

# NCYI Youth Groups Parshat Vaetchanan

([http://www.headcoverings-by-devorah.com/HebEngTaNaKh\\_TorahSummary.htm](http://www.headcoverings-by-devorah.com/HebEngTaNaKh_TorahSummary.htm))

## Parsha Outline

- Moshe's plea
- Loyalty to G-d
- Setting up the cities of refuge
- The Ten Commandments
- The Shema' (Hear O Yisrael)
- Warnings
- The Exodus

## Parsha Summaries

[http://www.chabad.org/parshah/article\\_cdo/aid/540484/jewish/Aliya-Summary.htm](http://www.chabad.org/parshah/article_cdo/aid/540484/jewish/Aliya-Summary.htm)

### Va'etchanan Aliya Summary

**General Overview:** In this week's Torah reading, *Va'etchanan*, Moses continues his attempt to impress upon the Israelites the importance of following G-d's commandments, the rewards which will result from obeying G-d's words, and the punishments they will incur if they neglect to do so. Moses recounts the story of the giving of Torah at Mount Sinai, and repeats the Ten Commandments. Moses designates cities of refuge. This portion also contains the Shema.

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**First Aliyah:** Moses recounts how he pleaded with G-d to allow him entry into Israel. G-d refused this request, but instructed Moses to climb a mountain from where he would see the Promised Land. Moses enjoins the people to follow G-d's law, and never to add to or detract from it. Moses uses the *Baal Peor* incident to demonstrate that those who remained faithful to G-d survived and thrived.

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**Second Aliyah:** Moses implores the Israelites to treasure the Torah, praising its wisdom, its righteous and just precepts, and the closeness to G-d it affords. He admonishes them to never forget the day when G-d gave them the Torah, and vividly describes that awesome event, enjoining them to recount that day's events to their children and grandchildren. He

then focuses on the divine revelation, reminding them that G-d did not appear as any image or form. Worshipping graven images, Moses warns, will result in national exile and decimation. But even when exiled, G-d will not forsake His people, and eventually they will repent and return to G-d. This section concludes with Moses extolling the Israelites' uniqueness: the only nation personally delivered by G-d from bondage, and the only people to whom G-d revealed Himself.

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**Third Aliyah:** Moses designates three cities of refuge on the eastern side of the Jordan River. These cities provided refuge for an individual who inadvertently murdered another.

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**Fourth Aliyah:** Moses repeats the Ten Commandments, reminding the Israelites that the Sinai covenant was not limited to those who were physically present at Mount Sinai.

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**Fifth Aliyah:** Moses describes the fright which gripped the nation following the revelation on Sinai. The leaders of the tribes approached Moses and pleaded that he be the intermediary to transmit G-d's words to them, and G-d agreed.

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**Sixth Aliyah:** This section begins with the first section of the Shema prayer. This paragraph contains the fundamental mitzvot of belief in G-d's unity, love of G-d, *tefillin*, *mezuzah*, and Torah study. The section continues with G-d's promise to give the Israelites a land filled with bounty and spoils. Moses admonishes the people to never forget the Creator who provided them with this wealth. Moses instructs the nation what to respond to their children who might inquire why they observe all the commandments: "We were slaves in Egypt, and G-d took us out in order that we serve Him, so that we could reap the rewards for doing so."

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**Seventh Aliyah:** The Israelites are directed to destroy the inhabitants of Canaan along with their idols, and the prohibition against intermarriage is discussed.

<http://ohr.edu/yhiy/article.php/3624>

Although Moshe is content that Yehoshua will lead the nation, Moshe nevertheless prays to enter the Land of Israel in order to fulfill its special *mitzvot*. Hashem refuses. Moshe reminds *Bnei Yisrael* of the gathering at Sinai when they received the Torah that they saw no visual representation of the Divine, but only the sound of words. Moshe impresses on *Bnei Yisrael* that the Sinai revelation took place before an entire nation, not to a select elite, and that only the Jews will ever claim that Hashem spoke to their entire nation. Moshe specifically enjoins *Bnei Yisrael* to "pass over" the Sinai event to their children throughout all generations.

Moshe predicts, accurately, that when *Bnei Yisrael* dwell in *Eretz Yisrael* they will sin and be scattered among all the peoples. They will stay few in number but will eventually return to Hashem.

Moshe designates three "refuge cities" to which an inadvertent killer may flee. Moshe repeats the 10 Commandments and then teaches the Shema, the central credo of Judaism, that there is only One G-d. Moshe warns the people not to succumb to materialism and thus forget their purpose as a spiritual nation. The *parsha* ends with Moshe exhorting *Bnei Yisrael* not to intermarry when they enter *Eretz Yisrael*, as they cannot be a treasured and holy nation if they intermarry, and they will become indistinguishable from the other nations.

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## Parsha Songs

[The lyrics are supplied here. For the tunes, please click on the link]

[http://www.chabad.org/parshah/article\\_cdo/aid/573778/jewish/Parshah-Song.htm](http://www.chabad.org/parshah/article_cdo/aid/573778/jewish/Parshah-Song.htm)

Lyrics:

Missing

## Parsha Questions & Answers

Selected from the following websites:

[http://www.chinuch.org/item\\_details.php?mid=7078](http://www.chinuch.org/item_details.php?mid=7078)

[http://www.chinuch.org/item\\_details.php?mid=5296](http://www.chinuch.org/item_details.php?mid=5296)

[http://www.chinuch.org/item\\_details.php?mid=1681](http://www.chinuch.org/item_details.php?mid=1681)

<http://ohr.edu/yhiy/article.php/1797>

The following are a selection of questions obtained from the above mentioned websites.

K-2

## Questions

1. What did Moshe pray for at the beginning of the parsha?
2. The Torah clearly states what Bnei Yisrael have to follow in order to successfully remain in the land that HaShem gives them. What is it that Bnei Yisrael must follow?
3. What event in the desert must Bnei Yisrael remember and make known to future generations?
4. What will happen to Bnei Yisrael if they pursue Avodah Zarah?
5. What term pertaining to the mitzvah of Shabbat parallels the term Zachor (remember) which is used in Parshat Yitro?
6. How are we to observe the Shabbat?
7. What are two rewards for honoring one's parents?
8. What does Shema Yisrael HaShem Elokeinu HaShem Echad mean?
9. What are we told to do in the shema?
10. With whom were Bnei Yisrael warned not to make treaties and not to intermarry and what does the Torah warn would happen to Bnei Yisrael if they did?

## Answers

1. To cross over the Yarden and enter Eretz Yisrael
2. The chukim and mishpatim (laws of the Torah)
3. Matan Torah at Har Sinai (also known as Har Chorev)
4. HaShem will remove them from Eretz Yisrael and disperse them among the nations
5. Shamor – observe
6. By refraining from all melacha that we do during the other six days of the week
7.
  - a. Arichat Yamim – lengthening one's days
  - b. Living successfully in the land HaShem gives us
8. Listen Israel, HaShem is our G-d, HaShem is one (i.e., don't go looking for Avodah Zarah)
9. Love HaShem
10.
  - a. With the seven nations that inhabited Eretz Yisrael at the time
  - a. They would be lead astray to worship other gods which would make HaShem angry and He would quickly destroy them

3-4

## Questions

1. What did Moshe pray for at the beginning of the parsha?

2. The Torah clearly states what Bnei Yisrael have to follow in order to successfully remain in the land that HaShem gives them. What is it that Bnei Yisrael must follow?
3. How will other nations view Bnei Yisrael if they safeguard and keep the laws of the Torah?
4. What event in the desert must Bnei Yisrael remember and make known to future generations?
5. Which sin would cause HaShem to become like a consuming flame?
6. What will happen to Bnei Yisrael if they pursue Avodah Zarah?
7. When do we say stanza 4:39? What does it mean?
8. What term pertaining to the mitzvah of Shabbat parallels the term Zachor (remember) which is used in Parshat Yitro?
9. How are we to observe the Shabbat?
10. What are two rewards for honoring one's parents?
11. If the reward is the same for listening to HaShem as it is for listening to our parents, then we can conclude that when we respect our parents we are ultimately respecting whom?
12. What does Shema Yisrael HaShem Elokeinu HaShem Echad mean?
13. We are told to love HaShem with all our heart, soul, and being. To whom must we transmit this message?
14. How does it state in the shema to do that?
15. With whom were Bnei Yisrael warned not to make treaties and not to intermarry and what does the Torah warn would happen to Bnei Yisrael if they did?

## Answers

1. To cross over the Yarden and enter Eretz Yisrael
2. The chukim and mishpatim (laws of the Torah)
3. They will view Bnei Yisrael as a wise, understanding and great nation
4. Matan Torah at Har Sinai (also known as Har Chorev)
5. Avodah Zarah – worshipping anything other than HaShem Himself
6. HaShem will remove them from Eretz Yisrael and disperse them among the nations
7.
  - a. In Aleinu before Al Kein
  - b. Know in your hearts that HaShem is supreme over heaven and earth and there is no other who reigns supreme
8. Shamor – observe
9. By refraining from all melacha that we do during the other six days of the week
10.
  - a. Arichat Yamim – lengthening one's days
  - b. Living successfully in the land HaShem gives us
11. HaShem
12. Listen Israel, HaShem is our G-d, HaShem is one (i.e., don't go looking for Avodah Zarah)
13. To our children

14. By showing love for HaShem in and out of the home and creating an environment conducive to fulfilling HaShem's commandments
15.
  - a. With the seven nations that inhabited Eretz Yisrael at the time
  - b. They would be lead astray to worship other gods which would make HaShem angry and He would quickly destroy them

## 5-6

### Questions

1. What did Moshe pray for at the beginning of the parsha?
  2. The Torah clearly states what Bnei Yisrael have to follow in order to successfully remain in the land that HaShem gives them. What is it that Bnei Yisrael must follow?
  3. How will other nations view Bnei Yisrael if they safeguard and keep the laws of the Torah?
  4. What event in the desert must Bnei Yisrael remember and make known to future generations?
  5. At Har Sinai, HaShem's voice came from a flame which symbolizes what HaShem will become if Bnei Yisrael commit a particular sin. Why did HaShem merely project His voice from fire to speak to Bnei Yisrael as oppose to appearing in the image of something that would speak to them?
  6. Which sin would cause HaShem to become like a consuming flame?
  7. What will happen to Bnei Yisrael if they pursue Avodah Zarah?
  8. What did HaShem call as witness to this testimony?
  9. When do we say stanza 4:39? What does it mean?
  10. What mountain is the northernmost border of Eretz Yisrael?
  11. What salty body of water is the southernmost border?
  12. What term pertaining to the mitzvah of Shabbat parallels the term Zachor (remember) which is used in Parshat Yitro?
  13. How are we to observe the Shabbat?
  14. What are two rewards for honoring one's parents?
  15. If the reward is the same for listening to HaShem as it is for listening to our parents, then we can conclude that when we respect our parents we are ultimately respecting whom?
  16. Why is Bnei Yisrael commanded, here in this parsha, not to desire a neighbor's field (this was not specified in Yitro)?
  17. What does Shema Yisrael HaShem Elokeinu HaShem Echad mean?
  18. We are told to love HaShem with all our heart, soul, and being. To whom must we transmit this message?
  19. How does it state in the shema to do that?
  20. With whom were Bnei Yisrael warned not to make treaties and not to intermarry and what does the Torah warn would happen to Bnei Yisrael if they did?

## Answers

1. To cross over the Yarden and enter Eretz Yisrael
  2. The chukim and mishpatim (laws of the Torah)
  3. They will view Bnei Yisrael as a wise, understanding and great nation
  4. Matan Torah at Har Sinai (also known as Har Chorev)
  5. So that Bnei Yisrael would not mistake it as being HaShem's image and therefore recreate it and worship it
  6. Avodah Zarah – worshipping anything other than HaShem Himself
  7. HaShem will remove them from Eretz Yisrael and disperse them among the nations
  8. Heaven and earth
  9.
    - a. In Aleinu before Al Kein
    - b. Know in your hearts that HaShem is supreme over heaven and earth and there is no other who reigns supreme
10. Har Chermon
11. Yam Hamelach
12. Shamor – observe
13. By refraining from all melacha that we do during the other six days of the week
14.
  - a. Arichat Yamim – lengthening one's days
  - b. Living successfully in the land HaShem gives us
15. HaShem
16. Because here is the first time that they are about to inherit land
17. Listen Israel, HaShem is our G-d, HaShem is one (i.e., don't go looking for Avodah Zarah)
18. To our children
19. By showing love for HaShem in and out of the home and creating an environment conducive to fulfilling HaShem's commandments
20.
  - a. With the seven nations that inhabited Eretz Yisrael at the time
  - b. They would be lead astray to worship other gods which would make HaShem angry and He would quickly destroy them

## Parsha Stories

[http://www.chabad.org/parshah/article\\_cdo/aid/408139/jewish/Living-with-the-Parshah.htm](http://www.chabad.org/parshah/article_cdo/aid/408139/jewish/Living-with-the-Parshah.htm)

### Living with the Parshah: Answers to Your Prayer

By [Mendy Loewenthal](#)

"Hey, Debbi, what's the matter?" Mr Korn looked at his eight year old daughter in some concern. She was sitting, her head buried in her arms, sobbing. Tearstained eyes looked

up at him. "Last week, (sob) you told me that if I want something I should pray for it (sob)." Debbi said miserably. "So today, I broke the next door window and I prayed really hard that Miss Smythe wouldn't find out it was me, but she did. G-d didn't listen to me!" If she would have looked at her father, she would have seen a distinct twinkle in his eyes. Nonetheless, he said seriously: "But Debbi, have you considered that G-d did listen to you, and perhaps He thought that maybe it was better that Miss Smythe should find out it was you?". He could see his small daughter turning this thought over in her head. "But, I don't like it when someone tells me off," she said in a small voice. "Aha, but if no-one ever told you off you might not realize when you did something wrong. For example you might think there is nothing wrong with playing ball near other people's windows and breaking them - as long as you don't get found out! Then you might possibly grow up to be a selfish person. No doubt G-d doesn't like that idea."

"So, you mean that sometimes we pray for things but G-d doesn't give them to us because if He did it wouldn't be good for us?" Debbi asked thoughtfully.

"Exactly!" her father said "In fact, we have an example of that in this week's Torah portion, Va'etchanan. G-d has told Moses that he can't enter the Holy Land, but still Moses prayed very hard asking to be allowed to, after all. Do you know what? G-d still did not let him go into the Land. It was not in G-d's plan to let Moses enter the Land of Israel at that time, so even though Moses, a really great person, prayed very hard, his prayer was answered 'No.'"

Debbi's eyes opened wide. "So do you mean prayers are always answered - just sometimes 'yes' and sometimes 'no'...?"

"Yes," said her father. "You are quite right. The main thing is that through the praying we connect with G-d." Debbi thought about that. "Just think!" she thought. "Through praying we connect with G-d!" She realized her father was saying something else, and she had not been listening. He began again. "By the way, Miss Smythe told me this evening she did not want to charge us for the window, because she was so grateful to you for rescuing her kitten when it got stuck up a tree last week. So maybe G-d answered 'yes' after all! Now say the Shema, and remember to thank G-d for looking after you... Goodnight!"

[http://www.chabad.org/parshah/article\\_cdo/aid/408140/jewish/Vaetchanan-Parshah-Lesson.htm](http://www.chabad.org/parshah/article_cdo/aid/408140/jewish/Vaetchanan-Parshah-Lesson.htm)

## Va'etchanan Parshah Lesson

By [Malka Touger](#)

The boys from Bunk Twelve were hiking down a mountain trail. After a while, they came to a clearing with cliffs on either side.

"Hello," shouted out Mia.

"Hello, Hello," came the answer as Mia's voice bounced back and forth from cliff to cliff. Soon the entire bunk was doing it. The valley became filled with the echoing of the campers' voices as each one tried out his vocal chords.

"Why do some echoes last longer than others?" Leah asked his counselor, Rachel.

"It depends on how loudly you shout," Rachel explained. "Creating an echo is like throwing a ball against the wall; the harder you throw, the harder the ball bounces back. So, the louder you call out, the more powerful are the sound waves and the more powerfully they will bounce back when they meet something hard which they cannot penetrate. When the sound waves bounce back, they create an echo.

"Calling out in the mountains is like throwing a ball in a ball court where you have one wall in front of you and one wall behind you. The ball will continue bouncing back and forth until its strength ebbs away. Here too, the voices continue to bounce from one cliff to another until they lose their strength. The stronger the voice, the longer it will continue to echo."

"Wait a minute," Leah said. "I remember, you said that when G-d gave the Ten Commandments, He spoke and there was no echo. G-d surely spoke very loudly. According to what you just explained, His voice should still be echoing throughout the world."

"Now, that's a great question," Rachel replied, smiling. "But you forgot one thing. I said that sound waves bounce back when they meet something they cannot penetrate. Our sages explain that there was a miracle and G-d's voice did not have an echo. It did not bounce away from the world. Instead, it sounded from one end of the world to the other, and the world absorbed G-d's voice.

"When G-d gave the Ten Commandments, He intentionally changed the rules of nature. His voice changed the world, making it ready to receive holiness. Ever since then, doing a good deed blends in with the nature of the world; it helps the world follow the voice of G-d which it accepted at the time of the giving of the Torah."

"The same is true when we study the Torah. We are not just learning laws and ideas. We want the Torah to seep into us and be absorbed in our innermost selves, changing the way we think and feel. The Torah should not bounce back, away from us. It should become part of our nature."

<http://ohr.edu/yhiy/article.php/Parshat-Va-etchanan.pdf?docid=3623&ie=1&showobject=1>

## LESSONS FROM THE PARSHA

### THE YOKE OF HEAVEN

"Those oxen sure are working hard, Avi." "Yes, pulling a plow is not easy, Chaim. I see something which helps them very much." "What is that?" "The yoke that they are wearing." "What is a yoke, Avi?" "It is the harness that fits over their necks like a collar." "How does it help them?" "It guides them, Chaim. The yoke lines them up and unites them into a team of oxen. When they are wearing that yoke, they must all pull together, in the same direction. Therefore, their strength is focused, which makes it much easier for them to pull." "I see." "These animals are not too smart, however. They think that their obligation to work comes from the yoke. They are naturally lazy and would rather be lying around doing nothing. Therefore, they sometimes try to throw off the yoke." "Avi, they do not realize that the yoke is not a burden for them, rather it helps them. It is really like a parable to the first verse of Kriyas Shema – *kabalas Ole Malchus Shomayim* – the acceptance of the Yoke of Heaven." "In what way, Chaim?"

The verse states, 'A man was born to toil' (Iyov 5:7). Work is a fact of life. Just as everyone in this world must breathe air, so too everyone must toil. The question is, what will his work be? The choice is his. He can toil for Hashem by accepting the Yoke of Heaven. That is the best occupation. He joins the 'team' of *ovdei* (servants of) Hashem. He is focused totally on productive activities that are good for him, everyone around him, the entire universe, and the Creator. He works hard serving Hashem and the Almighty rewards him richly in this world and the next." "A different person may not realize the exaltedness of this work. He will rebel and throw off the Yoke of Heaven, *chas v'shalom* (G-d forbid). He then proceeds to waste his precious time in this world pursuing worthless vanities. Even if he attains them, he will not be satisfied. Alternatively, Hashem may send him sickness, poverty, and other troubles that soak up his time, money, and energy. Either way he will end up with nothing; no deep satisfaction in this world, and no reward in the next world." "Oy vey! What a terrible fate. I want the best work. I want to *mekabel Ole Malchus Shomayim*. How do I do it, Chaim?" "One way is to be happy with whatever Hashem does for you, Avi, even if it is not pleasant. This does not exempt you from trying to improve the situation. However, you must accept that all the results are from Hashem." "That takes work."

It certainly does. We can think of many reasons to be unhappy with Hashem's plan for us. A rebel may imagine that the situation is worse than it truly is, and subsequently panic. On the other hand, he may worry about future problems that will probably never come to reality. His ego may tell him that he does not deserve this difficult situation. He may get frustrated because he does not have the tools to handle the situation. He may try *hishtadlus* (preparative action), and not receive the desired results. He will subsequently get frustrated and rebel. Sinas chinam, desires for honor, or material pleasures may distort the reality and make him panic and rebel. We have to rise above all of this, Avi. We must realize that Hashem is the Almighty, All Merciful King. Therefore, His decrees must be good for us. We accept them whole heartedly." "Do you have any other tips, Chaim?" "Yes, Avi. Always do every mitzvah with great *zerizus* (quickness), *hislahavus* (excitement), *zehirus* (carefulness), sincerity, and *simcha*. Fulfilling mitzvos is the greatest privilege in the world! Relate to it this way. This is the type of *kabalas Ole Malchus Shomayim* that Hashem wants." "Thank you so much Chaim. You have illuminated my whole approach to Hashem's holy mitzvos. May He help us to always work faithfully for Him." "Amen."

*Kinderlach . . .*

*We want to mekabel Ole Malchus Shomayim with all of our hearts, souls, and might, as it says in Kriyas Shema. We know that the yoke is good for us. It focuses our efforts into totally constructive work. It is good for everyone and everything. It gives us great reward, pleasure, and satisfaction. Most of all, it is the ratzon (will of) Hashem and gives Him nachas ruach. Fulfilling mitzvos is the greatest privilege in the world! Serve Hashem with simcha! Mekabel Ole Malchus Shomayim!*

## CALL ME ANY TIME

"Can we go over the Gemora again?" "Sure. Rava had a tremendous *kasha* (question) for Abaye." "Right. How could two witnesses who are related . . ." *Ring, ring.* "What's that?" "My cell phone. Excuse me one second." *The man is stunned as his chavrusa (study partner) carries on a phone conversation in the middle of their learning session.* "I'm sorry about that interruption. Now, what were we learning? I can't seem to remember." "It's not so easy to remember when there are interruptions." "I need to have a cell phone in order that people can reach me at any time." "I also have something that can reach someone at any time." *The man pulls a small brown object out of his pocket.* "What is that? Your cell phone?" "In a manner of speaking. I can call and get through whenever I want." "Really? What's the number?" "100-20-1." "What kind of a number is that? I never heard of such a number for a cell phone." "Maybe you recognize the number better in Hebrew. *Kuf-chof-aleph. 'Shir LaMaalos. Esa einei el he'harim, may ayin yovo ezri'* (A song of ascents. I raise my eyes up to the mountains. From where will my help come?)" "Stop joking around. That's no cell phone in your hand. It is a book of Tehillim." "I'm not joking. I can speak to Hashem whenever I want. I just open up this book and begin speaking. He hears every word. Just as He heard Moshe Rabbeinu's *tefillah* (prayer) in the beginning of the parasha."

*Kinderlach . . .*

*Hashem's line is always open. Dial Him up whenever you want. Are you feeling a little down? Call His number. Are you a little nervous about a big test? He can help you. Are you scared about the security situation? Give Him a call to remind yourself that He is protecting you. Take your Tehillim with you at all times. Call Him 24 hours a day. His line is always open.*

<http://www.aish.com/torahportion/pArchive.asp?eventType=45&eventName=V%26%2339%3Betchanan>

There are other stories available as well at the above website.

[http://www.aish.com/torahportion/family/Dont\\_ExpectAnything.asp](http://www.aish.com/torahportion/family/Dont_ExpectAnything.asp)

**V'etchanan** (Deuteronomy 3:23-7:11)

**Don't Expect Anything**

## From this week's Torah Portion

We appreciate life - and other people - much more when we don't have the spoiled attitude of expecting everything to be given to us. In this week's Torah portion we learn that when Moses requested something of God, even though he was the most deserving of people, he didn't ask as if he was entitled to anything. Rather, he asked as if it was an undeserved favor. We can learn from here the Torah value of not acting spoiled.

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## Story

*In our story, a kid discovers what life is like when we don't expect everything given to us.*

### SPOIL-RESISTANT

"C'mon Mom, hurry up. Didn't you finish packing my suitcase yet? I have to catch my train in 15 minutes," Megan stated, annoyed. "And what about snacks - are you sure you made my sandwiches *exactly* like I told you to?"

Megan was looking forward to her upcoming weeklong visit to her out-of-town cousins. It would be her first time visiting. She just wished her mom would move a little faster.

After driving her to the train platform, Megan's mother lifted the heavy suitcase out of the trunk and gave it to her.

"Okay, Mom - bye." The girl grabbed the suitcase and started rolling it toward the waiting train.

"Megan, didn't you forget something?" her mother asked with a tired smile.

"What do you mean?" The girl turned and shrugged. "I've got the all the stuff you packed me - the food you made me, the money and the train tickets you gave me and I'm wearing the new outfit you bought me. What could I have possibly forgotten?"

"To say thank you?"

"Oh, yeah ... thanks," she mumbled and scrambled toward the train.

*After a long train ride, she got to her cousins' house.*

"I'm so glad you came!" said her cousin, Jenny, with a friendly hug. "Come with me, I'll show you where you're sleeping."

"This is where me and my sisters sleep," Jenny said, stopping in front of a small room, lined with bunk beds and about half the size of Megan's spacious private bedroom at home. "Isn't it cozy?"

"I suppose so," Megan sniffed. "And where's *my* room?"

Jenny laughed as if Megan had made a hilarious joke. "Right here, silly," she said, pointing to a bed in the corner. "We gave you the *best* one - it hardly wobbles at all."

The next morning, Meagan woke up tired. It wasn't a surprise since she'd hardly been able to sleep in a room full of so many people breathing and her 'wobble-free' bed had rocked as if it was a ship at sea. Still, she must have slept some, because when she opened her eyes, Jenny and her other cousins were all already up and dressed.

Meagan looked up at her cousin, Jenny, who was just finishing neatly tucking in the corners of her bed sheets. Megan couldn't remember the last time she'd made her own bed. It was always the house cleaner or her Mom.

"Jenny," she said, "I'm really hungry. Are we going to have breakfast now?"

"Sure!" the girl smiled brightly. "Come with me."

Meagan followed her to the kitchen, sat down at the big, round table and folded her arms to wait for breakfast, vaguely wondering why all her cousins were scurrying about.

"Hey, I thought you said you were hungry?" Jenny asked.

"I am." Megan said. "Do you think it will be long?"

"What will be long?"

"Before we eat," she said.

"Well that depends how long it will be before you stand up and start making yourself something," Jenny smiled "It's, you know, self-serve around here. You want me to show you how to use the toaster-oven?"

Megan spent a week unlike any she'd ever experienced before in her whole life. She not only learned how to make toast, but also scramble eggs, wash dishes by hand and even mop a floor. It wasn't easy and she would never have dreamed of doing any of these things at home, but somehow here, where everyone was doing it, it seemed normal and almost ... fun. She wasn't sure she wanted to be more like that when she got home - but, surprisingly, she wasn't sure she didn't, either.

\* \* \*

"*Next stop, city station!*" the conductor's voice crackled over the loudspeaker. Megan grabbed her suitcase - which she'd packed herself, and hurried down the platform to meet her waving mother.

"Thank you SO much for coming to get me, Mom!" were her first words.

Her mom looked happily surprised, but Meagan knew that those words, and feelings of appreciation for all her parents did for her, would not be the last ones to leave her lips that day - or from now on.

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## Discussion Questions

### Ages 3-5

Q. How did Megan feel at first about the things her mom did for her?

A. She felt like it was coming to her.

Q. How did she feel in the end?

A. She felt grateful.

### Ages 6-9

Q. What life-lesson do you think Megan learned from her trip?

A. She'd had an attitude that things were coming to her and if anything she expected more. But spending a week around people who weren't spoiled made her consider that nobody had to do things for her - and if they did, she should appreciate it.

Q. How should a person feel if his parents don't do everything for him or give him everything he wants?

A. He should be grateful. That means they aren't spoiling him and are giving him the tools to live a happy, independent life.

### **Ages 10 and Up**

Q. Do you think a spoiled person will have a happy life? Why or why not?

A. Very unlikely. The nature of life is that sometimes things go the way we'd like them to and sometimes they don't. A spoiled person lives with the fantasy that he deserves whatever he wants all of the time. When things don't work out that way, he is in for a big letdown.

Q. Can a person have a lot of things and not be spoiled?

A. Absolutely. Being spoiled isn't a function of what we do or don't have. It's an attitude that we deserve things ... just because. A person can have a lot, but as long as she appreciates it and those who gave it to her - she isn't spoiled.

## **Parsha Games**

<http://www.aje.org.uk/harayon/>

## **K-2**

The Ten commandments are mentioned in this parashah, of which the fourth is 'Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy'

### **Middah/ Jewish Value**

- **Making Shabbat a special day**

### **Activity**

#### **The Five Senses of Shabbat**

**Talk to the children about the 5 senses that we have. Hold up one finger of your hand for each of the senses as everyone says together:**

**'We can...'**

**See, Smell, Taste, Hear, Touch, at the same time pointing to the appropriate area.**

If you can, have five pictures of: an eye, a nose, a mouth and tongue, an ear and a hand.

Now see if the children can think of different things connected to Shabbat, for which we use our senses. If you have the pictures you can ask a child to pick a picture and find an example to match that sense.

Some examples are:

- **SEE** - Candlelight, stars at the end of Shabbat, Havdalah candle
- **SMELL** - Challah baking, Besamim (spices) for Havdalah
- **TASTE** - Wine, challah
- **HEAR** - Singing Kiddush, Chazan singing
- **TOUCH** - Siddur, Chumash

## 3-4

The words of the Shema are the most important in Judaism. They are the first thing children are taught and the last thing one ever says. The words of the first paragraph are in this week's parashah

### **Middah/ Jewish Value**

- **Knowing the words of the Shema**

### **Activity**

Teach the children to 'leyn' the first paragraph of the Shema.

## 5-6

The words of the first paragraph of the Shema are in this week's parashah. It is one of the most important tefillot

### **Middah/ Jewish Value**

- **Saying tefillot (prayers) with kavannah - concentration and meaning**

### **Activity**

**STILL BLANK**