



Torah Reflections: Conversations on the Weekly Parsha  
Parshat Devarim 5784 : Words

Integrating Torah into one's life through reflection and conversation can be an incredibly fun and engaging experience. It's a journey of discovery, where ancient wisdom and timeless teachings come to life in our daily experiences. Through reflection, we have the opportunity to dive deep into the rich tapestry of Torah, extracting profound insights and lessons that resonate with our modern lives. The joy lies in the 'aha' moments, those instances when a Torah verse or story suddenly connects with our personal challenges, aspirations, and values. And when we engage in conversations about Torah with others, it becomes an interactive exploration, where diverse perspectives and interpretations enhance our understanding. These dialogues often spark excitement and intellectual curiosity, making the learning process both enjoyable and fulfilling. Torah becomes a vibrant and dynamic part of our lives, offering not just guidance but also a source of endless fascination, connection, and growth.

NOTE: Don't feel obligated to go through every source or answer all the questions—unless you want to. Even one source, or one question will give you plenty of material for discussion and meditation. Enjoy this!

### **Some thoughts from the parsha**

This week's Torah portion opens with Moshe addressing the Israelites, recounting their past missteps in their relationship with G-d. Though his speech contains rebuke, it's delivered with subtlety and deep respect, setting a standard for how to offer constructive criticism.

An interesting question arises: How did Moshe, who once described himself as "slow of speech," become so eloquent? The Midrash sheds light on this through a story about a peddler who, when asked by a king about his wares, downplayed them, recognizing that nothing could compare to the king's wealth. Similarly, Moshe struggled to speak in the presence of G-d because of G-d's Greatness. However, when speaking to the people, Moshe, as their leader, was clear and articulate.

This tension—between our ability to communicate with others and our humility before G-d—is why we ask G-d to "open our lips" before praying, acknowledging that while we must try to express ourselves, true speech in the presence of the Divine requires G-d's Help. Remember, we have the privilege of having direct access to G-d, no matter how insignificant one might feel.

### **Now, reflect upon the following questions**

1. What does it mean to you to balance humility before G-d with the responsibility to speak clearly and truthfully to others?
2. How do you perceive the idea that even the most eloquent human speech falls short in the presence of the Divine?
3. How can you apply Moshe's example of respectful and subtle communication in your own relationships and interactions?
4. What personal experiences have deepened your understanding of the power and limitations of speech, particularly in spiritual contexts?
5. How does the idea of having direct access to G-d impact your daily life and spiritual practices?

Shabbat Shalom!