**Shabbat Va’etchanan**

Season 2, Episode 2

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Theme: Think about the lines we draw in our lives. Think about norms and how people perceive their Judaism.

**Opening**

In the parsha, when Moses expresses rules and laws in Va’etchanan, he is concerned that the people of Bnai Israel will not continue their standard practices of Judaism once they enter the land of Israel. Moses is concerned that the people of Israel will worship idols and partake in other unkosher traditions. He is worried that the Jewish tradition will die out in time with his death. Today, many people have different variations of Judaism. People draw lines in different aspects of their life and make decisions about what they believe is moral. In order to realize our place in the world and to be honest with ourselves about our beliefs and morals, we must challenge ourselves to be truthful about tough questions.

**Crossing the Line Game:**

Have everyone stand on one side of a line on the tennis or basketball courts. Explain that this is a silent activity. Explain that you will read each prompt, and if they agree they should cross the line. Then they will move back to their spot and the next prompt will be read. If a chanich asks a questions about the prompt, tell them it means whatever they interpret it to mean. **Do not discuss each statement- it is a silent game and should flow.**

**Statements:**

Cross the line if cooking is your favorite chug at camp.

Cross the line if you love camp.

Cross the line if you feel Jewish in everyday life.

Cross the line if your Jewish practices are the same as your parents.

Cross the line if you enjoy being Jewish.

Cross the line if you think believing in God is an important part of being Jewish.

Cross the line if you think supporting the state of Israel is an important part of being Jewish.

Cross the line if you connect to Judaism through traditional prayer.

Cross the line if you like chocolate ice cream.

Cross the line if you Shabbat at home.

Cross the line if most of your friends are Jewish home.

Cross the line if you feel being Jewish is important to you

Cross the line if being Jewish is essential to your image.

Cross the line if you keep a stricter standard of Judaism at camp than at home.

Cross the line if keeping kosher is an important part of your Jewish identity.

Cross the line if you want to raise a Jewish family when your older.

Cross the line if your Jewish heritage is important to you.

Cross the line if you feel connected to Israel.

Cross the line if you practice Judaism different than your parents.

Cross the line if you think you have to follow the laws and traditions of Judaism in order to be Jewish.

Cross the line if camp is the primary influence in shaping your Jewish identity.

Cross the line if you were dishonest about any of the pervious prompts.

**Follow up Questions:**

1. Which prompts did most people agree on?
   1. Why do you think everyone agreed?
2. Which prompts did people not agree on?
   1. Why do you think people disagreed?
   2. Can someone explain why they answered the way they did?
3. Which prompts were the hardest to answer?

**Conclusion:**

A key quote from this weeks parsha is, (have someone read aloud)

**“be careful to do as the Lord your G-d has commanded you. Do not turn aside to the right or to the left: follow only the path the lord your G-d has enjoined upon you so that you may thrive and that it go well with you, and you may long endure in the land you are to possess.”**

If you were to look at this quote plainly, one would think that all we must do is follow G-d’s every command and law. In the Talmud, however, this verse is interpreted as G-d being our teacher. It is written that if we were to imitate G-d when G-d tells us to raise our right arm, we would wind up raising our left because we would be imitating him. Instead, we must use our own perception of the situation and think thoughtfully enough to be able to realize that we must really be raising our right arm. While we must think carefully about everything G-d says and commands, we also must take time to think about and asses the role Judaism plays in our life as well as the role we play as Jews in the greater world.