

Resources for Writing an Amazing Dvar Torah

Congratulations! You have been assigned to write a Dvar Torah for a USY event. I am guessing that you are quite excited, but may be a little nervous about figuring out where to find interesting insights on the weekly parasha. To help you, here is a list of five books and ten websites that can help you add layers of meaning and insight into any Dvar Torah:

Books for writing Divrei Torah:

1. ***Etz Hayim: Torah and Commentary*, ed. David Lieber:** This is the official Torah Commentary of the Conservative Movement, and it contains literary, theological, and halakhic insights on the Torah portion. You can find a copy at any Conservative synagogue.
2. ***The Bedside Torah*, by Rabbi Brad Artson:** This book includes a collection of stories and commentaries on the weekly parasha, which are easily accessible for a variety of audiences.
3. ***Teaching Torah: A Treasury of Insights and Activities*, ed. Sorel Goldberg Loeb:** This book contains summaries, commentaries, discussion questions and activities about the weekly parasha from leading educators across North America.
4. ***A Torah Commentary for Our Times*, ed. Harvey Fields:** This is a three-volume set with core issues raised in each parasha, with summaries of both traditional and modern commentaries on the parasha.
5. ***New Studies in the Parasha*, by Nehama Leibowitz:** Professor Nehama Leibowitz was one of the greatest teachers of Torah commentary in the modern era, and she compiled five volumes of commentaries and questions from her *gilyonot* ("sheets") on the weekly parasha.

Websites for writing Divrei Torah:

1. **Jewish Theological Seminary:** The Jewish Theological Seminary is the flagship institution of the Conservative Movement, and it has published online Divrei Torah from professors and rabbis for a number of years. You can check out their archives at <http://www.jtsa.edu/x1941.xml>.
2. **Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies:** The Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies is a school for training Conservative rabbis located in Los Angeles, California. You can check out their Divrei Torah at <http://judaism.ajula.edu/Content/ContentUnit.asp?CID=894&u=1474&t=0>.
3. **The USY Divrei Torah Archive:** USY has been publishing Divrei Torah by USYers and educators for decades, and many of those Divrei Torah can be found on the USY website. You can find the archives at <http://www.usy.org/yourusy/reled/dt/>.
4. **Torah Sparks from the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism:** USCJ is the parent organization of USY, has published discussion packets on the weekly parasha for many years from a variety of different teachers. You can find their archives at <http://www.uscj.org/JewishLivingandLearning/WeeklyParashah/TorahSparks/Archive/Default.aspx>.
5. **KOACH's Two Minute Torah Podcast:** Koach is the College Outreach program for the Conservative Movement, and they publish short written and audio Divrei Torah from rabbis and teachers from around the world. You can either read the Divrei Torah or listen to them on your iPod or computer. Check out their archives at: <http://www.uscj.org/koach/podcasts/twomintorah/index.html>.
6. **The Northwoods Kollel at Camp Ramah Wisconsin:** Camp Ramah Wisconsin operates the Northwoods Kollel, a unique *Beit Midrash* learning program for staff and campers, and many of the teachers from the Kollel and Camp Ramah publish Divrei Torah throughout the year. Check out their archives at: http://www.ramahwisconsin.com/site/epage/53769_697.htm.
7. **American Jewish World Service Dvar Tzedek:** The American Jewish World Service focuses on issues of global poverty and international development, and publishes a weekly Dvar Torah on a social justice topic. You can visit them at: http://ajws.org/what_we_do/education/publications/dvar_tzedek/.
8. **MyJewishLearning:** MyJewishLearning is a website containing countless articles on Jewish holidays, history, culture, and the weekly parasha. You can search on this website for articles from rabbis, educators and scholars from across the Jewish spectrum to find the commentary perfect for what you want to write. You can visit them at: <http://www.myjewishlearning.com>.
9. **Kolel- The Adult Centre for Liberal Jewish Learning:** Kolel is a Canadian-based Jewish organization that provides easy-to-understand Torah commentaries using both modern and traditional sources. You can find their commentary archives at <http://www.kolel.org/pages/parasha/archives.html>.
10. **G-dcast- A Video Torah Commentary:** G-dcast is a series of video from different storytellers about the weekly parasha. They offer their own unique spin on the questions raised by the weekly Torah reading. You can find all their videos at <http://www.g-dcast.com/>.