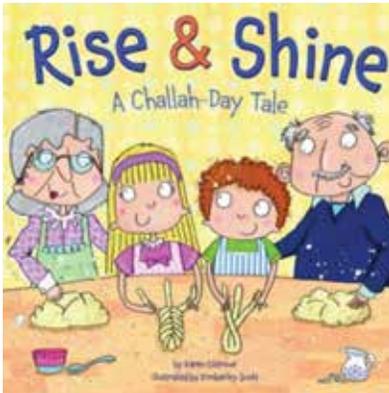


# Global Day of Jewish Learning

## Curriculum: Creating Together



NOV. 17. 13

[www.theglobalday.com](http://www.theglobalday.com)

A Project of the Aleph Society



Written by: **Devorah Katz**

**RESOURCES YOU WILL NEED:**

- Markers
- Paper
- Balloons (one per 8–12 students)

**Introduction** (10 minutes)

**B**egin by dividing the class into pairs. Ask each pair to make a list of groups to which they belong: family, sports, extra-curricular, friends, etc.

➤ **Activity:**

Give each student a piece of paper and some markers. Have them draw a big circle on their page then make a pie chart by dividing up the circle into wedges. Have them label the wedges with the names of groups to which they belong.

➤ **Ask:**

1. Ask students to share their lists with the class.
2. How do you feel about being part of a group?
3. Are there limitations with belonging to specific groups?
4. Give some examples of what you have accomplished as part of a group.

**Part One: Groups in the Bible** (25 minutes)

➤ **Ask your students to split back up into their original pairs. Together, they can read the text below from Exodus while trying to get a sense of the storyline.**

The Jewish people were nervous. They expected Moses to come down from the mountain after forty days, but he had yet to appear. Instead of calming each other down they actually did the opposite, feeding off of each other's nervous energy. Eventually, in a frenzy, they asked Aaron to build them a new god to worship, so Aaron made a golden calf.

### Text #1: Exodus 32:1-4

וַיֵּרָא הָעָם כִּי בִשֵׁשׁ מַלְּשָׁה לָרִדָּת מִן הַהָר וַיִּקְהֵל הָעָם עַל אַהֲרֹן וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלָיו קוּם עֲשֵׂה לָנוּ אֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר יִלְכוּ  
לִפְנֵינוּ כִּי זֶה מֹשֶׁה הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר הֶעֱלֵנוּ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לֹא יָדַעְנוּ מָה הָיָה לוֹ: וַיֹּאמֶר אֶלֶּהֶם אַהֲרֹן פָּרְקוּ נְזָמֵי הַזָּהָב  
אֲשֶׁר בְּאָזְנֵי נְשֵׁיכֶם וּבְנֵיכֶם וּבְנִתֵיכֶם וְהָבִיאוּ אֵלָי: וַיִּתְּפְּרוּ כָּל הָעָם אֶת נְזָמֵי הַזָּהָב אֲשֶׁר בְּאָזְנֵיהֶם וַיָּבִיאוּ אֶל  
אַהֲרֹן: וַיִּקַּח מֵיָדָם וַיִּצַר אֹתוֹ בַּחֶרֶט וַיַּעֲשֶׂהוּ עֲגֹל מִסֹּכָה וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלֶּה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר הֶעֱלִיף מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם:

**1** When the people saw that Moses was so long in coming down from the mountain, the people gathered against Aaron and said to him, “Come, make us a god who shall go before us, for that man Moses, who brought us from the land of Egypt— we do not know what has happened to him.” **2** Aaron said to them, “Take off the gold rings that are on the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring them to me.” **3** And all the people took off the gold rings that were in their ears and brought them to Aaron. **4** This he took from them and cast a mold, and made it into a molten calf. And they exclaimed, “This is your god, O Israel, who brought you out of the land of Egypt!”

#### ► Ask:

1. Why do you think *Bnei Yisrael* (Children of Israel) reacted so strongly when Moses didn't come down from the mountain?
2. Can you remember a time when you were afraid? How did you deal with your fears?
3. Why do you think *Bnei Yisrael* wanted to replace Moses with a golden calf?
4. Are you surprised that many of *Bnei Yisrael* demanded a golden calf?

### Text #2: Dr. Seuss: *Oh, the Places You'll Go!*

You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself any direction you choose. You're on your own. And you know what you know. And YOU are the one who'll decide where to go...

Dr. Seuss is teaching us a valuable lesson. He's letting us know that we, as individuals, get to make our own choices. We choose the direction we're headed in. Is this always the case? Or do we sometimes follow the path of others like parents, teachers, and friends? Yet, if each one of us makes our own decisions, how do we explain a story like that of the Golden Calf where all together a big group of people took the path of fear and irrationality?

#### ► Ask:

1. Is it possible that group mentality can lead us down the wrong path?
2. Have you ever found yourself following a group of your friends even when you think they are making the wrong decision? What happened?
3. How can we make good decisions for ourselves when our friends are making bad decisions?

Continue with your partner to read the next text.

### Text #3: Exodus 25:1-8

וַיְדַבֵּר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: דַּבֵּר אֶל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּקְחוּ לִי תְרוּמָה מֵאֵת כָּל אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִדְבְּנוּ לְבוּ תִקְחוּ אֶת תְּרוּמָתִי: וְזֹאת הַתְּרוּמָה אֲשֶׁר תִּקְחוּ מֵאֵתָם זָהָב וְכֶסֶף וְנְחֹשֶׁת: וְתַכְלֵת וְאַרְגָּמָן וְתוֹלַעַת שָׁנִי וְשֵׁשׁ וְעִזִּים: וְעֹרֹת אֵילָם מְאֻדָּמִים וְעֹרֹת תְּחָשִׁים וְעֵצֵי שִׁטִּים: שֶׁמֶן לְמָאֵר בְּשָׂמִים לְשֶׁמֶן הַמְּשַׁחָה וְלִקְטֹרֶת הַסַּמִּים: אֲבָנֵי שֹהַם וְאֲבָנֵי מִלֵּאִים לְאֹפֶד וְלַחֹשֶׁן: וְעָשׂוּ לִי מִקְדָּשׁ וְשָׁכַנְתִּי בְּתוֹכָם:

**1** The Lord spoke unto Moses, saying: **2** Tell the Israelite people to bring Me gifts; you shall accept gifts for Me from every person whose heart so moves him. **3** And these are the gifts that you shall accept from them: gold, silver, and copper; **4** blue, purple, and crimson yarns, fine linen, goats' hair; **5** tanned rams' skins, dolphin skins, and acacia wood; **6** oil for lighting, spices for the anointing oil and for the aromatic incense; **7** lapis lazuli and other stones for setting, for the ephod and for the breastpiece. **8** And let them make Me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them.

We've looked at a time when *Bnei Yisrael* banded together to create the Golden Calf. Let's take a look at when they worked together towards a positive outcome. God commands the Jewish people to bring donations to help build the *Mishkan* (Sanctuary). *Bnei Yisrael* are given a list of materials needed to complete the task at hand. They band together to bring the best of the best to Moses.

Mishkan, The (Sanctuary): a) the temporary Sanctuary in which the Divine Presence dwelled during the Jews' journeys through the desert; b) the portion of the tabernacle and the Temple building before the Holy of Holies which contained the inner altar, the table for the showbread, and the menorah. (adapted from [www.chabad.org](http://www.chabad.org))

#### ➤ Ask:

1. What sort of materials are Bnei Yisrael asked to donate to the building of the *Mishkan*?
2. What is the benefit of donating your own possessions to a cause?
3. Think of a time when you've given away a precious toy or game that you loved. How did it feel to part with something that you loved?

### Text #4: Sforno, commentary on Exodus 39:32

ותכל...ויעשו בני ישראל: הפעולה כולה על שלימותה נעשתה על ידי כל ישראל, כי קצתם התנדבו ממון וקצתם עשו המלאכה בנדבת לבם לעשות רצון קונם:

The entire action was completed by all of Israel; for some volunteered money, and some volunteered to work, all generously eager to perform the will of their Master.

Sforno (Rabbi Obadiah Sforno), a 16th century Italian commentator, wrote that because the Jewish people wholeheartedly donated the materials to build the *Mishkan*, they shared in its actual construction. Even if one was physically unable to do the work of creating the *Mishkan*, he argued, providing support for its construction allowed each individual to share in it completely.

Even if *Bnei Yisrael* aren't the ones picking up the hammers and nails and actually building the *Mishkan*, their donations are responsible for building the *Mishkan*. In that way, *Bnei Yisrael* actually take part in building the *Mishkan*.

Being part of the process adds to the overall experience and feeling of interconnectedness.

### Part Two: Working Together to Change the World (15 minutes)

*Facilitator's note: If you are running short on time, or do not have the appropriate resources, this section may be omitted.*

#### Introduction

Today we learned that working together as a group is always going to be a powerful experience. At times being in a group can be dangerous, leading to negative group experiences like we saw with the Golden Calf. But at its best, a group working well together can accomplish great things! Now it's time for us to work together as a group and do something wonderful.

#### Think, Pair, Share

Using the think-pair-share process, ask your students to imagine some things they could accomplish as a group. Pose a question to the students as a group and give them a few moments to think on their own. After they've had a chance to think by themselves, have the students brainstorm together in pairs, then have them share their ideas, as partners, with the whole class.

Here are some examples of group accomplishments:

- Organize a park clean up
- Take part in planting a garden at your school
- Run a clothing drive in your classroom
- Run a class-wide bake sale and raise money for charity
- Organize a class run to stay healthy and raise money for a good cause

As a class, decide on one idea that you can work together as a group to successfully accomplish and make it a class activity for the future.

### Final Activity (5 minutes)

*You will need one balloon for every 8-12 students.*

Have your students stand in circles with 8-12 students per circle.

Toss the balloon in the center of the circle. Without moving, students are asked to keep the balloon afloat using only their heads and noses.

After allowing mild chaos for a few minutes, point out the power of a group working together to accomplish its goal.

### Conclusion (5 minutes)

#### Text # 5: Babylonian Talmud Sanhedrin 99b

אמר רבי אבהו: כל המעשה את חבירו לדבר מצוה מעלה עליו הכתוב כאילו עשה

He who causes his friend to do a mitzvah (commandment) is regarded by Scripture as though he had done it himself.

The Talmud makes an important point. We are all individuals, but if we can inspire others then we can multiply our impact! We began by looking at all the different types of groups to which we belong. If we use those groups and our roles in those groups well, we can harness tremendous positive energy and accomplish wonderful things in the world.

**Text #1: Exodus 32:1-4**

וַיֵּרָא הָעָם כִּי בָשַׁשׁ מֹשֶׁה לָרֶדֶת מִן הַהָר וַיִּקְהַל הָעָם עַל אֶהֱרֹן וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלָיו קוּם עֲשֵׂה לָנוּ אֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר יִלְכוּ לִפְנֵינוּ כִּי זֶה מֹשֶׁה הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר הֶעֱלָנוּ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לֹא יָדַעְנוּ מָה הָיָה לוֹ: וַיֹּאמֶר אֶלֶהֱם אֶהֱרֹן פָּרְקוּ נְזָמֵי הַזָּהָב אֲשֶׁר בְּאָזְנֵי נְשֵׁיכֶם וּבְנִיתֵיכֶם וּבְנִיתֵיכֶם וְהִבִּיאוּ אֵלַי: וַיִּתְּפְרְקוּ כָּל הָעָם אֶת נְזָמֵי הַזָּהָב אֲשֶׁר בְּאָזְנֵיהֶם וַיְבִיאוּ אֶל אֶהֱרֹן: וַיִּקַּח מִיָּדָם וַיִּצַר אֹתוֹ בַּחֶרֶט וַיַּעֲשֶׂהוּ עֵגֶל מִסִּכָּה וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלֶּה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר הֶעֱלוּדָה מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם:

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