**The Bible Project**

*The process that I underwent*

When I first stepped into the Hartman Institute, I came with tremendous excitement and many questions about the innovative project: What is a learning community of teachers? What challenges are there in teaching Bible? How will we know that we are creating a correct pedagogical language? What will the group look like? Where will it be heading? And how will I be as a facilitator?

Now, several months later, I am standing on safe and stable ground. Questions remain but a wonderful group has come together in which to discuss them, with a true sense of belonging. The Hartman Institute is a setting where one can express different views and think deeply and professionally about every issue. I feel tremendously privileged to be part of the project. In the past few months, I have broadened the discourse about my profession as a teacher of Bible considerably, I have discussed pedagogical and value-related questions, and together we have discussed tools that can help Bible teachers to produce better lessons. Since my student days, I have not felt that my profession has received such attention. Finally we teachers, too, are being given recognition that the subject we teach is important. I and the teachers along with me are proud to be part of such a project. I bring that pride along with me into the classes that I teach and the meetings with the community of teachers that I facilitate.

I’ve learned so much, so quickly. Every day at the Hartman Institute provides enrichment and food for thought for the rest of the week. So it is among the community of teachers as well. We deal, among other things, with pedagogical tools that are helpful in producing more intriguing lessons and in defining the topics that a Bible teacher should relate to, such as tradition vs. criticism, relevance to the students, and discourse on Jewish identity. Also, we have been exposed to matters related to establishing a peer group: making acquaintance, trust, defining expectations, and creating a group where members can make mistakes and learn. It’s important for me to note that the very study of Bible in a high-quality peer group is a crucial challenge for me. It develops thinking, it gives me pleasure, and it yields insights that have not been part of what I’ve been doing in the past few years.

Every time I visit the Hartman Institute or Alma, I feel that I’ve grown another few centimeters. It is a pleasurable kind of growing, being associated with high-quality people, surrounded with inspiring facilitators who steward the process with great care and provide continual support. The project makes you think and hands you a great deal of responsibility, and there’s a belief that real change in Bible teaching can be brought about. There’s a commitment to do everything possible to enable pupils to study Bible in an interesting and relevant way, as I was privileged to do when I was a pupil. The goal that we bear in mind is that the pupils should consider the Bible an inseparable part of their lives and wish to return to it as they move ahead in life.