

JCI CURRICULUM: UNIT 1: CHAPTER 6 – TRUTH AND PEACE
LESSON 1: REBUKE YOUR NEIGHBOR

LESSON 1: REBUKE YOUR NEIGHBOR/ HOCHEACH TOCHEEACH (45 mins – 1 hour)

Goals

For students to:

- understand the concept of *hocheach tocheeach*
- appreciate the difficulty of the mitzvah of *hocheach tocheeach*
- relate *hocheach tocheeach* to the other values in Leviticus 19:17-18
- apply the concept of *hocheach tocheeach* to their own lives
- interpret Leviticus 19:17-18 and consider the connections between the different parts of the verses
- assess the Rambam's interpretation of Leviticus 19:17-18
- integrate the concept of *hocheach tocheeach* with the contrasting values of Truth and Peace studied in the previous class.

Materials:

- Poster board
- Markers
- Pens
- Paper / journals
- Text quotes on colored cards (save these for next week – Chapter 6 lesson 3)
- Text handouts
 - Quote set – Leviticus 19:17-18
 - Text – Rambam, *Mishneh Torah, Hilchot De'ot* 6:7

JCI CURRICULUM: UNIT 1: CHAPTER 6 – TRUTH AND PEACE LESSON 1: REBUKE YOUR NEIGHBOR

Procedure

1) Framing exercise #1 (15 mins)

רבן שמעון בן גמליאל אומר, על שלושה דברים העולם קיים--על הדין, ועל האמת, ועל השלום.
Rabbi Shimeon ben Gamliel, says: The world stands on three things: on justice, on truth, and on peace. (*Pirkei Avot* 1:17)

- a) Revisit this quote above that was discussed in chapter 6 lesson 1. Ask students to think of an example from their life when they have had to make a choice between speaking or acting out of “אמת” (*Emet* - Truth) and “שלום” (*Shalom* - Peace) in a relationship with others.
- b) Illustrate with an example: Your friend asks you to do a favor. You think it’s an unreasonable request. Do you follow the path of “אמת” (Truth) and tell her that you don’t want to do it and why, or do you follow the path of “שלום” (Peace) and do it anyway, since it’s not a big deal and it’s not worth making waves.
- c) Ask students to think of real, specific occasions in their life where they have had to make such a choice.

Either:

- d) Ask students to pair with a partner and share their stories. Students should explain the scenario to each other and why they chose either “אמת” (Truth) or “שלום” (Peace). After pair work, discuss as a class:

Or:

- d) Ask students to form groups of 3 and act out one of their examples for the class. After each or all of the roleplays discuss with class.
- e) Discussion questions:
 - Why was it hard to make a decision in each case?
 - Why did students choose either “אמת” (Truth) or “שלום” (Peace) in each specific case?
 - What were the consequences of choosing either “אמת” (Truth) or “שלום” (Peace) in each case? What was gained and what was lost?

JCI CURRICULUM: UNIT 1: CHAPTER 6 – TRUTH AND PEACE LESSON 1: REBUKE YOUR NEIGHBOR

2) Main Activity (30- 40 mins)

Part 1: 20 mins

- a) Divide students into groups of 3-4
- b) Hand out all of the following quotes on separate multi-colored cards to each group. Tell them that the quotes come from two consecutive verses in Leviticus.
- c) Ask students to put the quotes in the order they think is most logical.
- d) Ask students to discuss in their groups:
 - Are there any words or phrases whose meaning is unclear?
 - Which quotes fit best together?
 - Which are most out of place?
 - Can you think of connections between all of the quotes?
- e) Discuss as a class:
 - Ask student to report their answers.
 - Discuss areas of agreement and disagreement between groups.
 - Ask students what they think the meaning is of “*hate your neighbor in your heart*”; “*Rebuke (scold, hocheach tocheach) your neighbor*”, “*do not bring sin upon him*”. Discuss
 - Share the true order of the verses.
 - Ask students to share creative interpretations for connections between the quotes.

ל'א-תשנא אֶת-אָחִיךָ, בְּלִבְּךָ
Do not hate your neighbor in your heart

ויקרא פרק יט פסוק יז-ח 8-17:19 Leviticus

הוֹכַח תּוֹכִיחַ אֶת-עַמִּיתְךָ
Rebuke (scold, hocheach tocheach) your neighbor

ויקרא פרק יט פסוק יז-ח 8-17:19 Leviticus

וְל'א-תִשָּׂא עָלָיו חֵטָא
And do not bring sin upon him

ויקרא פרק יט פסוק יז-ח 8-17:19 Leviticus

JCI CURRICULUM: UNIT 1: CHAPTER 6 – TRUTH AND PEACE LESSON 1: REBUKE YOUR NEIGHBOR

לא תקם ולא תטר את בני עמך

You shall not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people

ויקרא פרק יט פסוק יז-ח 8-17:19 Leviticus

וְאָהַבְתָּ לְרֵעֶךָ כְּמוֹךָ

And love your fellow as yourself

ויקרא פרק יט פסוק יז-ח 8-17:19 Leviticus

אני ה'

I am God.

ויקרא פרק יט פסוק יז-ח 8-17:19 Leviticus

Part 2: (10 -20 mins)

a) Hand out the following text and read it together as a group.

רמב"ם הלכות דעות פרק ו הלכה ז

הרואה חבירו שחטא או שהלך בדרך לא טובה מצוה להחזירו למוטב ולהודיעו שהוא חוטא על עצמו במעשיו הרעים שנאמר הוכח תוכיח את עמיתך

...

וכל שאפשר בידו למחות ואינו מוחה הוא נתפש בעון אלו כיון שאפשר לו למחות בהם.

(Rambam (Maimonides) *Mishneh Torah*, Laws of Character Traits (*Hilchot De'ot* 6:7)

If someone sees his friend transgressing or going down a bad path, it is a mitzvah to restore him to goodness and inform him that he is transgressing through his evil deeds, as it says: "You shall surely rebuke your neighbor"... Anyone who has the ability to intervene but does not, is held responsible [by God] for those sins because he had the ability to intervene against them.

b) Ask students:

JCI CURRICULUM: UNIT 1: CHAPTER 6 – TRUTH AND PEACE LESSON 1: REBUKE YOUR NEIGHBOR

- a) Which parts of the *pasuk* (verse) does Rambam connect here?
- b) How does Rambam understand “*hocheach tocheeach*”?

Discuss their answers. Elicit/ explain that Rambam understands *hocheach tocheeach* to specifically mean warning a friend not to transgress a commandment from the Torah. He connects the last part of verse 18: ‘I am God’ with the obligation to rebuke, explaining that it is God who will hold you responsible for your friend’s actions if you do not rebuke her.

- c) The verse “הוֹכִיחַ תּוֹכִיחַ אֶת-עַמִּיתְךָ” “*Rebuke (hocheach tocheeach) your neighbor*” uses the word עַמִּיתְךָ (*amitecha*) which in Hebrew can mean friend, fellow, associate or neighbor. Rambam specifically uses the word חֵבֵר (*chaver*)- meaning friend – in his commentary. Do you think you should only rebuke friends who are doing things wrong or also other people in your community?

Discuss.

3) Conclusion (10 mins)

- a) Ask students to write personal responses in their journals.

Journal Questions:

- Do you feel comfortable rebuking your friends and neighbors?
- Do you think that you are responsible for your friends’ actions if they are doing something wrong?
- What is the connection between the obligation to rebuke your neighbor and the obligation to love your neighbor, on one hand, and the competing values of “אמת” (Truth) and “שלום” (Peace) on the other?

Ideas for the teacher: On the one hand, it seems truthful to always tell a friend if they are doing something you think is wrong. On the other hand, letting things that bother you slide seems to be in line with the value of pursuing peace. If you rebuke your friends, aren’t you creating unnecessary conflict? How can you decide which is the greater value in these kinds of situations?

- b) Ask students to share answers to one of the questions or share a concluding thought with the class.

JCI CURRICULUM: UNIT 1: CHAPTER 6 – TRUTH AND PEACE LESSON 1: REBUKE YOUR NEIGHBOR

Quotes to be printed on colored cards:

ל'א-תשנא אֶת-אַחֶיךָ, בְּלִבְבְּךָ
Do not hate your neighbor in your heart

ויקרא פרק יט פסוק יז-ח 8-17:19 Leviticus

הוֹכַחַת תּוֹכִיחַ אֶת-עַמִּיתְךָ
Rebuke (scold, hocheach tocheeach) your neighbor

ויקרא פרק יט פסוק יז-ח 8-17:19 Leviticus

וְל'א-תשא עָלָיו חַטָּא
And do not bring sin upon him

ויקרא פרק יט פסוק יז-ח 8-17:19 Leviticus

לֹא תִקֵּם וְלֹא תִטֵּר אֶת בְּנֵי עַמְּךָ
You shall not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people

ויקרא פרק יט פסוק יז-ח 8-17:19 Leviticus

וְאַהֲבַת לְרֵעֶךָ כְּמוֹךָ
And love your fellow as yourself

ויקרא פרק יט פסוק יז-ח 8-17:19 Leviticus

אֲנִי ה'
I am God.

ויקרא פרק יט פסוק יז-ח 8-17:19 Leviticus

JCI CURRICULUM: UNIT 1: CHAPTER 6 – TRUTH AND PEACE LESSON 1: REBUKE YOUR NEIGHBOR

Handout 2 – Rambam *Mishneh Torah*, *Hilchot De'ot* 6:7

רמב"ם הלכות דעות פרק ו הלכה ז

הרואה חברו שחטא או שהלך בדרך לא טובה מצוה להחזירו למוטב ולהודיעו שהוא חוטא על עצמו
במעשיו הרעים שנאמר הוכח תוכיח את עמיתך

...

וכל שאפשר בידו למחות ואינו מוחה הוא נתפש בעון אלו כיון שאפשר לו למחות בהם.

(Rambam (Maimonides) *Mishneh Torah*, Laws of Character Traits (*Hilchot De'ot* 6:7)

If someone sees his friend transgressing or going down a bad path, it is a mitzvah to restore him to goodness and inform him that he is transgressing through his evil deeds, as it says: "You shall surely rebuke your neighbor"... Anyone who has the ability to intervene but does not, is held responsible [by God] for those sins because he had the ability to intervene against them.