

PREPARING YOUR “D’VAR TORAH” A “D’var Torah” is your “Interpretation of the Torah Reading”

What will be included in your D’var Torah?

- 1) What you think your Torah parashah is teaching.
- 2) How this teaching challenges us (and you!).
- 3) But thank-you’s are not to be included. Your friends and family will love hearing these at your party.

So what’s in a D’var Torah?

1 st paragraph: [in 3-4 sentences] summarize your verses.

2 nd paragraph: [in 3-4 sentences] describe what you think your parashah is teaching. KEY QUESTION: What kind of message are these ancient words saying to you?

3 rd paragraph: [in 6-8 sentences] give three examples of how this message plays out in the modern world. a) fictional story from book/movie/tv show you’ve read or seen; b) from your own personal experience; c) from larger community around you (past history or current events).

4 th paragraph: [in 2-3 sentences] with these examples in mind ... what is the challenge for each of us ... that your Torah parashah is teaching about how to live, how to behave, etcetera?

5 th paragraph: [in 2-3 sentences] What does it mean to you to become a Bar/Bat Mitzvah? What is your Jewish life going to look like the Monday after your celebration? Use the “Jewish Life-Pieces” list to help you.

6 th paragraph: [in 3-4 sentences] write a short prayer (in English, beginning with the words, “Dear God ...”) to complete your D’var Torah. What do you hope for, wish ... regarding the ideas you’ve presented above ... for yourself, your family, friends, and the world?

Meeting with the Rabbi:

Create outline with Rabbi. Go home and complete these four steps:

Work on it with your parent(s) using the outline above. Type it up and send it to Rabbi Cy for editing: rabbi@bethmiriam.org

JEWISH LIFE-PIECES • Songs • Candles • Prayers • Torah • Confirmation • God • Holidays • Israel • Mitzvot • Tzedakah • Temple • Rabbi • Jerusalem • Abraham • Yiddish • Hebrew • Religious School • Cantor • Rabbinic Intern • Blessings • Shabbat • Services • 10 Commandments • Tallit • Esther/Mordekhai • Maccabees • Shoah/Holocaust • Persecution • Hitler • Shema • Shalom • Kashrut/Kosher • Challah • Noah’s Ark • Talmud • Purim Carnival • Midrash • Retreats • Tu b’Shevat • Midnight Run • Reformation Lutheran Church Soup Kitchen • Planting trees • Studying Torah • Visiting Israel • Learning Hebrew • Reciting Kaddish • Celebrating Shabbat • Supporting Israel • Becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah • Going to Camp Harlam • Trip to Israel • Teen Academy • Participating in tzedakah projects • Pride in your Jewish identity • Contributing \$\$ to Jewish organizations • Making aliyah (moving to Israel) • Belonging to Beth Miriam •

Ashkenazic/Sephardic • Attending services on Shabbat • Attending services on High Holy Days • Helping out in the Yom Kippur Food Drive • Attending services on other Jewish holidays • Keeping kosher: not mixing milk and meat • Keeping kosher: no pork or shellfish • Learning Jewish history • Believing in God • Supporting Jewish causes • Working for the equality of all people • Celebrating Pesach • Lighting Shabbat candles • Helping needy Jews around the world • Making a shiva visit or leading shiva • Being a Religious School madrich or madricha • Fasting on Yom Kippur • Bringing food to the Shopping Cart • Building a sukkah on Sukkot • Putting a mezuzah on a door • Wearing a tallit to daytime services • Eating matzah on Pesach • Lighting Hanukkah candles • Reciting the Shema before bedtime • Wearing a kippah • Reading Jewish books • Wearing a Chai or Star of David • Reciting Kiddush & Motzi on Friday nights • Havdalah on Saturday nights • Shaking a lulav and etrog on Sukkot • Reading from the Torah • Reciting Birkat Hamazon after meals • Working for peace • Using a Hebrew name • Hearing the megillah read on Purim • Celebrating Israel's Independence Day • Caring for the needy • Studying Jewish texts • Israeli Dancing • Learning Yiddish • Believing you make a difference in the world • Reading Jewish magazines • Giving your children a Jewish education • Apples & honey on Rosh Hashanah • B'rit Milah (circumcision) for a baby boy • B'rit Hayyim (naming) for a baby girl • Observing Holocaust Remembrance Day • Giving mishloakh manot (Purim gifts) • Dancing with the Torah on Simkhat Torah • Commemorating a Yahrzeit • Being a Zionist (supporting Israel) • Eating hamentashen on Purim • Having a special dinner on Shabbat • Having a seder on Pesach • Inviting a stranger to your Seder • Kissing a mezuzah when entering/leaving • Thinking about God • Being a mensch • Jewish community