Continue activities following the story – A Garden on a Donkey



By
Illustrations
Publisher: מ' מזרחי
Age Group: **First Grade**

כְּלָלִי

Who was Rabbi Akiva?
Rabbi Akiva, one of the greatest Jewish Rabbis, lived in Eretz Israel between 50 and 137 CE, from the destruction of the Second Temple to the Bar Kokhba revolt. He partook in the writing of the Mishna and in forming Halacha, and was the spiritual leader of the Bar Kokhba revolt. Many legends and stories have been written about Rabbi Akiva, and numerous sayings attributed to him. One of his most famous statements are: ***"Amar Rabbi Akiva: 'Veahavta lereacha Kamocha – zeh klal gadol baTorah*** **(And Rabbi Akiva said: 'Love thy neighbor' – that is a major rule of the Torah")** (Bereshit Rabba, 24:8). Rabbi Akiva started out as a shepherd, and only began to study Torah at the age of forty. His life story, like that of many leaders and sages, teaches us that Torah and knowledge are available to all of us, at any time.

כְּלָלִי

Proposed Family Activities:

- You may want to ask your child to look for the illustration of the donkey with the garden on its back. If that donkey could speak, what would it say? How does it

feel, and what does it think? Perhaps you could make up a dialog between Rachel and the donkey. Suggest that your child choose one of the characters, and share an imaginary conversation with each other in which Rachel and the donkey express their feelings and intentions.

- Have you ever avoided learning something in a new area because you were too embarrassed to do so? Perhaps you too have learned something at an older age, such as a new language, learning to play a musical instrument, or a new profession? You may want to share those experiences with your child. You could even ask them to teach you something that they can do well. Or how about going somewhere together and learning something new? Because the bashful cannot learn!
- Rachel plants a garden on the donkey's back. You may enjoy finding an old pair of shoes, a teapot or an old hat, filling them with soil together with your child, and planting a garden of your own.
- Many stories have been written about Rachel and Rabbi Akiva. You may want to look for more tales about these exemplary characters at home, the library, or online, in order to become better acquainted with them. If you are familiar with the tune of this song, you could sing together: "Amar Rabbi Akiva: 'Veahavta lereacha Kamocha – zeh klal gadol baTorah (And Rabbi Akiva said: 'Love thy neighbor' – that is a major rule of the Torah").