

DC Minyan Dvar Torah Guidelines

Thank you for agreeing to give a Dvar Torah at DC Minyan! We look forward to hearing your insights. This page is meant to give you some guidelines and tips on how to effectively prepare and deliver a Dvar Torah. Do not hesitate to contact the Dvar Torah coordinator (dvar Torah@dcminyan.org) if you have any questions.

Some tips for preparing:

- Give yourself lots of time to prepare. Especially if it's your first time, you may want to get started as much as 6-8 weeks in advance to allow time for reading, thinking and analyzing. Remember, a smart idea needs plenty of time to percolate.
- Start by reading through the whole parasha to see if anything hits you as a particularly interesting topic for further exploration.
- Formulate some of your own questions. Are there strange stories? Missing words? Extra words? Parallels between your parasha and other stories you've heard?
- Check out commentaries to see what others are saying on your topic of interest. Go online and see what others may have written on the topic.
 - On the DC Minyan website there is a [list of resources](#) that can assist you in researching your Dvar Torah.
 - If you're focused on a particularly strange or unusual word, check a concordance to see if that word is used elsewhere in Tanakh. That could yield some interesting results.
 - There are also experienced Dvar Torah presenters who are happy to help guide you through the process – just ask the Dvar Torah coordinator to help get you started.
- Come up with a good answer to your question. A solid, concise answer does not have to be complex or layered in ancient text. It can be pretty simple (and even from your own head), but it should answer your question as best you can.
 - If you cannot answer your question satisfactorily, that's OK. Once you've presented your "best shot," you can leave it open to the community to consider their own answers, and stimulate conversation.
 - Remember, good Divrei Torah often have better questions than answers.
- Consult with your friends and family. Ask them about your ideas and solicit their feedback. Is it interesting? Is it well thought out? They can help you to clarify your ideas. Also, ask them if you can practice your speech in front of them.
- Before you deliver the Dvar Torah, practice it out loud several times to make sure your comfortable with it, that it makes sense, and that it's not too long. (Aim for 5 minutes.)
- While it's best to speak "naturally" and not read your Dvar Torah word-for-word, it's also OK to write out your entire Dvar Torah if you prefer to do that. Just remember to practice that too, and write it out large enough that you can easily read your own writing (or type).

If you use Hebrew terminology, please make sure you translate the words the first time you use them so everyone knows what you're saying.

Also, keep in mind a Dvar Torah is meant to be accessible to all, and not a pulpit for political views. If you have questions about the content of your talk, please speak with the Dvar Torah coordinator.

Thanks again! We look forward to hearing your ideas!