

SHABBAT BULLETIN

August 5, 2023 | 18 Av, 5783



Dvar Torah EKEV 5783

By: Rabbi Yehoshua Ellis

We are now in the third Parsha of the Divarim, the final book of the Torah. This is the third and final Parsha in which Moshe tells the story of Israel to the Children of Israel. In each of the three Parshiot Moshe speaks specifically about three events that had a major impact on the Children of Israel. The first week Moshe recalls the sin of the spies, the second week he retells the Ten Commandments and revelation at Sinai, this week Moshe tells us about the sin of the Golden Calf.

The name of this week's Parsha comes from the second word in this week's Parsha. The Torah uses the word Ekev to describe the way in which we observe the Mitzvot. It is not entirely clear what the meaning of the word is here. Rashi, the eleventh century Torah commentator par excellence, connects the term to the word for

ankle, Akav. He says that the Torah is referring to the minor Mitzvot that get trampled underfoot, that if we are careful about them then we will merit to see blessing from the Mitzvot.

The word that I most closely associate with Ekev is Laakov, to set back or to hold up. Mitzvot do that, they stand in the way of things going ahead smoothly and in a timely manner. Last night we were all ready to leave my friend's house, bags packed and kids in hand when we remembered that we hadn't said Birkat Hamazone. So instead of an orderly exit we sat at the table and prayed together.

This disruption is the spiritual power that Mitzvot places in our hands. Life moves fast and we try to keep up with it. Life, especially with children, is a marathon from one event to another all the time constantly changing location. In order to accomplish what we need to do we have to always be on the move. The Mitzvot tie up this process, they throw in all manner of details that make efficient action a distant dream. I think about the hours I've spent searching for kosher

food, or how difficult it is to schedule vacations around Shabbat.

These bumps on the paths and pauses in progression give us the time to actually enjoy what we are doing and to share it with others. The Mitzvot then come to change the shape of our lives, by disrupting the rhythm at which they are lived. One of the blessings we are promised by the Torah for following the Mitzvot is length of day, this does not mean a long life, that is length of years. Length of days are days that are long, in which every moment is full of significance.

The Mitzvot promise a life full of meaning and blessing not because they make life easier, rather the opposite. By filling our lives with complications and additional considerations they give us the chance to live our lives as opposed to just going with the flow. We can all merit to live a life of reduced efficiency and heightened meaning if we just allow for the Mitzvot to hold us up a bit.

Shabbat Shalom!

OPINION

Chevra Shaas Words From Rabbi Menahem White EIQEV 5783

What? it's already August? Wow! Parents begin thinking of school supplies (as you say in Quebec, the time of "rentrée scolaire.") For my 46 years at U.T.T., it meant I had to begin thinking of content and teaching methods.

Back around 25 years ago, I was asked one year to start off the first teachers/administrators meeting of the year with a devar torah. Instead, I told the following story. Afterwards, many of the staff came over to me, and said that the story illustrated well what the philosophy of a school should be.

So I take the liberty of telling the story again. I think you will see how the story is a bit ahead of its time.

The Chafets Chayyim was known as one of the great sages in the period before and after WWI. He was held in great esteem and awe for both his knowledge of Jewish law, and for his righteousness. People came from far and wide to get his blessing. He was also head of an important yeshiva in Radin.

In 1886, the day-to-day functioning of yeshiva was placed in hands of his son-in-law, Rav Tsvi Hirsch Levinson. But final decisions remained in the hands of the Chafets Chayyim.

A certain student was not learning properly, would come late to minyan, etc. The principal wanted to expel him. The Chafets Chayyim didn't agree, and said that the boy should be kept in the school.... 2 weeks later, a woman came to the Chafets Chayyim. She ran a small inn, gave room and board to a small number of students. [In those days, the yeshiva did not supply the students with food.] She complained: a certain student was hutspadiq [i.e., arrogant] to her. The matter was investigated, the woman was correct. The Chafets Chayim told the principal to expel the boy from yeshiva.

So, the principal asked: what's the difference. Why can the first boy stay, but the second has to leave?

The great rabbi answered: the boy who was not up to par: he is young, he will grow out of it. He'll be OK. But the arrogant boy? In chapter 5 of Pirqei Avot, we learn: the arrogant go to hell. The great rabbi explained: why only the arrogant? There are many sins. What is special about arrogance? Answer: when a person does a sin, he can

always repent. But an arrogant person: he will never repent!! He's always right. It's beneath his dignity to admit that he did something wrong.

This idea can be connected with today's parasha. The 1st aliya explains: how can we be successful in the Land of Israel? The Torah says: "lo tavi' to'eyva 'el beitekha" "do not bring an abomination into your house." What is the abomination referred to? According to peshat, probably refers to verse immediately above, referring to idolatry: don't be influenced by foreign values

However, R. Levi Yitschak of Berditchev saw here a gezeira shava: that is, we interpret a word based on the way that word is used in another place in the Bible. Proverbs 16:5 says to'avat haShem kol gevah lev: "HaShem despises the arrogant." So the verse in this week's parasha means: "don't bring arrogance into your house."

Sadly, as we follow the news from Israel, we do not find many examples of compromise, tolerance, and patience.

We pray that the spirit of love, as we have just passed Tu be'av, can permeate our land of Israel "bimheirah beyameinu!" speedily in our days.

Shabbat shalom

SHABBAT SHALOM

Start/Debut End/Fin 8:00 p.m. 9:08 p.m.

PARASHAT VA'ETHANAN HERTZ PAGE 755 HAFTARAH ISAIAH HERTZ PAGE 776

SHABBAT SERVICES
SHAHRIT: 8:30A MINHA: 8:00P

WEEKLY SERVICES SCHEDULE

Sunday

Shahrit: 8:30A Minha: 6:00P

MONDAY - FRIDAY

Shahrit: 7:00A Minha: 6:00P

CHEVRA SHAAS Service Schedule

SHABBOS, August 5TH Schachris 9:30 a.m.

SUNDAY, August 6™ Schachris 8:00 a.m.

TORAH CLASS

Join ANDRE ROTCHEL every Shabbat after services Beit Hamidrash Refreshments

To contact
Rabbi Yehoshua Ellis:
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(514) 970-9932

To contact **Reverend Hazan Daniel Benlolo:**cantorbenlolo@thespanish.org
(514) 892-2859

The History & Evolution of the Torah

Every Shabbat 1 hour after kiddush starts.

Shabbat Aug. 5 at 1 p.m.

Coming Event

High Holiday Workshop

with

Rabbi Ellis & Company Sept. 7 from 7 - 9 p.m.

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10th Annual Calendar

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QUOTE OF THE WEEK

Everybody wants to save the Earth; nobody wants to help Mom do the dishes.

- P.J. O'Rourke | Aish HaTorah

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The Congregation.

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COMMMUNITY

PARNASS HAYOM BEIT HAMIDRASH HELWANI

SUNDAY/DIMANCHE 19 AV - AUGUST 6 Armand Mamane, en l'honneur de sa famille.

MONDAY/JEUDI 20 Av - AUGUST 7 David Gabbay & Shasha Families, in memory of Haron Shasha 5^{"1}

TUESDAY/MARDI 21 AV - AUGUST 8
Anne & Sam Aintabi, in memory of his brother, Robert Haim Aintabi 77

WEDNESDAY/MERCREDI 22 AV - AUGUST 9
Gary Pearl, in memory of his father,
Joseph Pearl τη

Maghen Abraham, in memory of Jacob Akaireb ben Rahel ז״ל

THURSDAY/JEUDI 23 AV - AUGUST 10 M. & Mme. Marcel Menda, en l'honneur de Rabbin Yehuda Abittan.





Jewish Wisdom

PARASHAT EKEV - VALUABLE LESSONS Reverend Hazan Daniel Benlolo

Parashat Ekev, contains valuable lessons that can resonate with the times we live in. Some key messages include:

- 1. Gratitude and humility: The portion emphasizes the importance of gratitude for the blessings we receive. In challenging times, it's essential to remember the things we are thankful for and to approach life with humility, recognizing our dependence on the Divine and the interconnectedness of all beings.
- 2. Trust in God during hardships: Parashat Ekev recounts the Israelites' journey through the wilderness, where they faced various trials. Despite the uncertainties, they were encouraged to trust in God's providence. This message can inspire us to find strength and hope during difficult times, trusting that there is a greater purpose and a guiding force in our lives.
- **3.** Ethical behavior and kindness: The portion stresses the importance of acting ethically and showing compassion towards others. In today's world, where divisions and challenges are prevalent, the message of treating others with kindness and fairness is more important than ever.
- **4.** Spiritual significance in everyday life: As mentioned earlier, the custom of saying blessings for various actions is present in Parashat Ekev. This serves as a reminder to find spiritual significance in everyday activities, fostering mindfulness and gratitude amidst our busy lives.
- **5.** Responsible stewardship of the Earth: The portion emphasizes that the land the Israelites are about to enter is a gift from God and that they have a responsibility to care for it. In the context of our times, this message carries the importance of environmental stewardship and taking care of our planet for future generations.
- **6.** Unity and collective responsibility: The portion stresses the idea of collective responsibility, emphasizing that the actions of individuals can have consequences for the community as a whole. This message can remind us of the importance of working together to address global challenges and to support one another.

In summary, Parashat Ekev offers timeless teachings that encourage us to cultivate gratitude, trust, ethical behavior, mindfulness, and unity. These lessons are relevant and can guide us in navigating the complexities of the modern world, fostering a sense of connection with the Divine and with each other.



Got a Question for Reverend/Hazan Daniel Benlolo?

Dear Danny

Why is it customary in Judaism to recite a blessing for almost everything?

Dear reader,

The practice of reciting blessings, known as "berakhot" in Hebrew, is an essential aspect of Jewish tradition and observance. It stems from the belief that God is the ultimate source of all blessings and that expressing gratitude for these blessings is an integral part of spiritual life.

The concept of blessings in Judaism can be traced back to the Torah, where it is mentioned numerous times. For example, in Deuteronomy 8:10, it says, "When you have eaten and are satisfied, you shall bless the Lord your God for the good land which He has given you." This passage encourages the act of blessing after partaking in a meal, acknowledging that the food comes from God's benevolence.

Judaism teaches that blessings should be recited for both positive and seemingly mundane aspects of life. For instance, there are blessings for food and drinks, such as bread, wine, and fruit, as well as blessings for different occasions and activities, like lighting the Shabbat candles, hearing good news, seeing a rainbow, studying Torah, and even using the restroom.

The rationale behind reciting blessings for ordinary activities is to infuse daily life with spiritual significance. It fosters mindfulness and helps individuals recognize that even the most routine tasks can be opportunities for gratitude and connection with the Divine. This practice serves as a constant reminder of the blessings in one's life and encourages a sense of thankfulness for everything, big or small.

Moreover, saying blessings before performing certain actions can also be seen as a way to seek permission or approval from God before proceeding with a specific activity. By acknowledging God's role in all aspects of life, it promotes a sense of humility and dependence on the Divine.

Overall, the custom of reciting blessings in Judaism helps cultivate a sense of spirituality and gratitude, making daily activities meaningful and sacred while deepening the connection with God.

until next time...



Congregation Maghen Abraham

PERASHA EKEV
Thoughts: Mayer Sasson

One hundred blessings

"And G-d will keep afar from you - all illness and all the bad sufferings of Egypt..." (7,15)

We know what the Tur wrote (Or Hachaim): David Hamelech instructed that one hundred blessings be made daily and thereby the plague that had erupted in his time wherein hundred young men had been dying daily stopped.

We can learn an allusion to this from this verse: "And G-d will keep afar from you - ממך - all illness" . In the merit of - ם מ ה - which adds up to 100 – the one hundred blessings that you make daily - the blessing of "And G-d will keep afar from you - ממך - all illness and all the bad sufferings of Egypt..." will be fulfilled.

Concerning this the Ben Ish Chai zy'o adds that we can interpret the verse in Tehilim (81) "Widen your mouth and I will fill it up" that it alludes to the idea that one who makes 100 blessings daily will be blessed. If we open our mouth - "=" – if we open up this word fully into its letters - =" =" – this adds up to the numerology of 100 (15 = =" = 85 = =" = 10.

Therefore, if we widen our mouths and say 100 blessings daily then "I will fill it up-"G-d will fill it and bring blessings upon the person.

SHABBAT SHALOM!!



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