים וְאֶעֱשֶׂה אֹתָם מִטְעָמִים לְאֲבִיד כַּאֲשֶׁר אֲהַב: י וְהַבֵּאתָ לְאֲבִיד וְאֶכֶל בְּעִבּוֹר אֲשֶׁר יִבְרַכְךָ לִפְנֵי מוֹתִי: יא וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב אֶל־רְבֵקָה אִמּוֹ הֵן עֲשֵׂו אַחִי אִישׁ שָׁעֵר וְאֲנֹכִי אִישׁ חָלָק: יב אוּלַי יִמְשְׁנִי אָבִי וְהִייתִי בְעֵינָיו כַּמִּתְעַתֵּעַ וְהִבֵּאתִי עָלַי קִלְכָּה וְלֹא בְרַכָּה: יג וַתֹּאמֶר לוֹ אִמּוֹ עָלַי קִלְכָּתְךָ בְנִי אֵדָה שָׁמַע בְּקֻלִּי וְלָךְ קַח־לִּי: יד וַיִּלְדָּה וַיִּקַּח וַיָּבֵא לְאִמּוֹ וַתַּעַשׂ אִמּוֹ מִטְעָמִים כַּאֲשֶׁר אֲהַב אָבִיו: טו וַתִּקַּח רְבֵקָה אֶת־בְּגָדֵי עֵשָׂו בְּנֵה הַגָּדֹל הַחֲמֹדֹת אֲשֶׁר אֲתָה בַּבַּיִת וַתִּלְבַּשׂ אֶת־יַעֲקֹב בְּנֵה הַקָּטָן: טז וְאֵת עֹרֹת גְּדֵי הָעֵאִים הִלְבִּישָׁה עַל־גְּדֵיו וְעַל חִלְקַת צִנְאָרָיו: יז וַתִּתֵּן אֶת־הַמִּטְעָמִים וְאֶת־הַלֶּחֶם אֲשֶׁר עָשְׂתָה בְיַד יַעֲקֹב בְּנֵה: יח וַיָּבֵא אֶל־אָבִיו וַיֹּאמֶר אָבִי וַיֹּאמֶר הֲנִי מִי אַתָּה בְנִי: יט וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב אֶל־אָבִיו אֲנֹכִי עֵשָׂו בְּכֹדָד עֲשִׂיתִי כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתָּ אֵלַי קוּם־נָא שִׁבָה וְאֶכְלָה מִצִּידִי בְּעִבּוֹר תִּבְרַכְנִי נַפְשָׁךְ: כ וַיֹּאמֶר יַצְחָק אֶל־בְּנָוֹ מִה־זֶה מִתְרַתְּ לְמִצָּא בְנִי וַיֹּאמֶר כִּי הִקְרָה יְהוָה אֵלַיִךְ לִפְנֵי: כא וַיֹּאמֶר יַצְחָק אֶל־יַעֲקֹב גְּשָׁה־נָא וְאֶמְשָׁךְ בְּנִי הֲאֵתָה זֶה בְּנִי עֵשָׂו אִם־לֹא: כב וַיִּגַּשׁ יַעֲקֹב אֶל־יַצְחָק אָבִיו וַיִּמְשָׁחוּ וַיֹּאמֶר הַקֵּל קוֹל יַעֲקֹב וְהִדָּם יָדַי עֵשָׂו: כג וְלֹא הִכִּירוּ כִּי־הָיוּ גְדֵיו כִּי־דִי עֵשָׂו אָחִיו שָׁעֵרֹת וַיִּבְרַכְהוּ: כד וַיֹּאמֶר אַתָּה זֶה בְּנִי עֵשָׂו וַיֹּאמֶר אָנִי: כה וַיֹּאמֶר הַגִּישָׁה לִּי וְאֶכְלָה מִצִּיד בְּנִי לְמַעַן תִּבְרַכְךָ נַפְשִׁי וַיִּגַּשׁ־לוֹ וַיֹּאכֵל וַיָּבֵא לוֹ יַיִן וַיִּשְׁתֵּ: כו וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו יַצְחָק אָבִיו גְּשָׁה־נָא וַשְׁקָה־לִּי בְנִי: כז וַיִּגַּשׁ וַיִּשְׁק־לוֹ וַיִּרַח אֶת־רִיחַ בְּגָדָיו וַיִּבְרַכְהוּ וַיֹּאמֶר רְאֵה רִיחַ בְּנִי כְרִיחַ שָׂדֶה אֲשֶׁר בָּרַכְוֹ יְהוָה: [ששׁ] כח וַיִּתֵּן־לָךְ הָאֱלֹהִים מִטַּל הַשָּׁמַיִם וּמִשְׁמַנֵּי הָאָרֶץ וְרֹב דָּגָן וַתִּירֹשׁ: כט יַעֲבֹדִיד עַמִּים וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה [וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה] לָךְ לְאִמִּים הָיָה גְבוּר לְאֲחִיד וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה לָךְ בְּנִי אֶמְשָׁךְ אֲרָרִיד אֲרוּר וּמִבְּרַכְיִךְ בְּרוּךְ: ל וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר פָּלָה יַצְחָק לְבָרְךְ אֶת־יַעֲקֹב וַיְהִי אֵדָה יָצָא יַעֲקֹב מֵאֵת פְּנֵי יַצְחָק אָבִיו וְעֵשָׂו אָחִיו בָּא מִצִּידוֹ: לא וַיַּעַשׂ גִּם־הוּא מִטְעָמִים וַיָּבֵא לְאָבִיו וַיֹּאמֶר לְאָבִיו יָקָם אָבִי וַיֹּאכֵל מִצִּיד בְּנָוֹ בְּעִבּוֹר תִּבְרַכְנִי נַפְשָׁךְ: לב וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ יַצְחָק אָבִיו מִי־אַתָּה וַיֹּאמֶר אָנִי בְנָךְ בְּכֹדָד עֵשָׂו: לג וַיִּחְרַד יַצְחָק חֲרָדָה גְדֹלָה עַד־מָאֹד וַיֹּאמֶר מִי־אֶפּוֹא הִנֵּה הַצִּיד־צִיד וַיָּבֵא לִי

וְאֵכֶל מִכָּל בְּטָרִם תִּבּוֹא וְאֲבָרְכֶהוּ גַם־בְּרֹדֶף יִהְיֶה: לֹד כְּשָׁמַעַע עֲשׂוּ
 אֶת־דְּבָרֵי אָבִיו וַיִּצְעַק צְעָקָה גְדֹלָה וּמְרָה עַד־מָאֹד וַיֹּאמֶר לְאָבִיו בְּרַכְנִי
 גַם־אֲנִי אָבִי: לֹה וַיֹּאמֶר בָּא אַחִיד בְּמִרְמָה וַיִּקַּח בְּרַכְתְּךָ: לוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר הֲכִי
 קָרָא שְׁמוֹ יַעֲקֹב וַיַּעֲקֹבֵנִי זֶה פַעַמִּים אֶת־בְּכֹרְתִי לָקַח וְהִנֵּה עִתָּהּ לָקַח
 בְּרַכְתִּי וַיֹּאמֶר הֲלֹא־אֶצְלַת לִי בְרַכָּה: לוֹ וַיַּעַן יִצְחָק וַיֹּאמֶר לַעֲשׂוּ הֵן גְּבִיר
 שְׁמֹתַי לָךְ וְאֶת־כָּל־אֲחָיו נָתַתִּי לוֹ לַעֲבָדִים וְדַגּוּ וְתִירַשׁ סִמְכֹתַי וּלְכָה
 אִפּוֹא מָה אַעֲשֶׂה בְנִי: לֹח וַיֹּאמֶר עֲשׂוּ אֶל־אָבִיו הַבְּרַכָּה אַחֲת הוּא־לָךְ אָבִי
 בְּרַכְנִי גַם־אֲנִי אָבִי וַיִּשָּׂא עֲשׂוּ קִלּוֹ וַיְבַדֵּ: לוֹ וַיַּעַן יִצְחָק אָבִיו וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו
 הִנֵּה מִשְׁמֵנִי הָאָרֶץ יִהְיֶה מוֹשְׁבֶדָּ וּמִטַּל הַשָּׁמַיִם מֵעַל: מ וְעַל־חֲרָבְךָ תַחֲזֶה
 וְאֶת־אֲחִיד תַעֲבֹד וְהִיָּה כַּאֲשֶׁר תִּרְדִּי וּפְרֻקֹת עָלָיו מֵעַל צְוֹאֲרֶךָ: מֵא וַיִּשְׁטֹם
 עֲשׂוּ אֶת־יַעֲקֹב עַל־הַבְּרַכָּה אֲשֶׁר בְּרַכּוּ אָבִיו וַיֹּאמֶר עֲשׂוּ בְלַבּוֹ יִקְרְבוּ יָמַי
 אֲבֵל אָבִי וְאֶהְרֹגָה אֶת־יַעֲקֹב אַחִי: מֵב וַיִּגַּד לְרַבֵּקָה אֶת־דְּבָרֵי עֲשׂוּ בְנָה
 הַגְּדֹל וְתִשְׁלַח וְתִקְרָא לַיַּעֲקֹב בְּנָה הַקָּטָן וְתֹאמֶר אֵלָיו הִנֵּה עֲשׂוּ אַחִיד
 מִתַּנְתָּם לָךְ לְהִרְגָדָ: מֵג וְעִתָּהּ בְנִי שָׁמַע בְּקִלִּי וְקוּם בְּרַח־לָךְ אֶל־לְבוֹן אַחִי
 חֲרָנָה: מֵד וַיִּשְׁבַּת עִמּוֹ יָמִים אַחֲדִים עַד אֲשֶׁר־תִּשׁוּב חֲמַת אַחִיד:
 מֵה עַד־שׁוּב אֶף־אַחִיד מִמֶּדָּ וְשָׁכַח אֶת אֲשֶׁר־עָשִׂיתָ לוֹ וְשָׁלַחְתִּי וּלְקַחְתִּיךָ
 מִשָּׁם לָמָּה אֲשַׁכַּל גַּם־שְׁנֵיכֶם יוֹם אֶחָד: מוּ וְתֹאמֶר רַבֵּקָה אֶל־יִצְחָק קַצְתִּי
 בְחַיִּי מִפְּנֵי בְנוֹת חַת אִם־לָקַח יַעֲקֹב אִשָּׁה מִבְּנוֹת־חַת כְּאֵלֶּה מִבְּנוֹת הָאָרֶץ
 לָמָּה לִי חַיִּים:

א וַיִּקְרָא יִצְחָק אֶל־יַעֲקֹב וַיְבַרֵךְ אֹתוֹ וַיְצַוֵּהוּ וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ לֹא־תִקַּח אִשָּׁה
 מִבְּנוֹת כְּנָעַן: ב קוּם לָךְ פְּדִינָה אֲרָם בֵּיתָה בְּתוֹאֵל אָבִי אִמָּדָ וְקַח־לָךְ מִשָּׁם
 אִשָּׁה מִבְּנוֹת לְבוֹן אַחִי אִמָּדָ: ג וְאֵל שְׂדֵי יְבֻרָדָ אֲתָדָ וַיְפָרָדָ וַיִּרְבֵּדָ וְהִיָּית
 לְקַחֵל עַמִּים: ד וַיִּתְּן־לָךְ אֶת־בְּרַכְתָּ אֲבִרְהָם לָךְ וּלְזֶרְעָךָ אֲתָדָ לְרִשְׁתָּךְ
 אֶת־אָרֶץ מְגֻרִידָ אֲשֶׁר־נָתַן אֱלֹהִים לְאֲבִרְהָם: ה וַיִּשְׁלַח יִצְחָק
 אֶת־יַעֲקֹב וַיִּלְדָּ פְדִינָה אֲרָם אֶל־לְבוֹן בְּו־בְּתוֹאֵל הָאֲרָמִי אַחִי רַבֵּקָה אִם
 יַעֲקֹב וְעֲשׂוּ: ו וַיִּרָא עֲשׂוּ כִי־בְרַדָּ יִצְחָק אֶת־יַעֲקֹב וְשָׁלַח אֹתוֹ פְּדִינָה אֲרָם
 לְקַחֲתָ־לוֹ מִשָּׁם אִשָּׁה בְּבְרַכּוֹ אֹתוֹ וַיַּצּוּ עָלָיו לֵאמֹר לֹא־תִקַּח אִשָּׁה מִבְּנוֹת
 כְּנָעַן: ז וַיִּשְׁמַע יַעֲקֹב אֶל־אָבִיו וְאֶל־אִמּוֹ וַיִּלְדָּ פְדִינָה אֲרָם:
 ח וַיִּרָא עֲשׂוּ כִי רָעוֹת בְּנוֹת כְּנָעַן בְּעֵינַי יִצְחָק אָבִיו: ט וַיִּלְדָּ עֲשׂוּ
 אֶל־יִשְׁמַעֵאל וַיִּקַּח אֶת־מַחֲלַת | בַּת־יִשְׁמַעֵאל בְּו־אֲבִרְהָם אַחֲוֹת נְבִיּוֹת
 עַל־נַשְׂוֹ לוֹ לֵאשָׁה:

When Isaac was old and his eyes were too dim to see, he called his older son Esau and said to him, "My son." He answered, "Here I am." ² And he said, "I am old now, and I do not know how soon I may die. ³ Take your gear, your quiver and bow, and go out into the open and hunt me some game. ⁴ Then prepare a dish for me such as I like, and bring it to me to eat, so that I may give you my innermost blessing before I die." ⁵ Rebekah had been listening as Isaac spoke to his son Esau. When Esau had gone out into the open to hunt game to bring home, ⁶ Rebekah said to her son Jacob, "I overheard your father speaking to your brother Esau, saying, ⁷ 'Bring me some game and prepare a dish for me to eat, that I may bless you, with the LORD's approval, before I die.' ⁸ Now, my son, listen carefully as I instruct you. ⁹ Go to the flock and fetch me two choice kids, and I will make of them a dish for your father, such as he likes. ¹⁰ Then take it to your father to eat, in order that he may bless you before he dies." ¹¹ Jacob answered his mother Rebekah, "But my brother Esau is a hairy man and I am smooth-skinned. ¹² If my father touches me, I shall appear to him as a trickster and bring upon myself a curse, not a blessing." ¹³ But his mother said to him, "Your curse, my son, be upon me! Just do as I say and go fetch them for me." ¹⁴ He got them and brought them to his mother, and his mother prepared a dish such as his father liked. ¹⁵ Rebekah then took the best clothes of her older son Esau, which were there in the house, and had her younger son Jacob put them on; ¹⁶ and she covered his hands and the hairless part of his neck with the skins of the kids. ¹⁷ Then she put in the hands of her son Jacob the dish and the bread that she had prepared. ¹⁸ He went to his father and said, "Father." And he said, "Yes, which of my sons are you?" ¹⁹ Jacob said to his father, "I am Esau, your first-born; I have done as you told me. Pray sit up and eat of my game, that you may give me your innermost blessing." ²⁰ Isaac said to his son, "How did you succeed so quickly, my son?" And he said, "Because the LORD your God granted me good fortune." ²¹ Isaac said to Jacob, "Come closer that I may feel you, my son -- whether you are really my son Esau or not." ²² So Jacob drew close to his father Isaac, who felt him and wondered. "The voice is the voice of Jacob, yet the hands are the hands of Esau." ²³ He did not recognize him, because his hands were hairy like those of his brother Esau; and so he blessed him. ²⁴ He asked, "Are you really my son Esau?" And when he said, "I am," ²⁵ he said, "Serve me and let me eat of my son's game that I may give you my innermost blessing." So he served him and he ate, and he brought him wine and he drank. ²⁶ Then his father Isaac said to him, "Come close and kiss me, my son"; ²⁷ and he went up and kissed him. And he smelled his clothes and he blessed him, saying, "Ah, the smell of my son is like the smell of the fields that the LORD has blessed. ²⁸ "May God give you Of the dew of heaven and the fat of the earth, Abundance of new grain and wine. ²⁹ Let peoples serve you, And nations bow to you; Be master over your brothers, And let your mother's sons bow to you. Cursed be they who curse you, Blessed they who bless you." ³⁰ No sooner had Jacob left the presence of his father Isaac -- after Isaac had finished blessing Jacob -- than his brother Esau came back from his hunt. ³¹ He too prepared a dish and brought it to his father. And he said to his father, "Let my father sit up and eat of his son's game, so that you may give me your innermost blessing."

³² His father Isaac said to him, "Who are you?" And he said, "I am your son, Esau, your first-born!" ³³ Isaac was seized with very violent trembling. "Who was it then," he demanded, "that hunted game and brought it to me? Moreover, I ate of it before you came, and I blessed him; now he must remain blessed!" ³⁴ When Esau heard his father's words, he burst into wild and bitter sobbing, and said to his father, "Bless me too, Father!" ³⁵ But he answered, "Your brother came with guile and took away your blessing." ³⁶ *Esau* said, "Was he, then, named Jacob that he might supplant me these two times? First he took away my birthright and now he has taken away my blessing!" And he added, "Have you not reserved a blessing for me?" ³⁷ Isaac answered, saying to Esau, "But I have made him master over you: I have given him all his brothers for servants, and sustained him with grain and wine. What, then, can I still do for you, my son?" ³⁸ And Esau said to his father, "Have you but one blessing, Father? Bless me too, Father!" And Esau wept aloud. ³⁹ And his father Isaac answered, saying to him, "See, your abode shall enjoy the fat of the earth And the dew of heaven above. ⁴⁰ Yet by your sword you shall live, And you shall serve your brother; But when you grow restive, You shall What, then, can I still do for you, my son?" ³⁸ And Esau said to his father, "Have you but one blessing, Father? Bless me too, Father!" And Esau wept aloud. ³⁹ And his father Isaac answered, saying to him, "See, your abode shall enjoy the fat of the earth And the dew of heaven above. ⁴⁰ Yet by your sword you shall live, And you shall serve your brother; But when you grow restive, You shall break his yoke from your neck." ⁴¹ Now Esau harbored a grudge against Jacob because of the blessing which his father had given him, and Esau said to himself, "Let but the mourning period of my father come, and I will kill my brother Jacob." ⁴² When the words of her older son Esau were reported to Rebekah, she sent for her younger son Jacob and said to him, "Your brother Esau. is consoling himself by planning to kill you. ⁴³ Now, my son, listen to me. Flee at once to Haran, to my brother Laban. ⁴⁴ Stay with him a while, until your brother's fury subsides -- ⁴⁵ until your brother's anger against you subsides -- and he forgets what you have done to him. Then I will fetch you from there. Let me not lose you both in one day!" ⁴⁶ Rebekah said to Isaac, "I am disgusted with my life because of the Hittite women. If Jacob marries a Hittite woman like these, from among the native women, what good will life be to me?" ^{TNK} **Genesis 28:1** So Isaac sent for Jacob and blessed him. He instructed him, saying, "You shall not take a wife from among the Canaanite women. ² Up, go to Paddan-aram, to the house of Bethuel, your mother's father, and take a wife there from among the daughters of Laban, your mother's brother, ³ May El Shaddai bless you, make you fertile and numerous, so that you become an assembly of peoples. ⁴ May He grant the blessing of Abraham to you and your offspring, that you may possess the land where you are sojourning, which God assigned to Abraham." ⁵ Then Isaac sent Jacob off, and he went to Paddan-aram, to Laban the son of Bethuel the Aramean, the brother of Rebekah, mother of Jacob and Esau. ⁶ When Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob and sent him off to Paddan-aram to take a wife from there, charging him, as he blessed him, "You shall not take a wife from among the Canaanite women," ⁷ and that Jacob had obeyed his father and mother and gone to Paddan-aram, ⁸ Esau realized that the Canaanite women displeased his father Isaac. ⁹ So Esau went to Ishmael and took to wife, in addition to the wives he had, Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael son of Abraham, sister of Nebaioth.

Tamar: Genesis 38: 1-30

א ויהי בעת ההוא ויבן יהודה מאת אחיו ויט עד-איש עד-למי
ושמו חירה: ב ויקרא-שם יהודה בת-איש כנעני ושמו שוע ויקחה ויבא
אליה: ג ותהר ותלד בן ויקרא את-שמו ער: ד ותהר עוד ותלד בן ויקרא
את-שמו און: ה ותקם עוד ותלד בן ויקרא את-שמו שלה והיה בכזיב
בלדתה אתו: ו ויפח יהודה אשה לער בכורו ושמה תמר: ז והיה ער בכור
יהודה רע בעיני יהודה וימתהו יהנה: ח ויאמר יהודה לאון בא אל-אשת
אחיד ויבס אתה והקם זרע לאחיד: ט וידע און כי לא לו יהיה הזרע
והיה אם-בא אל-אשת אחיו ושחת ארצה לבלתי נתן-זרע לאחיו: י וידע
בעיני יהנה אשר עשה וימת גם-אתו: יא ויאמר יהודה לתמר בלתי שבי
אלמנה בית-אביך עד-יגדל שלה בני כי אמר פן-ימות גם-הוא כאחיו
ותלד תמר ותשב בית אביה: יב וירבו הימים ותמת בת-שוע אשת-יהודה
וינחם יהודה ויעל על-גזזי צאנו הוא וחירה רעהו העדלמי תמנתה:
יג ויגד לתמר לאמר הנה חמיך עלה תמנתה לגו צאנו: יד ותסר בגדי
אלמנותה מעליה ותכס בצעיף ותתעלף ותשב בפתח עינים אשר
על-דרך: תמנתה כי ראתה כי-גדל שלה והוא לא-נתנה לו לאשה:
טו ויקרא יהודה ויחשבה לזונה כי כסתה פניה: טז ויט אליה אל-הדרך
ויאמר הבה נא אבוא אליך: כי לא ידע כי בלתי הוא ותאמר מה-תתן-לי
כי תבוא אלי: יז ויאמר אנכי אשלח גדי-עזים מן-הצאן ותאמר אם-תתן
ערבון עד שלחך: יח ויאמר מה הערבון אשר אתן-לך: ותאמר חתמך
ופתילך ומטף אשר בידך ויתן-לה ויבא אליה ותהר לו: יט ותקם ותלד
ותסר צעיפה מעליה ותלבש בגדי אלמנותה: כ וישלח יהודה את-גדי
העזים ביד רעהו העדלמי לקחת הערבון מיד האשה ולא מצאה:
כא וישאל את-אנשי מקמה לאמר איפה הקדשה הוא בעינים על-הדרך
ויאמרו לא-היתה בזה קדשה: כב וישב אל-יהודה ויאמר לא מצאתיה
וגם אנשי המקום אמרו לא-היתה בזה קדשה: כג ויאמר יהודה
תקח-לה פן נהיה לבז הזה שליחתי הגדי הזה ואתה לא מצאתה:
כד והי | כמשלש חדשים ויגד ליהודה לאמר זנתה תמר בלתי וגם הנה
הרה לזנונים ויאמר יהודה הוציאוה ותשרף: כה הוא מוצאת והיא
שלחה אל-חמיה לאמר לאיש אשר-אלה לו אנכי הרה ותאמר הכר-נא
למי החתמת והפתילים והמטה האלה: כו ויכר יהודה ויאמר צדקה
ממני כי-על-כן לא-נתתיה לשלה בני ולא-יסף עוד לדעתה: כז והי בעת
לדתה והנה תאומים בבטנה: כח והי בלדתה ויתן-יד ותקח המילדת
ותקשר על-ידו שני לאמר זה יצא ראשנה: כט והי | כמשלב ידו והנה
יצא אחיו ותאמר מה-פרצת עליך פרו ויקרא שמו פרו: ל ואחר יצא
אחיו אשר על-ידו השני ויקרא שמו זרח:

About that time Judah left his brothers and camped near a certain Adullamite whose name was Hirah. ² There Judah saw the daughter of a certain Canaanite whose name was Shua, and he married her and cohabited with her. ³ She conceived and bore a son, and he named him Er. ⁴ She conceived again and bore a son, and named him Onan. ⁵ Once again she bore a son, and named him Shelah; he was at Chezib when she bore him. ⁶ Judah got a wife for Er his first-born; her name was Tamar. ⁷ But Er, Judah's first-born, was displeasing to the LORD, and the LORD took his life. ⁸ Then Judah said to Onan, "Join with your brother's wife and do your duty by her as a brother-in-law, and provide offspring for your brother." ⁹ But Onan, knowing that the seed would not count as his, let it go to waste whenever he joined with his brother's wife, so as not to provide offspring for his brother. ¹⁰ What he did was displeasing to the LORD, and He took his life also. ¹¹ Then Judah said to his daughter-in-law Tamar, "Stay as a widow in your father's house until my son Shelah grows up" -- for he thought, "He too might die like his brothers." So Tamar went to live in her father's house. ¹² A long time afterward, Shua's daughter, the wife of Judah, died. When his period of mourning was over, Judah went up to Timnah to his sheepshearers, together with his friend Hirah the Adullamite. ¹³ And Tamar was told, "Your father-in-law is coming up to Timnah for the sheepshearing." ¹⁴ So she took off her widow's garb, covered her face with a veil, and, wrapping herself up, sat down at the entrance to Enaim, which is on the road to Timnah; for she saw that Shelah was grown up, yet she had not been given to him as wife. ¹⁵ When Judah saw her, he took her for a harlot; for she had covered her face. ¹⁶ So he turned aside to her by the road and said, "Here, let me sleep with you" -- for he did not know that she was his daughter-in-law. "What," she asked, "will you pay for sleeping with me?" ¹⁷ He replied, "I will send a kid from my flock." But she said, "You must leave a pledge until you have sent it." ¹⁸ And he said, "What pledge shall I give you?" She replied, "Your seal and cord, and the staff which you carry." So he gave them to her and slept with her, and she conceived by him. ¹⁹ Then she went on her way. She took off her veil and again put on her widow's garb. ²⁰ Judah sent the kid by his friend the Adullamite, to redeem the pledge from the woman; but he could not find her. ²¹ He inquired of the people of that town, "Where is the cult prostitute, the one at Enaim, by the road?" But they said, "There has been no prostitute here." ²² So he returned to Judah and said, "I could not find her; moreover, the townspeople said: There has been no prostitute here." ²³ Judah said, "Let her keep them, lest we become a laughingstock. I did send her this kid, but you did not find her." ²⁴ About three months later, Judah was told, "Your daughter-in-law Tamar has played the harlot; in fact, she is with child by harlotry." "Bring her out," said Judah, "and let her be burned." ²⁵ As she was being brought out, she sent this message to her father-in-law, "I am with child by the man to whom these belong." And she added, "Examine these: whose seal and cord and staff are these?" ²⁶ Judah recognized them, and said, "She is more in the right than I, inasmuch as I did not give her to my son Shelah." And he was not intimate with her again. ²⁷ When the time came for her to give birth, there were twins in her womb! ²⁸ While she was in labor, one of them put out his hand, and the midwife tied a crimson thread on that hand, to signify: This one came out first. ²⁹ But just then he drew back his hand, and out came his brother; and she said, "What a breach you have made for yourself!" So he was named Perez. ³⁰ Afterward his brother came out, on whose hand was the crimson thread; he was named Zerah.

Magazine Power Quiz

1. You are running for school president, you
 - a) Wear your cutest outfit, which happens to be your shortest skirt.
 - b) Listen to the needs of your classmates and promise to make the changes they are asking for.
 - c) Recruit all of your friends to help you put up posters and vote for you.

2. You just found out that the guy you have a crush on may be interested in someone else. You,
 - a) Flirt with other boys in front of him to make him jealous.
 - b) Tell the guy you have a crush on him and find out who he really likes.
 - c) Ask all of your friends, and his friends, who he likes.

3. When it comes to power, your motto is,
 - a) People do what I say because they want to be friends with me.
 - b) The leader can only have power if they are respected by the community.
 - c) If you have more people on your team, you are more likely to win.

4. You are about to fail your math class, which means you will have to repeat the year. You,
 - a) Intimidate the smartest kid in the class in hopes of him/her letting you copy his/her homework and tests.
 - b) Decide to hire a tutor to help you catch up with the work.
 - c) Organize a study group with your friends.

5. Its Saturday night and your parents have asked you to baby-sit your little brother. You,
 - a) Throw a fit and complain so much that your parents always ask you to do things until they finally agree not to make you baby-sit.
 - b) Compromise with your parents that if you baby-sit this week, you will be allowed to go to your friend's party next week.
 - c) Agree to baby-sit if they agree to let you have some friends over that night.

Lessons 4: Power in Sexuality

Objectives:

- Students will be able to describe how sexuality is used in ad campaigns.
- Students will be able to identify Tamar and Dina.
- Students will be able to identify types of power in each of these stories.

Guided Timeline:

15 minutes	Activity 1: Set Induction
20 minutes	Activity 2: Text Study
10 minutes	Activity 3: Journaling

Activity 1: Set Induction

Show images of ads (if possible project them onto a big screen). Ask students—

- What is being sold?
- How is it being sold?
- How does it make you feel?
- Why does this ad make you want/not want to buy the product?

After looking at several images discuss—

- Why do so many ads use sexual images to sell their product?
- Why is there such a trend for people to act or dress sexually at a younger age?
- Discuss the idea that there is power in sexuality.

Activity 2: Rereading Tamar--Text Study

Looking at Tamar through another lens. Explain to students that though we have previously studied Tamar, we will reread her story, looking at it from another perspective. In the last lesson, we discussed the idea of her being manipulative in order to get what she wanted. This time we will discuss the notion of her using her sexuality in order to accomplish her goals.

In addition to using the original text, we will also look at the story of Tamar from various commentators perspectives.

Students should read and discuss the text and commentaries with a partner before coming back together as a class to share some of their thoughts.

Then discuss the answers to the 5 questions on the chart—

- What model of power is this?
- How can women access power?
- What is gained with power?
- What is lost?
- What is the impact on me?

Activity 3: Journaling

Have students respond to the prompt—I feel powerless when...

If students feel comfortable, have some of them share some of their thoughts.

Materials:

Images of Ads

Chart

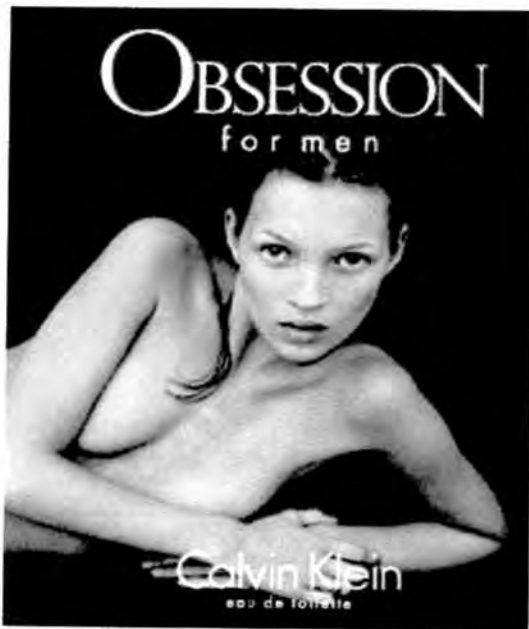
Genesis 38:1-30 text

Genesis 38:1-30 commentaries

Journals

Pens

Images of Ads

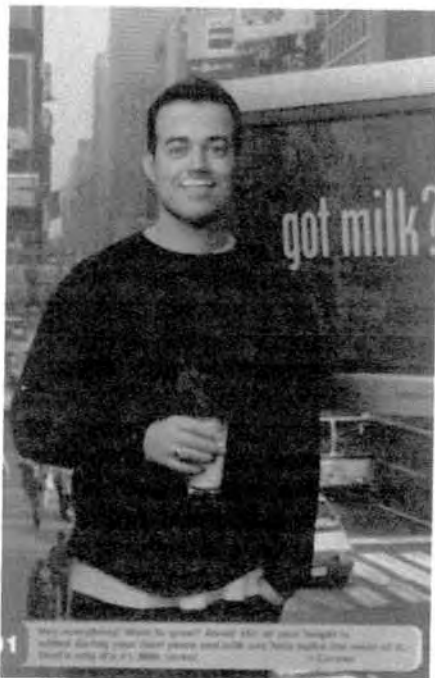




Louis Vuitton—Comparison Ads
(Consider the difference between how men and women are portrayed.)



Got Milk Comparison Ads





Old Budweiser Ad

What a Kiss I Got
that night

My special one found me when he came from over seas. He had the most beautiful smile that was the taste of heaven waiting upon the power.
 And I had my share of many things. It could be Budweiser to the rescue or it could be a good night.
 When the night came, he said, "I love the way you look and I love the way you smell." He said, "I love the way you look and I love the way you smell." He said, "I love the way you look and I love the way you smell."
 Instead, he looked at me and he said, "I love the way you look and I love the way you smell." He said, "I love the way you look and I love the way you smell."
 When I see Budweiser I think of happiness. I think of love. I think of you. I think of you. I think of you. I think of you.

Budweiser
 KING OF BEERS
 Where There's Life... There's Bud!

Tamar: Genesis 38: 1-30

א ויהי בעת ההוא וירד יהודה מאת אחיו ויט עד איש עד למי
ושמו חיכה: ב וירא שם יהודה בת איש כנעני ושמו שוע ויקחה ויבא
אליה: ג ותהר ותלד בן ויקרא את שמו ער: ד ותהר עוד ותלד בן ויקרא
את שמו אונן: ה ותסף עוד ותלד בן ויקרא את שמו שלה והיה בכזיב
בלדתה אתו: ו ויפח יהודה אשה לער בכורו ושמה תמר: ז ויהי ער בכור
יהודה רע בעיני יהודה וימתהו יהנה: ח ויאמר יהודה לאונן בא אל אשת
אחיד ויבם אתה והקם זרע לאחיד: ט וידע אונן כי לא לו יהיה הזרע
והיה אם בא אל אשת אחיו ושחת ארצה לבלתי נתן זרע לאחיו: י וירע
בעיני יהודה אשר עשה וימת גם אתו: יא ויאמר יהודה לתמר כלתו שבי
אלמנה בית אביך עד יגדל שלה בני כי אמר פן ימות גם הוא כאחיו
ותלד תמר ותשב בית אביה: יב וירבו הימים ותמת בת שוע אשת יהודה
ויפחם יהודה ויעל על גזזי צאנו הוא וחיכה רעהו העד למי תמנתה:
יג ויגד לתמר לאמר הנה חמיק עליה תמנתה לגז צאנו: יד ותסר בגדי
אלמנותה מעליה ותכס בצעיף ותתעלף ותשב בפתח עליים אשר
על דרך תמנתה כי ראתה כי גדל שלה והוא לא נתנה לו לאשה:
טו ויראה יהודה ויחשבה לזונה כי כסתה פניה: טז ויט אליה אל הדרך
ויאמר הבה נא אבוא אליך כי לא ידע כי כלתו הוא ויאמר מה תתן לי
כי תבוא אלי: יז ויאמר אנכי אשלח גדי עזים מן הצאן ויאמר אם תתן
ערבון עד שלחך: יח ויאמר מה הערבון אשר אתן לך ויאמר חתמך
ופתילך ומטה אשר בידך ויתר לה ויבא אליה ותהר לו: יט ותקם ותלד
ותסר צעיפה מעליה ותלבש בגדי אלמנותה: כ וישלח יהודה את גדי
העזים ביד רעהו העד למי לקחת הערבון מיד האשה ולא מצאה:
כא וישאל את אנשי מקמה לאמר אפה הקדשה הוא בעינים על הדרך
ויאמרו לא היתה בזה קדשה: כב וישב אל יהודה ויאמר לא מצאתיה
וגם אנשי המקום אמרו לא היתה בזה קדשה: כג ויאמר יהודה
תקח לה פן נהיה לבוזה הנה שלחתי הגדי הזה ואתה לא מצאתה:
כד ויהי | כמשלש חדשים ויגד ליהודה לאמר זנתה תמר כלתך וגם הנה
הרה לזנונים ויאמר יהודה הוציאוה ותשרף: כה הוא מוצאת והיא
שלחה אל חמיה לאמר לאיש אשר אלה לו אנכי הרה ויאמר הכר נא
למי החתמת והפתילים והמטה האלה: כו ויפר יהודה ויאמר צדקה
מפני כי על בן לא נתתיה לשלה בני ולא יסף עוד לדעתה: כז ויהי בעת
לדתה והנה תאומים בבטנה: כח ויהי בלדתה ויתן יד ותקח המילדת
ותקשר על ידו שני לאמר זה יצא ראשונה: כט ויהי | כמשני ידו והנה
יצא אחיו ויאמר מה פרצת עליך פרץ ויקרא שמו פרץ: ל ואחר יצא
אחיו אשר על ידו השני ויקרא שמו זרח:

About that time Judah left his brothers and camped near a certain Adullamite whose name was Hirah. ² There Judah saw the daughter of a certain Canaanite whose name was Shua, and he married her and cohabited with her. ³ She conceived and bore a son, and he named him Er. ⁴ She conceived again and bore a son, and named him Onan. ⁵ Once again she bore a son, and named him Shelah; he was at Chezib when she bore him. ⁶ Judah got a wife for Er his first-born; her name was Tamar. ⁷ But Er, Judah's first-born, was displeasing to the LORD, and the LORD took his life. ⁸ Then Judah said to Onan, "Join with your brother's wife and do your duty by her as a brother-in-law, and provide offspring for your brother." ⁹ But Onan, knowing that the seed would not count as his, let it go to waste whenever he joined with his brother's wife, so as not to provide offspring for his brother. ¹⁰ What he did was displeasing to the LORD, and He took his life also. ¹¹ Then Judah said to his daughter-in-law Tamar, "Stay as a widow in your father's house until my son Shelah grows up" -- for he thought, "He too might die like his brothers." So Tamar went to live in her father's house. ¹² A long time afterward, Shua's daughter, the wife of Judah, died. When his period of mourning was over, Judah went up to Timnah to his sheepshearers, together with his friend Hirah the Adullamite. ¹³ And Tamar was told, "Your father-in-law is coming up to Timnah for the sheepshearing." ¹⁴ So she took off her widow's garb, covered her face with a veil, and, wrapping herself up, sat down at the entrance to Enaim, which is on the road to Timnah; for she saw that Shelah was grown up, yet she had not been given to him as wife. ¹⁵ When Judah saw her, he took her for a harlot; for she had covered her face. ¹⁶ So he turned aside to her by the road and said, "Here, let me sleep with you" -- for he did not know that she was his daughter-in-law. "What," she asked, "will you pay for sleeping with me?" ¹⁷ He replied, "I will send a kid from my flock." But she said, "You must leave a pledge until you have sent it." ¹⁸ And he said, "What pledge shall I give you?" She replied, "Your seal and cord, and the staff which you carry." So he gave them to her and slept with her, and she conceived by him. ¹⁹ Then she went on her way. She took off her veil and again put on her widow's garb. ²⁰ Judah sent the kid by his friend the Adullamite, to redeem the pledge from the woman; but he could not find her. ²¹ He inquired of the people of that town, "Where is the cult prostitute, the one at Enaim, by the road?" But they said, "There has been no prostitute here." ²² So he returned to Judah and said, "I could not find her; moreover, the townspeople said: There has been no prostitute here." ²³ Judah said, "Let her keep them, lest we become a laughingstock. I did send her this kid, but you did not find her." ²⁴ About three months later, Judah was told, "Your daughter-in-law Tamar has played the harlot; in fact, she is with child by harlotry." "Bring her out," said Judah, "and let her be burned." ²⁵ As she was being brought out, she sent this message to her father-in-law, "I am with child by the man to whom these belong." And she added, "Examine these: whose seal and cord and staff are these?" ²⁶ Judah recognized them, and said, "She is more in the right than I, inasmuch as I did not give her to my son Shelah." And he was not intimate with her again. ²⁷ When the time came for her to give birth, there were twins in her womb! ²⁸ While she was in labor, one of them put out his hand, and the midwife tied a crimson thread on that hand, to signify: This one came out first. ²⁹ But just then he drew back his hand, and out came his brother; and she said, "What a breach you have made for yourself!" So he was named Perez. ³⁰ Afterward his brother came out, on whose hand was the crimson thread; he was named Zerah.

Looking at Tamar in Commentary

Rashi:

According to Rashi, “Tamar acted out of pure motives. She was trying to protect Judah from public shame, while at the same time fulfilling the commandment to have children. Though Judah declared publicly that Tamar should be put to death for prostitution, she chose not to embarrass him publicly, but to reveal the truth to him secretly.

Ramban (Nachmanides):

Ramban agrees with Rashi, but goes on to explain that in this case the ends justified the means.

Alice Ogden Bellis in Helpmates, Harlots and Heroes:

“Like many other biblical women, Tamar must use deception to achieve her ends. Like many other biblical women, she must become a mother to have a place in society. Nevertheless, in a culture that came to be fearful of women and especially of foreign women, Tamar’s story is a ray of hope.” (page 92)

Ellen Frankel in The Five Books of Miriam:

“Tamar comments: I took very seriously my obligation to provide an heir to Judah’s house. And until I fulfilled that obligation, I still thought of myself as Er’s widow. When I realized that Judah had no intention of marrying me to Shelah, I forced his hand by exchanging my bound status as a levirate widow for the free status of a prostitute. Only as such a free agent could I honor my debt to my husband’s family—though I had to sacrifice my dignity to do so.” (page 76)

Leila Leah Bronner in From Eve to Esther:

“Tamar is trapped in the customs of biblical society. She is neither an independent widow nor a dependent wife. She is an abandoned woman who is barren, so she devised a plan that, at the risk of her life, will enable her to bear a child, the only means for her to attain status in society and security in life.” (page 153)

Lessons 5-6: Power in Sexuality continued

(This lesson is intended to take place over 2 sessions, and is a continuation of lesson 4)

Objectives:

- Students will be able to describe how sexuality is used in ad campaigns.
- Students will be able to identify Tamar and Dina.
- Students will be able to identify types of power in each of these stories.
- Students will be able to identify how sexuality is used as power in their lives.
- Students will be able to identify behaviors and attitudes that enable them to feel powerful.

Guided Timeline:

10 minutes	Activity 1: Review
20 minutes	Activity 2: Text Study
30 minutes	Activity 3: Trial
20 minutes	Activity 4: Discussion
45 minutes	Activity 5: Self Defense
10 minutes	Activity 6: Conclusion

Activity 1: Review

Review the previous lesson.

- What did students learn about sexuality in ad campaigns?
- How did Tamar use her power?

Activity 2: Giving Dina a Voice--Text Study

Have students read through Genesis 34:1-24 (the story of Dina's Rape) either as a class or in small groups. As students read this text have them think about the following questions—

- How is Dina portrayed?
- How is Shechem portrayed?
- How are Dina's brothers portrayed?
- Who has power in this story?
- How do they use their power?

Then, using the attached commentaries and midrashim (which present the story in a potentially different light), ask these same questions again. Ask students to think about how a story can be understood in so many different ways.

- How else might they understand this story?
- How do they see Dina?
- What do they envision her saying if she had a voice?
- What might they say as parents of Dina? Of her brothers?

This is not so much a case of her using power, but of her being powerless and of others using their sexual power in the most negative way.

Activity 5: Trial

After reading the text and commentaries, students will put their learning to use in a different way. Prosecuting an attacker may be seen as one way of regaining power after an attack. Therefore, students will put either Shechem or Dina's brothers on trial. Students should be divided so that some represent the defense, while others represent the prosecution. There should be attorneys for all sides, the defendants, Dina and perhaps Dina's parents. Students are asked to take what they have learned about this story and interpret it themselves as part of this activity.

Allow students time to prepare their arguments or roles before the actual trial.

Activity 6: Let's Talk about Sex--Group Discussion

Take this opportunity to talk to students about their experience of sexuality, sex and using sexuality as power.

- How do students use sexuality/sex as power?
- Should this be a concern? Why or why not?
- How do they feel pressured to dress sexually, act sexually?
- How do they respond to situations when they feel pressured?
- What are strategies to respond in the future?

Activity 7 Self Defense Class

Organize an instructor for a self defense class. This is intended to teach students to feel good about their bodies, while at the same time learning to feel empowered, independent and to protect themselves. Explain the rationale for this class to students before the lesson. After the class discuss with students whether these goals were accomplished and what else they can do in the future to accomplish these goals.

Activity 8: Conclusion

- How can using sexuality make you feel powerful?
- How can using sexuality make you feel powerless?

- How can we shift our behaviors and attitudes to feel more powerful more of the time?

Materials:

Genesis 34:1-24 text
Genesis 34:1-24 commentaries
Pens
Paper

Dinah: Genesis 34:1-31

א ותצא דינה בת-לאה אשר ילדה לעקב לראות בבנות הארץ:
ב וירא אתה שכם בן-חמור החוי נשיא הארץ ויקח אתה וישכב אתה
ויענה: ג ותדבק נפשו בדינה בת-יעקב ויאהב את-הנער וידבר על-לב
הנער: ד ויאמר שכם אל-חמור אביו לאמר קח-לי את-הילדה הזאת
לאשה: ה ועקב שמע כי טמא את-דינה בתו ובניו היו את-מקנהו בשדה
והחרש יעקב עד-באם: ו ויצא חמור אבי-שכם אל-יעקב לדבר אתו:
ז ובני יעקב באו מן-השדה כשמעם ויתעצבו האנשים ויחר להם מאד כי
נבלה עשה בישראל לשכב את-בת-יעקב וכן לא עשה: ח וידבר חמור
אתם לאמר שכם בני חשקה נפשו בבתכם תנו נא אתה לו לאשה:
ט והתחתנו אתנו בנתיכם תתנו-לנו ואת-בנותינו תקחו לכם: י ואתנו
תשבו והארץ תהיה לפניכם שבו וסחרוה והאחזו בה: יא ויאמר שכם
אל-אביה ואל-אחיה אמצא-חן בעיניכם ואשר תאמרו אלי אתו:
יב הרפו עלי מאד מהר ומתן ואתנה כאשר תאמרו אלי ותנו-לי
את-הנער לאשה: יג ויענו בני-יעקב את-שכם ואת-חמור אביו במרמה
וידברו אשר טמא את דינה אחתם: יד ויאמרו אליהם לא נוכל לעשות
הדבר הזה לתת את-אחתנו לאיש אשר-לו ערלה כי-חרפה הוא לנו:
טו אך-בזאת נאות לכם אם תהיו כמונו להמל לכם כל-זכר: טז ונתנו
את-בנותינו לכם ואת-בנותיכם נקח-לנו וישבנו אתכם והיינו לעם אחד:
יז ואם-לא תשמעו אלינו להמול ולקחנו את-בתנו והלקנו: יח וייטבו
דבריהם בעיני חמור ובעיני שכם בן-חמור: יט ולא-אחר הנער לעשות
הדבר כי חפץ בבת-יעקב והוא נכבד מכל בית אביו: כ ויבא חמור ושכם
בנו אל-שער עירם וידברו אל-אנשי עירם לאמר: כא האנשים האלה
שלמים הם אתנו וישבו בארץ ויסחרו אתה והארץ הנה רחבת-ידיים
לפניהם את-בנותם נקח-לנו לנשים ואת-בנותינו נתן להם: כב אך-בזאת
יאתו לנו האנשים לשבת אתנו להיות לעם אחד בהמול לנו כל-זכר
כאשר הם נמלים: כג מקנהם וקנינם וכל-בהמתם הלוא לנו הם אם
נאותה להם וישבו אתנו: כד וישמעו אל-חמור ואל-שכם בנו כל-יצאי
שער עירו וימלו כל-זכר כל-יצאי שער עירו: כה ויהי ביום השלישי
בהיותם כאבים ויקחו שני-בני-יעקב שמעון ולוי אחי דינה איש חרפו
ויבאו על-העיר בטח ויחרגו כל-זכר: כו ואת-חמור ואת-שכם בנו הרגו
לפי-חרב ויקחו את-דינה מבית שכם ויצאו: כז בני יעקב באו
על-החללים ויבא העיר אשר טמאו אחותם: כח את-צאנם ואת-בקרם
ואת-חמריהם ואת-אשר-בעיר ואת-אשר בשדה לקחו:
כט ואת-כל-חילם ואת-כל-טפם ואת-נשיהם שבו ויבאו ואת-כל-אשר
בבית: ל ויאמר יעקב אל-שמעון ואל-לוי עכרתם אתי להבאישני בישב

הָאָרֶץ בְּכַנְעַנִי וּבְפָרָיִם נָאֲנִי מִתִּי מִסָּפֶר וְנֶאֱסָפוּ עָלַי וְהִכּוּנִי וְנִשְׁמַדְתִּי אֲנִי
וּבֵיתִי: לֹא נִיאֲמְרוּ הַכְּזוּנָה יַעֲשֶׂה אֶת-אַחֻזְתָּנוּ:

Now Dinah, the daughter whom Leah had borne to Jacob, went out to visit the daughters of the land. ² Shechem son of Hamor the Hivite, chief of the country, saw her, and took her and lay with her by force. ³ Being strongly drawn to Dinah daughter of Jacob, and in love with the maiden, he spoke to the maiden tenderly. ⁴ So Shechem said to his father Hamor, "Get me this girl as a wife." ⁵ Jacob heard that he had defiled his daughter Dinah; but since his sons were in the field with his cattle, Jacob kept silent until they came home. ⁶ Then Shechem's father Hamor came out to Jacob to speak to him. ⁷ Meanwhile Jacob's sons, having heard the news, came in from the field. The men were distressed and very angry, because he had committed an outrage in Israel by lying with Jacob's daughter -- a thing not to be done. ⁸ And Hamor spoke with them, saying, "My son Shechem longs for your daughter. Please give her to him in marriage. ⁹ Intermarry with us: give your daughters to us, and take our daughters for yourselves: ¹⁰ You will dwell among us, and the land will be open before you; settle, move about, and acquire holdings in it." ¹¹ Then Shechem said to her father and brothers, "Do me this favor, and I will pay whatever you tell me. ¹² Ask of me a bride-price ever so high, as well as gifts, and I will pay what you tell me; only give me the maiden for a wife." ¹³ Jacob's sons answered Shechem and his father Hamor -- speaking with guile because he had defiled their sister Dinah -- ¹⁴ and said to them, "We cannot do this thing, to give our sister to a man who is uncircumcised, for that is a disgrace among us. ¹⁵ Only on this condition will we agree with you; that you will become like us in that every male among you is circumcised. ¹⁶ Then we will give our daughters to you and take your daughters to ourselves; and we will dwell among you and become as one kindred. ¹⁷ But if you will not listen to us and become circumcised, we will take our daughter and go." ¹⁸ Their words pleased Hamor and Hamor's son Shechem. ¹⁹ And the youth lost no time in doing the thing, for he wanted Jacob's daughter. Now he was the most respected in his father's house

²⁰ So Hamor and his son Shechem went to the public place of their town and spoke to their fellow townsmen, saying, ²¹ "These people are our friends; let them settle in the land and move about in it, for the land is large enough for them; we will take their daughters to ourselves as wives and give our daughters to them. ²² But only on this condition will the men agree with us to dwell among us and be as one kindred: that all our males become circumcised as they are circumcised. ²³ Their cattle and substance and all their beasts will be ours, if we only agree to their terms, so that they will settle among us." ²⁴ All who went out of the gate of his town heeded Hamor and his son Shechem, and all males, all those who went out of the gate of his town, were

²⁵ On the third day, when they were in pain, Simeon and Levi, two of Jacob's sons, brothers of Dinah, took each his sword, came upon the city unmolested, and slew all the males. ²⁶ They put Hamor and his son Shechem to the sword, took Dinah out of Shechem's house, and went away. ²⁷ The other sons of Jacob came upon the slain and plundered the town, because their sister had been defiled. ²⁸ They seized their flocks and herds and asses, all that was inside the town and outside; ²⁹ all their wealth, all their children, and their wives, all that was in the houses, they took as captives and booty. ³⁰ Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, "You have brought trouble on me, making me odious circumcised. among the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites and the Perizzites; my men are few in number, so that if they unite against me and attack me, I and my house will be destroyed." ³¹ But they answered, "Should our sister be treated like a whore?"

Looking at Dina in Commentary

Since the days of the composition of the midrashim, traditional interpretation, including the medieval commentators, has taken an almost unanimous stance. If Dinah was raped, she must have played a part in the catastrophe that fell upon her.

Now Dinah, Leah's daughter whom she had borne to Jacob, went out to visit the daughters of the land. Rashi explains: "Why does scripture mention that Dinah was Leah's daughter and not Jacob's daughter? She was so called because of her going out; she was Leah's daughter, who also a *yatzanit* [out-going woman], for it says *and Leah went out to meet him* (Bereishit 30: 16).

Dinah's going out *to visit the daughters of the land* was understood by the authors of the midrash, and consequently by Rashi, as testifying to Dinah's questionable character. She was the sinner, therefore she became the victim.

(Based on Rashi)

Actually, Dinah was extremely modest. When she went out she was completely covered, so that even her face was concealed. But one of her arms accidentally became uncovered, and Shechem was able to get an idea of her beauty.

Shechem raped Dinah, taking her by force.

Shechem had heard about Dinah's beauty, and had devised a strategy to bring her away from her father's house. He hired a number of dancing girls to perform in the street and when Dinah came out to watch them, he kidnapped her and brought her to his palace.

(From Me'am Loez)

"Two alternative interpretations seem to dominate the exegetical discussion of the Dinah story in Genesis 34.

The first interpretation suggests that Shechem did not rape Dinah and that the actions of Simeon and Levi were an expression of male dominance and control over women. While the text indicated that he had intercourse with the virgin, this interpretation, if it is believed, does not suggest violent sexual action. According to this interpretation Dinah was out looking for a man and was taken by Shechem. While Shechem's intercourse was not acceptable by Jewish standards, he was following the cultural standards of his own people. In 34:3 Shechem fell in love with Dinah and was willing to marry her. The intentions of Hamor and Shechem were about honor, love, economic advancement, cooperation, and trade. The deceit, slaughter, and treachery by Simeon and Levi robbed Dinah of a chance to marry her love and find security in a loving relationship. The cruelty of the sons of Jacob was an injustice to Dinah, her husband Shechem, as well as the city of Shechem. Judgment upon the irrationality of the sons of Jacob was a warning, given later by Jacob, concerning their abuse of power that dominated Israel. In Genesis 49:5-7, Jacob has the last word concerning their actions and refuses to accept any part of their vengeance....

The second interpretation suggests that Shechem raped Dinah and that Shechem and Hamor were men who manipulated and tried to abuse power on a helpless girl and her clan. Jacob's failure to respond was a weakness and unwillingness to vindicate his daughter. The sons of Jacob acted deceitfully because they were a small powerless group.

(From "The Silence in Dinah's Cry" by Ron Clark found in the European Electronic Journal for Feminist

"But Hamor spoke with them (Jacob and his sons) saying, 'The soul of my son Shechem longs for your daughter; please give her to him in marriage. Make marriages with us; give your daughters to us, and take our daughters for yourselves. You shall dwell with us; and the land shall be open to you; dwell and trade in it; and get property in it.' (Genesis 34: 8-10):

Rabbi Simeon bar Lakish said, 'There are three expressions of love that God used to express God affections for Israel: cleaving, loving, delighting in (and these expressions occur in three distinct verses):

Cleaving: 'But you who cleave to Adonai your God' (Deut. 4:4)

Loving: 'God did not set God's love upon you...because you were more in number than any people.' (Deut 7:7)

Delighting in: 'And all nations shall call you happy for you are a delightful land.' (Mal 3:12)

But in the passages at hand, concerning a wicked person, we are able in a single verse to derive all of them:

Cleaving: 'And his soul cleaved.' (Gen 34:4)

Loving: 'The soul of my son Shechel loves for your daughter.' (Gene 34:8)

Delighting in: 'Because he had delight in Jacob's daughter.' (Gen 34:19)

Rabbi Abba bar Elishib add another two more, 'Love and speech.'

Love: 'I have loved you.' (Mal 1:2)

Speech: 'Speak to the heart of Jerusalem.' (Is. 40:12)

But in the passage at hand, concerning a wicked person, we derive all of them:

Love: 'And he loved the girl.' (Gen 34:3)

Speech: 'And he spoke to the heart of the girl.' Gen 34:3)

(Based on Genesis Rabbah)

Now Dinah went out

There are those who explained, "like mother, like daughter," and others said "like father, like daughter."

Like her mother, for it is said *and Leah went out to meet him*; just as one went to meet her husband in order to fulfill a mitzvah, so this one went to find a husband.

Like her father, for it is said *and Jacob went out*; just as the one went because of his brother, so this one went out because of her brothers, to find herself a place.

(Midrash written by Rivkah Lubitz)

("Sippur Dinah: Scripture, the Sages, and Ourselves," in Avi Sagi and Nahum Illan, editors, *Tarbut Yehudit B'ein Hase'ara - Sefer Hayovel Le'Yoskeh Ahituv*, pp. 742-753)

And he lay with her by force yet it does not say *and Dinah cried out*.

Is it even imaginable that Dina did not cry out? Rather, she became like a mute. The pain and humiliation silenced her.

Rivkah Lubitz gives Dinah back her scream, she sounds the voice that the Torah had hidden.

As is written in the end of her midrash, "Dinah's silence resonates from one end of the world to the other, it is the cry that is in the heart."

(Midrash written by Rivkah Lubitz)

("Sippur Dinah: Scripture, the Sages, and Ourselves," in Avi Sagi and Nahum Illan, editors, *Tarbut Yehudit B'ein Hase'ara - Sefer Hayovel Le'Yoskeh Ahituv*, pp. 742-753)

"I am Serah's Aunt, and Rachel was My Aunt" by Mira Magen

"...They called me Dinah, daughter of Jacob, when I was a girl like Serah.

...When Shechem arrived and did what he did, I had no goat's wool to bite, and the shout that I had choaked escaped and was great and strong.

'Don't cry, girl,' said Shechem. 'I love you, I will wed you, no matter how much bride-price they demand, I will marry you.'

I pray so much that the only cry that I cried out will return to me, and I will cry it out once more...

Now that Simeon and Levi have reached the end of their days, I shall demand of them my name. They should stand in the center of town, and frighten the youths, announcing before family and community; "She shall not be called *Shemisha*, but rather Dinah, daughter of Jacob.'

...Simeon takes a break from his reaping and asks me, 'Why today?'

'Because the time has come to return the name that was stolen from me.'

...'If you hadn't gone out to visit the daughters of the land, that heathen wouldn't have seen you, he wouldn't have desired you and done to you what he did.'

...'Simeon, you were a youth and have grown old, and gained nothing of wisdom...I was an only daughter and you were twelve sons. There was no one to understand me. Who appointed you to chastise me? After all, if you were an only son with twelve sisters, you also would have gone out to find friends among the sons of the land.'

'But you were a girl. Your honor resided inside the home.'

'My honor? My honor was torn from me with my virginity, and repaid in love...I ask nothing of you but my name...'

...'Once you were Dinah, until you were used by a heathen, and you became *Shemisha*.'

...'That man loved me and paid you for me with his foreskin, and you came upon him treacherously and plundered his life.'

...'He made you into a whore and you grieve for him?' Levi asks..

'But that man loved me, and you and your brother killed him because his passion preceded his love'...

Levi rose up from the weeds, wiping the sweat from his face with his forearm....He said, 'Just as the sun does not spin around at noon to return to its origin in the east, deeds also may not be undone. Go home, woman!'

...I leave, throat full of cries yet choked.

...My feet clear themselves a passage among the piles of breathing wool, they walk to the place of screaming....I walk to them to raise my voice among the noise of the multitudes, which will blot out the cry that I shall to return to myself."

In the Red Tent, Anita Diamant also gives Dinah her voice back. In this book, Shechem express regret at having raped Dinah, and Dinah gradually falls in love with Shechem. Diamant portrays Simeon and Levi as bullies whose actions are motivated by their own aggression. Dinah is angry with her father, and blames her situation on him. She leaves behind her family, and her unhappy memories running away to Egypt.

Lessons 7-8: Power in Leadership
(This lesson is intended to take place over 2 sessions.)

Objectives:

Students will be able to identify Deborah and Miriam.
Students will be able to identify the type of power they generally use.
Students will be able to describe how the different types of power seen in Biblical texts may influence their lives.

Guided Timeline:

10 minutes	Activity 1: Set Induction
45 minutes	Activity 2: Text Study
35 minutes	Activity 3: Leadership Assessment
20 minutes	Activity 4: Finding Myself on the Chart
10 minutes	Activity 5: Conclusion

Activity 1: Set Induction

Journaling—looking back at the definition of power from the first lesson, how has your understanding of power changed?

Activity 2: Text Study: Role Play

Divide the class in half, assigning half the class to study Deborah and the other half to study Miriam. Give each group the biblical text and commentaries about the woman they are studying.

Have each group read their texts and discuss—

- Who was this woman?
- What did she do?
- What kind of power did she have? How did she use it?
- How did she lead the people?

Then, have each of the groups put together a presentation, incorporating all of the texts the studied, as well as their own opinions.

Come back together as a class to share their role plays.

Then, as a class, fill in the chart for Miriam and Deborah.

Activity 3: Leadership Assessment: How are you a Leader?

Miriam and Deborah were both leaders of the Israelite community.

- Who else can you think of who are leaders?
- What qualities do they have that make them leaders?
- Are there other qualities that make a leader?
- What makes you a leader?

Have students take the leadership assessment quiz.

Once they have scored themselves, have them find the category they fall into and the list strengths and weaknesses for that category.

****Remind students that this is not an exact science, and this quiz may not accurately define them, nor should they let it define who they are. It is just a way to allow them to focus on what they know to be their strengths and weaknesses and for us to open up a conversation about what qualities make a leader.**

Discuss—

- What are you surprised by on this quiz?
- What did you find that you expected?
- What are some characteristics on the list that you might work on?
- In your lives, when do you see leaders who do positive things?
- When might a leader do something negative?
- How might you be a leader?
- Why might it be especially important for you, at your age, to be a leader?
- Why might it be scary to be a leader amongst your friends?

Activity 4: Finding Myself on the Chart

Now that students have filled in the chart completely, we will discuss where they would place themselves on it.

- What type of power do you use the most?
- When might you want to use another type?
- What are the benefits and drawbacks to using each type in certain situations you experience?
- What have you learned from the Biblical women that you would like to incorporate into your lives?
- How has what you have learned impact how you might use power differently in the future?

Activity 5: Conclusion

Transition to the next unit—both of these women were leaders among the Israelites, but what else did they have in common?

Both had strong connections to God.

Does their connection to God have anything to do with their leadership?

Materials:

Journals

Pens

Exodus 15:20-21 text

Judges 4 text

Deborah commentaries

Miriam commentaries

Leadership assessment quiz and scoring

Miriam: Exodus 15:20-21

כ ותקח מרים הנביאה אחות אהרן
את התוף בקדה ותצאן כל הנשים
אחריה בתפים ובמחלות: כא ותען
להם מרים שירו ליהוה כי גאה גאה
סוס ורכבו רמה בים:

Then Miriam the prophetess, Aaron's sister, took a timbrel in her hand, and all the women went out after her in dance with timbrels. ²¹
And Miriam chanted for them: Sing to the LORD, for He has triumphed gloriously; Horse and driver He has hurled into the sea.

Looking at Miriam in Commentary

Ellen Frankel in The Five Book of Miriam:

“Miriam the Prophet declares: Only a single verse of my Song of the Sea is recorded in the Torah, the faint echo of my brother’s song... The song that my brother Moses sings swells the narrative as waves fill the sea, a magnificent poem charged with dramatic imagery and power. Still, my song, though so much briefer, today stirs the hearts of Jewish women, inspiring them to create new songs, poems, stories, meditations, interpretive commentaries and prayers.

The Sages in Our Own Time teach: This biblical episode portrays Miriam as a prophet and leader of her people, especially the women. Even though Moses’ triumphant Song of the Sea is eighteen verses long, while Miriam’s is only one verse (and even that single verse is a direct quote from her brother’s song), this imbalance reflects later editing, not Miriam’s second-class status in her own time. In fact, some of us believe that Miriam’s song was censored or long, due to a later generation’s uneasiness with female leadership.

Miriam comments: Indeed, my very presence in the Torah as a recognized leader demonstrates that strong women have always played a vital role among our people.” (page 110)

Alice Ogden Bellis in Helpmates, Harlots and Heroes:

“It can be said that the primary characteristic of the biblical portrait of Miriam is that she was a leader in the wilderness. In addition, it can be said that, although the texts do not yield a single role designation of her leadership position, they do firmly reflect traditions which regarded Miriam as a cult official and as a mediator of God’s word...Miriam emerges from the bits and pieces as a multifaceted character: mediator, cultic figure, prophet, musician, beloved leader, strong, even threatening personality.” (pages 104, 106)

Etz Hayim Torah Commentary:

“Where did Miriam and the other women obtain timbrels in the wilderness? These righteous women were so confident that God would work miracles for them that they had brought timbrels along from Egypt, anticipating that God would give them cause to celebrate.” (page 413)

Rashi:

Miriam is called Aaron’s sister because she was a prophet even before Moses’ birth.

Deborah: Judges 4:4-10

ד ודבורה אשה
ביאה אשת לפידות היא שפטה את ישראל בעת ההיא: ה והיא יושבת
תחת תמר דבורה בין הרמה ובין בית אל בחר אפרים ויעלו אליה בני
ישראל למשפט: ו ותשלח ותקרא לברק בן אבינעם מקדש נפתלי
ותאמר אליו הלא צנה | יהנה אלהי ישראל לך ומשכת בחר תבור
ולקחת עמך עשרת אלפים איש מבני נפתלי ומבני זבולון: ז ומשכתי
אליך אל נחל קישון את סיסרא שר צבא לבין ואת רכבו ואת המונו
תתיחו בידך: ח ויאמר אליה ברק אם תלכי עמי והלכתי ואם לא תלכי
עמי לא אלך: ט ותאמר הלא אלך עמך אפס כי לא תהיה תפארתך
על הדרך אשר אתה הולך כי ביד אשה ימכר יהנה את סיסרא ותקם
בורה ותלך עם ברק קדשה: י ויצעק ברק את זבולו ואת נפתלי קדשה
ויעל ברגליו עשרת אלפי איש ותעל עמו דבורה:

Deborah, wife of Lappidoth, was a prophetess; she led Israel at that time. ⁵ She used to sit under the Palm of Deborah, between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim, and the Israelites would come to her for decisions. ⁶ She summoned Barak son of Abinoam, of Kedesh in Naphtali, and said to him, "The LORD, the God of Israel, has commanded: Go, march up to Mount Tabor, and take with you ten thousand men of Naphtali and Zebulun. ⁷ And I will draw Sisera, Jabin's army commander, with his chariots and his troops, toward you up to the Wadi Kishon; and I will deliver him into your hands." ⁸ But Barak said to her, "If you will go with me, I will go; if not, I will not go." ⁹ "Very well, I will go with you," she answered. "However, there will be no glory for you in the course you are taking, for then the LORD will deliver Sisera into the hands of a woman." So Deborah went with Barak to Kedesh. ¹⁰ Barak then mustered Zebulun and Naphtali at Kedesh; ten thousand men marched up after him; and Deborah also went up with him.

Looking at Deborah in Commentary

Daniel Block in "Why Deborah's Different":

"When the Israelites cried out, and sought out Deborah for her judgment, they were asking her not to solve their legal disputes but to give them the divine answer to their cries. She functioned as a representative of Yahweh. She was a prophetess... They came to her to 'cry out' to Yahweh and to hear 'the judgment,' that is Yahweh's answer to the national crisis created by the Canaanite oppression." (p. 50)

Babylonian Talmud, Tractate Megillah 14a:

The Talmud declares that there have been 7 female prophetesses: "Our rabbis taught: 'Forty-eight prophets and seven prophetesses prophesied to Israel... Seven prophetesses. Who were these?—Sarah, Miriam, Deborah, Hannah, Abigail, Huldah and Esther.'" (Megillah 14a) The female prophetesses are listed by name, the male ones are not.

Book of Legends:

"Now Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lappidoth, she judged Israel at that time" (Judg. 4:4). What was the special character of Deborah that qualified her to prophesy about Israel and to judge them? Was not Phinehas son of Eleazar still alive at that time? In the school of Elijah it was taught: I call heaven and earth to witness that whether it be a heathen or a Jew, a man or a woman, a manservant or a maidservant, the holy spirit will suffuse any one of them in keeping with the deeds he or she performs.

"Deborah, a prophetess . . . judged Israel" (Judg. 4:4). With regard to this verse, R. Berekhiah had four sayings: Woe unto the living who need help from the dead; woe unto the strong who need help from the weak; woe unto the seeing who need help from the blind; woe unto the generation that has to be led by a woman.

Tosafot, Gittini 88b:

"Although a woman may not be a judge, nevertheless Deborah was accepted, under Divine instruction (which is why it says she judged only "at that time.") Or perhaps, she did not actually judge, but merely publicized the laws."

Yalkut Shimoni, Mikraot Gidolot:

"Deborah's husband was ignorant, therefore she made wicks for him to bring to the Sanctuary and thereby merit him the Hereafter. She made thick wicks, like torches, to emit a great deal of light. The Almighty then said that because she intended to increase His light, He would cause her light to shine of Yisrael."

Leadership Assessment Test

(Adapted from The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens)¹⁰

Going across each row one-at-a-time, rate each column in that row 1-4. 1 being the least like you and 4 being the most like you.

Example:

Imaginative	2	Investigative	4	Realistic	1	Analytical	3
-------------	---	---------------	---	-----------	---	------------	---

Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4
Imaginative	Investigative	Realistic	Analytical
Adaptable	Inquisitive	Organized	Critical
Relating	Creating	Getting to Point	Debating
Personal	Adventurous	Practical	Academic
Flexible	Inventive	Precise	Systematic
Sharing	Independent	Orderly	Sensible
Cooperative	Competitive	Perfectionist	Logical
Sensitive	Risk-Taking	Hard-working	Intellectual
People-Person	Problem Solver	Planner	Reader
Associate	Originate	Memorize	Think Through
Spontaneous	Changer	Wants Direction	Judger
Communicating	Discovering	Cautious	Reasoning
Caring	Challenging	Practicing	Examining
Feeling	Experimenting	Doing	Thinking

Now add up your totals (don't include the example, of course) for each column and place the total in the blanks below.

<u>Column 1</u>	<u>Column 2</u>	<u>Column 3</u>	<u>Column 4</u>
Grapes ____	Oranges ____	Bananas ____	Melons ____

- If your highest score was in column 1, consider yourself a grape.
- If your highest score was in column 2, consider yourself an orange.
- If your highest score was in column 3, consider yourself a banana.
- If your highest score was in column 4, consider yourself a melon.

Now find your fruit on the following pages and review what this may mean to you.

¹⁰ This Leadership Assessment Test was originally written for the Pre-Madrichim class at Temple Beth Shalom, in Santa Ana, CA.

BANANAS

Natural abilities include:

- Planning
- Fact-finding
- Organizing
- Following directions

Bananas learn best when they:

- Have an orderly environment
- Have specific outcomes
- Can trust others to do their part
- Have predictable situations

Bananas may have trouble:

- Understanding feelings
- Dealing with opposition
- Answering "what if" questions

To expand their style, Bananas need to .

- Express their own feelings more
- Get explanations of others' views
- Be less rigid

APPLES

Natural abilities include:

- Debating points of view
- Finding solutions
- Analyzing ideas
- Determining value of importance

Apples learn best when they:

- Have access to resources
- Can work independently
- Are respected for intellectual ability
- Follow traditional methods

Apples may have trouble:

- Working in groups
- Being criticized
- Convincing others diplomatically

To expand their style, Apples need to:

- Accept imperfection
- Consider all alternatives
- Consider others' feelings

GRAPES

Natural abilities include:

- Being Reflective
- Being Sensitive
- Being Creative
- Being Flexible
- Preference for working in groups

Grapes learn best when they:

- Can work and share with others
- Balance work with play
- Can communicate
- Are noncompetitive

Grapes may have trouble:

- Giving exact answers
- Focusing on one thing at a time
- Organizing

To expand their style, Grapes need to:

- Pay more attention to details
- Not rush into things
- Be less emotional when making decisions

ORANGES

Natural abilities include:

- Experimenting
- Being independent
- Being Curious
- Creating different approaches
- Creating change

Oranges learn best when they:

- Can use trial and error
- Produce real products
- Can complete
- Are self-directed

Oranges may have trouble:

- Meeting time limits
- Following a lecture
- Having few options or choices

To expand their style, Oranges need to:

- Delegate responsibility
- Be more accepting of others' ideas
- Learn to priorities

UNIT 4: CONNECTING WITH GOD

Goals for Unit:

- To engage students in Biblical text and discussions about those texts.
- To engage students in discussions about God.
- To help students understand what their relationship with God is and what they would like it to be.
- To help students understand different ways of connecting to God.
- To engage students in discussions about the role God plays in their identity as Jewish women.

Understandings for Unit:

The varying interpretations of and connections to God that Jewish thinkers and Biblical women have had over the course of history can inform our understanding as we create our own vision of God.

Our personal relationship with and connections to God may be strengthened through study and varying of experiences including prayer, artwork, writing, encounters in nature and meditation.

Essential Questions for Unit:

- How can we connect with God?
- What would we like our relationship with God to look like?
- How does our relationship with God impact our Jewish identities?

Objectives for Unit:

- Students will be able to describe various thinkers interpretations of God.
- Students will be able to define their own interpretation of God.
- Students will be able to identify different ways of connecting with God in Biblical texts.
- Students will be able to explain how they might connect with God.

Assessment:

Journaling

Group Discussion
Categorizing and Comparing Visions of God
Learning Station Activities—Art Project, Personal Timeline
Sharing Projects
Jig Saw-Teaching each other

Memorable Moment

Planning and Participating in a Class Prayer Service

Notes to Teacher:

This unit introduces students to various ways of connecting with God. The unit begins by familiarizing students with many different visions of God and asking them to compare these visions to their own vision of God. We will then look at a few Biblical women who had interactions with God and examine how they connected with God.

During each class there will be time for students to test out different ways of connecting with God. It is important to note that I do not believe all students will actually interact with God in this forced setting. Rather, I am providing these different models as a way of teaching students different methods for the future. They should recognize that prayer in a classroom may not be incredibly spiritual, but that perhaps at some other point in their life prayer may be a mode for developing a deeper relationship with God. The same may be true for meditation, or text study, or even artwork.

Recently, there was an article on the Union for Reform Judaism National Teacher's Newsletter regarding the issue of teaching about God. In it Sherry Blumberg, a Jewish educator and co-author of *Teaching Spirituality* was quoted saying, "As an educator, I believe that I must not restrict the definition of religious experience so as to limit the vast range of possibilities that occur when people try to make sense of the world and of God. Just as learning styles are different for each individual, religious experience is also different for each, and everyone experiences God differently because every person is unique."

The article continued, "Just as using different modalities like music, movement and art can help different students learn material, engaging in creative activities is one way of opening up our students to experiencing a sense of something bigger than themselves. When students participate in creative activities, the teacher can put it into a spiritual context, recalling God as the Creator and explaining that when we use our creative powers, we demonstrate that we are created in the image of God. Mordecai Kaplan, ideological founder of Reconstructionism was a champion of creating dynamic Jewish art and developing Jewish artists as one of the highest expressions of Godliness in the world. Incorporating creative elements like drama, music and

art into our fixed prayer (*keva*) and observance can spark moments of real intention, insight and meaning.”¹¹

As a teacher, you must also be aware that many adolescents (and people of every age) struggle with the concept of God, or may not believe in God. Please be sensitive to these students and work with them on how to adapt the material so that they can still participate comfortably. I believe they can still engage in the text study and discussions and it may be interesting to hear their perspectives. They can be challenged along with the rest of us, by sharing their opinions and thinking about other students’ viewpoints.

Scattered throughout the unit are questions about the role of God in one’s Jewish identity, especially as a Jewish woman. For a class of young Jewish women, and potential Jewish leaders, I believe this is a particularly important question to think about.

¹¹ “Keva and Kavannah.” *V’shinantam*: The Union for Reform Judaism National Teacher’s Newsletter, No IV, 5764. www.urj.org.

Unit 4: Connecting with God Resources

Texts:

Jeremiah ch. 1 text
Ezekiel ch. 1 and 2 text
2 Kings 22:14-20 text
2 Chronicles 34:22-33 text
Genesis 16 text
Genesis 21:1-21 text
Hagar commentaries/midrashim
1 Samuel 1:1-2:10 text
“Footprints in the Sand”

Handouts:

Note cards with visions about God

Lesson 1: What/Who is God?

Objectives:

Students will be able to explain how different Jewish thinkers envisioned God.
Students will be able to describe their own current vision of God.

Guided Timeline:

15 minutes	Activity 1: Set Induction
25 minutes	Activity 2: Sorting and Discussing
15 minutes	Activity 4: What do you Believe?
5 minutes	Activity 5: Wrap Up

Activity 1: Set Induction

Journaling—

- What is your vision of God?
- Has this vision changed over the course of your life?
- How do you interact with God?
- How does God interact with you?
- Do you ever have doubts about God?
- When do you struggle with God?

With a partner, have students take a couple of minutes to share some of their reflections on these questions.

*****Note to Teacher:** We will come back to some of these questions later in the lesson, and the unit, therefore it is not crucial that students share their answers at this point in the lesson. Having them write down their thoughts and beliefs at the start of the unit will be a helpful way for them to begin thinking about God, and for them to remember what they believed before being influenced by other thinkers, texts and classmates.

Activity 2: Sorting Visions of God

On note cards are excerpts taken from writings of Jewish philosophers and Jewish writings about what/who God is. Students are asked (with partners, or in small groups) to sort these note cards into categories and then to label each group of note cards. When sorting the note cards they should consider—

- What is similar about these visions of God?
- What is different?
- How would this category be labeled?

After students have had an opportunity to sort the cards, come back together as a class to share how they categorized and labeled the cards. Give students the chance to share some of their opinions about these visions of God.

Explain to students that many of the views written on the note cards come from famous Jewish philosophers. There is not one way to understand God; in Judaism we accept so many different views of God, how to connect to God and how to have a relationship with God.

Activity 3: What do you Believe?

After the class has discussed the opinions and views written on the note cards, it is time for them to express their own beliefs. It is important that students understand that their opinions can continually change, throughout this unit and throughout their lives. The answers they give now are not answers they are stuck with forever. Discuss—

- Which of the views we read resonate with you? Why?
- Which do not resonate with you? Why?
- How do the visions of God written on the note cards compare to your original vision that you wrote in your journal?

Activity 5: Wrap Up

Over the next several lessons, we will be continuing to discuss different visions of God and different ways of connecting of with God—found through the experiences of women in the Bible. As a way of preparing for the next several classes, it will be helpful to think of times in your life when you might have experienced God, or felt a connection to God. If you never have felt that, think of a time when you might have wanted to experience God in your life, why does that time of your life stand out and why might God have been a helpful presence?

Materials:

Journals

Pen

Note cards with views about God

Visions of God

God made the moon to mark the seasons;
The sun knows when to set.
You bring on the darkness and it is night...
(Psalms 104:19-20)

God makes clouds rise from the end of the earth;
God makes lightening for the rain;
God releases the wind from God's vaults.
(Psalms 135:7)

*Now, if you obey Adonai your God, to observe faithfully all God's
commandments...Adonai your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth.*
(Deuteronomy 28:1)

See, a time is coming—declares Adonai—when I will make a new covenant with the House
of Israel and the House of Judah...I will put My Teaching into their inmost being and inscribe
it upon their hearts. Then I will be their God, and they shall be My people.
(Jeremiah 31:31, 33)

*As a father has compassion for his children, so Adonai has compassion for those who revere
Adonai.*

(Psalm 103:13)

Adonai is near to all who call to Adonai, to all who call with sincerity.
(Psalm 145:18)

Would you discover the mystery of God?
Would you discover the limit of the Almighty?
(Job 11:7)

But as the heavens are high above the earth,
So are My ways high above your ways....
(Isaiah 55:9)

An earthly king...has dukes and viceroys, who share with him in the burden of rule, and also have a share in the honor with which he is honored, but God is not so; God has no duke or governor and no lieutenant. No other with God does God's work, but God does it alone. No other bears the burden with God, but God bears it alone. Therefore, God alone is to be praised.

(Midrash on Psalm 149:1)

When I am judging created things, I am called "God," and when I am waging war against the wicked, I am called "Lord of Hosts." When I suspend judgment for a man's sins, I am called El Shaddai (Almighty God), and when I am merciful toward My world, I am called "Adonai," for "Adonai" refers to the Attribute of Mercy, as it is said (Exodus 34:6) "Adonai, Adonai, God, merciful and gracious."

(Sh'mot Rabbah, Sh'mot 3:6)

Scripture would not let the nations of the world have an excuse for saying that there are two powers but declares: "I am the Lord your God. I am the One who was in Egypt and I am the One who was at the sea. I am the One who was at Sinai. I am the One who was in the past and I am the One who will be in the future."

(M'chilta, Bachadoesh 4)

God said to Israel: You have made Me the only object of your love in the world...so I shall make you the only object of My love in the world.

(BT Brachot 6a)

We find that the Holy One, blessed be God, blesses bridegrooms, adorns brides, visits the sick, buries the dead, and recites the blessing for mourners.

(B'reishit Rabbah, B'reishit 8:13)

As God clothed the naked...visited the sick...comforted the mourners, buried the dead...so should you.

(BT Sotah 14a)

God is alone: a Unity, in the sense that God's nature is single, not composite, whereas each one of us and of all other created beings is made up of many things... But God is not a composite being, consisting of many parts...

(Philo, "Allegories of Sacred Law," 2:i)

God's essence as it really is, the human mind does not understand and is incapable of grasping or investigating.

(Maimonides, Mishneh Torah, Knowledge, Basic Principles, 1:9)

God is the cause of all existence. In God all else subsists and from God derives... God is sufficient to himself... God is absolutely eternal.

(Maimonides, Commentary to the Mishnah, Chelek: Sanhedrin, Ch. 10)

The Rabbi of Kotzk once asked: "Where is the dwelling place of God?" His learned students laughed. "What a thing to ask! Isn't the whole world full of God's glory?"

The rabbi answered his own question: "God dwells wherever a person lets God in!"

God is one and alone; there are no other gods besides the one and only God.

God does not possess a body.

God is a spiritual Being who expresses will, love, and concern for the created world.

God is all-powerful; God is capable of upsetting the laws of nature; God can create miracles.

God is all-good.

God is all-knowing. God "knows" what happened in the past and what will happen in the future.

God "knows" us, "hears" our prayers, and "answers" them, though we may not always realize how or when.

We cannot know God completely. At the essence of God—what God is in God's-self—we can only guess.

(Milton Steinberg, Basic Judaism, pp. 39-40)

God is the Power that makes for salvation.

(Mordecai Kaplan, Meaning of God, p. 40)

God is the Power that impels man to become fully human.

(Mordecai Kaplan)

God is the sum of everything in the world that renders life significant and worthwhile—or holy.

(Mordecai Kaplan)

It matters very little how we conceive God, as long as we so believe in God that belief in God makes a tremendous difference in our lives.

(Mordecai Kaplan, Questions Jews Ask, p. 87)

A God who makes a difference in one's personal life should be designated as a personal God.

(Mordecai Kaplan, Questions Jews Ask, p. 104)

God is the image of man's higher self, a symbol of what man potentially is or ought to become.

(Erich Fromm, Psychoanalysis and Religion, p. 49)

Long before we attain any knowledge about God's essence, we possess an intuition of a divine presence.

(Abraham Joshua Heschel, Man is Not Alone, p. 67)

God is not the object of discovery, but the subject of revelation.

(Abraham Joshua Heschel, Man is Not Alone, p. 129)

We cannot make God visible to us, but we can make ourselves visible to God.

(Abraham Joshua Heschel)

The relation with man is the real simile of the relation with God; in it true address receives true response. It is by genuinely relations to others, that we relate to God.

(Martin Buber, *I and Thou*)

God is not in me, nor in you,
But between us.

God is not in me or mine, nor you or yours
But ours.

God is known not alone, but in relationship.
Not as separate lonely power, but through kinship, our friendship,
Through our healing and binding and raising up of each other.

(Harold Schulweis, "Between," from *Passages in Poetry*)

The critical question for predicate theology is not "Do you believe that God is merciful, caring and peace-making?" but "Do you believe that doing mercy, caring, making peace are godly?"

(Harold Schulweis, *Evil and the Morality of God* p. 122)

God is the creative, spiritual Seed of the universe—the Energy, the Power, the Force, the Direction, the Trust—out of which the universe has expanded, by which the universe is sustained, in which the universe and mind find their meaning.

(Ronald Gittelsohn, "A Naturalist View," p. 46)

God is our sense of self, our innermost essence, encountered throughout all creation. Our selves are made of God's self. But this does not mean that the world is our creation or that we are God. It does mean that this awareness, this sense of uniqueness we feel cannot possibly have come just from ourselves.

(Lawrence Kushner, *Eyes Remade for Wonder*, pp.151-152)

Perhaps the greatest step toward a mature understanding of God is the realization that God doesn't "do" things the way a person does them. God doesn't "cause" things to happen in the world, except in a special sense of the word, different from the way we use it about ourselves when we speak of our "causing things to happen" or our "making" things. It would be very pleasant to believe in a God who really did make things happen by the same rational and physical processes that we employ, a God who punished us for what we did wrong and protected us from harm if we deserved protection. But there is so much evidence from real experience contradicting this kind of belief that its proponent would have to spend all his time defending and apologizing for it.

(Harold Kushner)

God is something like a Force, a Power, a Process, a quality of relationship. God is the name we attach to the fact that we find certain things possible and meaningful in the world and in our lives and the fact that we find ourselves stirred to move in the direction of realizing these possibilities. We call God the force behind our growing and learning, our curiosity to discover and our impulse to share and to help.

(Harold Kushner)

The God I believe in does not send us the problem; God gives us the strength to cope with the problem.

(Harold Kushner)

In the *mishkan*, which means "dwelling place," the Israelites could experience the dwelling of God in their midst, but they had to build it, using their possessions, their creativity, their skills, their sweat—all so that they could experience the presence of God. I believe we are enjoined to do no less in our days—to turn all our experiences, all our creativity, all our possessions, all our encounters with nature into an awareness of God's presence—and an awareness of how God dwells in our midst.

(Richard Levy)

Lesson 2: A Call from God

Objectives:

- Students will be able to define what a prophet is.
- Students will be able to identify Huldah.
- Students will be able to describe how Huldah connected with God.

Guided Timeline:

10 minutes	Activity 1: Set Induction
5 minutes	Activity 2: Brief Review
10 minutes	Activity 3: What is a Prophet?
20 minutes	Activity 4: Text Study
15 minutes	Activity 5: Personal Connection--Meditation
5 minutes	Activity 6: Conclusion

Activity 1: Set Induction

Have students write on a piece of paper times in their lives when they have experienced God.

- Where did this occur?
- What happened?
- If you have never experienced God, when might be a time (in the future) that you would like to experience God? Have you ever had a time in your life (in the past) when you wished God had been more present?

Then, have them turn to the person sitting next to them and share their experiences.

Activity 2: Brief Review

Discuss—

- What are some of the different ways of understanding God that we talked about last class?

The Jewish thinkers we learned about last class had different ways of understanding what or who God is and therefore had different ways of connecting with God. Similarly, the women in the Bible had different ways of connecting with or experiencing God. Over the next few lessons, we will look at how a few different women experienced God and try to learn from them about the many different ways of connecting with God and how we might strengthen our relationship with God.

Activity 3: What is a prophet?

Many people today think of a prophet as any person who sees the future. That was certainly a piece of it, but a prophet had many more gifts than the ability to see the future. A prophet was a spokesperson for God and a person chosen by God for this task. The prophet was required to speak to the people on God's behalf, often teaching the people of Israel. Prophets were role models of holiness, scholarship and closeness to God. They set the standards for the entire community.

The Hebrew word for a prophet, navi (Nun-Bet-Yod-Alef) comes from the term niv sefatayim meaning "fruit of the lips," which emphasizes the prophet's role as a speaker. The Bible identifies 55 prophets of Israel, and the Talmud tells us that there were seven of them who were women (Sarah, Miriam, Deborah, Hannah, Huldah, Abigail, Esther)

We have already learned a little bit about Esther, Deborah and Miriam in other contexts and today we will learn more about Huldah.

Before learning more about Huldah, we will look at who a couple of the other prophets were and how they interacted with God.

As a class, read together Jeremiah chapter 1, Ezekiel chapters 1 and 2. The purpose of reading these texts is to have an understanding of how other prophets interacted and connected with God, so that we might have a basis of comparison and understanding when we read the Huldah text.

Discuss—

- How did these prophets interact with God?
- How did God interact with each of these prophets?
- What was similar in their encounters?
- What was different?
- What can we learn from these two prophets about how to connect to God?

Activity 4: Huldah Who?--Text Study

Have students read these 2 texts that tell the story of Huldah: 2 Kings 22:14-20; 2 Chronicles 34:22-33. Either as a class or with partners discuss—

- What is happening in these two texts?
- What is similar in these texts?
- What is different?
- How does Huldah interact with/connect with God?
- How does God interact with Huldah?
- How is this like or unlike how God interacted with Jeremiah and Ezekiel?
- Which of the note card descriptions of God (from last class) fit best with this description and interaction?
- Is it important to have a relationship with God, as a Jewish woman? Why or why not?

Activity 5: Meditation—A Personal Connection with God

Remind students of some of the ways and places they experienced God. Just like us, the women in the Bible did not all experience God in the same way nor in the same place. During each of our classes, we will experiment with different ways that one might connect to God. Do not expect that every student, or even that most students will experience God in this forced moment, but regard it as teaching moment. Students should remember how this feels and maybe they will use it again someday in a less controlled setting.

Lead students through a guided meditation: Ask them to find a comfortable place to sit and close their eyes; clear their minds of any stresses, or thoughts about the day, picture a blank screen; relax their bodies from the tops of their heads all the way down to their toes; continue this type of relaxation exercise for a couple of minutes.

Then ask students to picture a time in their lives when they were influential, either in a small way or in a big way. How did they make a difference? What did they do? What were their actions? What were their thoughts? Who helped them to make this difference?

After asking these types of questions, and guiding students through their experiences, slowly bring them back, asking them to first find the blank screen, then to slowly open their eyes, and come back to the classroom.

Activity 6: Conclusion

Debrief the meditation exercise.

- What felt comfortable?
- What felt uncomfortable?
- How might you use this again?
- How might you connect to God using meditation?

Materials:

Jeremiah ch. 1 text
Ezekiel ch. 1 and 2 text
2 Kings 22:14-20 text
2 Chronicles 34:22-33 text

Jeremiah Chapter 1

The words of Jeremiah son of Hilkiah, one of the priests at Anathoth in the territory of Benjamin. ² The word of the LORD came to him in the days of King Josiah son of Amon of Judah, in the thirteenth year of his reign, ³ and throughout the days of King Jehoiakim son of Josiah of Judah, and until the end of the eleventh year of King Zedekiah son of Josiah of Judah, when Jerusalem went into exile in the fifth month. ⁴ The word of the LORD came to me: ⁵ Before I created you in the womb, I selected you; Before you were born, I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet concerning the nations. ⁶ I replied: Ah, Lord GOD! I don't know how to speak, For I am still a boy. ⁷ And the LORD said to me: Do not say, "I am still a boy," But go wherever I send you And speak whatever I command you. ⁸ Have no fear of them, For I am with you to deliver you -- declares the LORD. ⁹ The LORD put out His hand and touched my mouth, and the LORD said to me: Herewith I put My words into your mouth. ¹⁰ See, I appoint you this day Over nations and kingdoms: To uproot and to pull down, To destroy and to overthrow, To build and to plant. ¹¹ The word of the LORD came to me: What do you see, Jeremiah? I replied: I see a branch of an almond tree. ¹² The LORD said to me: You have seen right, For I am watchful to bring My word to pass. ¹³ And the word of the LORD came to me a second time: What do you see? I replied: I see a steaming pot, Tipped away from the north. ¹⁴ And the LORD said to me: From the north shall disaster break loose Upon all the inhabitants of the land! ¹⁵ For I am summoning all the peoples of the kingdoms of the north -- declares the LORD. They shall come, and shall each set up a throne Before the gates of Jerusalem, Against its walls roundabout, And against all the towns of Judah. ¹⁶ And I will argue My case against them For all their wickedness: They have forsaken Me And sacrificed to other gods And worshiped the works of their hands. ¹⁷ So you, gird up your loins, Arise and speak to them All that I command you. Do not break down before them, Lest I break you before them. ¹⁸ I make you this day A fortified city, And an iron pillar, And bronze walls Against the whole land -- Against Judah's kings and officers, And against its priests and citizens. ¹⁹ They will attack you, But they shall not overcome you; For I am with you -- declares the LORD -- to save you.

Ezekiel Chapters 1 and 2

Ezekiel 1:1 In the thirtieth year, on the fifth day of the fourth month, when I was in the community of exiles by the Chebar Canal, the heavens opened and I saw visions of God. ² On the fifth day of the month -- it was the fifth year of the exile of King Jehoiachin -- ³ the word of the LORD came to the priest Ezekiel son of Buzi, by the Chebar Canal, in the land of the Chaldeans. And the hand of the LORD came upon him there. ⁴ I looked, and lo, a stormy wind came sweeping out of the north -- a huge cloud and flashing fire, surrounded by a radiance; and in the center of it, in the center of the fire, a gleam as of amber. ⁵ In the center of it were also the figures of four creatures. And this was their appearance: They had the figures of human beings. ⁶ However, each had four faces, and each of them had four wings; ⁷ the legs of each were *fused into* a single rigid leg, and the feet of each were like a single calf's hoof; and their sparkle was like the luster of burnished bronze. ⁸ They had human hands below their wings. The four of them had their faces and their wings on their four sides. ⁹ Each one's wings touched those of the other. They did not turn when they moved; each could move in the direction of any of its faces. ¹⁰ Each of them had a human face the front; each of the four had the face of a lion on the right; each of the four had the face of an ox on the left; and each of the four had the face of an eagle the back. ¹¹ Such were their faces. As for their wings, they were separated: above, each had two touching those of the others, while the other two covered its body. ¹² And each could move in the direction of any of its faces; they went wherever the spirit impelled them to go, without turning when they moved. ¹³ Such then was the appearance of the creatures. With them was something that looked like burning coals of fire. This fire, suggestive of torches, kept moving about among the creatures; the fire had a radiance, and lightning issued from the fire. ¹⁴ Dashing to and fro *among* the creatures was something that looked like flares. ¹⁵ As I gazed on the creatures, I saw one wheel on the ground next to each of the four-faced creatures. ¹⁶ As for the appearance and structure of the wheels, they gleamed like beryl. All four had the same form; the appearance and structure of each was as of two wheels cutting through each other. ¹⁷ And when they moved, each could move in the direction of any of its four quarters; they did not veer when they moved. ¹⁸ Their rims were tall and frightening, for the rims of all four were covered all over with eyes. ¹⁹ And when the creatures moved forward, the wheels moved at their sides; and when the creatures were borne above the earth, the wheels were borne too. ²⁰ Wherever the spirit impelled them to go, they went -- wherever the spirit impelled them -- and the wheels were borne alongside them; for the spirit of the creatures was in the wheels. ²¹ When those moved, these moved; and when those stood still, these stood still; and when those were borne above the earth, the wheels were borne alongside them -- for the spirit of the creatures was in the wheels. ²² Above the heads of the creatures was a form: an expanse, with an awe-inspiring gleam as of crystal, was spread out above their heads. ²³ Under the expanse, each had one pair of wings extended toward those of the others; and each had another pair covering its body. ²⁴ When they moved, I could hear the sound of their wings like the sound of mighty waters, like the sound of Shaddai, a tumult like the din of an army. When they stood still, they would let their wings droop. ²⁵ From above the expanse over their heads came a sound. When they stood still, they would let their wings droop. ²⁶ Above the expanse over their heads was the semblance of a throne, in appearance like sapphire; and on top, upon this semblance of a throne, there was the semblance of a human form. ²⁷ From what appeared as his loins up, I saw a gleam as of amber -- what looked like a fire encased in a frame; and from what appeared as his loins down, I saw what looked like fire. There was a radiance all about him. ²⁸ Like the appearance of the bow which shines in the clouds on a day of rain, such was the appearance of the surrounding radiance. That was the appearance of the semblance of the Presence of the LORD. When I beheld it, I flung myself down on my face. And I heard the voice of someone speaking.

Ezekiel 2:1 And He said to me, "O mortal, stand up on your feet that I may speak to you." ² As He spoke to me, a spirit entered into me and set me upon my feet; and I heard what was being spoken to me. ³ He said to me, "O mortal, I am sending you to the people of Israel, that nation of rebels, who have rebelled against Me. -- They as well as their fathers have defied Me to this very day; ⁴ for the sons are brazen of face and stubborn of heart. I send you to them, and you shall say to them: 'Thus said the Lord GOD' -- ⁵ whether they listen or not, for they are a rebellious breed -- that they may know that there was a prophet among them. ⁶ "And you, mortal, do not fear them and do not fear their words, though thistles and thorns press against you, and you sit upon scorpions. Do not be afraid of their words and do not be dismayed by them, though they are a rebellious breed; ⁷ but speak My words to them, whether they listen or not, for they are rebellious. ⁸ "And you, mortal, heed what I say to you: Do not be rebellious like that rebellious breed. Open your mouth and eat what I am giving you." ⁹ As I looked, there was a hand stretched out to me, holding a written scroll. ¹⁰ He unrolled it before me, and it was inscribed on both the front and the back; on it were written lamentations, dirges, and woes.

Huldah: 2 Kings 22:14-20, 2 Chronicles 34: 22-33

2 Kings 22

14 וַיֵּלֶךְ חִלְקִיָּהוּ הַכֹּהֵן וְאַחִיקָם וְעַכְבּוֹר וְשַׁפָּן וְעֵשָׂיָה
אֶל-חִלְדָּה הַנְּבִיאָה אֲשֶׁתוֹ שָׁלֵם בֶּן-חַרְחִס שֹׁמֵר
הַבְּגָדִים וְהִיא יֹשֶׁבֶת בִּירוּשָׁלַם בַּמְּשָׁנָה וַיִּדְבְּרוּ אֵלֶיהָ:
15 וַתֹּאמֶר אֵלֵיהֶם כֹּה-אָמַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אָמְרוּ לְאִישׁ
אֲשֶׁר-שָׁלַח אֲתֶכֶם אֵלַי:

16 כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה הַנְּנִי מִבֵּיא רָעָה אֶל-הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה
וְעַל-יֹשְׁבָיו אֵת כָּל-דְּבָרֵי הַסֵּפֶר אֲשֶׁר קָרָא מֶלֶךְ יְהוֹרָם:
17 תַּחַתוֹ אֲשֶׁר עֲזָבוּנִי וַיִּקְטְרוּ לְאֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים לְמַעַן
הַכְּעִיסֵנִי בְּכֹל מַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵיהֶם וּנְצַתָּה חֲמָתִי בַּמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה וְלֹא
תִכָּבֵה:

18 וְאֶל-מֶלֶךְ יְהוֹרָם הַשְּׁלַח אֲתֶכֶם לְדַרְשׁ אֶת-יְהוָה כֹּה
תֹּאמְרוּ אֵלָיו כֹּה-אָמַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הַדְּבָרִים אֲשֶׁר
שָׁמַעְתָּ:

19 יַעַן כִּדְ-לִבְבְּךָ וַתִּכְנַעַו מִפְּנֵי יְהוָה בְּשִׁמְעֶךָ אֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתִּי
עַל-הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה וְעַל-יֹשְׁבָיו לְהִיזֹת לְשִׁמָּה וּלְקַלְלָהּ וַתִּקְרַע
אֶת-בְּגָדֶיךָ וַתִּכְבַּה לְפָנַי וְגַם אָנֹכִי שָׁמַעְתִּי נֹאם-יְהוָה:
20 לָכֵן הַנְּנִי אֶסְפֹּךְ עַל-אֲבֹתֶיךָ וְנֹאסַפְתִּי אֶל-קְבֻרָתְךָ בְּשָׁלוֹם
וְלֹא-תִרְאִינָה עֵינֶיךָ בְּכֹל הַרְעָה אֲשֶׁר-אַנִּי מִבֵּיא עַל-הַמָּקוֹם
הַזֶּה וַיֵּשִׁיבוּ אֶת-הַמֶּלֶךְ דְּבָר:

14 So the priest Hilkiah, and Ahikam, Achbor, Shaphan, and Asaiah went to the prophetess Huldah -- the wife of Shallum son of Tikvah son of Harhas, the keeper of the wardrobe -- who was living in Jerusalem in the Mishneh, and they spoke to her. 15 She responded: "Thus said the LORD, the God of Israel: Say to the man who sent you to me: 16 Thus said the LORD: I am going to bring disaster upon this place and its inhabitants, in accordance with all the words of the scroll which the king of Judah has read. 17 Because they have forsaken Me and have made offerings to other gods and vexed Me with all their deeds, My wrath is kindled against this place and it shall not be quenched. 18 But say this to the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of the LORD: Thus said the LORD, the God of Israel: As for the words which you have heard -- 19 because your heart was softened and you humbled yourself before the LORD when you heard what I decreed against this place and its inhabitants -- that it will become a desolation and a curse -- and because you rent your clothes and wept before Me, I for My part have listened -- declares the LORD. 20 Assuredly, I will gather you to your fathers and you will be laid in your tomb in peace. Your eyes shall not see all the disaster which I will bring upon this place." So they brought back the reply to the king.

2 וַיִּלְךָ חֲלָקֶיהוּ וְאֲשֶׁר הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶל-חֲלָלָהּ הַנְּבִיאָה אֲשֶׁתוֹ שָׁלֵם
 בֶּן-(תּוֹקֶהֶת) [תּוֹקֶהֶת] בֶּן-חֲסֻקָּה שׁוֹמֵר הַבְּגָדִים וְהָיָא יוֹשֶׁבֶת
 בִּירוּשָׁלַם בַּמִּשְׁנָה וַיְדַבְּרוּ אֵלֶיהָ כִּזְאת: 3
 23 וַתֹּאמֶר לָהֶם כֹּה-אָמַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אָמְרוּ לְאִישׁ
 אֲשֶׁר-שָׁלַח אֲתֶכֶם אֵלַי: 4
 24 כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה הַנְּנִי מִבֵּיא רָעָה עַל-הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה
 וְעַל-יוֹשְׁבָיו אֵת כָּל-הָאֱלֹת הַכְּתוּבֹת עַל-הַסֵּפֶר אֲשֶׁר קָרָאוּ
 לִפְנֵי מֶלֶךְ יְהוּדָה:
 25 תַּחֲתוֹ אֲשֶׁר עֲזַבְנִי (נִיקֻטִּירוֹ) [נִיקֻטִּירוֹ] לְאֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים
 לַמַּעַן הַכְּעִיסְנִי בְּכֹל מַעֲשֵׂי יְדֵיהֶם וַתִּתֵּן חַמְתִּי בַּמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה
 וְלֹא תִכְבְּהוּ:
 26 וְאֶל-מֶלֶךְ יְהוּדָה הִשְׁלַח אֲתֶכֶם לְדַרוֹשׁ בֵּיהוָה כֹּה תֹאמְרוּ
 אֵלָיו 5 כֹּה-אָמַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הַדְּבָרִים אֲשֶׁר שָׁמַעְתָּ:
 27 יַעַן כִּדְ-לִבְבְּךָ וַתִּפְנַעוּ מִלִּפְנֵי אֱלֹהִים בְּשִׁמְעַךְ אֶת-דְּבָרָיו
 עַל-הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה וְעַל-יוֹשְׁבָיו וַתִּפְנַע לִפְנֵי וַתִּקְרַע אֶת-בְּגָדֶיךָ
 וַתִּבְכֶּה לִפְנֵי וְגַם-אֲנִי שָׁמַעְתִּי נֹאם-יְהוָה:
 28 הַנְּנִי אֶסְפֹּף אֶל-אֲבֹתֶיךָ וְנֹאסַפְתָּ אֶל-קְבֻרֹתֶיךָ בְּשָׁלוֹם
 וְלֹא-תִרְאִינָה עֵינֶיךָ בְּכֹל הַרְעָה אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי מִבֵּיא עַל-הַמָּקוֹם
 הַזֶּה וְעַל-יוֹשְׁבָיו וַיֵּשִׁיבוּ אֶת-הַמֶּלֶךְ דָּבָר: 6
 29 וַיִּשְׁלַח הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיֹּאסֹף אֶת-כָּל-זִקְנֵי יְהוּדָה וִירוּשָׁלַם:
 30 וַיַּעַל הַמֶּלֶךְ בֵּית-יְהוָה וְכָל-אִישׁ יְהוּדָה וַיֵּשְׁבִי יְרוּשָׁלַם
 וַתִּכְהַנְיִם וַתִּלְוִיִם וְכָל-הָעָם מִגְּדוֹל וְעַד-קָטָן וַיִּקְרָא
 בְּאָזְנֵיהֶם אֶת-כָּל-דְּבָרֵי סֵפֶר הַבְּרִית הַנִּמְצָא בֵּית יְהוָה:
 31 וַיַּעֲמֵד הַמֶּלֶךְ עַל-עַמּוּדוֹ וַיִּכְרַת אֶת-הַבְּרִית לִפְנֵי יְהוָה
 לְלַכֵּת אַחֲרָי יְהוָה וּלְשַׁמֹּר אֶת-מִצְוֹתָיו וְעֲדוּתָיו וַחֲקָיו
 בְּכָל-לִבְבוֹ וּבְכָל-נַפְשׁוֹ לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת-דְּבָרֵי הַבְּרִית הַכְּתוּבִים
 עַל-הַסֵּפֶר הַזֶּה:
 32 וַיַּעֲמֵד אֵת כָּל-הַנִּמְצָא בִירוּשָׁלַם וּבְנֵימָן וַיַּעֲשׂוּ יֹשְׁבֵי
 יְרוּשָׁלַם כַּבְּרִית אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵיהֶם:
 33 וַיִּסַּר יְאֲשִׁיהוּ אֶת-כָּל-הַתּוֹעֵבוֹת מִכָּל-הָאֲרָצוֹת אֲשֶׁר לִבְנֵי
 יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיַּעֲבֵד אֵת כָּל-הַנִּמְצָא בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל לַעֲבֹד אֶת-יְהוָה
 אֱלֹהֵיהֶם כָּל-יְמֵיו לֹא סָרוּ מֵאַחֲרַי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵיהֶם:

²² Hilkiyah and those whom the king had ordered went to the prophetess Huldah, wife of Shallum son of Tokhath son of Hasrah, keeper of the wardrobe, who was living in Jerusalem in the Mishneh, and spoke to her accordingly. ²³ She responded to them: "Thus said the LORD God of Israel: Say to the man who sent you to Me, ²⁴ 'Thus said the LORD: I am going to bring disaster upon this place and its inhabitants -- all the curses that are written in the scroll that was read to the king of Judah -- ²⁵ because they forsook Me and made offerings to other gods in order to vex Me with all the works of their hands; My wrath shall be poured out against this place and not be quenched.' ²⁶ But say this to the king of Judah who sent you to inquire of the LORD: 'Thus said the LORD God of Israel: As for the words which you have heard, ²⁷ since your heart was softened and you humbled yourself before God when you heard His words concerning this place and its inhabitants, and you humbled yourself before Me and tore your clothes and wept before Me, I for My part have listened, declares the LORD. ²⁸ Assuredly, I will gather you to your fathers, and you will be laid in your grave in peace; your eyes shall see nothing of the disaster that I will bring upon this place and its inhabitants.'" They reported this back to the king. ²⁹ Then the king sent word and assembled all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem. ³⁰ The king went up to the House of the LORD with all the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem and the priests and the Levites -- all the people, young and old -- and he read to them the entire text of the covenant scroll that was found in the House of the LORD. ³¹ The king stood in his place and solemnized the covenant before the LORD: to follow the LORD and observe His commandments, His injunctions, and His laws with all his heart and soul, to fulfill all the terms of the covenant written in this scroll. ³² He obligated all the men of Jerusalem and Benjamin who were present; and the inhabitants of Jerusalem acted in accord with the Covenant of God, God of their fathers. ³³ Josiah removed all the abominations from the whole territory of the Israelites and obliged all who were in Israel to worship the LORD their God. Throughout his reign they did not deviate from following the LORD God of their fathers.

Lesson 3: God During our Highs and Lows

Objectives:

- Students will be able to identify Hagar.
- Students will be able to describe how God interacted with Hagar.
- Students will be able identify highs and lows in their lives and describe where God might have been.

Guided Timeline:

5 minutes	Activity 1: Introduction
40 minutes	Activity 2: Text Study
15 minutes	Activity 3: Sharing our Work
3 minutes	Activity 4: Conclusion

Activity 1: Introduction

- Read students the poem “Footprints in the Sand”
- Introduce students to Hagar.
- Explain the day’s lesson.

Activity 2: Text Study: Learning Stations

Set up 4 learning stations—Learning stations are opportunities for students to study on their own or with a partner at their own pace. These four stations should be set up around the room and students should be given the freedom to go to the stations in any order they choose and at the pace that best suits their learning. (However, the paper tear midrash will be easier to do after they have read at least some of the texts.)

Station 1-Students should read the Hagar story from Genesis and answer questions.

Station 2-Students should read commentaries/midrashim on Hagar and answer questions

Station 3-Students should create a personal timeline, indicating the highs and lows. As they look at the highs and lows, they should consider what their relationship with God was like at those moments.

- They should consider the poem we read at the beginning of the class “Footprints in the Sand.” Have they ever felt that God carried them during the hard times, as God carried Hagar?
- What might they have said to God? /What might their prayers to God have been at both the highs and the lows points in their lives?

- If students have never experienced God, are there times in their lives when they wished they had experienced God—either their highs or their lows. What would they have said to God?
- If they are struggling with God because they did not experience God at those times, they could write about some of their doubts, and struggles in their journal.

After creating their timeline, they should try to answer these questions in their journal.

Station 4-Students should do a paper tear midrash based on the Hagar texts. This activity requires that students create their own understanding of the Hagar story through art. They are given tissue paper, construction paper and glue but no scissors. This asks all students to use all of their creative powers to tell this story.

Activity 3: Sharing our Work

After students have had the opportunity to go through the stations, come back together as a class to share some of the answers to the text questions and to present their paper tear midrash to one another.

If students feel comfortable, they should also share their timelines and some of the answers to the questions they wrote about in their journals.

Activity 4: Conclusion

Sometimes we can connect to God through our study, through writing and through art. Today we did all three of these activities. Maybe you felt a connection to God today, or maybe you did not—either way, the next time you participate in these activities, consider how they might be ways of strengthening your relationship with God.

Materials:

“Footprints in the Sand”
 Genesis 16 text
 Genesis 21:1-21
 Hagar commentaries/midrashim
 Journals
 Tissue paper
 Construction paper
 Glue
 Paper
 Pens

“Footprints in the Sand”

By Mary Stevenson

One night I dreamed I was walking along the beach with God
Many scenes from my life flashed across the sky.
In each scene I noticed footprints in the sand.
Sometimes there were two sets of footprints,
other times there were one set of footprints.

This bothered me because I noticed
that during the low periods of my life,
when I was suffering from
anguish, sorrow or defeat,
I could see only one set of footprints.

So I said to God,
“You promised me God,
that if I followed you,
you would walk with me always.
But I have noticed that during the most trying periods of my life
there have only been one set of footprints in the sand.
Why, when I needed you most, you have not been there for me?”

God replied,
“The times when you have seen only one set of footprints in the sand,
is when I carried you.”

Hagar: Genesis 16, Genesis 21: 1-21

Genesis 16

Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. She had an Egyptian maidservant whose name was Hagar. ² And Sarai said to Abram, "Look, the LORD has kept me from bearing. Consort with my maid; perhaps I shall have a son through her." And Abram heeded Sarai's request. ³ So Sarai, Abram's wife, took her maid, Hagar the Egyptian -- after Abram had dwelt in the land of Canaan ten years -- and gave her to her husband Abram as concubine. ⁴ He cohabited with Hagar and she conceived; and when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was lowered in her esteem. ⁵ And Sarai said to Abram, "The wrong done me is your fault! I myself put my maid in your bosom; now that she sees that she is pregnant, I am lowered in her esteem. The LORD decide between you and me!" ⁶ Abram said to Sarai, "Your maid is in your hands. Deal with her as you think right." Then Sarai treated her harshly, and she ran away from her. ⁷ An angel of the LORD found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, the spring on the road to Shur, ⁸ and said, "Hagar, slave of Sarai, where have you come from, and where are you going?" And she said, "I am running away from my mistress Sarai." ⁹ And the angel of the LORD said to her, "Go back to your mistress, and submit to her harsh treatment." ¹⁰ And the angel of the LORD said to her, "I will greatly increase your offspring, and they shall be too many to count." ¹¹ The angel of the LORD said to her further, "Behold, you are with child and shall bear a son; you shall call him Ishmael, for the LORD has paid heed to your suffering. ¹² He shall be a wild ass of a man; his hand against everyone, and everyone's hand against him; he shall dwell alongside of all his kinsmen." ¹³ And she called the LORD who spoke to her, "You Are El-roi," by which she meant, "Have I not gone on seeing after He saw me!" ¹⁴ Therefore the well was called Beer-lahai-roi; it is between Kadesh and Bered. -- ¹⁵ Hagar bore a son to Abram, and Abram gave the son that Hagar bore him the name Ishmael. ¹⁶ Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to Abram.

Genesis 21

The LORD took note of Sarah as He had promised, and the LORD did for Sarah as He had spoken. ² Sarah conceived and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken. ³ Abraham gave his newborn son, whom Sarah had borne him, the name of Isaac. ⁴ And when his son Isaac was eight days old, Abraham circumcised him, as God had commanded him. ⁵ Now Abraham was a hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him. ⁶ Sarah said, "God has brought me laughter; everyone who hears will laugh with me." ⁷ And she added, "Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would suckle children! Yet I have borne a son in his old age." ⁸ The child grew up and was weaned, and Abraham held a great feast on the day that Isaac was weaned. ⁹ Sarah saw the son whom Hagar the Egyptian had borne to Abraham playing. ¹⁰ She said to Abraham, "Cast out that slave-woman and her son, for the son of that slave shall not share in the inheritance with my son Isaac." ¹¹ The matter distressed Abraham greatly, for it concerned a son of his. ¹² But God said to Abraham, "Do not be distressed over the boy or your slave; whatever Sarah tells you, do as she says, for it is through Isaac that offspring shall be continued for you." ¹³ As for the son of the slave-woman, I will make a nation of him, too, for he is your seed." ¹⁴ Early next morning Abraham took some bread and a skin of water, and gave them to Hagar. He placed them over

her shoulder, together with the child, and sent her away. And she wandered about in the wilderness of Beer-sheba. ¹⁵ When the water was gone from the skin, she left the child under one of the bushes, ¹⁶ and went and sat down at a distance, a bowshot away; for she thought, "Let me not look on as the child dies." And sitting thus afar, she burst into tears. ¹⁷ God heard the cry of the boy, and an angel of God called to Hagar from heaven and said to her, "What troubles you, Hagar? Fear not, for God has heeded the cry of the boy where he is. ¹⁸ Come, lift up the boy and hold him by the hand, for I will make a great nation of him." ¹⁹ Then God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water. She went and filled the skin with water, and let the boy drink. ²⁰ God was with the boy and he grew up; he dwelt in the wilderness and became a bowman. ²¹ He lived in the wilderness of Paran; and his mother got a wife for him from the land of Egypt.

Questions to Consider:

- Why did Hagar agree to have a child for Abram and Sarai?
- What happened when she had that child?
- Why did Hagar run away?
- What happened when Hagar ran away?
- How did she interact with God in chapter 16?
- How did God interact with Hagar in chapter 16?
- In chapter 21, why did Hagar leave?
- How is her interaction with God different in this chapter?
- Compare and contrast Hagar's connection with God to Sarai's connection with God.
- What can you learn about different ways to connect to God?
- At what points in their lives do we see God interacting with these Biblical figures?
- Can you think of similar examples from your life when God has interacted with you?

Looking at Hagar in Commentary

Ramban:

Ramban explains that Sarai transgressed in the way they treated Hagar, and so did Abram by allowing her to behave in this way; God therefore gave Hagar a son who would afflict the descendants of Abram and Sarai.

Rashi:

Rashi teaches that in chapter 16 verses 9-10, each statement is introduced by the words "And angel of God said to her" because each time a new angel was sent to her.

Rabbi Michal Shekel in The Women's Torah Commentary:

"The encounter between Hagar and the Divine is a cause of discomfort in traditional Jewish interpretation. In Gen 16:7, it is Adonai's messenger who finds Hagar. In the next four verses, Adonai's messenger speaks to Hagar. In verse 13, Hagar names Adonai... Abram has never done this, nor has anyone else. Throughout the early chapters of the Torah, Abram needs signs to substantiate his covenant with God. Hagar is somehow more accepting, more comfortable with God." (page 58-59)

Etz Hayim Torah Commentary:

Chapter 16, verse 8-"This is the first time in the Torah that God speak to a woman (and to a non-Israelite woman.)"

Chapter 16, verse 13 **El-roi**-"The God who sees me.' God is a God who notices the oppressed, the needy, the marginalized, those of whom human society takes no notice."

Lesson 4: A Prayer to God

Objectives:

- Students will be able to identify Hannah.
- Students will be able to describe how Hannah connected to God.
- Students will be able to describe how one might connect to God through prayer.

Guided Timeline:

10 minutes	Activity 1: Set Induction
30 minutes	Activity 2: Text Study
20 minutes	Activity 3: Personal Connection—Prayer
10 minutes	Activity 4: Conclusion

Activity 1: Set Induction

Ask students—

- What is prayer?
- Where do we say prayers?
- Who do we say them to?
- When do we say them?

Allow students to discuss these answers, but consider suggesting they think broadly about the term prayer. Perhaps prayer can be defined as any interaction/communication with God (especially in the Bible where what we consider to be traditional prayer is not frequently seen or heard).

Activity 2: Text Study: Jig Saw

As a class read 1 Samuel 1:1-9. This text introduces us to Hannah and her troubles. Make sure that the class understands what the problem is and what is happening in this piece of the text.

Then, divide the class into two groups.

The first group should read 1 Samuel 1:10-28, focusing on the prayer in verse 11.

The second group should read 1 Samuel 2: 1-10.

Each group should discuss—

- What is happening in this section?
- How is Hannah connecting to God?
- What is Hannah praying for?
- How does God interact with Hannah?

After each group has had an opportunity to read their text and discuss it, members from each group will rotate, half of the first group and half of the second group are mixed and the groups will teach one another.

As the groups are mixed, they should discuss—

- How are the prayers similar?
- How are they different?
- How are these prayers different ways of connecting with God? How are they similar?
- How does God respond in each circumstance?
- When have you used a similar type of prayer?
- What role does God play in your Jewish identity? In your identity as a Jewish woman?

Activity 3: Prayer-Personal Connection to God

In the text we just read, Hannah experiences a spiritual journey, “walking through the whole range of prayer modalities (which) culminates with the psalm attributed to her (2:1-10), the Song of Hannah. As a hymn of praise to God, this psalm is the ultimate, most sublime form of prayer.... Abraham Joshua Heschel’s description of prayer applies perfectly to Hannah’s psalm. Heschel explains that prayer, as an act of worship lifts people out of the triviality of existence, giving them a sense of living ‘in ultimate relationships.’”¹²

During the next activity, students will have the opportunity to reach out to God in a way that is similar to Hannah. For some students this prayer experience may yield a greater connection to God than others. It is important to recognize that this is an artificial setting designed more for teaching than as a guarantee that students will connect with God in this moment.

Option 1—Lead students in a prayer service, incorporating in psalms to the service. Try to have the service in a pretty place, and to use music whenever possible.

Option 2—Ask students to write their own psalm, praising God. They may use Hannah’s prayer as a model, but their prayer should experience their own emotions and experiences.

Activity 4: Conclusion

Debrief Prayer experience—

- What did it feel like to pray?
- How might we connect to God through prayer?
- Did this prayer experience feel different than others you have had? Why or why not?
- What are other types of prayer?

¹² Aschkenasy, Nehama. *Woman at the Window*. Detroit, Wayne State University Press, 1998 (141).

Materials:

1 Samuel 1:1-2:10 text

Paper

Pens

Prayer books

Hannah: 1 Samuel 1:1-2:10

1 Samuel 1:1-9 There was a man from Ramathaim of the Zuphites, in the hill country of Ephraim, whose name was Elkanah son of Jeroham son of Elihu son of Tohu son of Zuph, an Ephraimite. ² He had two wives, one named Hannah and the other Peninnah; Peninnah had children, but Hannah was childless. ³ This man used to go up from his town every year to worship and to offer sacrifice to the LORD of Hosts at Shiloh. -- Hophni and Phinehas, the two sons of Eli, were priests of the LORD there. ⁴ One such day, Elkanah offered a sacrifice. He used to give portions to his wife Peninnah and to all her sons and daughters; ⁵ but to Hannah he would give one portion only -- though Hannah was his favorite -- for the LORD had closed her womb. ⁶ Moreover, her rival, to make her miserable, would taunt her that the LORD had closed her womb. ⁷ This happened year after year: Every time she went up to the House of the LORD, the other would taunt her, so that she wept and would not eat. ⁸ Her husband Elkanah said to her, "Hannah, why are you crying and why aren't you eating? Why are you so sad? Am I not more devoted to you than ten sons?" ⁹ After they had eaten and drunk at Shiloh, Hannah rose. -- The priest Eli was sitting on the seat near the doorpost of the temple of the LORD.

1 Samuel 1:10-28 ¹⁰ In her wretchedness, she prayed to the LORD, weeping all the while. ¹¹ And she made this vow: "O LORD of Hosts, if You will look upon the suffering of Your maidservant and will remember me and not forget Your maidservant, and if You will grant Your maidservant a male child, I will dedicate him to the LORD for all the days of his life; and no razor shall ever touch his head." ¹² As she kept on praying before the LORD, Eli watched her mouth. ¹³ Now Hannah was praying in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice could not be heard. So Eli thought she was drunk. ¹⁴ Eli said to her, "How long will you make a drunken spectacle of yourself? Sober up!" ¹⁵ And Hannah replied, "Oh no, my lord! I am a very unhappy woman. I have drunk no wine or other strong drink, but I have been pouring out my heart to the LORD. ¹⁶ Do not take your maidservant for a worthless woman; I have only been speaking all this time out of my great anguish and distress." ¹⁷ "Then go in peace," said Eli, "and may the God of Israel grant you what you have asked of Him." ¹⁸ She answered, "You are most kind to your handmaid." So the woman left, and she ate, and was no longer downcast. ¹⁹ Early next morning they bowed low before the LORD, and they went back home to Ramah. Elkanah knew his wife Hannah and the LORD remembered her. ²⁰ Hannah conceived, and at the turn of the year bore a son. She named him Samuel, meaning, "I asked the LORD for him." ²¹ And when the man Elkanah and all his household were going up to offer to the LORD the annual sacrifice and his votive sacrifice, ²² Hannah did not go up. She said to her husband, "When the child is weaned, I will bring him. For when he has appeared before the LORD, he must remain there for good." ²³ Her husband Elkanah said to her, "Do as you think best. Stay home until you have weaned him. ²⁴ When she had weaned him, she took him up with her, along with three bulls, one ephah of flour, and a jar of wine. And though the boy was still very young, she brought him to the House of the LORD at Shiloh. ²⁵ After slaughtering the bull, they brought the boy to Eli. ²⁶ She said, "Please, my lord! As you live, my lord, I am the woman who stood here beside you and prayed to the LORD. ²⁷ It was this boy I prayed for; and the LORD has granted me what I asked of Him. ²⁸ I, in turn, hereby lend him to the LORD. For as long as he lives he is lent to the LORD." And they bowed low there before the LORD.

1 Samuel 2:1 And Hannah prayed: My heart exults in the LORD; I have triumphed through the LORD. I gloat over my enemies; I rejoice in Your deliverance. ² There is no holy one like the LORD, Truly, there is none beside You; There is no rock like our God. ³ Talk no more with lofty pride, Let no arrogance cross your lips! For the LORD is an all-knowing God; By Him actions are measured. ⁴ The bows of the mighty are broken, And the faltering are girded with strength. ⁵ Men once sated must hire out for bread; Men once hungry hunger no more. While the barren woman bears seven, The mother of many is forlorn. ⁶ The LORD deals death and gives life, Casts down into Sheol and raises up. ⁷ The LORD makes poor and makes rich; He casts down, He also lifts high. ⁸ He raises the poor from the dust, Lifts up the needy from the dunghill, Setting them with nobles, Granting them seats of honor. For the pillars of the earth are the LORD's; He has set the world upon them. ⁹ He guards the steps of His faithful, But the wicked perish in darkness -- For not by strength shall man prevail. ¹⁰ The foes of the LORD shall be shattered; He will thunder against them in the heavens. The LORD will judge the ends of the earth. He will give power to His king, And triumph to His anointed one.

Lesson 5: Finding My Own God

Objectives:

- Students will be able to describe how Hannah, Hagar and Huldah connected to God.
- Students will be able to define their own vision of God.
- Students will be able to describe different ways of connecting to God.

Guided Timeline:

10 minutes	Activity 1: Introduction
30 minutes	Activity 2: Planning the Service
25 minutes	Activity 3: Class Prayer Service
15 minutes	Activity 4: Debriefing the Service

Activity 1: Introduction

As potential Jewish leaders of the future, you may have the opportunity to chair events, run programs, and create and lead services. Today, in our classroom, we have the chance to put into practice some of those skills, using what you have learned over the last few classes. As a group, we will create our own prayer service, dedicated to Hannah, Hagar and Huldah. These are women who are not often studied when Bible is taught, so we dedicate our prayer to them today. In our last class, when we learned about Hannah we discussed the idea that the word prayer does not have to mean the fixed liturgy (prayers from the prayer book) that we are used to today. You can create a service that expresses you, and your own personal connections to God. I ask that you incorporate some of what we have been discussing over the last few classes, and that you work together as a group to plan this service.

Activity 2: Planning the Service

Students should work together to plan the service, incorporating the lessons they learned and ideas we discussed as a class.

In order to help the students plan this service, you might consider providing several different prayer books for them to look through.

This service could be more traditional in format, incorporating prayers and readings between the prayers. Students may choose to write these readings, using some of the themes we have studied in class; information about the Biblical women; or what it means to them to learn more about connecting with God.

Or the service may be more creative, using artwork, meditation, poetry and other medium the students choose to include.

Activity 3: Class Prayer Service

Once they have finished planning, the entire class should participate in the class prayer service.

Activity 4: Debriefing Prayer Service

- How did it feel to plan this service together?
- What elements did you incorporate from the class?
- What role did the Biblical women play?
- What did you include that was more about your personal connection to God?
- What did you learn about different ways of connecting or interacting with God?

UNIT 5: BECOMING A JEWISH WOMAN

Goals for Unit:

- To review the Biblical women we have studied over the course of the year.
- To engage students in discussions about how the women we have studied have influenced them.
- To help students understand what values are important to them at this point in their lives, as well as what values might be important to them in the future.
- To engage students in discussions about the role Judaism will play in their developing identities.
- To engage students in discussions about what it means to be a Jewish woman.
- To synthesize and review themes from the year.

Understandings for Unit:

- The experiences of Biblical women teach us how relationships, self esteem, power and God have an influence in our lives.

Essential Questions for Unit:

- What are the values I have learned that I want to incorporate into my life?
- How do Biblical women, and their stories, influence my life and its story?
- How am I developing my own Jewish identity?
- What does it mean to me to be a Jewish woman?

Objectives for Unit:

- Students will be able to define the values they would like to incorporate into their lives.
- Students will be able to describe how the Biblical women they have learned how have influenced them.
- Students will be able to describe the role they would like Judaism to play in their lives now and in the future.

Assessment:

Journaling
Group Discussion
Collage-How I see myself as a Jewish woman

Memorable Moment

Channeling a Biblical Woman
Personal Mission Statement

Note to Teacher

In this final unit, one of the main goals is to synthesize and review the main values and themes from the year. In addition, this is an excellent opportunity for students to discuss what they will take with them from this year. What are the values that are most important to them? And how did the Biblical women we learned about influence their thinking about their identity as Jewish women?

However, if you find that other issues come up throughout the year that need to be addressed, some of these lessons can be condensed and you could take one or two of these lessons to address issues more critical to your class.

The final activity on the last lesson is a closing ritual. I have purposely left this activity vague, because I believe that the ritual should be designed for each class individually. You may choose to have your class involved in the creation of this ritual, or you may choose to design it yourself. Regardless, you will need to consider the make-up and the needs of your class. What kind of closure do they need from this year? Is it more important for them to think more about the material, or have an opportunity to speak to each other? These are just a couple questions to take into account when determining what the closing activity will be.

I hope that it has been a successful year, full of learning, teaching, reflecting and relationship-building!

Lesson 1: Influential Women

Objectives:

- Students will be able to identify all of the Biblical women we have studied this year.
- Students will be able to describe who these women were and why they might have been important.
- Students will be able to describe why one Biblical woman was especially influential for them.

Guided Timeline:

15 minutes	Activity 1: Review
30 minutes	Activity 2: Preparations
20 minutes	Activity 3: Presentations
5 minutes	Activity 4: Wrap Up

Activity 1: Review

Review with the class the women we have studied this year. Have them name each of the women, identify who they were and explain the context in which we studied them.

Activity 2: Preparations

Have each student pick one Biblical woman that was especially meaningful for them. (This activity will work better if there are a variety of women represented, but it is most important that the students truly connect to the woman that they will present).

They will be “channeling” this Biblical woman. If they would like to, they can bring in or create costumes to feel more authentic.

In their presentation they should answer the following questions—

- What would this woman want us to know about her life?
- What do you want us to know about this woman?
- How might she be interpreted today, in your life?
- What did she value?
- What should we learn from her?
- Why is she meaningful to you?

Activity 3: Presentations

Have the class come back together so that each student can present.

Activity 4: Wrap Up

- What did you learn that was new to you about these women?

Materials:

Pen
Paper
Biblical Texts

Lesson 2: I am a Jewish Woman

Objectives:

- Students will be able to identify values that we have discussed throughout the year.
- Students will be able to identify values that are important to them now and in the future.
- Students will be able to describe how Judaism might play a role in their lives.
- Students will be able to describe what it means to them to be a Jewish woman.

Guided Timeline:

10 minutes	Activity 1: Set Induction
10 minutes	Activity 2: Journaling
20 minutes	Activity 3: Collage
15 minutes	Activity 4: Sharing
5 minutes	Activity 5: Conclusion

Activity 1: Set Induction

Brainstorm some values we have discussed this year.

- In what context did we discuss them?
- Why might they be important?

Activity 2: Journaling

Have students write individually in their journals, responding to the questions—

- What values are most meaningful to me right now? Why?
- What values do I think I will incorporate more into my life in the future? Why?

Activity 3: Making a Collage

Have students reflect on how they envision themselves as a Jewish woman.

- What role will Judaism play in their lives?
- What will influence their decisions?
- Who will be their role models?

After they have spent some time thinking about these questions and perhaps writing some of the answers, have students create a collage that represents their identity as Jewish women. They can use images and phrases from magazines and newspapers, as well as creating their own images.

Activity 4: Sharing our Collages

Once everyone has finished their collage, students should share their creations and be prepared to explain their rationale.

- How does this piece of art depict my identity as a Jewish woman?
- Who have you learned the most from? What will you take with you?

Activity 5: Conclusion

The questions we discussed today have no right answer. In fact, the answers are likely ever-changing. For next class, continue to think about these questions, we will come back to some of them.

Materials:

Journals
Pens
Art Supplies

Lesson 3: Taking it All With Me

Objectives:

Students will be able to identify what or who influences them as they develop their own Jewish identity.

Students will be able to describe what they have learned from this class.

Guided Timeline:

15 minutes	Activity 1: Introduction- What is a Mission Statement
25 minutes	Activity 2: Writing a Personal Mission Statement
15 minutes	Activity 3: Sharing Final Thoughts
10 minutes	Activity 4: Closing Ritual

Activity 1: Introduction-What is a Mission Statement?

A personal mission statement is a brief description of what you want to focus on, what you want to accomplish and who you want to become in a particular area of your life. It is a way to focus your energy, actions, behaviors and decisions towards the things that are most important to you. Stephen Covey explains a mission statement as “the solid expression of your vision and values.” It is also important, according to him, to “review it regularly and make minor changes as the years bring additional insights or changing circumstances.”¹³

Some suggestions for a personal mission statement:

- Keep it simple, clear and brief.
- Your mission statement should touch upon what you want to focus on and who you want to become as a person (character) in this part of your life.
- Make sure your mission statement is positive. Instead of saying what you don't want to do or don't want to be, say what you do want to do or become.
- Include positive behaviors, character traits and values that you consider particularly important and want to develop further.
- Think about how your actions, habits, behavior and character traits in this area affect the important relationships in your life.
- Make it emotional.
- Remember that your mission statement is not cast in stone. It will continue to change and evolve as you gain insights about yourself and what you want out of each part of your life.

¹³ Covey, Stephen. *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*. New York: Free Press, 2004 (129).

Bring in examples of missions statements (i.e. of the school, of the synagogue, etc) for students to read through and gain a better understanding of what a mission statement is. As you read through the examples, ask students--

- What is the purpose of this statement?
- Why do you think it was written?
- (If you are reading more than 1) What are similarities? What are differences?

Activity 2: Writing a Personal Mission Statement

Have students write their own personal mission statement. Within this statement they might reflect on the following questions—

- What are the values I have learned that I want to incorporate into my life?
- How do Biblical women, and their stories, influence my life and its story?
- How am I developing my own Jewish identity?
- Where does God fit into my life?
- What are my goals for the future?

Activity 3: Sharing Final Thoughts

Give students an opportunity to share some thoughts from their mission statements. They should not feel obligated to read the entire statement, but they should pick excerpts to read to the class, or summarize the main points.

They may also share any other final words about the class, their classmates or the entire experience.

Activity 4: Closing Ritual

Create with the class some type of ritual to provide the class with closure. This may take the form of a blessing, or you may choose to have each student write personal notes to each other, or you may choose to have a celebration. The type of closing ritual will depend on the class—you may decide to plan it entirely on your own, or you may involve the class in the planning. Whatever you do, it should leave the class with a sense of finality and of friendship.

Materials:

Examples of Mission Statements
Paper
Pens
Closing Ritual supplies