

## A Parable for Family School:

In the beginning there was a man and a woman. They lived in a perfect place, a beautiful garden. It was safe and secure. They didn't have to worry about anything. They never had to choose or think. They didn't need to make any decisions, not about what to eat for breakfast, lunch, or dinner. They never had to pick out what they were going to wear that day or the activities they wanted to do. They didn't have to decide what books to read, movies to see, or games to play. Everything was provided. Everything was perfect.

In the middle of this garden was a tree of knowing. It was a tree of knowing good and bad. They ate of the fruit of the tree, and their eyes were opened. They became aware. Now they had to make choices and decisions about what was right and what was wrong.

When their eyes were opened, they saw the world as it really was—happy and sad, safe and scary, sunny and overcast. But that was real life. So they left the perfect place and entered the world as it was. They were sad when they thought that they had left the Tree of Life behind, but in fact, they found another Tree of Life, the Torah.

The Tree of Life that is the Torah teaches us to "Love our neighbor as ourselves." "Honor our parents." "Do not steal." "Do not harm any other human being." "Love the Eternal your God with all your heart, with all your mind, with all your strength."

"The Torah is a Tree of Life to all who hold it close." It guides us and teaches us and inspires us. It protects us as well. "It is our life and the length of our days." Therefore we choose life and eat of the sweet fruit of the Tree of Life.

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*November 4, 2018*