

JLI Leadership in Jewish sacred texts: Unit 1: The Torah - Exodus - ספר שמות

In this unit, we will look at the text, decipher, translate, consider ambiguities and literary features while we also study and create commentaries.

A. Text study from Chapter 1:

1. Mitzpe Ramon Group: Read Exodus 1:1-17 (the first aliyah) in Hebrew and identify at least five ambiguous phrases in the text. What makes them ambiguous?

1. Verse ____

2. Verse ____

3. Verse ____

4. Verse ____

5. Verse ____

Mitzpe Galil Group: Read Exodus 1:1-17 (the first aliyah) in English and identify at least five ambiguous phrases in the text in the English and try to match up the English with the equivalent Hebrew phrasing. What makes them ambiguous?

1. Verse ____

2. Verse ____

3. Verse ____

4. Verse ____

5. Verse ____

2. A comparative look at some of our different commentators:

a. Complete the chart by writing in translations of the verse and the commentary

Verses	Commentator	Commentator	Commentator
שמות א:א, א:ה	רש"י	רמב"ן	ספורנו
שמות א:ו-ז-ח	רש"י	רשב"ם	אבן אזרא הארוך
שמות א:ט-י-יז	רש"י	רשב"ם	אבן אזרא הארוך and only the very 1:16) (last lines of 1:17

b. What do you conclude about the respective style of each commentator?

c. Note which of the three commentaries on each of the three selected verses interests you the most and why:

3. Leadership:

a. Identify at least three literary features (narrative elements, phrasings, images, etc.) in this first chapter that capture your imagination and why do they interest you?

b. Identify two different people who show leadership and describe (and even contrast) the kind of leadership they provide:

c. What emotions are left unsaid in the text?

d. Describe the gender roles in this first chapter:

e. If you were to give a d'var Torah based on this chapter, what would you address and what message would you convey?

B. Text study 1:18-2:10 (2nd aliyah)