

D'var Torah (Speech) Guidelines

D'var Torah content:

- ▶ Review of your life up until now (optional)
- ▶ General summary of the Parasha (Torah portion) sections you will be speaking about
- ▶ Your questions related to the Parasha
- ▶ Answers, opinions, and lessons learned from the Parasha
- ▶ Words of gratitude to relatives, teachers, and others

Helpful questions to ask when preparing a D'var Torah

- Which stories, quotes, facts, or Mitzvot (laws) from my Parasha interest me most?
- How would I describe the content of the sections I chose in my own language (in detail)?
- What do I like or perhaps dislike about each one?

If you picked Torah sections of laws, lists, or other technical information

1. What feelings do I have when I read the sections I picked?
2. What may be unclear, odd, repetitive, or missing in the sections I picked? (please form as many critical questions as you can?)
3. What seems to be a symbol or symbols, and what may it/they be a symbol of?
4. What did Rabbis and commentators throughout history say about them?
5. What may these sections teach me about being human?
6. What may these sections teach me about being Jewish?
7. What may they teach about God?
8. In my opinion, why are these sections included in the Torah?
9. What lessons from my sections would I like to apply to my own life?

If you picked a story

1. What feelings do I have when I read the sections I picked?
2. Which questions can I ask about the sections I picked? (i.e. questions that start with, why, who, when, how, how much, in what order. Please form as many critical questions as you can?)
3. Who are the good-ones and who are the bad-ones in the story, and why?
4. Why are the leader/s doing and/or saying things the way they are?
5. Why may God be doing and/or saying things the way S/He is?
6. If I was God and could make things happen differently, how would I make things happen and why?
7. Which parts of the story are left untold, and what may have happened there?
8. Which parts of the story repeat and why in your opinion would the Torah repeat them?
9. What seems to be a symbol or symbols, and what may it/they be a symbol of?
10. What did Rabbis and commentators throughout history say about my Torah story?
11. Is there anyone in the story that is like me, and why?
12. Is there anyone in the story that is like anyone I know, and why?
13. Does the story remind me of things that happened in real life to my family or to someone else, and what was that?
14. How may this story help me better understand a similar situation that I have experienced?
15. Why should other people know and remember this story?
16. What does it teach me about being human?
17. What does it teach me about being Jewish?
18. What does it teach about God?
19. What lesson does the Torah story teach me that I would like to apply to my own life?