

The Pardes Center for Jewish Educators presents

# An Interactive PARSHA EXPERIENCE



**Parsha:** Ki Tavo

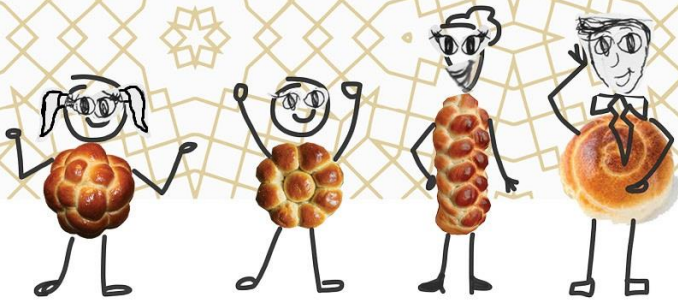
**Title:** First Fruit and Family

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## The Parsha at First Glance

### Spotlight on the Parsha:

In *Parshat Ki Tavo*, we learn about the mitzvah of *bikkurim* - the first fruits. The people are told that once they enter and settle Israel (and begin to farm the land), they should bring their first fruits to the *Beit Hamikdash*, the Temple, and give them to the *Kohen*,



the priest. The priest will place them in front of the altar and then people will say a prayer to God.

Before we get to the specific verses in the parsha that talk about what should happen during that visit to the priest, consider:

If you were a farmer, and bringing your first fruits to the Temple, what do you think you would want to say to God?

## Zooming In:

### Devarim 26:5-10

<p>(5) You shall then recite as follows before the LORD your God: "My father was a fugitive Aramean. He went down to Egypt with meager numbers and sojourned there; but there he became a great and very populous nation.</p> <p>(6) The Egyptians dealt harshly with us and oppressed us; they imposed heavy labor upon us.</p> <p>(7) We cried to the LORD, the God of our fathers, and the LORD heard our plea and saw our plight, our misery, and our oppression.</p> <p>(8) The LORD freed us from Egypt by a mighty hand, by an outstretched arm and awesome power, and by signs and portents.</p>	<p>ה וְעָנִיתָ וְאָמַרְתָּ לְפָנֵי יְהוָה  אֱלֹהֶיךָ, אֲרָמִי אֲבִד אָבִי, וַיֵּרֶד  מִצְרַיִמָּה, וַיִּגַּר שָׁם בְּמִתֵּי מְעוֹט;  וַיְהִי-שָׁם לְגוֹי גָּדוֹל עָצוּם וְרַב .  וַיִּרְעוּ אֹתָנוּ הַמִּצְרִים, וַיַּעֲנוּנוּ;  וַיִּתְּנוּ עָלֵינוּ עֲבֹדָה קָשָׁה .  וַנִּצְעַק אֶל-יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ;  וַיִּשְׁמַע יְהוָה אֶת-קִלְנוֹ, וַיִּרְא אֶת-  עַנְיֵנוּ וְאֶת-עֲמָלְנוּ וְאֶת-לַחְצֵנוּ .  וַיֹּצִיאֵנוּ יְהוָה מִמִּצְרַיִם בְּיָד  חֲזָקָה וּבְזֶרַע נְטוּיָה, וּבְמַרְא גְדֹל-  וּבְאֹתוֹת, וּבְמִפְתֵּיִם .</p>
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<p>(9) He brought us to this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey.</p> <p>(10) Wherefore I now bring the first fruits of the soil which You, O LORD, have given me.” You shall leave it before the LORD your God and bow low before the LORD your God.</p>	<p>ט וַיְבִיאֵנוּ אֶל-הַמְּקוֹם הַזֶּה; וַיִּתֵּן-  לָנוּ אֶת-הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת, אֶרֶץ זָבַת  חֶלֶב וּדְבַשׁ .</p> <p>י וַעֲתָה, הִנֵּה הֵבֵאתִי אֶת-רֵאשִׁית  פְּרֵי הָאֲדָמָה, אֲשֶׁר-נָתַתָּה לִּי,  יְהוָה; וְהִנְחִיתוּ לְפָנַי יְהוָה  אֱלֹהֶיךָ, וְהִשְׁתַּחֲוִיתָ לְפָנַי יְהוָה  אֱלֹהֶיךָ .</p>
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Now that you've read what the Torah says about this, consider:

Why is this what we are supposed to say when we bring the first fruits?

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks points out that most ancient cultures had a ceremony or holiday celebrating the first fruits, but that those cultures focused on nature and nature’s power. In Judaism, we are focused on something else: our history, and on our ancestors’ relationship with God. These verses remind us of that story. It emphasizes the importance of who we are and where we come from. It connects us to our Jewish identity.

**Questions for Consideration:**

- How do we connect to bikkurim today?
- When is another time we read אֲרָמִי אֲבִד אָבִי each year, and how does that connect to when we say it for bikkurim?
- What are some times in your life when you have heard or told stories about your family? How did that make you feel?
- When are times when you feel connected to your ancestors?



## The Parsha Through Another Lens

### Family Tree Time!

Note: This activity may require some preparation before Shabbat.

The aim of this activity is to get participants to connect to their ancestors. At the Shabbat meal they will recreate their family tree.

On the following pages are images of different types of fruit. Each generation in your family will be represented by a different fruit:

- grapes = the children's great-grandparents' generation,
- oranges = the children's grandparents,
- apples = parents' generation
- pomegranates = the children's generation

On each piece of fruit, write a family member's name and cut out the fruit. You can include extended family as well, and decide how far back you want to go.

At the Shabbat meal give the children all the fruits and ask them to put the generations in order of how they think the family tree looks. Use the whole table, and be creative about how they may want to show different parts of the family. It may be interesting for you to sit back and see how children understand your family.

You can connect this activity back to bikkurim, first fruits, and the idea of relating to our past as part of our identity, like when we say: My father was a fugitive Aramean –  
אֲרַמִּי אֵבֶד אָבִי.



## Extension Activity

Have each person at the table pick a “card” and either answer or ask the question on the card.

What’s your favorite story about your grandfather?	What is one thing you learned from your parents?	Where is your grandmother/ grandfather from?
What is your favorite story about your grandmother?	What is one fact about one of your parents?	What is a funny story about one of your siblings?
Where did your great-grandparents live?	What’s one thing you learned from your grandparents?	What is something that’s important to your parents?
What is your favorite family memory?	What is your favorite family story?	If you could ask a question of a family member you’ve never met, what would the question be and who would you ask?
What is a food that has been passed down in your family?	What is a story you’d want to tell your kids about your family?	Share a wish you have about your family.

**Shabbat Shalom!**

