

Lesson 20 - Between the Bookends 6:10 – 11:25

Objective: For students to analyze the Mitzvah section, list its major themes and show how they all relate to the first two commandments.

Activity:

Split the class into 13 pairs/groups (combine sections if the class is small). Assign each group one of the following sections. Ask them to study that section and fill out the worksheet. When they are done have each group present their findings to the rest of the class.

- a) 6:10-15
- b) 6:16-19
- c) 6:20-25
- e) 7:1-11
- f) 7:12-16
- g) 7:17-26
- h) 8:1-10
- i) 8:11-20
- j) 9:1-6
- k) 9:6-29
- l) 10:1-11
- m) 10:12-22
- n) 11:1-12

The Mitzvah Section

Your assigned paragraph: _____

Read your assigned paragraph carefully then answer the following questions.
Prepare to present your findings with the rest of the class.

1. How would you best characterize the contents of your section:

- A. Commandments B. Mussar

2. Summarize the basic message of the paragraph in a sentence.

3. How does this message relate to the first two commandments? Are there any words in your paragraph that are similar to words or phrases use in the first two commandments?

[L20 Perek 6-11 - Contents - Worksheet.doc](#)

The answer to question 1 for all groups should be B. Mussar. Once students realize this pattern explain that the Mitzvah section is an expansion of the first two commandments. As such, this section will not prescribe any specific action but is rather series of encouragements to be faithful to God, not forget Him, and follow all of His commandments.

a) 6:10-15

1. Mussar
2. Don't get too comfortable in the land and forget God.
3. The first commandment was to recognize God. This paragraph says to avoid the opposite, forgetting God, at a time when you become settled and don't think you need His help any longer. Pasuk 14 then summarizes the second commandment not to go after other gods. The phrases אשר הוציאך מארץ מצרים מבית עבדים (pasuk 12) and א-ל קנא (pasuk 15) are identical to phrases in the ten commandments.

b) 6:16-19

1. Mussar
2. Don't test God, rather do good.
3. When Bnei Yisrael tested God at Masah they asked, "Is Hashem in our midst or not?" (Shemot 17:7) indicating a lack of faith required by the first commandment.

c) 6:20-25

1. Mussar
2. Teach next generation to keep laws because Hashem saved us from slavery.
3. The pasuk עבדים היינו which begins the Hagaddah of Pesah talks about Hashem's role as taking us out of Egypt, just as the first commandment does. Hashem gave us commandments for our own good so we will prosper in Israel.

e) 7:1-11 kill all inhabitants

1. Mussar (with some commandments)
2. Don't be influenced by the pagan culture in Israel.
3. This extends the second commandment not to worship other gods as do the natives of Israel. The commandment to destroy altars and not marry local nationalities are all practical ways to avoid transgressing the second commandment. The words שמר הברית דור דור והחסד לאהביו ולשמרי מצותו לאלף דור (pasuk 9) echo similar words in the ten commandments (5:10).

f) 7:12-16 reward

1. Mussar
2. Reward for keeping commandments.
3. Keeping the commandments is how we serve Hashem and fulfill the first commandment. This paragraph says that if we do so, Hashem will keep his side of the ברית and fulfill the חסד he promised the forefathers. The word חסד is also used in the ten commandments to describe reward. This paragraph is an expansion of that word giving details about what it means. The last verse says לא תעבד אלהים, repeating the second commandment.

g) 7:17-26

1. Mussar (and a commandment to destroy idols.)
2. Don't be afraid of the enemy nations in Israel.
3. The detailed description of all the miracles Hashem did when taking us out of Egypt (pesukim 18-19) expands on the אשר הוצאתיך מארץ מצרים in the first commandment. The instruction to destroy idols (pesukim 25-26) is the practical application of the second commandment.

h) 8:1-10

1. Mussar
2. Hashem cares always looks out for our best.
3. The description of how Hashem took care of us in the desert develops the theme of Hashem rescuing Bnei Yisrael from Egypt mentioned in the ten commandments. Point out that ואכלת ושבעת וברכת is the source for the requirement to recite Birkat Hamazon.

i) 8:11-20

1. Mussar
2. Don't forget Hashem once you get comfortable.

3. This section warns us against a common trap when we receive everything we need and forget who gave it to us. This would violate the first commandment. The end presents the unhappy consequences of violating the second commandment.

Note how the last words of pasuk 20 parallel the opening words of this chapter thus forming an envelope around this passage.

j) 9:1-6

1. Mussar

2. God will help you win only because the nations in Israel are evil.

3. Even though the enemy is large and scary, we should trust that Hashem will help us fight. This trust is proceeds from internalizing the first commandment.

k) 9:6-29

1. Mussar

2. Historical review of provocations and how Moshe saved Bnei Yisrael.

3. This list of all the times Bnei Yisrael did not fulfill the first two commandments and how Moshe had to save the nation each time should encourage us to learn from our mistakes.

l) 10:1-11

1. Mussar (History with a sermonic point.)

2. Description of the creation of the second Luchot and their placement in the Aron.

3. In order to remember the ten commandments for all times, we need a new written copy and need to store it in the Aron and carry it with us.

Point out that pasuk 17 is the source for the praise formula found in the first Beracha of the Amida – הא-ל הגדל הגבר והנורא

m) 10:12 - 22 Basic Requirements

1. Mussar

2. Fear and love Hashem.

3. A grand explication of what it means to fulfill the first commandment which includes, fear, love, worship ובכל נפשך ובכל לבבך - recalling the Shema, and taking care of the stranger.

n) 11:1 – 11:12

1. Mussar

2. You have seen Hashem's miracles and can rely on Him to provide rain in Israel.

3. Unlike Egypt which has rivers, Israel relies on rain for their fields which requires Bnei Yisrael to trust that Hashem will provide them rain – a corollary of the first commandment.