# UNSCROLLED

## DIY TOOLKIT





IT'S A REINTERPRETATION, A REIMAGINING, A
CREATIVE CELEBRATION: 54 LEADING JEWISH WRITERS,
ARTISTS, PHOTOGRAPHERS, AND SCREENWRITERS,
PLUS ACTORS, AN ARCHITECT, A MUSICIAN, AND
MORE GRAPPLE WITH THE FIRST FIVE BOOKS OF
THE BIBLE, GIVING NEW MEANING TO THE 54 TORAH
PORTIONS. EDITED BY ROGER BENNETT, ONE OF THE
FOUNDERS OF REBOOT, UNSCROLLED IS A GATHERING
OF ENGAGING, DIVERSE VOICES THAT WILL SPEAK
TO ANYONE INTERESTED IN JEWISH CULTURE AND
IDENTITY. IN STORIES, POEMS, MEMOIRS, PLAYS,
INFOGRAPHICS—PLUS A WEB SEARCH, A GRAPHIC
NOVEL, AND A PSYCHIATRIC TRANSCRIPT—IT OFFERS
A FRESH TAKE ON THE TORAH, ITS VALUE, AND ITS
PLACE IN OUR LIVES.

LEARN MORE AT WWW.UNSCROLLED.ORG.



Every year, Jews around the world read the Torah from start to finish. With *Unscrolled*, we hope to engage people who have never read the Torah, people who read the Hebrew portion every week and people who think it's a whole lot of brisket. With *Unscrolled*, we hope to empower individuals and communities to create their own *midrash* (commentary). We want you to engage with the simplicity of the text and the depth of the oral tradition. But most of all we want communities, groups and individuals to look at the Torah and think- how is this relevant to me in the 21st century? Is this text a part of my life? How can I explore this text with my friends, family and community?

With Simchat Torah (the holiday where we complete and begin reading the Torah), Unscrolled will begin to engage the world on a weekly basis through our website (www.unscrolled.org), twitter (@unscrolled, #torahin140), Facebook and Pinterest. In addition, we look forward to working with your community to create large scale events, siyyumim (completion parties) for each book of the Torah and weekly learning experiences that will engage you and your community in a deep and impactful way. Keep reading for ideas that range from an Unscrolled storytelling event to an Unscrolled Writer's Workshop to an Unscrolled text study. Take Unscrolled and use it in a way that makes sense for your community.

If you would like to brainstorm program ideas or discuss options for your community, please contact our National Marketing and Outreach Coordinator Dina Mann by email at dina@rebooters.net or by phone at 347-201-3462.



### **EXODUS FOR THE REST OF US. ENGAGE WEEKLY.**

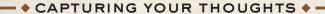
### UNSCROLLED ONLINE

Every week, Reboot will be engaging individuals through our website (www.unscrolled.org) and our various social media channels. People will unscroll through **Keep it Simple**, a twitter campaign that will encourage people to sum up the weekly portion in 140 characters using the hashtag **#torahin140**, and **Go Deep**, an activity prompt that will engage people to conceive how each weekly text applies to their lives.

We'd love you to be part of the online conversation and to use these prompts in your own communities via newsletters, online and printed communications.

### ◆ UNSCROLLED AS A BOOK CLUB ◆

Want to use *Unscrolled* for your book club or study group? Use the Reader's Guide as a starting point for conversations. Integrate *Unscrolled* as one of your commentary sources to give your discussion a bit of pop. Riff off the text to create your own interpretation and share on Twitter and Facebook. Enjoy the discussion over libations and burnt offerings.

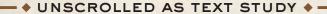


Every community has its share of opinions. Now's the time to engage them. In *Unscrolled*, 54 writers and artists reinterpret and reimagine the 54 portions. Engage your community to write their interpretations on a weekly basis. Share interpretations online at *Unscrolled*.org. Share them in your newsletter or email blast. Print out copies to share during the Torah reading. Use the participants' prose to engage in a conversation where the writer presents their *midrash*. You can even use a singular theme throughout the year to explore what matters to your community.

### Example:

Delve into each portion through the lens of community.

- What happened at Mount Sinai? Was it like a Rolling Stones concert or more like the signing of the Declaration of Independence? Ben Greenman explores what it was like for the Israelites to wait. What does the portion of Mishpatim say about rules and patience? Is this applicable to your community?
- ◆ Those spies who went into Canaan- were they negative Nancys or was the land super scary? Caitlin Roper discusses one person who says something different from the crowd. Is there someone like that in your community? How can you embrace the "other" voice? (Sh'lakh L'kha)
- With Ki Tissa, Rich Cohen examines what it means to have an object or imagery. He's not so sure it's a really big deal. How does your community perceive imagery in its building/practices?



Why not have an old-fashioned text study class with a twist? Pull from the Torah, *Unscrolled* and a third source and compare the interpretations. Have a heated argument like Hillel and Shamai. (Please see source sheet examples in the appendix.) Involve food. We always do.

### Example:

- ◆ Dina, oh Dina. What a tale. Boy meets girl. Boy agrees to ritual circumcision for him and his entire people. Girl's brothers murder everyone. Read Michaela Watkins interpretation and *The Red Tent* by Anita Diamant. What is missing from each story? How does it relate to the original text? Is there something you find offensive? (Va-Yishlah)
- ♦ Kosher rules. Or for some people like David Sax they are just too, too complicated. Read Sax's piece and the original text. Read about a new kosher where ethics are key. What does keeping kosher mean to you? Is it relatable? What does keeping Kosher do for you? Or do you have other eating rules that you live by? (Sh'mini)
- ◆ All the complaining in the desert is enough to give you a headache. Eddy Portnoy thinks of it as a national symbol of the Jewish people and recalls Nasology, a pseudoscience of the 19th century that studies, you guessed it, noses. Review Portnoy's essay. Does this make you mad? Does this make you want to complain? Can you recall other kvetching in popular culture. Watch Annie Hall or any episode of Seinfeld or Curb your Enthusiam as a group. Do these texts continue this idea of complaining? (B'ha-alot'kha)



### FIVE BOOKS. FIVE EVENTS.

There are five books in the Torah. Have your community celebrate each time a book is finished. Events can range from a discussion with 20 people to a 400 person Sinai-inspired mosh pit. Engage different departments of your institution at each event or your community as a whole. When the Torah is completed on Simchat Torah, throw a giant Unscrolled siyyum (completion party.) Read below for five event ideas and feel free to use the weekly and large scale events for inspiration as well.

### ♦ UNSCROLLED AS OPEN SPACE

What do you want to talk about when it comes to the Torah?

Use open space technology to have open, riveting conversations that might not usually happen in a typical Torah learning program. Start with a circle of chairs and no program outline. The community sets their own agenda by identifying issues and topics related to the Torah that mean something to them; topics for which they have passion and interest and for which they are willing to host a discussion group.

Small group discussions happen throughout the day, with participants moving from group to group whenever they feel that they can no longer learn or contribute to a discussion, or when they feel drawn to another topic. Read more about Open Space in the appendix.

Here are some conversation topics that might interest your community:

- Why are there pillars of fire leading the Israelites in the desert?
- Why was there animal sacrifice?
- ♦ What's up with Judah and Tamar?
- ♦ How do I find time for a weekly Torah pow wow?
- ♦ What's the relevance of XYZ to my life today?
- How is belief manifested in the Torah?

The discussion can go any direction your participants choose to take it.

### ♦ UNSCROLLING THE BIG ISSUES ♦

The Torah offers complicated text that deals with leadership, community and the Jewish people. For centuries, people have turned to rabbis, teachers and community leaders to interpret the merits of each text and discuss controversial elements that may get under our skin. With this *Unscrolled* program, we hope to empower community members to challenge their teachers and leaders to think about different texts that put them in a huff. Have a panel discussion in your community to discuss the hard stuff.



- ◆ Family Sacrifice: Ever wonder how Abraham could even think about sacrificing his son? Didn't he think about Sarah? Damon Lindelof's piece examines the tale from a very different angle. How did you react to his interpretation? (Vayeara)
- ◆ Love Thy Neighbor: Why do we as Jews have such hatred for Amalek? I don't like hating people. Why does this have to go on for thousands of years? (B'shallah)
- Crime and Punishment: Why was Moses punished so harshly for hitting a rock? Didn't he hit the water in Egypt so that it would turn to blood? (Hukkat)
- ◆ Good vs. Evil: What was so bad about Korah? Adam Levin explores the Jew vs. Jew relationship. Moses did seem to have a lot of power, couldn't there have been more of a democracy? (Korah)
- ◆ Abomination: In Aharei Mot, the Torah declares that lying with a man is an abomination. Amichai Lau Lavie re-examines his Bar-Mitzvah portion and considers what is an abomination. In our world today, how can members of the LGBT community embrace the Torah with text like this?

### ♦ UNSCROLLED AND ART ♦

What do you picture when you think of the Torah stories? In *Unscrolled*, artists, doodlers and designers shared their visual interpretations of different Torah portions. Have your group rethink Torah portions in a visual way through drawings, paintings, sculptures, infographics, cartoons, dioramas...the sky is the limit. When you are done creating, display the items in a gallery/lobby of your space and invite your community to enjoy and discuss. Share photos of the imagery on Facebook and Pinterest. Don't forget to include @unscrolled!



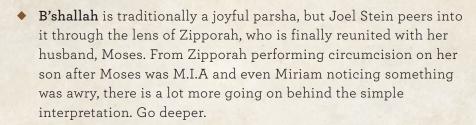
- Mark Kushner reimagines the Tabernacle in New York City.
   How would it look in your hometown? Create a version of how this might look in Anytown, USA. (T'rumah)
- Rebecca Odes and Sam Lipsyte collaborated on a cartoon for Yitro. Interpret the Ten Commandments in cartoon form.
- Gillian Laub creates a short photo essay of her Grandmother as an homage to Moses' final poem. Read Moses' poem and take photos of the people who mean something to you. (Va-ye'lekh)

### - ♦ UNSCROLLED AND A WRITER'S WORKSHOP ♦ -

Come together and write. Traditionally, the belief goes that the Torah was written by one entity- the big G-D! But since Sinai people have been making it their own. Get folks from your community to come together for a weekly, monthly or occasional Writer's Workshop. Pick one portion or theme and discuss the original text and the *Unscrolled* version. Encourage people to be creative and that there is no such thing as the "wrong" interpretation. Think out of the scroll. Be open to things that are insulting, funny, charming and witty. Have each person write their piece. Share it with the synagogue in a digest or online via a blog. Share the posts on Twitter with @unscrolled to be part of the larger conversation.

### Example:

◆ Saki Knafo analyzes the relationship between Jacob, Joseph and his brothers in Vayiggash. Obviously between Technicolor dream coats, death plots and planted goblets there is more than meets the eye. But hey every family has drama. Explore what that drama is. Did someone not take out the trash one too many times or forget to empty out the dishwasher? Add texture as you see fit.



◆ In Shoftim, God tells Moses that he will appoint a prophet once they get to the land of Israel. David Katznelson tells a story of a prophet he met. A musical prophet. Is there prophecy in your life? Explore this topic and discuss the notion of modern day prophecy. Does it exist? Who are our modern prophets?

### ♦ UNSCROLLED AND A QUIZ SHOW ♦

Get out your multi-colored sets and your microphone and get ready for *Name that Parasha*. In this game-show event, challenge your community with questions on the weekly portion or channel the *Million Dollar Pyramid* and have people team up to try and guess a parsha story without saying the words related.

In addition, you can use Torah quizzes from My Jewish Learning (http://bit.ly/ac6iPR) to further challenge your community. Here are a few challenging questions of our own:

- ◆ For Massei, Rebecca Bortman creates an infographic depicting the journeys in the desert. Name two places where the Israelites encamped.
- ◆ In Toldot, Joshua Foer discusses Esau leaving the fold to the disappointment of his parents. From what nation did Esau choose a wife?
- ◆ In **T'tzavveh**, Mark Lamster refers to "God's Tailor." What is God's Tailor's name?
- ♦ In Va-y'hi, Dennis Berman writes a letter to his unborn son. Which of Jacob's sons get a double blessing?
- ♦ In Va-era, Sloane Crosley creates a WebMD search of the 10 plagues.
  Name 3 of those plagues.



### **CREATE A LARGE EVENT.**

LOOKING TO DO A ONE-OFF EVENT?

KEEP READING FOR IDEAS THAT WILL DRAW A

CROWD AND LEAD TO FURTHER CONVERSATIONS.

### UNSCROLLED STORIES

Everybody loves a good story. Ask members of your community to share their favorite Biblical stories as part of a panel discussion or storytelling show. Invite local celebrities, writers and politicians to participate in helping your community think differently. Choose one theme and ask people to riff and add their own interpretations and commentaries.

Below are some examples of themes to inspire your storytellers:

### In the Desert:

- ◆ Hukkat-The red cow is one of the most iconic and confusing parts of the Torah. Rachel Axler writes from the cow's perspective. How could you extend this interpretation? Would you add anything to the cow's voice? What if the High Priest spoke back to the cow?
- ◆ Va-ethannan—Ariel Kaminer explores the idea of having manna for 40 years day in and day out. Is there a meal in your life that you could eat every day? Is there a meal that has a story? Share it.

★ Ki Tetzei-The laws of marriage and remarriage are discussed in the same portion as war with Amalek. Davy Rothbart ties these together in the tale of a cross-dressing Holocaust survivor grandfather. Are there family stories that made you question your families' past? Don't want to air out your dirty laundry? What family stories do you want to pass on? How do we talk about traumatic events in our family histories?

### Women in the Torah:

- ◆ Lekh L'kha-Jill Soloway explores the complicated relationship between Sarah, Hagar and Abraham. What do you think drove this triangle?
- ◆ Hayyei Sarah—Rebecca at the well has often been thought of as a sweet story of how Isaac's match was found. Rebecca Dana looks at it from a different perspective that puts everyone on the chopping block. How were matches made in your family? What's your interpretation of this narrative? Is there something in the story that doesn't seem right to you? Can we compare the role of the *shadchan* (matchmaker) to dating websites?
- Naso-Justin Rocket Silverman explores the concept of sotah, a woman who is suspected of infidelities. How does this process resonate with you? What if men were put through the same processes? What would that look like?

### Six-Word Memoirs on the Torah

◆ In 2012, Reboot teamed up with SMITH Magazine to create Six-Word Memoirs on Jewish Life. Now, use Six-Words to describe your favorite Torah stories. Project them onto the wall and tell the story behind them. Have a Six-Word Memoir Bible slam at the end of the evening. Continue the conversation at www.smithmag.net/jewish/.



### Here are some examples:

- ◆ Ten plagues. Moses saves the day (Va-era)
- ♦ World created in six days. Rest. (B'reishit)
- ♦ Flooded land. Big boat. Humanity saved. (Noah)
- ◆ Colorful coat makes brothers hate him. (Mi-ketz)

### **♦ GET UNSCROLLED ◆**

Do something big. Carefully unscroll your whole Torah with your community standing in the center of the room. Literally surround your community with words of Torah. Have community members interpret stories beforehand ala *Unscrolled*. When you get to that part in the Torah, have them stand by the portion and tell their tale. Not into unscrolling? Project text and imagery from the Torah around your space and create an interactive storytelling experience.



# SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS ARTICLES ABOUT KASHRUT OPEN SPACE GUIDELINES. SAMPLE TEXT STUDY FAQ

### SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

### Sharing Unscrolled

In addition to participating in *Keep it Simple* and *Go Deep*, we encourage you and your organization to spread the word through social media.

Sign up for our weekly newsletters for fresh and exciting content every week.

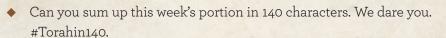
### Facebook:

- ♦ Like *Unscrolled* on Facebook. Facebook.com/*Unscrolled*
- ♦ Sample Posts:
  - UNSCROLL the Torah- one portion at a time. Visit Unscrolled.org and join the conversation.
  - Want to keep it simple or go deep? Do both on Unscrolled.org.

### Twitter:

- Follow Unscrolled on Twitter. Twitter.com/Unscrolled
- ♦ Sample Posts:
  - UNSCROLL the Torah one portion at a time.

    Visit Unscrolled.org and join the conversation. #Torahin140
  - Engage with the Torah. Want to keep it simple or go deep?
     Why not do both on Unscrolled.org #Torahin140



### Pinterest:

- ◆ Follow *Unscrolled* on Pinterest. Share our boards and repin your favorite photos. Pinterest.com/*Unscrolled*.
- ♦ Add your interpretation of the weekly portion on its board.

### ARTICLE ABOUT KASHRUT

Please visit http://nyti.ms/VMZ7Jo to read *Kosher Wars*, an article that explores what *kashrut* means today.

### OPEN SPACE TECHNOLOGY

Adapted from Open Space Technology: A Brief User's Guidehttp://www.openspaceworld.com/users\_guide.htm - by Harrison Owen

### Here are some guidelines:

Whoever comes is the right person. Don't wait for an 'expert.' Realize that whomever comes to your group has been moved by their passion for the issue.

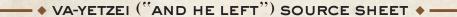
Whatever happens is the only thing that could have. Don't control the discussion—even if it goes off topic—that may be the direction for new ideas. Follow the energy of the group.

Whenever the conversation starts is the right time. Don't wait for some specific person to arrive; begin with people who are drawn to the discussion.

When it's over, it's over. It may be done in ten minutes or you may wish to continue your discussion for longer than the allotted time. If you're done early, join another group. If you take longer, just move your discussion elsewhere.

The Law of Two Feet. If you feel you are neither learning nor contributing to a discussion, get up and move to another discussion, without waiting for the group to complete its conversation. Your fresh insights and creative thoughts are needed other places. In some cultures this may be rude, in Open Space it is disrespectful to the process and to the greater group to sit and stay in a discussion that you did not connect to. The result is a room alive with movement and animated discussion as people travel from group to group to use their best energy and thinking where it is most needed.

Be Prepared to Be Surprised. If you carry your preconceived agenda into a conversation, you may never receive the greater results and more intuitive thinking that can come from a group of diverse and passionate people taking a conversation where it can go.



Genesis 28:10 - 32:3

### Genesis 28:11

11 He came upon a certain place and stopped there for the night, for the sun had set. Taking one of the stones of that place, he put it under his head and lay down in that place.

### Rashi

1040-1105

France

And he put [them] around his head. He made them like a gutterpipe around his head, because he was afraid of dangerous animals. [The stones] began to quarrel with one another. This one would say, "Upon me shall the righteous one lay his head," and this one would say, "Upon me shall he lay his head."

The Holy One, Blessed is He, immediately made them into one stone. This is why it says, "And he took the stone that he placed around his head," using the singular "the stone."

A gutterpipe has a bottom which is enclosed on three of its sides, and open on the fourth. Similarly, Jacob put down one stone upon which to lay his head, and surrounded it with piles of stones from three sides. His body extended from the fourth side (Maharsha to Chullin 91b).

### Sforno

1475-1550

Italy

And he encountered the place. He came to a place which he had not planned on as a destination. The definite article the place denotes a place where travelers could spend the night. Such places were to be found in every town, usually on the road. Similarly, the angels say to Lot,

"We will spend the night on the road (19:2)," and so in the episode of the concubine in Givah, but do not spend the night on the road [where wayfarers customarily stay] (Judges 19:20).

From the stones of the place...which were prepared for there guests to eat or sit on.

### Samson Rafael Hirsch

1808-1888

Germany

Then he took some of the stones of the place, arranged them round his head so that no man or beast tread on him. This protection of stones was the first house he built for himself. And although he had been quite excited by the place—it was at the border of the land of his future—he still lay down and slept at this place.

### Adam Mansbach in Unscrolled

1976-

USA

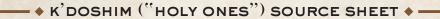
28:11. Who the f\*&k uses a stone as a pillow? "Hmm, lemme see, there's gotta be some crap around here I can use to rectify the appalling softness of the ground." I can only conclude that this mufu\*&er was extremely drunk, which is what I would be nonstop if I lived back in these sheepherding-ass times.



Via http://www.smarin.net/en/editions/livingstones/

### Questions:

- ♦ What do you think the text from Genesis/*Breishit* is saying?
- What are the different ways that the commentators perceive the stones?
- ♦ Which commentary makes the most sense to you?
- ♦ How does Adam Mansbach view a pillow of stones? How does it relate to the earlier sources?
- ◆ Is there a time in your life when a common object took on a different meaning?
- ◆ Can you name a time when you slept in an unconventional setting?



Leviticus 19:1—20:27 Leviticus 19:19

19 You shall observe My laws. You shall not let your cattle mate with a different kind; you shall not sow your field with two kinds of seed; you shall not put on cloth from a different mixture of two kinds of material.

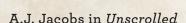
### Rashi

1040-1105

France

And a garment of two kinds of stuff, etc. Why is (this) stated? Since it is stated (Deut. 22..11): "Thou shalt not wear a mingled stuff, wool and linen together," I might conclude that he must not put on shearings of wool and flax-stalks, (therefore) Scripture states, "a garment." Whence (do we derive that this includes felt clothes?

Scripture states, "mingled stuff", something which is hackled, spun, and twined. And I believe that twined denotes a substance (of materials) which are spun and woven together, so to be joined as "they are fit for the seeds which they contain" (M.K.12) which we explain as denoting "withered", And the term "mingled stuff" is explained by Menahem (ben Saruk) (as) "mingled stuff of wool and linen."



1968-

USA

Read A.J. Jacob's excerpt.

Do not wear a garment made of two kinds of cloth

Also, I think it would be wonderful to include a short paragraph after the commandment. Just a little exposition — nothing too clunky, to help people understand why you are giving them such specific edicts about clothing. Perhaps something along these lines:

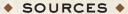
I make this command because rhtuals can be fulfilling, even if these rituals seem strange from the outside, as with candles on a birthday cake, which is a bizarre custom if ever there was one. I make this command because there is something inherently good and beautiful about following rules, as they give structure to your very lives.

Otherwise, I fear this commandment might just seem kind of, well, crazy.

Visit Shatnez Testers of America to learn how shatnez is tested today. (http://shatnez.n3.net/)

### Questions:

- What is the text from Leviticus saying?
- Why do you think the Torah prohibits mixing fabric?
- ♦ Why are there laws that we may not understand?
- ♦ What does Rashi add to the conversation?
- ♦ What does A.J. Jacob's piece contribute to the idea of *shatnez*?
- ◆ If you could write the laws of shatnez what would they look like?



Rashi: The Torah with Rashi's Commentary Translated, Annotated and Elucidated, Rabbi Yisrael Herczeg, Sapirstein Edition. Artscroll / Mesorah Publications, Ltd, 1999.

Sforno: Commentary on the Torah, Raphael Pelcovitz, Mesorah Publications Ltd., 1987.

The Jewish Bible: Tanakh: The Holy Scriptures -- The New JPS Translation According to the Traditional Hebrew Text. Jewish Publication Society,1985.

The Pentateuch and Rashi's Commentary, Rabbi Abraham Ben Isaiah and Rabbi Benjamin Sharfman. S. S. & R, 1950.

The Pentateuch: Translation and Commentary by Samson Hirsch, Samson Raphael Hirsch (Author), Isaac Levy (Translator.) Judaica Press, 1963.

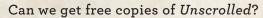
### ♦ UNSCROLLED FAO ♦

### Can Reboot help me plan my Unscrolled event?

Yes! We would love to advise you on your *Unscrolled* event. Check out our DIY guide for inspiration. Email Dina Mann, dina@rebooters.net, to set up a time to brainstorm ideas.

### Can we do an event with Unscrolled authors?

Our *Unscrolled* authors are tied up with Fall launch events in NY, SF and LA. Depending on the scale and size of the event, we can try and see whether there are authors available for your program.



Workman Publishers are offering a fantastic bulk discount rate to Reboot's community partners. Email Dina Mann, dina@rebooters.net, for bulk sales information.

### Can Reboot help market our Unscrolled event?

Yes! Please make sure to email Dina Mann, dina@rebooters.net with your event information, including date, time, location and a short blurb about your event. We will post in our monthly newsletter and also share the event on Facebook and Twitter.

### Can Reboot help market our other events and programs?

Reboot would be happy to market other events and programs if there is an appropriate fit and tie into Reboot's local and national programs.

### Can Reboot provide any budget for our Unscrolled events?

Reboot can provide programmatic support to help brainstorm your program together with you, however, Reboot cannot provide any funds for your program.

### Can Reboot co-sponsor our Unscrolled event?

Co-sponsorship depends on the size and scale of your event. Please email Dina Mann, Dina@rebooters.net to set up a time to discuss your event.

### How should we credit this event?

The *Unscrolled* logo should appear on all materials related to your event. Please email Dina Mann, dina@rebooters.net, for a high-resolution logo.

### Where do I find the DIY guide?

The DIY guide can be found on the *Unscrolled* website, unscrolled.org/diy.

