

Bonus Jewish Family Education Session: Prayer and Community - Reform and Change

Level 6

(Theme: Revelation)

Torah

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| 1. Introduction to <i>K'tuvim</i> /Writings | What is <i>K'tuvim</i> /Writings? What type of literature is found in <i>K'tuvim</i> /Writings? How did God reveal God's self to our ancestors, and how does God reveal God's self to us today? Students will have the opportunity to explore the idea of God's ongoing Revelation as explored throughout this level. |
| 2. <i>M'gillat Rut</i> / The Book of Ruth: Mining the Text for Meaning | How can a deeper reading of a biblical text help me discover meanings or messages that are not readily apparent? How do questions (not necessarily their answers) help me find out more meaning in text? What is my own assessment of the meaning of the Book of Ruth? Students will provide their own interpretation of the Book of Ruth in preparation for the creation of a "Ruth Movie Storyboard" in lesson 3. |
| 3. <i>M'gillat Rut</i> / The Book of Ruth: Finding God in Moab and Canaan | What role does God play in the book of Ruth? What are some different perspectives on the role God plays in the text and in our lives? How do the multiple perspectives on God's role in the text affect my understanding of our relationship with God? In this lesson, students will create a "Ruth Movie Storyboard" with appropriate scenes that reflect their viewpoint about the meaning of the story. |
| 4. Introduction to Wisdom Literature | What is wisdom, according to Jewish texts? What does God have to do with wisdom? How can ancient Jewish perspectives on wisdom speak to me today? Students will examine the connection that exists between the wisdom literature of the Bible and the Level 6 theme of Revelation. |

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| 5. <i>Mishlei</i> / Proverbs: Wise Words for All | This lesson examines how the Book of Proverbs enhances and enriches a person's understanding of wisdom and, thereby, holds the power to enhance and enrich their life. |
| 6. <i>Kohelet</i> : Wise Man or Cynic? | Why is the book of <i>Kohelet</i> /Ecclesiastes controversial? What wisdom can we learn from the <i>Kohelet</i> ? How does the wisdom in the Bible help me in my own life? Students will apply wisdom texts to an issue in their lives and an issue in their world. |
| 7. <i>T'hillim</i> / Psalms Session: Alef: Poetry and Liturgy | What are the psalms? What is unique about the psalms? What can I learn about my relationship with God through the psalms? Through analysis of psalms, students will describe various aspects of the author's relationship with God. |
| 8. <i>T'hillim</i> / Psalms Session Bet: Images of God | What ideas and themes are found in the psalms? What ideas in the psalms relate to or resonate with me? What do I believe about God and my relationship with God? Through text analysis, students will describe different attributes of God described in the psalms. |
| 9. God: How Are You revealed in the World and What Is My Relationship with You? | What do I believe about God? What is my relationship with God? How does God reveal God's self in our world? In this lesson, students will create their own text that describes their relationship with God. |

Avodah

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| 1. Standing at Sinai: My Role in Revelation | What is the meaning of Revelation? What meaning does it have in my life? What is my role in Revelation? What does it mean that we stood at Mount Sinai, and what responsibility do I have as a result of having been present at Mount Sinai? In this lesson, students will create a mural that reflects their understanding of their role in the ongoing process of Revelation. |
| 2. The Torah Service as Public Reading | How is public reading of Torah different than reading or studying privately? Why is it important to hear Torah read in community? How do the rituals and prayers associated with the Torah service build community? This lesson includes an optional activity in which students study Reform Movement platforms and reflect on the changing attitudes related to Revelation. |

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| 3. The Torah Service and Community Building | This lesson continues to explore the power of the public reading of the Torah and expands on its power to build community. Students will focus on how certain pieces of liturgy such as the <i>Mi Shebeirach</i> and <i>Birkat Hagomeil</i> prayers create opportunities for members of the community to share the joys and accomplishments of their lives. |
| 4. Finding Our Own Way to Sinai: A Map of the Torah Service | What happens in the Torah service and why is it like a reenactment of Sinai? This lesson is designed to acquaint students with the major elements of the Shabbat morning Torah service. |
| 5. Choreography and Etiquette of the Torah Service | What is my role in the Torah service as a member of the congregation and as a participant in the ritual? How can I find personal meaning within the spectrum of customs and traditions surrounding the Torah service? What is the important, special vocabulary of the Torah service? In this lesson, students create their own Bar/Bat Mitzvah information booklet, demonstrating their understanding of key customs and rituals in the Torah service. |
| 6. The Blessing of Torah | What is the significance of a blessing before and after an action and what are the possible messages in the blessings before and after the Torah reading? What is the blessing of Torah in my life? Students will explore the possibility of a connection between the blessings for the reading of the Torah and Revelation, as well as explain their on interpretation of the chosenness concept. |
| 7. What is the Haftarah? | The purpose of this lesson is to help students understand the connection between the readings of the Haftarah, a selection from the book of Prophets, and the weekly Torah portion. What is the haftarah? What is commentary, or interpretation, and how is the haftarah like commentary? What are the differences in traditional and Reform synagogues with regard to the haftarah blessings after the reading? |
| 8. The Role of <i>Sh'liach Tzibur</i> | Why is the role of <i>sh'liach tzibur</i> (a community's worship leader) important? What do I need to know, do, and understand to serve in the role of <i>sh'liach tzibur</i> ? Students will reflect on the importance of the role of <i>sh'liach tzibur</i> through a series of poster activities related to the importance of the role. |

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| 9. My Communal Role in Revelation: Entering the Covenant as a Jewish Adult | What does it mean that we stood at Sinai as a people, and what responsibility do I have as a result of having been present at Sinai? Am I still a part of the Jewish community even when I don't feel a connection to Revelation/Torah or to God? In this lesson, students will project a vision of the Jewish community of the future based on their sense of the past, and the present. |
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G'milut Chasadim

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| 1. Finding God in Our World Through Acts of G'milut Chasadim | What makes something a "world issue?" What world issues are of concern to us? How can we be advocates for world issues? Students will recognize and identify world issues as opportunities to work as God's partners. |
| 2. <i>Bal Tashchit</i> : Protecting the Rainforests | This lesson is the first of two that focus on caring for our physical world as a means of connection to God and the work of <i>g'milut chasadim</i> . What can I learn from Jewish sources about my responsibility for protecting nature and the environment? How can I experience Revelation by working to protect the environment? How can I get involved in environmental issues such as recycling or protecting the rainforests? Why are environmental concerns world issues? Students will plan a local project for protecting their environment, create a display on rainforests for "Make A Difference Day" and explain how they can help with local quality of life. |
| 3. <i>Bal Tashchit</i> : Recycling and Conserving Energy | This lesson encourages students to continue exploring the concept of <i>Bal Tashchit</i> , this time focusing on the topic of recycling and conserving energy. Students will investigate the conservation and Conservation practices of their own synagogue as a way to teach others about the issues relating to the protection of the world. |
| 4. <i>Tzaar Baalei Chayim</i> : Care and Protection of Animals | What does Jewish tradition teach about the care of and responsibility toward animals? How can I experience Revelation by protecting animals? How do I weigh the needs of animals and humans? What does <i>Tzaar Baalei Chayim</i> mean to me? In this lesson, students will be challenged to look at the fate of animals through a global lens. |

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| 5. World Health Issues | This lesson will use Jewish texts on health and healing to help students consider their responsibility regarding world health issues. What are some world health issues? What is the connection between what Judaism teaches about health and healing and our concern for world health issues? How can I experience Revelation by working to combat world health problems? |
| 6. Peace | What can I learn from Jewish texts about war and peace? What can I do to promote peace in the world? Why is it so difficult to bring about peace and eliminate war? How might I experience God when I invoke myself in actions that promote peace around the world? In this lesson, students will create a project that shares the value of peace in the world. |
| 7. World Hunger | What are the causes of world hunger and what can we do about it? What does Judaism teach us about our responsibility for world hunger? How can I experience Revelation by working against world hunger? Students will interpret and react to messages about hunger contained in Jewish texts through drama, music, or art. |
| 8. Jews and the Struggle for Civil Rights | What is the Religious Action Center for Reform Judaism, and what does it do? What are civil rights? What can I do to support social justice in my country? How can I experience Revelation by fighting for social justice? In this lesson, students will prepare a civil rights campaign for Making a Difference Day that will allow visitors to engage in the work of <i>Tikkun Olam</i> . |
| 9. <i>Hineini</i> : Embracing Our People Around the World | Where in the world do we find Reform Synagogues? What responsibilities do we have for Reform Jews in Israel Eastern Europe, and the FSU? What are some ways in which we can build connections with these communities? How can I experience Revelation by helping other Jews? In this lesson, students will plan and implement a project that helps build connections with Reform congregations in Israel and Eastern Europe. |

Bonus Jewish Family Education Session: Coincidence, Courage, or the Hand of God? A Family Exploration of the Book of Esther