

Va'etchannan

By Cayla Murphy

Shabbat Shalom. My Torah portion, *Va'etchannan*, talks about the covenant that G-d made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Moses tells the Israelites, that even though it was our ancestors who received the covenant, it still applies to us. The reason we don't have to renew the covenant is because even though we weren't physically there at Horeb when our ancestors received it, in a way, we were there in mind and spirit. But, even though we weren't physically there, don't start thinking that you can blow it off, because you can't! You still have to follow it even though our ancestors who were physically there are dead. It is our job to pass it down from generation to generation. A Brit is the sign of the covenant, reminding us to follow it and pass it down. Even if parents fail to teach their kids the Jewish religion, it is still the kids' job to study it and live it when they grow up, thus fulfilling the covenant. This applies to not only men, but women also. Today by becoming a Bat-Mitzvah, I begin my covenant with G-d. Once the covenant was made, rules had to be established so things wouldn't get crazy. So, the results of the covenant are the six hundred and thirteen mitzvot.

When G-d gave us the 10 commandments at Mount Sinai, we actually heard G-d say them. We were all there in mind and spirit. After the 10 Commandments were given from G-d, the Israelites were very frightened. So they asked Moses to get the rest from G-d and then tell them what G-d said.

The *V'ahavta* is also in my torah portion. The part that says "with all your might" is a tough concept. The Rabbis say that it means that you should serve G-d with

everything you do. So, for my *Mitzvah* project I am actually going to do something. I am going to make wooden signs to mark points of interest on the Garvin-Maher trail. This trail belongs to the Avon Land Trust that most people don't know exists. Once I am finished, I am going to organize a community hike so people can enjoy the outdoors. This project is part of the Unplugged Learning Project, which raises awareness of the outdoors and helps get people outside. This way, we are showing that we love G-d by loving what he created, and gave us. I am not just going to acknowledge that a trail is there, we are going to walk it. I would like to thank my mom and dad for supporting me and encouraging me to work towards this special day, Rhonda Holtman for being a great teacher of my portion, all my Hebrew school teachers for giving me a great Jewish education, and Rabbi Small, Cantor Cohn and Moshe Pinchover for preparing me for this special day. Please turn to page 1005 in the *Etz Hayim Chumash*, the big red book.