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PREPARING A D'VAR TORAH ... FOR PRESENTATION OR DISCUSSION

Yes! You *can* write a D'var Torah. If you have the interest, Jewish tradition has all the material you will ever need. Combine that with an idea that's important to you, and you can absolutely bring Torah to others for any occasion.

Gather the following ...

- A topic, something important to you.
- A *parashah* (in particular, a piece that speaks to your topic).
- Two good examples of what you're trying to say.
- And a good story or thought to catch people's attention when you begin.

Putting together a D'var Torah ...

- Decide which you'd like to prepare – a presentation or a discussion.
- Decide in what order you'd like to present your material (you're welcome to add more, of course, but watch the clock!).
- You needn't begin with your catchy story/thought – you may certainly open with the *parashah* itself, then move to the story/thought.
- If presenting, lay out clearly and concisely the piece of Torah you're presenting. Also, adding a small amount of background material (When and where does the story take place? Who are the main characters? What Jewish concept do I need preliminary information about in order to understand?) can help your listeners stay with you.
- If discussing, provide as much Torah intro as needed in order to get to the material you'll be discussing. Have someone read aloud (always give this piece away ... it's the easiest participation piece). Then throw out leading questions so the discussion can go the way you'd like it to. Be careful, though; make sure your questions are thoughtful, provocative, and (at the very least) interest you.
- To beef up discussions: Ask follow-up questions to those who speak. Find a bit of commentary (from Rashi, etcetera) to either support your point, or provoke the group even more. To find commentary, visit sefaria.org and reformjudaism.org/learning/torah-study.
- Whether presenting or discussing, after Torah material is “on the table,” provide your examples. If discussing, ask if there are others.
- Then pull it all together with a clearly articulated final point.
- And close your D'var Torah with either a prayer, a poem, a story, or a concluding thought and/or challenge.

Questions? Contact me anytime at rabbibillydreskin@gmail.com.