

The Pardes Center for Jewish Educators presents

An Interactive PARSHA EXPERIENCE



Parsha: V'zot Habracha

Title: Teach Your Children Well

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

The Parsha at First Glance

Spotlight on the Parsha:

Our *parsha* opens with Moshe's final blessing to *Bnei Yisrael* before his death. As part of his blessing, in *Devarim* 33:4, we are told:



<p>4. The Torah that Moshe commanded us is a legacy for the congregation of Yaakov.</p>	<p>ד תורה צוה-לנו, משה : מורשה, קהלת יעקב.</p>
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There is an **active** aspect here of our inheritance of the commandments that Moshe has given us.

As Rashi comments, "We have taken it and we will not abandon it."

Questions for Consideration:

- a) What do you think the *p'shat* (simple meaning) of this verse is?
- b) What does it mean to inherit something? (Young people may need your help in defining this term, depending on their age.)

Zooming In:

This verse has come to epitomize our relationship with Torah. In many communities we sing this verse right after opening the ark and taking out the Torah.

In the Talmud we are told that it should be recited from generation to generation and is the first Torah verse taught to a child (Tractate Sukkot 42a):

<p>What is the Torah [taught to a child who has just learned to speak]? Rav Hamnuna said: "Moses commanded us Torah, an inheritance of the congregation of Jacob." [Devarim 33:4]</p>	<p>תורה מאי היא? א"ר המנונא (דברים לג, ד) : "תורה צוה לנו משה מורשה קהלת יעקב."</p>
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- a) **Why** or **what** about this verse do you think made the Rabbis of the Talmud pick it as the **first** verse a child should say when they learn how to speak?
- b) What lessons might this verse teach a young child?



The Parsha Through Another Lens

Creating Our Own Chain



(This activity requires stapling and writing. If you want this to be a shomer shabbat-friendly activity, you can do this as a thinking and sharing activity without the crafting piece.)

Give children strips of paper of two different colors, similar to those used to construct a sukkah chain. (See picture for guidance.)

Ask them to identify three people that they feel they “inherited” Torah from. Encourage them to think about Torah in a broad sense, as Jewish identity, Jewish lessons, etc.

Have them write the name of each person on a separate piece of paper and create links for a chain from each piece of paper.

Then have students think of three lessons or ideas from the Torah that they feel they have “inherited” and that they would feel strongly about teaching someone else (a younger sibling or friend).



An example could be: *Ve'ahavta l'reacha kamocha* - loving your neighbor as yourself.

Have the children use their second color of paper and summarize each teaching with a title or group of words and write them on a separate chain in their link.

Then have them link all their circles together to form a chain.

As a group, have the children come together with their chains. Ask each person to share at least one piece of Torah they have inherited and one person they feel they have inherited Torah from.

After each person shares, start linking the individual students chains together so they form one large chain.

Wrapping Up

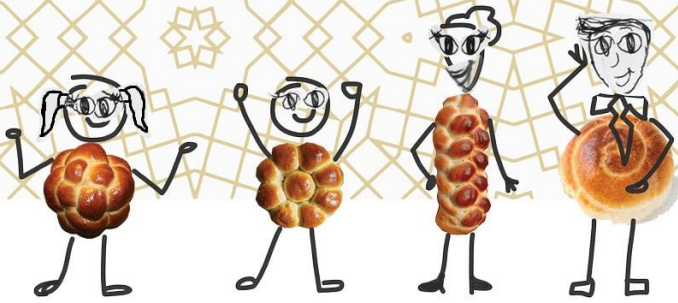
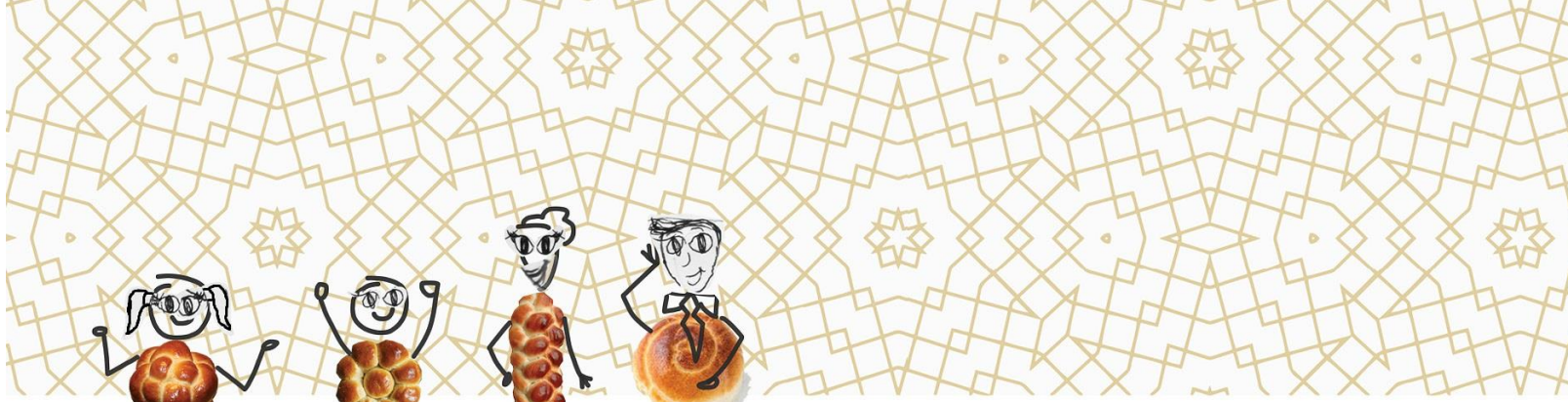
Have the children reflect on some common themes or ideas they heard about the Torah that the group felt they have inherited and the people they felt they inherited Torah from. Did anything stand out to them?

Revisit our verse, Devarim 33:4:

4. The Torah that Moshe commanded us is a legacy for the congregation of Yaakov.	ד תּוֹרַה צְוָה-לָנוּ, מֹשֶׁה : מוֹרְשָׁה, קִהַלְת יַעֲקֹב.
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Ask the children after this activity:

- How do you understand this verse?
- What does it mean for us to inherit the Torah that Moshe commanded?
- How do we continue the chain of inheritance?
- How do you understand Rashi's idea that we will inherit this Torah and not abandon it?



Hang your chain somewhere prominent in your home/classroom to be reminded of the importance of our inheriting the Torah of Moshe and continuing this legacy.

Shabbat Shalom!