

Social Action and Responsibility Unit - Worksheet 4

Amos, one of the 12 minor prophets, lived in the early 8th century BCE.

Amos 8: 4-6

4 Hear this, O you that would swallow the needy, and destroy the poor of the land

5 Saying: 'When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell grain? and the sabbath, that we may set forth corn? making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances of deceit;

6 That we may buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes, and sell the refuse of the corn?'

ד שמעו-זאת, השאפים אביון; ולשבית, ענוי- (עניי-)

ארץ.

ה לאמר, מתי יעבר החדש ונשבירָה

שָׁבָר, וְהַשְׁבֵּת, וְנִפְתָּחָה- בָּר-- לְהַקְטִין

אֵיפָה וְלְהַגְדִּיל שֶׁקֶל, וְלַעֲנֹת מֵאֲזָנֵי

מִרְמָה

ו לַקְנוֹת בַּכֶּסֶף דָּלִים, וְאֲבִיוֹן בַּעֲבוּר

נַעֲלִים; וּמִפֶּל בָּר, נִשְׁבִּיר.

1. What does this text describe?

2. Compare and contrast Amos's statement in verse 6 to Avraham's actions in with the guests that we studied in the first lesson (*Bereshit* 18:1-8).

3. How would you summarize Amos' message in a contemporary terms? Give a practical example of what we can do to help.

We read the story of Yonah on Yom Kippur

Sefer Yonah 4:5:11

5 Then Yonah went out of the city, and sat on the east side of the city, and there made him a booth, and sat under it in the shade until he would see what would occur in the city.

ה וַיֵּצֵא יוֹנָה מִן-הָעִיר, וַיֵּשֶׁב מְקוֹדֵם לְעִיר; וַיַּעַשׂ לוֹ שֵׁם סֹכָה, וַיֵּשֶׁב תַּחְתֶּיהָ בַּצֶּל, עַד אֲשֶׁר יֵרָאֶה, מֵה-יְהִיָּה בְּעִיר.

6 And *God* designated a *kikayon* gourd, which rose up above Yonah to form a shade over his head to relieve him from his discomfort. So Jonah rejoiced greatly over the *kikayon*.

ו וַיִּמְן ה'-אֱלֹקִים קִיקְיֹן וַיַּעַל מֵעַל לְיוֹנָה, לְהִיּוֹת צֶלַעַל-רֹאשׁוֹ, לְהַצִּיל לוֹ, מִרְעָתוֹ; וַיִּשְׂמַח יוֹנָה עַל-הַקִּיקְיֹן, שֶׁמָּחָה גְדוּלָּה.

7 Then *God* prepared a worm at dawn of the next day, and it attacked the *kikayon* so that it withered.

ז וַיִּמְן הָאֱלֹקִים תּוֹלַעַת, בְּעֹלוֹת הַשַּׁחַר לְמַחֲרָת; וַתִּבֶּד אֶת-הַקִּיקְיֹן, וַיִּיבֹשׁ.

8 And it came to pass, when the sun arose, that *God* prepared a stifling east wind; and the sun beat upon Jonah's head and he became faint; he asked for death and he said: 'Better is my death than my life.'

ח וַיְהִי כַּזֶּרֶחַ הַשָּׁמֶשׁ, וַיִּמְן אֱלֹקִים רוּחַ קָדִים חַרְיִשִׁית, וַתִּבֶּד הַשָּׁמֶשׁ עַל-רֹאשׁ יוֹנָה, וַיִּתְעַלֶּף; וַיִּשְׁאַל אֶת-נַפְשׁוֹ, לָמוּת, וַיֹּאמֶר, טוֹב מוֹתִי מִחַיִּי.

9 And *God* said to Yonah: 'Are you so deeply grieved about the *kikayon*?' And he said: 'I am greatly grieved to the point of death.'

ט וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹקִים אֶל יוֹנָה, הַהֵיטֵב תָּרָה-לָךְ עַל-הַקִּיקְיֹן; וַיֹּאמֶר, הֵיטֵב תָּרָה-לִּי עַד-מוֹת.

10 And *God* said: 'You took pity on the *kikayon* gourd, for which you did not labour, nor made it grow, which materialized overnight, and perished overnight;

י וַיֹּאמֶר ה'-- אֵתָּה חִסַּתָּ עַל-הַקִּיקְיֹן, אֲשֶׁר לֹא-עָמַלְתָּ בוֹ וְלֹא גִדַּלְתָּ: שָׁבֹן-לִילָה הָיָה, וַיָּבֹן-לִילָה אָבַד.

11 and I – shall I not take pity on Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than one hundred and twenty thousand people who do not know their right hand and their left hand, and also much cattle?'

יא וַאֲנִי לֹא אָחוּס, עַל-נִינְוָה הָעִיר הַגְּדוּלָּה-- אֲשֶׁר יֵשׁ-בָּהּ הַרְבֵּה מְשֻׁתִּים-עֹשְׂרֵה רַבּוֹ אָדָם, אֲשֶׁר לֹא-יָדְעוּ בֵּין-יְמִינָם לְשְׂמָאלָם, וּבְהֵמָּה רַבָּה.

Worksheet 4

1. Why is Yonah so upset and grieved about the loss of his *kikayon* gourd?

2. The city of Ninveh was a non-Jewish city that repents after Yonah's message is delivered. What can we learn about our obligation to *chesed* and *tzedakah* from this?

3. The text demonstrates that it is natural for people to feel closer to something they have nurtured and know, rather than things that are far away. How does *tzedakah* and *chesed* reflect that human behaviour?

4. What can we learn from these texts about having pity for others?

Worksheet 4

Bereshit 18: 1-8 1

1 And God appeared to him by the plains of Mamre, as he sat at the entrance of the tent in the heat of the day;

א וַיֵּרָא אֵלָיו ה', בְּאֵלֵי מַמְרָא; וְהוּא יֹשֵׁב פְּתַח-הָאֹהֶל, בְּחֹם הַיּוֹם.

2 And he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, three men stood over him; and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the entrance of the tent, and bowed down to the earth,

ב וַיִּשָּׂא עֵינָיו, וַיֵּרָא, וְהִנֵּה שְׁלֹשָׁה אַנְשִׁים, נֹצְבִים עָלָיו; וַיֵּרָא, וַיָּרָץ לִקְרֹאתָם מִפֶּתַח הָאֹהֶל, וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ, אַרְצָה.

3 And he said: 'God, if now I have found favor in your sight, please do not pass by your servant.

ג וַיֹּאמֶר: ה', אִם-נָא מָצָאתִי חֵן בְּעֵינֶיךָ- אַל-נָא תַעֲבֹר, מֵעַל עַבְדְּךָ.

4 Let now a little water be fetched, and wash your feet, and recline yourselves under the tree.

ד זַקַּח-נָא מַעֲט-מַיִם, וְרַחֲצוּ רַגְלֵיכֶם; וְהִשְׁעֲנוּ, תַּחַת הָעֵץ.

5 And I will fetch a piece of bread, and satisfy your heart; after that you can pass by; because you have passed by your servant.' And they said: 'So do, as you have said.'

ה וְאָקַחְהָ פַת-לֶחֶם וְסַעְדוּ לַבָּקָם, אַחַר תַּעֲבְרוּ-כִי-עַל-כֵּן עֲבַרְתֶּם, עַל-עַבְדְּכֶם; וַיֹּאמְרוּ, כֵּן תַעֲשֶׂה כַאֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתָּ.

6 And Avraham hurried to the tent to Sarah, and said: 'Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes.'

ו וַיַּמְהַר אַבְרָהָם הָאֹהֶלָה, אֶל-שָׂרָה; וַיֹּאמֶר, מַהֲרִי שְׁלֹשׁ סָאִים קָמַח סֹלֶת-לוּשִׁי, וַעֲשִׂי עֲגוֹת.

7 And Avraham ran to the herd, and fetched a calf tender and good, and gave it to the boy; and he hurried to prepare it.

ז וְאֶל-הַבָּקָר, רָץ אַבְרָהָם; וַיִּקַּח בֶּן-בָּקָר רַךְ וְטוֹב, וַיִּתֵּן אֶל-הַנַּעַר, וַיַּמְהַר, לַעֲשׂוֹת אוֹתוֹ.

8 And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had prepared, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and they ate.

ח וַיִּקַּח חֲמֹצֶה וְחֶלֶב, וּבֶן-הַבָּקָר אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה, וַיִּתֵּן, לַפְּנֵיהֶם; וְהוּא-עֹמֵד עֲלֵיהֶם תַּחַת הָעֵץ, וַיֹּאכְלוּ.