

The Pardes Center for Jewish Educators presents

An Interactive PARSHA EXPERIENCE



Parsha: Acharei Mot

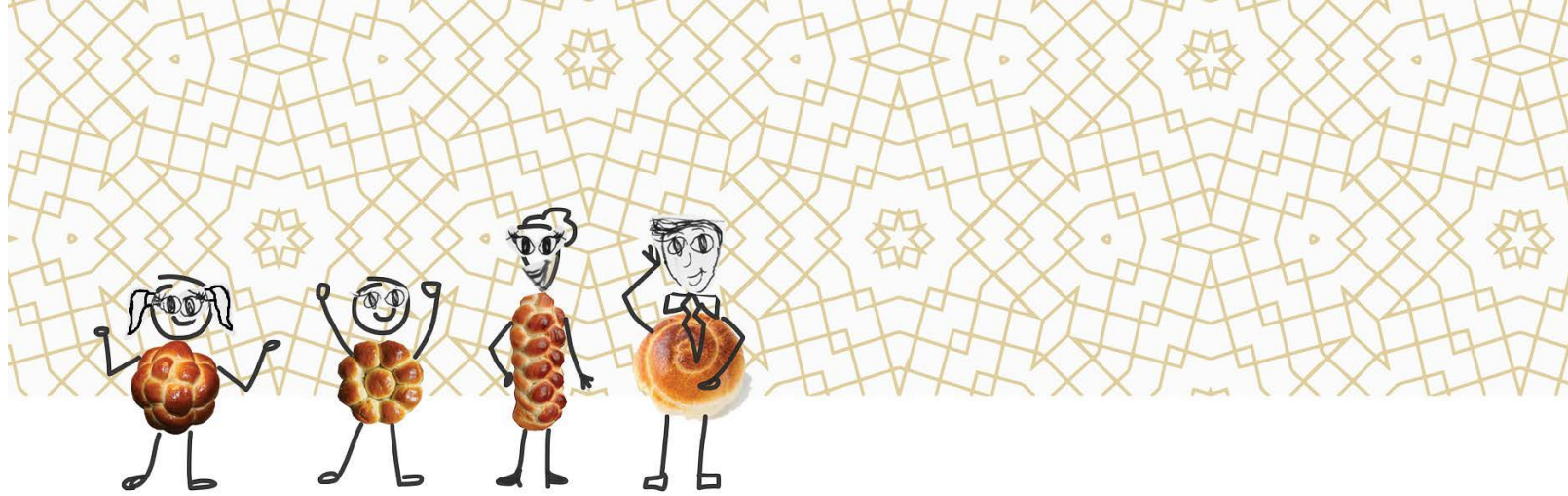
Title: Walk This Way

Contributor: Amy Martin, Pardes Day School Educators Program, '09-'11

The Parsha at First Glance

Spotlight on the Parsha:

Forgiveness and atonement, how to make our wrongs right, are the main themes of this *parsha*, which is called *Acharei Mot*. We learn all about using offerings – animals – to help *Bnei Israel* be free of their mistakes and regrets.



Zooming In:

Later on, in the parsha, there is a long list of the ways we should behave and live our lives.

These are divided into two types of laws: *mishpatim* and *chukim*. Mishpatim are laws that we are easily able to understand. For example: “Don’t Steal,” a law that is found in the Ten Commandments.

Chukim are laws that are harder for us to know why God asks us to follow them. For example: the law prohibiting wearing clothing made of wool and linen mixed together.

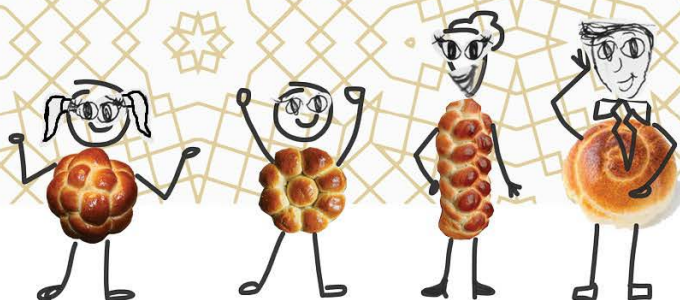
No matter how difficult it may be to understand the ‘why’ behind some of our laws, we are told that we need to follow them. This verse is from chapter 18 of Vayikra:

4 You shall fulfill My ordinances and observe My statutes, to follow them . I am the Lord, your God.	ד אֶת-מִשְׁפָּטַי תַּעֲשׂוּ וְאֶת-חֻקֹּתַי תִּשְׁמְרוּ לְלַכְתַּם בָּהֶם : אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם .
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Questions for Consideration:

The verb that is used is this pasuk, **לַלְכַת**, means to walk.

- Why do you think that the Torah chose this verb when talking about following laws?
- What does it mean to “walk in them”?



The Parsha Through Another Lens

Game On:

Play a round or two of each of the following games.

Simon Says

In case you need a refresher of the rules, one person is “Simon,” while the others are the players. Standing in front of the group, Simon tells players what they must do. Players should only obey the instructions that begin with the words “Simon Says.” If “Simon Says” doesn’t begin the instructions, and a player ends up doing the action, then they are out!

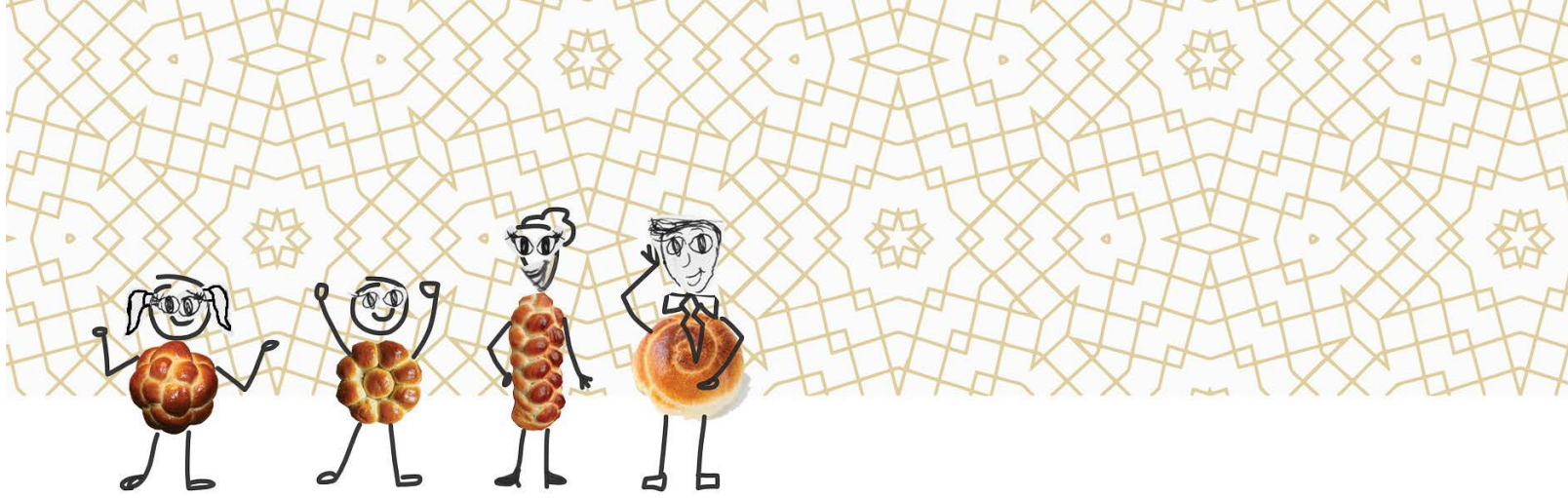
Shape Maker

Materials: Pre-cut strings of yarn, each cut into one-foot-long pieces.

Players must sit back to back. Player A gets the string. Player B will give instructions to Player A.

Player B must describe, step by step, how to make a shape out of the string without telling Player A what shape they are making.

For example: Player B might say to Player A, “Turn 5 inches of your string to the right. Take the next 5 inches and turn it south, etc.” Player B gives instructions until Player B believes Player A has built the shape. At this point, Player A and B can step out of their formation and look at the shape. Was Player A able to make the shape Player B envisioned just by following Player B’s instructions?



Discussion after your games:

- How did it feel to be the person listening to the rules in both Simon Says and Shape Maker?
- What do you have to do when you follow someone?
- Thinking back to our parsha, what do you think God is asking the Jewish people to do when God says: “**לִלְכֹת בְּהֵם**” – meaning, to follow both mishpatim and chukim?
- Is it easier to follow rules that you understand? Think about these examples: You understand why you can’t cross the street when the traffic light is green. You understand why it’s bad to be jealous of toys or clothes that your friends have.
- Why is it so hard to follow laws that you don’t understand as well? For example, when your parents say, “Why? Because I said so...”
- After your reflections, do you have anything to add to the idea of why the Torah would use the verb **לִלְכֹת** (to walk) to refer to following laws?

Shabbat Shalom!