

Morning Mindfulness & Gratitude: Teaching

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In seeking wisdom,
the first step is silence,
the second listening,
the third remembering,
the fourth practicing,
the fifth teaching others.

Rabbi Shlomo ibn Gabirol (ca. 11th C, Cordoba)

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Babylonian Talmud *Rosh Hashanah* 23a

Rabbi Yochanan said: “Anyone who studies Torah but does not teach it is likened to a myrtle in the wilderness.”

There are those who say a different version: “Anyone who studies Torah and teaches it in a place where there are no Torah scholars is likened to a myrtle in the wilderness, which is precious.”

Babylonian Talmud *Sukkah* 49b

Rabbi Elazar said: What is the meaning of that which is written: “She opens her mouth with wisdom, and a Torah of *chesed* is on her tongue” (Proverbs 31:26)?

Is there, then, a Torah of kindness and a Torah that is not of *chesed*? Rather, [it is Torah studied] for its own sake that is a Torah of kindness, [and it is Torah studied] not for its own sake that is a Torah that is not of *chesed*. Some say Torah [studied in order] to teach it is a Torah of kindness; [and Torah studied] with [the intent to] not teach it is a Torah that is not of kindness.

Rebbe Nachman of Bratslav, *Likutei Moharan* 48:5:3

Chesed (Lovingkindness) is the aspect of Avraham – i.e., one must teach one’s wisdom to others and draw them under the wings of the Divine Presence. This is the aspect of “and the Torah of *chesed* is on her tongue” (Proverbs 31:26); of which our Sages, of blessed memory, said: This refers to someone who studies in order to teach it [to others] (Sukkah 49b). This is likewise the aspect of “the souls that they made in Haran.” (Genesis 12:5)

Genesis 12:5

וַיִּקַּח אַבְרָם אֶת־שָׂרַי אִשְׁתּוֹ וְאֶת־לוֹט בֶּן־אָחִיו וְאֶת־כָּל־רְכוּשָׁם אֲשֶׁר רָכְשׁוּ וְאֶת־הַנֶּפֶשׁ אֲשֶׁר־עָשׂוּ בְּחָרָן וַיֵּצְאוּ לְלֶכֶת
 אֶרְצָה כְּנָעַן ...

Abram took his wife Sarai and his brother's son Lot, and all the wealth that they had amassed, and the persons that they had acquired in Haran; and they set out for the land of Canaan.

Rashi on Genesis 12:5 - “the persons that they had acquired”

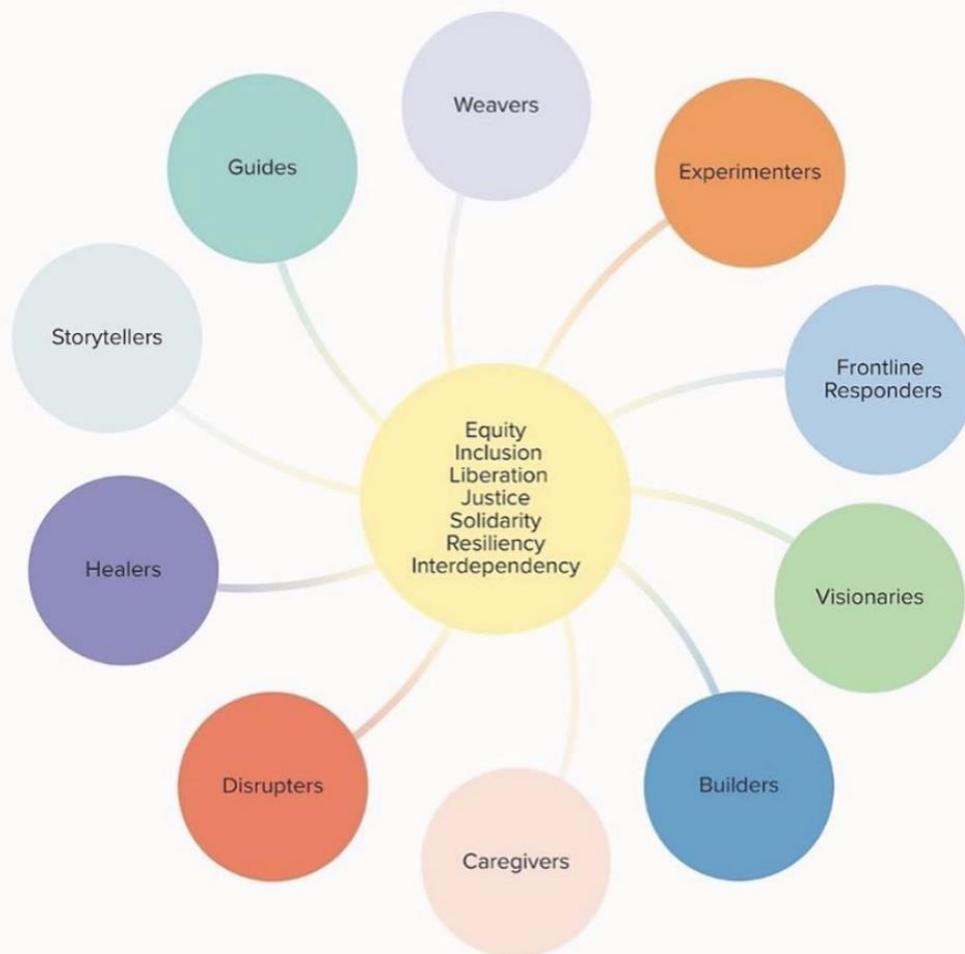
בְּחָרָן אֲשֶׁר עָשׂוּ (literally, made): The souls which he had brought beneath the sheltering wings of the *Shechinah*. Abraham converted the men and Sarah converted the women and Scripture accounts it unto them as if they had “made” them.

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Dear God,
 teach me to embody those ideals
 I would want my children
 to learn from me.
 Let me communicate
 with my children wisely –
 in ways
 that will draw their hearts
 to kindness, to decency
 and to true wisdom.

Dear God,
 let me pass on to my children
 only the good;
 let them find in me
 the values
 and the behavior
 I hope to see in them.

Mapping Our Roles in A Social Change Ecosystem



Created by Deepa Iyer (Solidarity Is and Building Movement Project)
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