



מחזור"ק – מִיָּזְמָה תַּנְכ"י קוֹנְסוּרְבַּטִּיבִי



שְׁלֵשֶׁת מִזְוֵה

English Teachers' Guide



MaToK: The Bible Curriculum Project of the Solomon Schechter Day Schools

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STANDARDS and BENCHMARKS for Parashat Shemot

STANDARD 1

Students will become independent and literarily astute readers of the biblical text in Hebrew.

Benchmarks:

- 1.4 Recognizes names, places, and key words from biblical texts.
- 1.5 Locates names, places, and key words from biblical texts.
- 1.6 Reads verses from the *TaNaKH* in Hebrew.
- 1.7 Knows the alpha-numeric of Hebrew.
- 1.9 Differentiates between section, book, chapter, and verse of *TaNaKH*.
- 1.10 Employs a variety of strategies and access skills when reading blocks of texts independently.
 - 1.10a. Understands verb prefixes and suffixes.
 - 1.10b. Identifies roots in verbs and nouns.
 - 1.10c. Recognizes repeating words and roots.
 - 1.10d. Identifies biblical noun declensions, i.e., possessive suffixes.
 - 1.10e. Distinguishes between narrative, dialogue, and inner quotations.
 - 1.10f. Uses context cues to comprehend words in their context.
 - 1.10g. Comprehends verses and short blocks of verses from the *TaNaKH* in Hebrew.
- 1.11 Knows basic Biblical vocabulary.
- 1.13 Discerns different names or nomenclatures referring to a biblical personage or lack of name of biblical personage.
- 1.14 Employs additional access skills when reading blocks of texts independently.
 - 1.14a Recognizes regular biblical verse syntax.
 - 1.14d. Recognizes vav consecutive imperfect.
 - 1.14f. Identifies shared roots in verbs and nouns.
 - 1.14g. Understands related words in a noun construct.
- 1.15 Recognizes texts identifying literary devices.
- 1.20 Employs grammatical and literary skills when reading blocks of texts independently.
- 1.21 Reads and comprehends longer blocks of verses from the *TaNaKH* in Hebrew.
 - Finds and cites verses to support a personal statement about the text*
 - Uses literary devices to support search for meaning in the text*
- 1.22 Comprehends units of text after textual study.
- 1.23 Understands that the verbal system in biblical Hebrew is different from modern Hebrew
- 1.24 Knows aspects of biblical Hebrew.

STANDARD 2

Students will be engaged in the learning of ancient, rabbinic, and modern modes of interpretation of the biblical text and will see themselves as a link in this ongoing chain of interpretation.

Benchmarks:

- 2.2 Contributes personal ideas about the narrative.
- 2.3 Raises questions about the stories of the *Torah*.
- 2.4 Knows there are special stories/ *midrashim* that help explain and teach lessons based on the Torah's words and narratives.
- 2.5 Understands that some questions have more than one answer.
- 2.6 Recognizes special literary characteristics of the biblical text.
- 2.7 Understands that there are commentaries that provide interpretations of the *Torah*.
- 2.8 Understands that *Midrashim* help interpret the biblical text.
- 2.9 Distinguishes between *Midrash* and the *Torah* text.
- 2.11 Understands elements of Rashi's commentary on the *Torah* text.
- 2.12 Understands some basic principles of *Midrash*.
- 2.14 Differentiates between *p'shat* and *d'rash*.
- 2.16 Understands that there can be multiple interpretations to a given textual issue.
- 2.18 Draws connection between text and personal experience.

STANDARD 4 (applies particularly to Exodus 1,2 -- the midwives, etc.)

Students will view TaNaKH as the formative narrative of the Jewish people past, present, and future.

Benchmarks:

- 4.8 Explores the implication of various biblical narratives and empathizes with the biblical characters involved.
- 4.9 Identifies reoccurring central themes in unfamiliar texts.
- 4.10 Compares and contrasts central personalities of *Torah* narratives.

- 4.11 Relates the familial connection of the personalities of the *TaNaKH*.
- 4.12 Increases specificity and detail of personalities, themes, and events of *Torah* narratives.
- 4.13 Locates the narrative sequentially in the text.
- 4.19 Analyzes the characters in the *TaNaKH* focusing on their motivation and personality.

STANDARD 6

Students will develop an appreciation for the sacredness of the TaNaKH as the primary record of the meeting between God and the people of Israel and as an essential text through which Jews continue to grapple with theological, spiritual, and existential questions.

Benchmarks:

- 6.8 Examines the impact of Divine interactions on biblical characters.
- 6.10 Develops an understanding of a variety of biblical metaphors for God.
- 6.11 Understands and respects that people have differing and evolving concepts of God that are often connected to biblical texts.
- 6.12 Recognizes that names of God require special treatment
- 6.13 Explores why the text might have chosen to use particular metaphors for God and /or for God's presence in particular contexts.
- 6.15 Grapples with the question of what it means that God "speaks."
- 6.16 Analyzes how various human/Divine dialogues influence the Divine/human relationship.
- 6.20 Relates personal conceptions of God to conceptions of God in the *Torah* text.

STANDARD 8

Students will develop a love of Torah study for its own sake and come to embrace it as an inspiring resource, informing their values, sense of moral commitments, and ways of experiencing the world.

Benchmarks:

- 8.4 Engages enthusiastically in the study of *Torah*.
- 8.5 Expresses empathy for the biblical characters.
- 8.9 Explores various perspectives of modern moral issues in teacher-identified texts.
- 8.11 Recognizes universality of specific themes and ideas in the *Torah*.

פרשת שמות פרקים א'-ו' INTRODUCTION מאורה

Dear Teacher,

We welcome you to the MaToK teachers' guide, and hope that you will find it useful and enriching. If this is the first time you are using a MaToK teachers' guide, we suggest that you use this introduction to learn about the way teachers' guides are put together. Here are a few points that we hope will help make it more accessible:

I. Organization

1. Each unit (usually a פרשה) begins with an overview. Within the units, each *lesson* has its own introduction, which is more detailed than the overview.

Certain elements appear in most unit and lesson overviews. They are part of the background for the teacher.

2. Background for the teacher.

A. The narrative in its context. This is provided so that you will know at a glance which segment of the narrative is addressed in this unit or lesson.

B. Concepts and themes in the narrative (see also themes in each perek): These include concepts that can be inferred from the narrative, even though they are not directly stated.

C. Theological issues: These are understandings about God that arise from the story, or questions students may raise about God as a result of studying the segment.

D. Literary structure and devices: MaToK's approach to Torah study is essentially a literary approach. That means that we assume that the literary devices in the story convey understanding of the story and lead to important ideas.

E. Understandings from modern scholarship: What does contemporary scholarship teach us about this story? This segment is often provided for the teacher, but is not necessarily to be part of the lesson.

F. Understandings from tradition: These are small selections from פרשנות and מדרש. These, too, are provided for the teacher, but are not necessarily intended to be part of the lesson.

3. Objectives: Why have we chosen these particular goals? The more comfortable you become with these objectives and access skills, the more you will be able to exercise your own creativity and interpretive skills in developing Torah study. The ability to assess learning depends upon knowing what the learning objectives are.

A. Learning activities: What activities will the students engage in, in order to learn? These are activities that we suggest to support objectives and the development of access skills.

B. Access skills: The purposeful development of access skills, which support a literary approach to Torah study, characterizes MaToK. In each unit, we list the access skills that will build the scaffold of student understanding, so that they can become increasingly independent readers of Torah.

4. The unit

The unit is divided into “lessons.” However, a “lesson” is simply a subdivision of the unit; it is not necessarily a 40-45-minute period of time. The lessons presented are the basic lessons and should often be continued in follow-up lessons in which exercise sheets, vocabulary cards, etc. are used for reinforcement and students have the opportunity to practice reading the text, work on torn paper representations, play with match cards or vocabulary cards, etc.

The pacing of lessons is specific to each setting, and teachers will decide where the appropriate place is to make the transition from one segment to another.

II. Pedagogy

A. We are interested in addressing multiple intelligences, both in order to honor diverse ways of learning, and to expand student opportunities for expression.

B. Open-ended questions. We see the Torah as open to much interpretation. To that end, we encourage teachers and students to ask open-ended questions. Questions of this kind liberate the teacher from having to have all the “answers.” Rather, we encourage teachers to conduct *conversations* on the most important and difficult of questions, rather than feeling compelled to provide an answer. Such conversations thrive on tolerance for “wait time,” and on encouraging more than one response to a given issue.

C. Approach to Student Questions

We hope that your students will feel comfortable enough to ask questions as their studies progress. Before beginning your teaching consider how you will respond to commonly asked student questions such as:

When was the Torah written? By whom?
What did it sound like when God “spoke”?
Did Moshe “see” God?

פרשת שמות פרקים א'-ו' INTRODUCTION אורה

Some questions specific to שמות, such as:

Are the stories of the Israelites in Egypt historically true?

Was there really a person named Moshe?

What does God look like?

God spoke to Moshe. Does God speak to people today?

Questions like these deserve serious attention and discussion by the whole class. When the teacher senses that s/he cannot interrupt the lesson to treat these questions as they arise, s/he may suggest that students write down the questions and put them into a "Question Box" that will be opened and discussed periodically at certain set times.



It is usually helpful to begin these discussion by turning to the class for suggestions. Keep in mind that there are many questions to which we do not know "the" answers. Teaching students that there is no "final" correct answer to many questions is an important lesson. Sometimes, you and your students may benefit from inviting an outside guest such as a rabbi to discuss these questions in an open way, but not necessarily someone who has "the" answer.

It is also important to keep in mind that as adults, our ideas about God and about the truths of the Torah have probably changed over the course of our own lives. We probably do not have the same ideas about God that we did when we were the age of the students we are teaching. For many of us, our attempts to understand and struggle with questions about God will continue to develop as our own life and studies continue to unfold. It is important to share this concept with your students: they probably do not have the same understanding of God as they did when they were three years old, and this understanding will probably change as they themselves continue to study more and to develop more.

III. Ours is a non-literal approach

The activities that encourage the students to see this text in a non-literal way, as a poem. To this end we have asked students to recognize repeated words, phrases and patterns and to make predictions. We have used color and music to try to build this approach. The technique of "torn paper" rather than exact drawings was chosen for this reason. Any techniques that you develop that further emphasize this approach will help to make this sophisticated point. Keep in mind that the ability to see the text as metaphorical and not literal may be beyond the reach of many of your students at this stage; however, we can begin to guide them to this understanding even in this very first unit.

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IV. קדושה

By now your students have been studying from the actual text of the חומש for several years. Still, we want to remind them of the specialness of the act of studying the Torah text, and of our approach to Torah study: to uncover the “truths” it teaches (see above). Thus, we stress the “truths” the Torah teaches about God, about the world, about all people and the Jewish people in particular, and about how all of these can and ought to best to interact.

Setting the proper classroom tone is also fundamental in establishing the way your students study חומש. Establishing a sense of קדושה and wonder is essential. Studying חומש should be different than other subjects. This structure can be designed by the teacher and students together.

Here are some ways to that you might consider to accomplish this:

- Begin each class with the "ברכה: ...לעסוק בדברי תורה."
- Establish a set format that encourages student questions (question box for questions to be answered at a later date).
- Change in seating arrangement for חומש study. (This could involve work in pairs.)
- Ask students to help to design ways to keep חומש study special.

פרשת שמות פרקים א'-ו' INTRODUCTION אורה

Organization of the Lessons in פרשת שמות

שיעור	פרק / פסוק	Title / Topic
1	הקדמה: הקשר לספר בראשית א': א' - ז'	בין ספר בראשית לספר שמות איך נעשו הבנים של ישראל ממשפחה לעם?
2	א': ח' - י'	למה שנה מלך מצרים את היחס לבני ישראל?
3	א': י"א - י"ד	מה עשה פרעה לבני ישראל?
3A	א': י"ד	בְּחֶמֶר וּבְלִבָּנִים <i>Note that special supplies and a special place need to be arranged in advance for the brick-making activity.</i>
4	א': ט"ו - כ"ב	מה צוה פרעה על המילדות?
5	ב': א' - י'	מי הציל את הילד?
6	ב': י"א	מה ראה משה?
7	ב': יא' - י"ז	למה משה מתערב?
8	ב': כ"ג - כ"ה	מה ידע א-להים?
9	ג': א' - ו'	ממה משה ירא?
10	ג': ז' - י	מה התפקיד של משה?
11	ג': י"א - י"ב	מי אנכי כי אלד?
12	ג': י"ג - ט"ו	מה שמו?
13		
14		
15		
16		
17		
18		
19		

פרשת שמות פרקים א'-ו' INTRODUCTION אורה

שיעור	פרק / פסוק	Title / Topic
20		
21		

פרשת שמות פרק א' OVERVIEW ספור

Background for Teachers: Overview of שמות

1. The continuity of the Jewish people is threatened at crucial moments in our national history; however, God's covenant makes the survival of the Israelites a certainty.
2. It is the heroic actions of often powerless women who make the victory of the Israelites over Pharaoh even more striking.
3. Fear of the alien motivates genocide.
4. שמות is the story of the confrontation between the God of Israel and the God of Egypt (represented by Pharaoh).

Background for Teachers: Overview of the Unit

שמות א': א-כ"ב

The first chapter of שמות can be divided into four sections:

Verses 1-7: The transition from Israelite family to Israelite nation;

Verses 8-10 : The new Pharaoh's fears about the growing population of Israelites.

Verses 11-14: The new Pharaoh's first attempt and failure to contain the Israelites through enslavement; the continued growth of the Israelite nation; the experience of slavery.

Verses 15-22: The new Pharaoh's second attempt and failure to contain the Israelites through the midwives; the continued growth of the Israelite nation; the third attempt to contain this Israelites, this time through the decree that all baby boys be thrown into the Nile.

Key concepts in פרק א'

- שמות begins with the creation of the Israelite nation from what was the Israelite family/clan;
- The Israelites experience a 'radically amazing'¹ population increase;
- The development of the Israelite nation is the fulfillment of God's promise to Avraham
- Pharaoh's attempt to dominate the Israelites is part of God's plan (foretold to Avraham in ברית בין הבתרים);
- Pharaoh's three increasingly desperate ways to "outwit" the Israelites and contain their

1. "Radical amazement" is Heschel's term for what we experience that allows events or things to point us toward divine authorship.

פרשת שמות פרק א' OVERVIEW סאורא

population are unsuccessful and the Israelites continue to multiply. ((1 enslavement 2) secret killing of Israelite baby boys by the midwives 3) openly throwing all newborn baby boys into the Nile.)

- Life in slavery is bitter, oppressive and characterized by ruthlessness. These constitute different kinds of death: enslavement, suffocation, drowning;
- God and God's partners (the midwives) thwart Pharaoh, sustaining and increasing life.
- Fear/Awe of God —יראת א-להים—helps people do fearless things; the midwives represent, "history's first recorded case of civil disobedience in defense of a moral cause"²

Theological and Moral Issues

1. There is a divine plan: God acts in history to save the Jewish people. Until God rewards the salvational work of the midwives there is no direct mention of God. The language of the text, however, gives hints of God's presence just behind the scenes. The foretelling of *בית בין הבתרים* and the enslavement *שמות* are described by the same verbs (*ויעבדו*, *ויעבדו את בני ישראל-ועינו אותם*, *ויעבדו*), implying that this is all part of God's plan. Through that divine plan that we, as a people, will learn crucial values.

2. A large question that may be asked of this story is: Why is it necessary for the Israelites to be enslaved? As students will learn in the course of their studies of Torah, slavery and being a stranger constitute the formative experience of the Jewish people, and this experience has given rise to many of our ethical obligations. The experience of being a *גר* and an *עבד*, a stranger and a slave in the land of Egypt—a culture that was particularly intolerant of aliens in their midst—is fundamental to the fabric of Jewish life. This experience gave rise to our ethical obligations to care for the widow, the poor and the stranger, as well as our ritual obligations to observe Shabbat and Pesah. A fundamental part of our relationship with God is the belief that God hears the cry of the *גר*, and wants us to hear that cry as well.

3. The consciousness of a Higher Power who makes moral demands on human beings (*יראת א-להים*) constitutes the ultimate restraint on evil and the supreme incentive for good. A person who is *ירא א-להים* is impelled by a sense of mission that leads to moral courage and heroism. The actions of the midwives demonstrate this moral courage and heroism. The motivation for their actions, according to the text is "*יראת א-להים*," "the fear of God." According to Sarna, "This term is frequently cited in biblical texts in relation to situations that involve norms of moral or ethical behavior."³

2. Sarna, N., 1986 *Exploring Exodus*, New York: Schocken Books, p.25).

3. Sarna, p. 5.

פרשת שמות פרק א' OVERVIEW סאורה

Literary concepts and devices and conceptual connections:

מלה חוזרת, מלה מנחה -- Key Words: The repetition of certain key words highlights the major themes of the narrative. The words, themselves, "give away" the plot: the forces of life against the oppression of slavery: ע-ב-ד; ר-ב-ה; י-ל-ד; ח-י-ה

Series of (synonymous) verbs in a row: פָּרוּ וַיִּשְׂרְצוּ וַיִּרְבּוּ וַיַּעֲצֻמוּ... וַתִּמְלֶא

Echoes: "הד" מספור אחר" The language of the first chapter of שמות echoes language used in the creation narrative (בראשית א') as well as the Avraham stories. These echoes teach us that these events have been anticipated before they happen, and therefore, they represent part of a greater divine plan and purpose.

Objectives

Students will be able to :

1. Link linguistic echoes with underlying concepts: God fulfills promises; what God has foretold comes to be;
2. Explore the character of Pharaoh first in the text, then in Rashi and midrash;
3. Explore the inner dilemma faced by the midwives, the reasons for their actions and the concept of יראת א-לויים.

Access Skills

4. Find the echoes of words used in earlier texts ("הד" מספור אחר) and make meaning of them.
5. Break down a comment by Rashi into phrases and then re-synthesize for meaning.
6. Analyze a midrash that explains an unknown word and an underlying question.
7. Make predictions based on textual clues.

Understandings from Modern Scholarship

Of Pharaoh's reaction to the population explosion, Sarna writes⁴

"If the anxieties of the authorities were understandable in the circumstances, the reaction to the potential menace posed by the presence of a large population in a strategic area can only be described as iniquitous. The Pharaoh took draconian measures to limit the growth of the Israelites, and to this end he cunningly devised that adult males be pressed into slavery."

4. Sarna, p. 18.