

Peulat Shabbat Va'etchanan

Step 1-Meet at the tennis courts!

Step 2-Split up into the following groups:

Step 3- Read the following overview of the parasha to your campers.

In parashat va'etchanan, Moses pleads with God to allow him to enter the land of Israel. Since he disobeyed G-d in an earlier parasha, G-d refuses to let him enter and forces him to die on a mountain bordering Israel. In order to prevent the Israelites from straying from G-d's word like he did in the earlier parasha, Moses reminds the Israelites of all the miracles G-d performed for them. These include the repetition of the Ten Commandments and the Shema, which both declare the central tenets of the Jewish faith: the unity of G-d, the mitzvah of loving G-d, and the study of the Torah.

Step 4-Ten Commandments Activity

Each group will be provided with a list of the Ten Commandments. The campers should order the commandments in a list based on their opinion of the order of importance. Once the campers are done ordering the commandments, they should explain their logic. Any campers who disagree with the group's list should also explain why they disagree.

Step 5- Discuss the following questions.

1. If you could add a commandment to the Ten Commandments, what would it be? Why?
2. If you could take away a commandment from the Ten Commandments, which one would it be? Why?
3. Can love, or any emotion, be commanded?
4. What experiences had the people of Israel had that would lead them to love G-d?
5. Why did Moses choose to repeat the Ten Commandments and the Shema? Why not other prayers?
6. The Ten Commandments appear twice in the Torah, but the two versions are not identical. The biggest difference exists in the fourth commandment, the one that refers to *Shabbat*. Exodus 20:8 tells us to "Remember (*zachor*) *Shabbat*" because "God made heaven and earth in six days and rested on the seventh day." On the other hand, Deuteronomy 5:12 command us to "Observe (*shamor*) *Shabbat*" because we were slaves in Egypt and God freed us. What is the significance of this difference?
7. Why do you think the rabbis chose the Shema to be placed inside mezuzahs?
8. What are the Ten Commandments for life at camp?