

## Lesson Plan – Social Activism and Responsibility

*The following lesson plan is a suggestion of how some of the ideas and resources contained in this unit could be incorporated into a 60-minute class period for a high-school age class. This lesson plan will focus solely on one particular idea within the thought of Rabbi Sacks. There are many other themes found in this unit of resources which would take more classroom-time to explore with your students.*

**Goal:** To see the development of the idea of taking responsibility in Sefer Bereishit, culminating in Avraham as a model for responsibility, and to explore the role of responsibility in the thought of Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks zt"l.

### **1-10 minutes: Opening Activity: Quote Cards**

Use the quote cards included in the Opening Activity to help your students consider what taking responsibility means and how this can be an important value in their lives.

Display them as cards or posters around the classroom (hung on the walls or laid out on the floor). Ask your students to find the one they find most inspiring or important to them, and encourage them to think about how this helps them with the task of “*becoming partners with God in the work of creation*” and “*co-authors with God of the world that ought to be.*”

### **11-25 minutes: The Birth of Responsibility – Biblical Sources**

Divide your students into 4 groups, and assign each group one of the “Acts” from the section of this unit entitled ***The Birth of Responsibility***:

- Act 1: Adam and Eve in Gan Eden
- Act 2: Cain and Abel
- Act 3: Noach and the Flood
- Act 4: The Tower of Babel

Ask each group to study the verses Rabbi Sacks quotes, together with his description and analysis. Ask them to prepare to present to the class what the failure of responsibility was in their Act.

### **26-35 minutes: Presentations**

Ask each group to present their findings.

### **36-50 minutes: Summing up**

Ask each group to explore the life of Avraham as presented in the Torah for examples where he modelled the opposite form these stories – the accepting of *personal, collective, moral, and ontological* responsibility.

### **51-60 minutes: Summing up**

Conduct a class discussion how Avraham was a model of responsibility, using examples from the text (ask your students to find these examples), and conclude with the text ***Abraham as a Model of Responsibility*** found in the online unit on Responsibility.

Conclude by asking your students how they can incorporate these lessons into their everyday lives.