

INTERNET PARSHA SHEET
ON EIKEV - 5759

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B'S'D' "A pauper sees hashgochas Hashem every day, while a rich man only sees it once in a few years."

Parashat Eikev - 5759 - OU Torah Insights Project OU Torah Insights Project Parashat Eikev July 31, 1999 Rabbi Michael Shmidman

Parshas Eikev begins on a high note. "And it will be, if you listen to these judgments and you observe and do them... [G-d] will love you and bless you and multiply you." Our Sages tell us that this opening word, "Vehayah--And it will be," portends good news. It therefore follows that joy and happiness await those who hearken to and observe the ordinances of the Torah. Happiness does not result from being free to do whatever one wants, with no thought to the consequences and absolved of accountability. This type of behavior may give one a charge, a quick high but not a joy of lasting significance. Good times don't always bring about happy days. "Vehayah eikev tishme'Et and it will be, if you listen": What is the source of happiness? Listening to G-d's instruction, following a course of discipline that fulfills a Divinely mandated responsibility. When our behavior is true to our calling, based on our potential and talent, when we make meaningful contributions to society then we experience real, lasting happiness. Rashi provides another insight into the joy of mitzvos, based on another interpretation of the word eikev. "If you heed the lighter commandments those that people tread upon with their heel (akavav)." In many instances of everyday life, in so many facets of human relations, we neglect or simply fail to see opportunities that make life more pleasant, more satisfying, more enriching, more ennobling because we fail to recognize the importance of what we could have done. How many of these possible and potential "lighter" mitzvos have we tread upon during the past year. Think of the telephone calls we should have made, the thank you notes we should have written, the visits we should have taken, the classes we should have attended, the minyanim we should have prayed with. These are some of the mitzvos kalos that we so often neglect, but from which we could reap such great rewards of satisfaction, joy, and camaraderie if we only paid them more attention. If you want to bring joy into your life and the lives of others, listen to and perform those simple mitzvos that we tend to tread upon, that we think of as insignificant and thus don't give the proper due. Along the same lines, there are mitzvos that have "footsteps behind them." We often fail to realize that good deeds bring about results well after the time that the good deed is performed. A mitzvah may have long-lasting consequences. Bring a new person to shul, invite a newcomer for a Shabbos meal the ramifications may last forever. Look at lasting friendships that are the result of one act of kindness or one simple introduction. We often refer to ikvasa demeshicha the footsteps of Mashiach to describe our times. We feel redemption coming closer. If we live a life of "Vehayah eikev tishme'Et in all its many facets, we hope to hear soon and in our time the footsteps of the Mashiach. Rabbi Michael Shmidman Rabbi Shmidman is rabbi of Congregation Orach Chaim in New York City.

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From: Yated USA[SMTP:yated-usa@ttec.com] Peninim Ahl HaTorah: Parshas Eikev by Rabbi A. Leib Scheinbaum Hebrew Academy of Cleveland

Now, O Yisrael, what does Hashem your G-d ask of you? Only to fear Hashem, your G-d. (10:12) Fear of G-d is essential. A person is able to acknowledge Hashem and freely submit to His will only when he truly fears Him. One naturally succumbs to the yetzer hora, evil inclination. Through our yiraas Shomayim, fear of Heaven, however, we are able to overcome the blandishments of the yetzer hora. The Chofetz Chaim placed emphasis on the word "viata" "now". A person should go through life inquiring, "What does Hashem ask of me-now? Not tomorrow, not yesterday, but right now! When we keep the idea of current obligation in our mind, Judaism becomes alive. Our whole manner of observance takes on a totally new perspective. Horav

From: Yated USA[SMTP:yated-usa@ttec.com]
Kortz Un Sharf- Short and Sweet Parsha Vertlach by Shaya Gottlieb

V'hoyo Eikev Tishmaun- And it shall be because you will listen (7:12) This possuk is compared to a father who tells his child, "You should learn, because if you don't, you will be punished until you want to learn. So you might as well begin learning immediately." So, too, Moshe Rabenu told the Bnei Yisroel, 'V'hoyo Eikev,' the result will be, that you will be forced to obey, so you might as well obey to begin with. -Rav Bunim of P'shischa Before every step that a person undertakes, he must first consider whether he is doing the will of Hashem, and fulfill the deed accordingly. 'V'hoyo Eikev', by every step of the way, 'Tishmaun,' you shall pay attention and decide whether you are doing Hashem's will. -The Sassover Rebbe Chazal: The word 'V'hoyo' is a loshon of simcha. V'hoyo, there will be a great simcha in shomayim, if 'Eikev', during the 'Ikvesa d'Mishica,' when there will be great nisyonos and difficulties being a Jew, 'Tishmaun', Klal Yisroel will heed the Torah and do the mitzvos. -Orach L'chaim "Vishomar Hashem Elokecho Licho Es Habris"-And Hashem will guard the covenant that he promised to your fathers (7:12) When Klal Yisroel sins, they are not nourished in their own merit, but in the merit of the promise Hashem made to their fathers. The possuk warns us, "Take care to uphold the bris that Hashem made with your fathers, so that you should be nourished in your own merit." -Chasam Sofer

"Ushmartem V'asisem Osom"- and you will fulfill them (7:13) The warning about fulfilling the mitzvos is expressed in plural form, (ushmartem) while the promise about Klal Yisroel's reward is expressed in singular form (uvayrachecho). Though all of Klal Yisroel fulfill the mitzvos, everyone fulfills them on a different level, with a different measure of enthusiasm and joy. Therefore, everyone deserves their own reward. -Kli Chemdo

"Vomarto K'Kochi V'otzem Yodi Oso Li Es Hachayil Hazeh"- and you shall say, 'my strength has given me these riches' (8:17) You shall not say that because of your 'otzem yodi', closing your fists to the poor, you became wealthy. No one has ever become wealthy from stinginess!

A wealthy man once came to Rav Chaim of Volozhin, crying bitterly. A shipment of merchandise was confiscated at the border, and the loss would turn him into a pauper. "Don't worry, Hashem will help," Rav Chaim consoled him. A while later, the merchant came to Rav Chaim and said, "Boruch Hashem! The shipment went through." "You see?" said Rav Chaim.

Chizkiyahu Cohen, zl, notes the word "mayimuch" from you: It would seem that the Torah is emphasizing the individual. He elucidates this with a thought from Horav Yisrael Salanter, zl, who once met a person and asked him, "What do you do?" The person respectfully responded that he is involved in various business endeavors. Once again Rav Yisrael asked him, "What do you do?" This time the person elaborated a bit more about his business endeavors, hoping to satisfy Rav Yisrael. This answer still did not meet satisfaction. The question was asked another few times, resulting in the same response. Finally, Rav Yisrael told the individual, "I am questioning what you do, and you are telling me what Hashem does. You do not make the money; you do not create the success of the business endeavor. Hashem does all that. I asked what you do and you respond with information about what Hashem does. Similarly, people tend to justify their laxity in mitzvah observance and Torah study maintaining, "I am busy." People identify their jobs and the pursuit of parnasah, livelihood, as the prime deterrents from successfully carrying out their commitment as Jews. The Torah responds to these thoughtless people; "What does Hashem ask of you? Only to fear Him. You do what Hashem imposes upon you, and Hashem will take care of your livelihood. The problems arise when we make the mistake of playing G-d, assuming that it is we who are making great achievements. If we would only realize that our success is all Hashem's doing, we might find more time to demonstrate our gratitude to Him.

You shall teach them to your children to discuss them. (11:19) Rashi comments that Chazal have inferred from this pasuk that when a child begins to talk, his father should converse with him in lashon hakodesh, Hebrew, and should begin to teach him Torah. If he does not teach him Torah, it is viewed as if he had buried him. This is implied by the juxtaposition to the next pasuk, in which the Torah states, "In order to prolong your days and the days of your children." The mitzvah of limud haTorah takes on a new perspective when it applies to a father's obligation to educate his children. A father who is lax in fulfilling his responsibility of chinuch ha'banim incurs grave consequences. Not only does he rob his child of his heritage, he impairs his development as a Jew. Horav Yisrael Salanter, zl, says that when a person passes on from this world he comes before the Heavenly Throne and must give an accounting of his life. He is asked to justify his behavior and the level of his observance of Torah and mitzvos. He then receives his reward and is able to repose in his eternal rest. He may still, however, be called upon to answer for the shortcomings of his children. If their sins can be traced back to a lack of proper education, then the parent is held liable. The onus of guilt is placed where it belongs-on the parent. The Alter M'Kelm, interprets the prayer of "and remove spiritual impediment from before us and behind us." We implore Hashem not to prosecute us for the sins that are "lifaneinu," before us. This refers to our sins. We also beg Him not to profer charges against us for those sins that are "m'achareinu" behind us. This is a reference to the sins perpetrated by our children, after us. The baalei mussar cite a compelling analogy which will hopefully impart a strong impression regarding a parent's responsibility towards his children's education. There was once a man who was very wealthy. He was blessed with one son who k'r lost his ability to speak due to the effects of a serious illness, The grief-stricken father took his child to a multitude of doctors and specialists, alas, to no avail. The boy grew up healthy and bright, but he could not speak. The father would go into his room at night and weep bitter tears for the agony suffered by his only child. What could he do? He was willing to undergo any ordeal just so that his child could speak. If only he could put words in his son's mouth. This tragic story is regrettably one that is relevant to us. When a person leaves this world, he enters the eternal world where everything is spiritual. What does the neshamah do ba'Shomayim? We are taught that Torah is studied at all times; each person shares in the Torah according to his specific level of erudition. If he was a great scholar in this world, he will have much to speak about in Olam Habah. If, unfortunately, his mastery of Torah was limited, he will be relegated to sitting alone "speechless" because he will not have a word to say! In the World To Come, there will be no interest in secular or mundane matters. Everything will be Torah-nothing else! Are we that

different than the father whose son could not speak? Are we availing our children the opportunity to "speak" in Olam Habah, or are we preparing them to sit there mute, impaired eternally, because of our lack of vision and selfish concerns? The mitzvah of teaching Torah to one's children, writes the Shelah Ha'Kadosh, is the underlying purpose of the mitzvah of "Pru U'rvu," "Be Fruitful and Multiply." We are enjoined to have children that will study Torah and transmit this commitment to learning through the generations. The commentators emphasize the great significance for parents to pray to Hashem that they be blessed with children who are devoted and committed to Torah study. The mother of the Chofetz Chaim was a tzadeikes-a modest, virtuous woman who spent the major portion of her day in prayer to the Almighty. She prayed that her beloved son grow to be a G-d-fearing Jew. A number of years after her death they found an old, worn Tehillim in her house. This precious book was brought to the Chofetz Chaim who took hold of it with both hands, kissing it fervently as tears welled up in his eyes. During this tearful "reunion" with his mother's Tehillim the Chofetz Chaim turned to the people and said, "Do you have any idea how many prayers my mother said every morning? She would tearfully embrace her Tehillim and pray to Hashem, 'Please Ribono Shel Olam, grant me that my son grow into a good and true Jew.'" Is it any wonder that her son became the righteous and learned Chofetz Chaim? We have no idea of the effect that prayers emanating from the heart have upon the spiritual development of a child. A bright child, the finest schools, the most exciting and experienced teachers are all wonderful-but Tehillim and tears are essential pre-requisites for raising a ben Torah. Parents must realize that Torah, unlike any other form of knowledge, is a gift from Hashem. We must pray that we, together with our child, be worthy of that gift.

The Jerusalem Post SHABBAT SHALOM: Fruit of the earth, fruit of the womb By RABBI SHLOMO RISKIN

(July 29) One of the best-known prayers in the Jewish liturgy is the Grace After Meals, the first blessing of which is attributed to none other than Moses himself in gratitude for the manna which descended from heaven to sustain the people during our long sojourn in the desert. "And through His great goodness, we have never lacked, and may we never lack nourishment... For the sake of His great name, because He is God Who nourishes and sustains all, and He prepares food for all of His creatures which He has created... Blessed are you God, Who nourishes all." (Par. 1 of Grace After Meals, as cited in B.T. Berachot 48b) But if so, shoulding the commandment to recite Grace After Meals, cited in this week's portion, have appeared in the biblical section where the manna episode is originally recorded in Exodus? Why is it in this week's portion of Ekev, within the context of how "...God brings you into a good land... A land of wheat and barley and vines and fig trees, and pomegranates, a land of olive trees and honey?" (Deut. 7-8) After all, the manna ceased to fall once the charges of Moses entered the Promised Land! We have already suggested that the Book of Deuteronomy deals specifically with the laws necessary for a nation on the threshold of entering the Land of Israel. Throughout the desert experience it would have been superfluous to introduce the formulation of a blessing to acknowledge God's sustaining power. After all, everyone saw - and therefore understood - that the manna came from God as a miraculous gift. However, once entering the land was imminent, and the people would soon be required to get behind a plow and start working the fields of wheat and barley, it was possible that the farmers would start claiming that, "It was my power and the might of my hand that have brought me this prosperity." (Deut. 8:17) All too often a person involved in the daily process of working the land, introducing irrigation systems to back up the unpredictable skies, and initiating the 11 necessary stages of bread production, will begin to believe that his own energy and skills are the sole key to success. Therefore the Torah found it necessary for Moses to present the commandment to praise God for sustaining us with food in order to instruct the nation - entering an independent stage in its history - that God continues to play a crucial role in providing sustenance. In order to underscore this idea, it is

important to note the seven species of foods (wheat, barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives, date-honey) mentioned in the context of the commandment to bless the land. These seven species require a special blessing after any one of them is eaten, a shortened version of the Grace After Meals. However, in an earlier context, when special foods native to the land of Israel are mentioned, it appears strange that these seven are not at all singled out. In the Book of Genesis, the brothers of Joseph report to their father Jacob that the Grand Vizier has demanded that they return with their youngest brother Benjamin. Jacob carefully selects as a gift to the Grand Vizier what the Bible calls zimrat ha-aretz, literally - "the song of the land" - idiomatically the glory of the land. And what does he send? "A little balsam, a little honey, and some gum, resin, pistachio nuts and almonds." (Gen. 43:11) What happened to the seven species so lavishly praised in our Torah reading of Ekev? One of the most well-known Israeli botanist-agriculturalists, Noga Ha-Reuveni, suggests a brilliant reason. Jacob's fruits were indeed choice produce, indigenous to the land, worthy of singing about. But the seven species designated by our Torah portion in Deuteronomy share one extra feature: They require, in addition to hard work and intelligent agricultural processing, the right degree of sun, wind and rain in the proper proportions at the right time. These seven species obviously demand not only human effort but also Divine intervention. They are testimony to the partnership between humans and God in producing the life-sustaining foods from the earth, the very partnership demanded of the Israelites once they left the manna-miracle of the desert and entered the "real" world of Israel. What the Torah is teaching us is to synthesize courage and humility: the courage which is born of the knowledge that we can and must work effectively to provide material sustenance, and the humility which comes with the understanding that even after we've done whatever we can, it is only with God's help that anything significant will be accomplished. And as it is with the fruit of the earth, so is with the fruit of the womb. All too often we forget what factors go into the creation of a new generation. Some people look upon their children as a product of their own handiwork; they take complete responsibility, taking all the credit when the child turns out well and taking all the blame when things work out badly. But the fact is that in such instances the parents have overlooked two crucial elements in this drama: the first is God, who makes it all possible; should He choose to, God can withhold the 'right' climatic conditions. Second, they've also overlooked the factors of the child itself, forgetting that each one of us, each child, is one of God's own creations, and therefore has a personal uniqueness independent of the parent. The child is a product of nurture and nature, the first having much to do with parental love and guidance, and the second dependent upon God and unique "human nature" personality traits of every individual created in the Divine image. Each seed in a pomegranate will yield a different quality of fruit. Each child has its own unique quality, and a parent who forgets this is bound to pay the price. Shabbat Shalom _ 1995-1999, The Jerusalem Post - All rights reserved Try our

From: Yated USA[SMTP:yated-usa@ttec.com]
Halacha Discussion by Rabbi Doniel Neustadt

You will eat and you will be satisfied and bless ashem(8:10)

Amounts of Food that Require Brochos

Bread: -Washing hands is required before eating at least 1.1 oz. of bread, and is strongly recommended when any amount of bread is eaten(1). -Al netilas yadayim, the blessing over washing hands, is recited when washing for at least 2.2 oz. of bread(2). Some poskim(3) hold that a blessing may be recited even for 1.1 oz., and one may follow this view(4). -Ha-Motzi is recited for any amount of bread(5). -Birkas ha-Mazon is recited after eating 1.1 oz.(6) of bread within a time-span of no longer than 3-4(7) minutes. One who is unsure whether or not he ate this amount of bread should not recite Birkas ha-Mazon(8). Note: When measuring amounts of bread [and cake], small air bubbles are included in the measurements(9), while large ones are not(10). Note also that the amounts are measured by volume, not by

weight(11).

Baked goods: -Mezonos is recited before eating any amount of baked goods. -Al ha-Michyah is recited for 1.1 oz. eaten within a time-span of no longer than 3-4 minutes(12). -The basic halachah is that the 1.1 oz. must be composed entirely of flour (the other ingredients do not count towards the 1.1 oz. minimum). Several poskim maintain that one should follow the basic halachah(13). Many people, however, are not precise in ascertaining the amount of flour they have eaten, and some poskim find a source for their practice(14) if at least the majority (.6 oz.) of the mixture is pure flour(15). -Washing hands, reciting Al netilas yadayim, and reciting Birkas ha-Mazon are required when eating an amount of cake(16) that constitutes kevius seudah, i.e., an amount of mezonos that has the halachic status of eating a regular meal (as opposed to a snack). When one eats such a substantial amount of cake, we treat the cake as a substitute for bread. There are several opinions as to the amount of cake which is necessary for kevius seudah. Some poskim rule that 8.8 oz. of cake is an amount which may be considered as a standard kevius seudah. Ideally, one should avoid eating this amount of cake so as not to enter into a halachically gray area(17). In practice, however, Al netilas yadayim and Birkas ha-Mazon are not recited(18) unless one eats an amount of cake equal to the amount of bread he would eat at a main meal, which is about two rolls, or five pieces of bread, or about 18-20 oz. of cake. This is a very rough estimate(19) and the actual amount varies according to the differences in eating habits between men and women(20), different age groups(21), and different localities(22). Another disagreement among the poskim is how to calculate the amount of cake necessary for kevius seudah when cake is eaten together with other foods at the same sitting: -Some hold that the entire amount must be composed of the cake(23) itself. Other foods eaten at the same sitting do not count(24). -Some hold that other foods eaten at the same sitting do count-but only if a minimum of 8.8 oz. of cake is eaten. The other foods are counted towards the larger amount required for kevius seudah mentioned earlier(25). -Some hold that other foods, like chopped liver or tuna fish, eaten along with mezonos items that are bread substitutes, like crackers, bread sticks or egg matzah, are also included in the amount for kevius seudah. But pastries, etc., which are eaten before or after the other foods, do not combine with the other foods to form a kevius seudah(26). -Some hold that all foods eaten at the same sitting, whether eaten with the cake or not, are counted towards the amount for kevius seudah(27). According to this opinion, even a small amount of cake eaten at a kiddush or buffet dinner will combine with the other foods to form a kevius seudah.

1 Mishnah Berurah 158:10. 2 Mishnah Berurah 158:9. 3 Gr" a quoted in Sha'ar ha -Tziyun 9. 4 Igros Moshe O.C. 4:41; Harav S.Y. Elyashiv (quoted in Vezos ha -Berachah, pg. 15 and pg. 255). 5 Shulchan Aruch Harav 168:7. 6 O.C. 184:6. This is a Rabbinical obligation. Biblically, one does not recite Birkas ha-Mazon unless he has eaten a meal which satiates him. 7 The exact amount of time is in dispute, so l'chatchilah three minutes should be the limit. B'dieved, however, there are many poskim who consider four minutes the proper time-span. 8 Mishnah Berurah 184:15. It is proper, however, to wash and eat more bread so that Birkas ha-Mazon can be recited; ibid. 9 Sha'ar ha-Tziyun 486:7; Chazon Ish, Uktzin 3:7. 10 Mishnah Berurah 210:1, as explained by Harav S.Z. Auerbach and Harav S.Y. Elyashiv (quoted in Vezos ha-Berachah, pg. 46, 184, and 257). See Shoneh Halachos 486:4. 11 See Shiurei Torah (Harav A.C. Na'eh) 1:1. 12 O.C. 208:9. 13 See Igros Moshe O.C. 1:71 and E.H. 1:114; Divrei Yoel 1:13; Harav S.Y. Elyashiv (quoted in Vezos ha-Berachah, pg. 46). This is also the ruling of the Brisker Rav (quoted in Teshuvos v'Hanhagos 1:132). 14 Mishnah Berurah 208:48; Chazon Ish O.C. 26:8. 15 Harav S.Z. Auerbach (quoted in Vesein Berachah, pg. 530); Yalkut Yosef 3:491. 16 Or other baked goods which have "bread-like" properties and appearance, e.g., thick crackers, pretzels, Cheerios, etc. Spaghetti, blintzes, farfel and other mezonos items which do not resemble bread at all are not included. 17 Mishnah Berurah 168:24. 18 But one who feels satiated from this amount may recite Birkas ha -Mazon; Harav S.Z. Auerbach (Vesein Berachah, vol. 2, Hebrew section, pg. 10). 19 There are many factors and many views which must be taken into account when calculating this amount. See Vezos ha-Berachah, pg. 28-36 and pg. 193-199 for a lengthy explanation of this very difficult subject. See also The Laws of Berachos, pg. 250-251. 20 Harav S.Z. Auerbach (Vesein Berachah, pg. 488) rules that women and girls who eat less than men have a smaller shiur of kevius seudah. 21 See Be'ur Halachah 168:6, who rules that kevius seudah for children and elderly people varies according to their individual eating habits. 22 Igros Moshe O.C. 3:32. 23 Indeed, the Chazon Ish is quoted (Orcho s Rabbeinu 1:80) as ruling that only the flour itself, and not the other ingredients, is counted. 24 Birkei Yosef 168:6; Aruch ha-Shulchan 167:17; Kaf ha-Chayim 167:43. 25 Shulchan Aruch 167:8; Harav S.Z. Auerbach (quoted in Vesein Berachah, vol. 2, Hebrew section, pg. 10 and pg. 490); Shevet ha-Levi 7:25. 26 Derech ha-Chayim (Mezonos 3); Mishnah Berurah 168:24 (as explained by Harav S.Z. Auerbach, quoted in Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchasa 54, note 132); Harav Y. Kamenetsky (quoted in Vesein Berachah, pg. 261); Harav C.P. Scheinberg (quoted in Vezos ha -Berachah, pg. 32). 27 Igros Moshe O.C. 3:32 and 4:41; Harav S.Y. Elyashiv (quoted in Vezos ha -Berachah, pg. 32); Mekor ha-Berachah, pg. 113.

From: Shlomo Katz[SMTP:skatz@torah.org] Hamaayan / The Torah Spring
Edited by Shlomo Katz Contributing Editor: Daniel Dadusc Eikev
Sponsored by Marion Krakow and family on the yahrzeit of her brother
Louis Frankel a"h The Mailman family on the yahrzeit of grandfather
Shalom ben Dov Ber a"h

Our parashah begins: "This shall be the reward when you hearken to these ordinances . . . Hashem, your G-d, will safeguard for you the covenant and the kindness that he swore to your forefathers." The Torah continues with a list of rewards: He will love you, He will bless the fruit of your womb, the fruit of your land, your grain, wine, oil, sheep, etc. We then read: "Perhaps you will say in your heart, 'These nations are more numerous than I; how will I be able to drive them out?' Do not fear them! You shall remember what Hashem, your G-d, did to Pharaoh and to all of Egypt." R' Baruch Yashar (a contemporary Israeli rabbi) offers the following insight and interpretation of these verses: Chazal teach that, contrary to our intuitions, one who lives his life without experiencing open or obvious miracles is preferable to one who does experience such events. Why? When Hashem performs an open miracle for someone, it is as if He gave the person access to a locked room by breaking down the door. On the other hand, when He gives someone else the same benefit through natural means, without performing an open miracle, it is as if He gave that person the key to the room. Which is a greater sign of closeness? Obviously, being given the key!

Our verses teach that if we develop a close relationship with G-d by keeping His ordinances, He will bless us with all of the gifts of nature. We will lack nothing, and we will require no open miracles. On the other hand, if our faith weakens and we become scared of the inhabitants of the Land, then we will fall to a lower level where He will be required to perform open miracles, just as He did for us in Egypt against Pharaoh. (Bein Ha'shittin Shel Torah p.252)

"And now Israel, what does Hashem, your God, ask of you? Only to fear Hashem your God, to go in all His ways and to love Him, and to serve Hashem, your God, with all your heart and all your soul, to observe the commandments of Hashem and His decrees." (10:12-13) R' Moshe Chaim Luzzato z"l (the "Ramchal") cites this verse as containing all the virtues necessary for fulfilling the will of Hashem with perfection. These attributes are: "Fear of Hashem," "going in His ways," "love of Hashem," "a perfect heart," and "observance of all His mitzvot." The following is Ramchal's description of each of these attributes and how they relate to serving Hashem: "Fear of Hashem": Fear his greatness and majesty as you would a great and powerful King. "Going in His ways": A person should perfect all his character traits so as to emulate those of Hashem, as our sages said (Shabbat 133b), "As He is merciful, so, too, you should be merciful. As He is giving, so, too, you should be giving." "Love of Hashem": A person should have such love for Hashem in his heart that he strives to please Him just as he would strive to please his own parents. "A perfect heart": One's service to Hashem should be with pure intentions, i.e., one should serve Hashem for the sake of serving Hashem and for no other reason. "Observance of all His mitzvot": This means exactly what it says, i.e., that one should observe all the mitzvot and each detail of each mitzvah. Through the study of mussar, Ramchal writes, you can perfect each of these attributes and do what Hashem, your G-d, asks of you. (Mesillat Yesharim: Introduction)

"It will be that if you hearken to My commandments that I command you today, to love Hashem, your G-d, and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul . . . that you may gather in your grain, your wine, and your oil." (11:13-14) The gemara (Berachot 35b) cites a disagreement between Rabbi Yishmael and Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai over whether a person should work for a living or whether he should learn Torah full-time while depending solely on Hashem for sustenance. Rabbi Yishmael's opinion is that a person should work as well as learn Torah. Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, on the other hand, is of the opinion that to engage in work is to neglect the Torah. Rabbi Yishmael quotes our verse, "[T]hat you may gather your grain," as

support for his view. But, the gemara asks, is it not written (Yehoshua 1:8), "Do not remove this Torah from your mouth," which seems to suggest that a person should never stop learning Torah? Necessarily, says Rabbi Yishmael, our verse teaches that the verse in Yehoshua should not be taken literally. Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, on the other hand, supports his opinion with a verse from Yishayah (61:5): "Foreigners will stand and tend your flocks." You need not do this yourself. As for our verse, this refers to a time when we do not do the will of Hashem. That is when we will gather our own grain. If we do Hashem's will, however, we will not need to work. Many commentaries (including Tosfot) ask: How can Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai say that the verse, "[T]hat you may gather in your grain," will be fulfilled when we do not do the will of Hashem? After all, the section in which the verse appears begins with the words: "It will be that if you hearken to My commandments . . ." It would seem from this juxtaposition that gathering in the grain is a reward for those who listen to Hashem! R' Shmuel Eliezer Eidels ("Maharsha"; died 1631) answers as follows: Our verses do indeed tell us what will happen when we do the will of Hashem. However, they refer to a time when we are not perfect tzaddikim. Our verse states: "[I]f you hearken to My commandments . . . to love Hashem, your God, to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul." However, unlike Devarim 6:5 (part of the first paragraph of Shema), our verse (which is part of the second paragraph of Shema) does not say, "[W]ith all your possessions." This suggests that the second paragraph is referring to those who are not perfect tzaddikim, i.e., who would not sacrifice their belongings for Hashem. (Chiddushei Aggadot)

There are other differences between the first and second paragraphs of Shema that suggest that the first paragraph is addressed to perfect tzaddikim while the second refers to "ordinary" doers of G-d's will: 1) The first paragraph does not speak of a reward, while the second paragraph does. This suggests that the second paragraph is addressed to those who need more reminders and incentives, while the first paragraph is not. 2) The first paragraph does not mention those who do not observe His mitzvot, while the second paragraph warns of the consequences of not following His commandments. 3) The first paragraph is written in the singular, because perfect tzaddikim are few, while the second paragraph is written in the plural.

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From: Aish HaTorah[SMTP:aishlist@mail.netvision.net.il]
Aish HaTorah: APPEL'S PARSHA PAGE
PARSHAT EKEV by Rabbi Yehuda Appel Aish HaTorah Cleveland

Some years ago, when my wife and I were living in Israel, we bought our apartment from a fellow who (at the risk of severe understatement) was anti-religious. Given this background, a passing comment he made at our deal's closing seemed rather odd. He assured us that all the Mezuzahs in the house were completely kosher. Noting my quizzical look, he then told my wife and I the following story: Many years prior, his daughter had been born with a serious heart defect. After being told at the hospital that she didn't have long to live, he wandered the streets of Jerusalem in a daze. Finally, he came across an old Yemenite man and poured out his heart to him. The Yemenite advised him to buy Mezuzahs and put them on his door posts immediately. Desperate for anything that could help his daughter, he ran to a religious neighborhood, asked where the nearest scribe lived, and bought several Mezuzahs. After putting them up, he returned to the hospital where he was greeted with great news. Lo and behold, a miracle had occurred: His daughter's heart defect had disappeared! When he finished telling us his story, the man then made a comment I will never forget. "You see" he said, "the Mezuzahs are kosher. And if my daughter should ever decide to become religious, I can't stand in her way - because she belongs to G-d. But if my son ever tries to become religious... I'll kill him!"

The Yemenite man's advice to put up Mezuzahs, as strange as it may sound, is actually in line with Jewish tradition. In this week's parsha, the verse dealing with the Mezuzah is juxtaposed with a verse promising long life to one's children. (see Deut. 11:20-21) Both these verses are written on the parchment of the Mezuzah, and many commentators therefore explain that Mezuzahs help to protect children's health. But it is not children alone who benefit from the Mezuzah's presence. Written on the outside of each parchment is the name of G-d, "Sha-dai." Among other things, this divine appellation is an abbreviation for the words "Shomer D'larei Yisrael" - "Guardian of the Gates of Israel." The Mezuzah, so to speak, guards the doors of a Jewish home. Other sources see a different meaning to the Mezuzah. The Alshich notes that the Mezuzah is placed even upon the doors of rooms inside the house. Oftentimes, how a person appears in public is a far cry from how they act in private. The Mezuzah therefore reminds us of the sanctity of the Jewish home.

Maimonides presents what is perhaps the most widely accepted understanding of Mezuzah. He explains that oftentimes people get so caught up in the hustle and bustle of making a living, that they lose their "G-d consciousness." The Mezuzah, however, provides a wonderful solution to this problem. The Mezuzah contains a declaration of our Love of G-d and our commitment to observe His mitzvahs. As we pass through the door and kiss the Mezuzah, we focus on G-d's inspirational "instructions for living," posted on the wall. Says Maimonides: The Mezuzah is a constant reminder "that nothing endures forever; nothing is eternal but knowledge of the Almighty. Upon reminding himself of this fact, a person will return to a proper consciousness and walk in a proper path."

Rabbi Yehuda Appel is an American who studied and taught Torah for many years in Jerusalem. In 1990, he and his family moved to Cleveland where he now serves as Executive Director of Aish HaTorah. (C) 1999 Aish HaTorah International - All rights reserved. Email: yappel@aish.edu Home Page: <http://www.aish.edu>

violation of the Torah prohibition against hurting others with words. Some examples: - "That's ridiculous." Compare this with: "I see some difficulties with that." - "That's totally stupid." Compare this with: "Let's look at this in another way."

Do everything you can not to embarrass your spouse or put him or her on the spot. There is no need to point out every single error and mistake. If a mistake is likely to be repeated or needs to be corrected, it is important to point it out, but even then do it with finesse. In many situations, the mistake is a one-time error and there is absolutely no need to point it out. If there is a healthy relationship between husband and wife and both have high self-esteem, this is not an issue. But there are many marriages in which pointing out mistakes is the primary focus of communication, and this causes much distress. Don't criticize small and irrelevant mistakes unless you know that your husband or wife will appreciate it. Some partners constantly correct the other's grammar, choice of words, and patterns of speech. If you find someone's grammar or pattern annoying, correct it in a way that enables the other person to feel good. Don't do it in a way that sounds like an attack on the intelligence and competency of your husband or wife.

I interviewed a retired American Rabbi who settled in Jerusalem, not far from most of his married children and grandchildren. I asked him about the first thought that comes to mind when he thinks about an important principle for marriage. "Don't say everything that comes to your mind," he said. In contrast, someone who got divorced responded to my question about personal qualities or patterns that led to divorce, saying, "I believe strongly in the importance of saying everything I feel. If I don't like something, I consider it dishonest not to express my thoughts frankly and bluntly. We would have had a good marriage except for the fact that my wife was so weak. She couldn't take hearing the truth. She kept telling me to keep my critical remarks to myself. But she's wrong. I was hoping that she would become stronger, but she quit the marriage instead. She's a coward and afraid to face herself."

Here is one woman's report of how positive speech patterns saved her marriage: My spouse and I frequently became embroiled in fiery quarrels. We would both say things to each other that we would be embarrassed to repeat to any of our friends or relatives. Our verbal battles were replete with lethal weapons of speech. We decided that we needed to consult a third party to learn how to speak to each other without such intense verbal battles. The person we spoke to tried a number of approaches to influence us to change the way we tried to resolve our differences. At the sessions we spoke respectfully to each other. But once we got home, we again insulted and attacked each other with our verbal weapons. The counselor suggested a homework assignment that proved to be highly effective. He told us, "I thought of an idea that will help you change your patterns. I want both of you to transcribe word for word what the other person says when you quarrel. We will then discuss the contents of what you have written at our next meeting." We carried out the homework according to the instructions we were given. After doing this for an entire week, we only needed one more session with the counselor. Whoever was transcribing word for word what the other one said had to keep requesting that the speaker speak slower. Seeing your spouse writing down each word you say makes you think a little bit more objectively about your communication. Also, speaking slower prevents you from spewing forth angry words. When we met with the counselor to read what we had written, he suggested ways we could "edit" what we had said. He told us to keep asking for what we wanted and to express our opinions in a way that is both self-respecting and respectful of each other. Seeing your words transcribed is a great reminder of the Mishnah in Pirkei Avos which says that all of our deeds and words are written in an eternal book. Politicians and diplomats are much more careful with what they say when reporters are present. My spouse and I became each other's reporters. We agreed to have weekly meetings together to discuss the written highlights of the week. The caustic barbs ended. Our meetings were transformed into conversations between a young couple who care deeply for each other. My most thrilling "report" was when I quoted my spouse as saying, "I think that you are a super wonderful person. And I

From: Heritage House[SMTP:heritage@david.virtual.co.il]
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"MARRIAGE: CHOOSE YOUR WORDS CAREFULLY!"
by Rabbi Zelig Pliskin

"Death and life are in the power of the tongue" (Proverbs 18:21). This definitely applies to the life of your marriage. An article for a newspaper or magazine or a letter to someone you consider very important requires choosing your words carefully. You might even ask others for suggestions on how to edit what you wrote. It is equally crucial to watch what you say when you speak to your husband or wife. Your words to your spouse can create feelings of joy, love, closeness, gratitude, and maybe even radiant bliss. Your words to your spouse can console, comfort, inspire, motivate, elevate. But other words can create feelings of pain, distress, and anger. When you choose the right words, you can say things that would create a quarrel had you said them differently. Take, for example, situations when you need to say "no" to a request. Some people say "no" in a way that causes resentment or ill will. For example, "You don't meet my requests when you don't feel like it, so I'm not going to do what you asked." But you can also say "no" in a different way. "I would love to meet your request at a different time. But I'm afraid that I can't say 'yes' right now." As someone once said, "If you can't oblige, at least speak obligingly." I once saw a sign on someone's refrigerator, "Be careful of the words you say. Keep them soft and sweet. You'll never know from day to day, which ones you'll have to eat." The thought went through my mind that one's refrigerator is the perfect place to keep this reminder. Just as we need to be careful about what we eat, regarding both keeping kosher and health, so too, we need to be careful about how we speak, regarding both kosher speech and the health of one's marriage. Every statement you make can be phrased in many ways. Choose positive ways to word things. Marriage is a great opportunity to learn tact. Tact is when you say your position in a way that is sensitive to the feelings of the person to whom you are talking. Speaking without tact can be a

feel fortunate to be married to you."

Excerpts reprinted with permission from "MARRIAGE" - a wise and sensitive guide to making any marriage even better. By Rabbi Zelig Pliskin, a personal and development coach in Jerusalem, and the author of 10 books on spiritual and emotional growth, including "Gateway to Happiness" and "Guard Your Tongue." "Marriage" is published by Mesorah Publications Ltd., Brooklyn, NY. <http://www.innernet.org.il> (C) 1999 InnerNet Magazine

From:Ohr Somayach[SMTP:ohr@virtual.co.il] * TORAH WEEKLY *
Highlights of the Weekly Torah Portion Parshat Aikev

Insights Son Of Godzilla "And it will be that if you hearken to My commandments." (11:13) One of the ten commandments of Hollywood is "If it makes money, let there be born unto it a Son. A sequel. Or a prequel. Let it contain all the same stars, and let the plot be so close to its progenitor that you're not sure if you're actually watching a different film or the original one." Jews recite the three paragraphs of "Shema" twice a day. The second paragraph of "Shema" looks like "Son of Shema." It has the same mitzvot -- to love G-d and to serve Him with all your heart, etc.; to speak of the mitzvot when you're sitting in your home and walking along the way, to wear tefillin; to put up a mezuzah on your door. Haven't we heard all this before? All over the world there are speed limits on roads. In the States it's a mind-numbing 55 MPH. In England it's 70 MPH. A speed limit is to prevent a person from killing himself. Seeing as that's the reason, why do we need a system of fines and penalties to stop people speeding? Isn't losing one's life a far more persuasive reason to slow down than losing \$75 dollars for a speeding ticket? A smaller but more immediate danger can impact us more than a danger which is greater but more remote. In reality, nothing exists but G-d. Thus, the only thing that really can be called "good" is being close to G-d. In the first paragraph of the Shema, no results are stated for doing the mitzvot because it's self-evident that doing them brings us close to G-d. That's the real good. Human nature being what it is, however, the Torah repeats those same mitzvot in this week's Parsha, adding that if we do them we will have rain at its proper time; we'll gather our grain, our wine, our oil. G-d will provide grass for our cattle. We'll eat and be satisfied. And if we don't keep the mitzvot, then there will be no rain, the ground won't yield its produce, and eventually we will be exiled. None of these blessings and curses can compete with the true good of closeness to G-d; it's just that sometimes the threat of \$75 speed ticket is more eloquent than the possibility of not making it home at all. * Son of Godzilla - Rabbi Dovid Orlofsky

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* PARSHA Q&A *

Recommended Reading List Ramban 8:2 Lesson of the Midbar 8:9
Resources of the Land 8:10 Blessing After the Meal 8:18 Source of Power
9:8 Responsibility 9:28 In defense of the Jewish People 10:12 For Our
Sake 11:10 Better Than Egypt 11:13 Individual and Community
Sforno 7:12 Hashem's Direct Influence 7:24 Royal Adversaries 8:1
Advantage of Observance
Sefer Hachinuch 430 Blessing After the Meal 431 Loving the Convert 432
Fear of Hashem 433 Prayer 434 Cleaving to the Wise
Written and Compiled by Rabbi Reuven Subar <http://www.ohrnet.org>

From:TorahFax[SMTP:torahfax@netaxis.qc.ca] bs"d.
Thursday, Av 16, 5759 / July 29, 1999

This week's Parsha, Aikev, begins, "V'haya Aikev Tishma'un" - "And it shall be because you will listen to the commandments of G-d and you will keep and do them that the L-rd your G-d will keep with you the covenant and the mercy which He swore to your fathers. And He will love you and bless

you and multiply you; He will bless the fruit of your body and the fruit of your land... And G-d will take away from you all sickness; and all the evil diseases of Egypt He will not put upon you..." Thus, Moshe tells the Israelites that adhering to the mitzvot will result in G-d's blessings for a good, happy and fulfilling life. The word "Aikev" not only means "because", it can also be translated as "heel." In this context, the Torah emphasizes that one should be very careful to observe even the mitzvot which "a person walks over them with their heel;" i.e. mitzvot which people may not deem them important.

In Pirkei Avot (Chapters of our Fathers) our Talmudic sages tell us, "Be careful to perform a minor mitzvah just as a major one, for you do not know the reward for each mitzvah." Each of the 613 mitzvot is G-d given and as such we cannot measure which mitzvot are "more" or "less" significant.

In Psalms (49) King David says, "Why should I have to fear in days of evil, for the injunctions that I trod upon will surround me." According to the Midrash, King David was worried that he may have unwillingly transgressed some of the "light" mitzvot - "that I trod upon." For being considered "light" he may have overlooked them.

The Talmudic sages give the following parable to explain why G-d didn't specify the various rewards for the mitzvot. A king hired workers to plant trees and attend to them. He told the workers that each tree had its price, which he guaranteed to pay. However, the king didn't disclose the different prices. For the king said to himself, "If I tell them the prices, they will all plant the same trees that will earn them the most. If I do not disclose the reward for each tree, the workers will plant different trees and the orchard will be beautiful."

The same is with mitzvot. If Hashem would have revealed the reward for each of the mitzvot, everyone would only do the mitzvot which have the greatest reward and ignore the rest.

Yet, Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai says that from the two mitzvot -- honoring ones parents (Kibud Av Va'a'im) and sending away the mother bird before taking its young (Shiluach Hakan), which G-d did reveal their reward, one can understand the great reward for ALL mitzvot.

Honoring parents is considered one of the most "important" mitzvot. It is a mitzvah which takes personal effort to perform. Sending away the mother bird is considered one of the easiest mitzvot to perform. Yet the Torah tells us that the reward for both of these mitzvot is "long life."

From the reward of these two mitzvot, says Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, we understand that the reward for all other mitzvot is also very great.

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From: Rabbi Pinchas Winston[SMTP:winston@torah.org] Subject:
Perceptions - Parashas Aikev: On the "Heel" of Moshiach, Part Two

And after you have eaten and are satisfied, then bless Hashem, your G-d, for the good land which He has given to you. (Devarim 8:10) Famous words, that are also found in the third paragraph of Birchas HaMazone, the blessing recited after a bread-meal. Simple words, that tell one that he must be grateful for the gift of life, and all that sustains it. Simple words, that is, until a brilliant rabbi, such as the Shem M'Shmu'el, asks an insightful question: "Why does it say, 'after you have eaten and are satisfied, then bless Hashem, your G-d'? Isn't it enough that we have eaten, that we can then bless Him? The answer is, that, like a child, if the body isn't happy, then the soul can't stay focused to fulfill its mission, which is to praise Hashem (Shem M'Shmu'el, Aikev). The Shem M'Shmu'el is teaching us a few things here. The first lesson is that it is enough that we have food at all that we must bless G-d; satiation is a bonus. In fact, we see this idea in the first paragraph of "bentching," where we thank G-d for his extra-kindness (chayn), His kindness (chesed), and His mercy (rachamim). What is the difference between the three? Though we may believe to the contrary, the truth is, the fact that G-d created us does not obligate Him to sustain us. That He does provide us with food is a function of His mercy, not because it is our constitutional right. That is the level of "rachamim." "Chesed" means that the

food is accessible. Mercy is responsible for the existence of food, but what if that food were three feet under ice in the Arctic Circle? Would we have any other choice but to spend whatever time and energy necessary to get to that food, if that is all that would keep us alive? But that is not the way it is, for, G-d's chesed makes food conveniently available, even in your own backyard if you so choose! However, need that accessible food look and taste good? No--even chesed doesn't demand that. That "extra mile" that G-d goes to not only sustain us, and to not only make our sustenance convenient, but to even make an orange and apple look and smell wonderful, and taste even better, is a function of "chayn," of G-d's love for His creation. But why? Because, as the Shem M'Shmuel points out, the purpose of our being here is to sing praise of G-d. Not that He needs our praises, mind you, but rather, because we need to praise Him! Praising others means being appreciative of their being, and being appreciative of their being means being sensitive to life and all aspects of it, and that is godly. And being godly is what we're here to achieve, for, as the Ramchal explains: "G-d's purpose in creation was to bestow of His good to another ... Since G-d desired to bestow good, a partial good would not be sufficient. The good that He bestows would have to be the ultimate good that His handiwork could accept. G-d alone, however, is the only true good, and therefore His beneficent desire would not be satisfied unless it could bestow that very good, namely the true perfect good that exists in His intrinsic nature ... His wisdom therefore decreed that the nature of His true benefaction be His giving created things the opportunity to attach themselves to Him to the greatest degree possible. Man was therefore created with both a yetzer tov and a yetzer hara. He has the power to incline himself in whichever direction he desires ... The Highest Wisdom decreed that man should consist of two opposites. These are his pure spiritual soul and his unenlightened physical body. Each one is drawn toward its nature, so that the body inclines toward the material, while the soul leans toward the spiritual. The two are then in a constant state of battle ... (Derech Hashem 1:2:1-1:3:2) When the yetzer hara wins the battle, and man pursues physicality, then he moves away from G-d and godliness. However, when the soul wins the battle, and man moves towards spirituality, then he becomes godly, and further attached to G-d, so-to-speak. Better resembling His Creator, he becomes more attached to Him, and the pleasure is sublime and unbounded. However, like in all battles, be they physical or spiritual, a good "commander" must have good strategies, and it is no different when battling the body and its drives (note: the root of the Hebrew word for "war"--milchamah--is the Hebrew word for "bread"--lechem, because it symbolizes the essential battle in life). If we satisfy the body, the Torah is telling us by including the concept of "satiation" (according to the Shem M'Shmuel), then the two of them together can sing praise to G-d with a full heart. Because, everyone knows that a happy body is a singing body. And, a singing body will direct that praise to G-d when the body understands that the source of its satiation is the Source of all true satiation, G-d Himself. And, as the Talmud teaches: One who sings song in This World, will merit to sing song in the World-to-Come. (Sanhedrin 91b)

Now, Israel, what does Hashem your G-d, ask of you, but to fear Hashem your G-d and to walk in His ways ... (Devarim 10:12) The issue of fear of G-d is one of the most discussed in the world of Torah. And it should be, because, as Moshe says, this is what G-d is really asking of us. As we have mentioned before, the Mesillos Yesharim ("Path of the Just," Rabbi Moshe Chaim Luzzatto) explains that fear of G-d is basically two concepts: fear of punishment for going against the will of G-d, and, a feeling of awe in G-d's presence, evoked by contemplating G-d's greatness and our own lowliness; the latter is the ultimate level. Interestingly enough, in the above verse, the Ba'al HaTurim finds reference to a halachah that, seemingly, has as much to do with fear of G-d as any other halachic matter. The verse itself contains 99 letters, but can be said to contain 100 letters when the word "ask" (shoel) is written as it should be written, that is, with its "vav." Hence, says the Ba'al HaTurim, a Torah reference to the rabbinical ordinance (established by King David) to recite 100 blessings daily (Menachos 43b). What is the special connection? As the Nefesh HaChaim teaches in the Second "Gate," the concept behind a blessing is to draw down spiritual light

from Above into our very mundane, physical world, in order to make the presence of G-d more "palpable" in creation. This is how we elevate creation and make it "holy to G-d," and become closer to Him. Many think that we make a blessing, for example over food, in order to gain Divine permission to eat. And this is correct, because the Talmud says that one who eats food or enjoys any part of This World without making the appropriate blessing is like one who has stolen and benefited from Divine property (Brochos 35a)--a serious violation! However, the deeper explanation is that one eats an apple, for example, in order to make a blessing! This is because the purpose of creation is not to eat, but to increase awareness of G-d's providence in creation, and it is the blessing, not the food, that does this best. When we make blessings, especially with the proper understanding of their words, and with the appropriate level of intention, our words become spiritual "conduits" for the Divine light that brings blessing to us and the world around us! (You can even bring blessing to someone who is miles away when doing a mitzvah on his or her behalf, or when making a blessing with the intention that another should spiritually benefit as well.) Therefore, the Ba'al HaTurim's connection between the mitzvah to fear G-d and the rabbinical one to make 100 blessings daily is quite appropriate (not that the Ba'al HaTurim needs our approval). For, the words, "yireh Shamayim" (fear of Heaven), literally mean the "seeing of Heaven," an euphemism for G-d Himself. And, the point of the 100 blessings is to make the hand of G-d far more apparent in every day life. They are one and the same idea. (Why "100" blessings? That is a more Kabbalistic matter, beyond the scope of this parshah sheet ...) ...

Have a great Shabbos, Pinchas Winston

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Shabbat-B'Shabbato - Parshat Eikev SHABBAT-ZOMET is an extract from SHABBAT-B'SHABBATO, a weekly bulletin distributed free of charge in hundreds of synagogues in Israel. It is published by the Zomet Institute of Alon Shevut, Israel, under the auspices of the National Religious Party. Translated by: Moshe Goldberg <http://www.moresheet.co.il/zomet>

DESCENT AS A PREPARATION FOR ASCENT by Rabbi Yehuda Shaviv "And it will come to be, after you listen" [Devarim 7:12]. "This refers to mitzvot ... which a person tramples underfoot" [Rashi]. The praises of Eretz Yisrael are the theme of this week's Torah portion, with words of praise near the beginning (8:7-10) and at the end (11:9-12). The Torah feels the need to praise the land to this generation, made up as it was of people who never saw it or experienced life there. Many other generations were similar, in that they lived in the Diaspora and were only able to view the land in a spiritual sense. However, in modern times, for people like us who spend our daily lives on the land and travel its roads, why should we need these written words of praise? When we consider the matter in depth, it is clear that we indeed need words of encouragement even more than earlier generations. For us, in spite of the fact that we know that it is the equivalent of all the mitzvot of the Torah (Sifri Re'ah, 80), the mitzva of living in Eretz Yisrael has become a commandment trampled underfoot. And there is a double meaning to this statement: All the time we are in the land, we are observing the mitzva, but on the other hand it has become something mundane and unexciting. This is true of any mitzva performed constantly, without any pause, which is transformed into a habit and rote. The performance may lose any unique feeling or experience. Who, then, can experience the uplifting feeling of the mitzva? It can only be someone who revitalizes his experience, fulfilling the obligation with interruptions at regular intervals. In addition,

anyone who enters the land for the first time can be expected to enthusiastically appreciate its value, while comparing Eretz Yisrael to the land from which he came. And it is this dual concept which the Torah wants to emphasize. Eretz Yisrael has its own virtues, "a land which your G-d seeks. The eyes of your G-d are constantly upon it, from the beginning of the year to the end of the year" [Devarim 11:12]. However, another way to recognize the virtue of the land is that "it is not like the land of Egypt, which you left" [11:10].

A travel note: Many people take advantage of the summer for trips abroad. However, any such trip carries with it halachic problems, and even after all the halachic leniency, there can remain an ethical dilemma. However, it may be possible to justify a trip if it serves to strengthen the conviction of the traveler in the value of Eretz Yisrael. If when they return home, the travelers are able to feel something of the spirit of a new mitzva of living on the land, then at least their spiritual descent will have been for the purpose of ascending to greater heights.

A MITZVA IN THE TORAH PORTION: The Blessings after a Meal by Rabbi Binyamin Tabory It is a positive mitzva "to bless the great and holy name after eating" [Rambam, title of Hilchot Berachot]. The Talmud gives the verse of Devarim 8:10 as a source for requiring several different blessings in Birkat Hamazon, the Grace after Meals: "'And you will eat, and be satiated, and bless' - This refers to the first blessing, 'Hazan.' 'On the land' - this is the blessing referring to the land. 'The good land' - this refers to the blessing, 'Bonei Yerushalayim.'" [Berachot 48b]. The Talmud continues with the opinion of Rabbi Nachman. He says that Moshe instituted the first blessing when the Manna fell, Yehoshua instituted the second one when entering the land, David wrote the blessing "about your nation Yisrael and about your city Jerusalem," with Shlomo adding the words, "about the great and holy Temple." The Talmud also brings a Torah source for the fourth blessing, "Hatov V'Hameitiv," which was instituted by the sages of the Mishna, but in the end the Talmud states that this blessing is of Rabbinical and not Torah origin. According to the Ramban, while Birkat Hamazon is a Torah obligation, every person was free to make up his own words until Moshe, Yehoshua, David, and Shlomo instituted a uniform text for everybody. The Talmud rules that employees who are busy working should not recite the blessing before eating. Rashi explains that this is because the blessing is not a Torah obligation. However, they are required to recite an abridged format of the Grace after Meals, including only the first and the third blessings. Tosafot explain that even though these blessings are a Torah requirement, the sages have the power to overrule a Torah mitzva. This implies that the Tosafot consider not only the separate components as part of the Torah mitzva but also the need for three blessings. According to the Ramban, it is not required to recite three blessings but only to include the different components mentioned in the above verse. As noted above, the Rambam defines the mitzva as a requirement "to bless ... after eating," but he does not mention the detailed blessings as a Torah requirement. The first blessing, "Hazan," is in the third person ("He gives bread, etc), while the second blessing, "Al HaAretz," is in the second person ("We thank you ... for giving to our forefathers"). It may be that once Bnei Yisrael entered the land, they could be considered "a bride in her husband's house" and no longer "a bride in her father's house" (see Pesachim 87a), and in this second blessing it was therefore possible to address the Almighty directly (see Mateh Yehuda).

From:Ohr Somayach[SMTP:ohr@virtual.co.il] Weekly Daf Rosh Hashana 23 - 29 Parshat Eikev ...

Along for the Ride "Cast upon Hashem your yihov," says King David (Tehillim 55:23), "and He will sustain you." An unusual word, "yihov," one which eluded the Rabbis until one day when the Sage Rabba bar Bar Chanah was traveling together with a merchant leading a camel carrying wares. The merchant saw the sage struggling with his own luggage and said, "Take your yihov and put it on my camel." It then became clear that King David was counseling us to place the baggage of our needs on Hashem's "wagon." The story is told of a fellow struggling with his heavy baggage on a county road when a wagon driver offered him a lift. He gladly accepted the ride but he held on to the baggage. The stunned driver asked him why he didn't put his baggage down on the wagon floor. He replied that he was grateful enough for being spared the trouble of walking, and he did not wish to impose any further on his generous host by adding the baggage to the wagon's load. We often relate to Hashem in the same silly way. We are entirely dependent upon His kindness in sustaining us with life, health and all the basic necessities of existence. But when it comes to the baggage such

as earning a livelihood, we suddenly feel that this is something which is completely dependent upon us. Hashem offers you a free ride every minute of the day, King David reminds us, so don't be a fool and keep struggling with your baggage of parnasa (livelihood). Put that on Hashem's wagon as well, and He will be sure to sustain you. *Rosh Hashana 26b

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INSIGHTS INTO THE DAILY DAF brought to you by Kollel Iyun Hadaf of Yerushalayim daf@dafyomi.co.il, http://www.dafyomi.co.il

ROSH HASHANAH 17 & 18 (8, 9 Av) - these Dafim have been dedicated by Rabbi Eli Turkel of Ra'anana, Israel, to the memory of his father, Reb Yisrael Shimon ben Shlomo ha'Levi Turkel (Yarzeit: 10 Av). ROSH HASHANAH 19 & 20 (10, 11 Av) - dedicated by Rabbi Kornfeld's grandmother, Mrs. G. Turkel, to the memory of her husband, Reb Yisrael Shimon (Isi) ha'Levi Turkel, who loved Torah and worked to support Torah until his last breath. He passed away on 10 Av 5780. Now is the time to help the Dafyomi Advancement Forum continue its unique Torah service! Send a tax-deductible contribution to D.A.F., 140-32 69 Avenue, Flushing NY 11367 Rosh Hashanah 20b

LUNAR ASTRONOMY QUESTIONS: Rabbi Zeira makes two important statements regarding the new moon. First, he teaches that when the Beraisa of "Sod ha'Tbur" (the secret wisdom of lunar astronomy) says cryptically, "The Molad occurs before Chatzos, or the Molad occurs after Chatzos," it means that there is a difference between when the Molad occurs before or after Chatzos (midday). Rabbi Zeira explains that when the Molad occurs before Chatzos, the new moon can be seen right after sunset of the same day. When the Molad occurs after Chatzos, it is not possible to see the moon after sunset of that day. In addition, Rabbi Zeira says in the name of Rav Nachman that the moon fully disappears from view for a total of 24 hours at the time of the Molad: for people "here" (Rashi: in Bavel), the moon is not visible for 6 hours before the Molad and for 18 hours after the Molad, and for people "there" (in Eretz Yisrael), the moon is not visible for 18 hours before the Molad and for 6 hours after the Molad.

RASHI explains the statements of Rabbi Zeira in considerable detail, attributing his explanation to Rav Sa'adyah. Although Rashi explains this statements at length, the astronomy behind his explanations is very unclear.

(a) What does Rashi mean when he says (DH 24 Sha'os) that the people standing in the east can see the moon better when it is in the east, and the people standing in the west can see it better when it is in the west? The moon moves across the sky, and people in both the east and the west see it in both the east and west parts of the sky! Besides, living further east or west cannot possibly bring a person "closer" to the moon. No place on earth is significantly closer to the moon than any other due to the great distance between the earth and the moon (~250,000 miles)!

(b) What does Rashi mean when he says, repeatedly (DH Nolah, DH Kaf -Dalet, DH Mechasya, and again on 24a DH Kan), that at the time of the new moon, the moon *alw ays* rises in the south-east and sets in the south-west? That is not true -- it depends on what season of the year it is! The sun and the new moon are always in close proximity. In the summer (in the Northern Hemisphere), the sun and new moon rise *north* of the midpoint of the eastern horizon, traveling in a curve across the sky, first towards the south, and then curving around (at midday) towards the north again, and then setting north of the midpoint of the western horizon. In the winter, the sun and new moon rise to the *south* of the midpoint of the eastern horizon, traveling again in a southerly curve across the sky and setting to the south of the midpoint of the western horizon. Why, then, does Rashi say that the moon *always* rises in the south-east and *always* sets in the south-west? (See also Rashi in Yoma 62b, DH Al Taba'as, and RASHASH there who asks a similar question.)

(c) Rashi writes that some people are able to see the moon six hours before or after the Molad. (People in the east can see the old, waning moon six hours before the Molad occurs, and people in the west can see the new, waxing moon six hours after the Molad occurs). The Rishonim ask that this is astronomically impossible! The moon cannot be seen for at least 18 hours after the time of the Molad! (Rambam, Hilchos Kidush ha'Chodesh 17:3 -- the impossibility of the six hour limit of visibility that Rashi describes has been confirmed by modern day astronomers.)

ANSWERS: (a) HAGAHOS BEN ARYEH, as well as Hagoan Rav Yosef Elyahou Henkin, zt'l, in LEV IVRA (p. 44,45), propose an ingenious solution that offers a simple, astronomically correct rationale for differentiating between the people of the west and the people of the east. (Hagahos Ben Aryeh were written by Rav Zev Lipkin, Rosh Beis Din of Telz and father of Hagoan Rav Yisrael Salanter -- the explanation referred to actually appears as a bracketed insertion in the Ben Aryeh, and it is not clear who added it.) The Ben Aryeh's explanation is explained in greater detail, with additional clarifications, in MAGID HARAKTA (Rav Hasgal, presently in Kiryat Sefer, Israel) and KUNTRUS KAF-DALED SHA'OS (Dr. Nisim Vidal, former chief astronomer of the Royal Greenwich Observatory, and visiting professor at the Harvard University Center for Astrophysics), who explain at length the astronomical principles behind this explanation. We will present their explanation here in brief, based on three introductory remarks.

1. Although the sun and moon both travel in an east-west trajectory from our perspective (caused by the rotation of the earth), rising daily in the east and setting in the west, they also have a motion relative to each other. The moon travels slightly slower than the sun, constantly falling behind it more and more to the east. As the month progresses, the moon gets progressively farther away from the sun in the sky until passes the midway point, after which it starts to approach the sun from the other side, the west. Eventually it "catches up" with the sun, traveling west to east relative to the sun, and passes the sun in an easterly direction. This is what causes the changes in the appearance of the moon, as follows.

At the beginning of the month, at the time of the Molad, the moon and sun are at the same point in the sky (actually, the Molad is the point immediately after conjunction, or "Kibutz;" conjunction is when the moon and sun are at the same point). At that point, we cannot see the moon at all (it is between the sun and the earth, and all of the light of the sun that it reflects is on the side of the moon that faces *away* from the earth). As the days progress, the moon lags behind the sun, so that more

of it becomes visible. A day or two after the Molad, we can see the moon "behind" (to the east of) the sun. Fifteen days after the Molad, the moon has lagged so far behind in the sky that it is now on the opposite side of the sky from the sun (that is, the earth is between the moon and the sun), and thus at night we are able to see the entire lit face of the moon (a full moon). As more days pass (the second half of the month), the moon's lag causes it to get "nearer" to the sun from the "other" direction (the direction in which the sun is traveling), so that when we look into the sky, we see the moon ahead (to the west of) the sun. Finally, at the end of the month, its lag causes it to be equal again with the sun, and the next Molad occurs. (See, or ask for, our Graphics section)

The moment before the moon passes through the sun (before the Molad), it is immediately to the west of the sun. The moment after it passes through the sun (after the Molad), it is immediately to the east of the sun.

2. There are a number of ways of expressing the changing distance between the sun and the moon. Mathematically, it can be expressed as a matter of degrees around a circle (since the sun and moon travel around the earth in a circle, for our perspective). When the moon is on the opposite side of the sky from the sun (such as in the middle of the month, when the moon sets in the west at the time that the sun rises in the east), it is 180 degrees away from the sun. When the moon is one-quarter circuit away from the sun, it is 90 degrees from the sun, etc.

This distance can also be expressed in terms of the number of days or hours that have passed from the time of the Molad. This amount of time expresses how many hours or days it has taken for the moon to lag as much as it has behind the sun. For example, when we say that the moon and sun are fifteen days (half a month) apart, that means that the distance between the moon and sun is whatever distance the moon lags in fifteen days. (As we have seen, in terms of degrees, this means that the moon is 180 degrees away from the sun).

Since the moon travels 360 degrees from the sun (i.e. it meets the sun again after completing an entire circuit) in approximately 30 days (a lunar month), it travels 12 degrees in one day, or half a degree in one hour. When we say that the moon is one day (24 hours) away from the sun, that means it is 12 degrees away (because in one day, the distance between the moon and the sun increases by 12 degrees).

(NOTE: The distance "between the sun and the moon" as expressed by the amount of time that has passed since the Molad, as we have explained, is not to be confused with the distance that the "moon travels around the earth" each day. Since it goes around the earth (360 degrees) once a day, it travels 15 degrees every hour, or one degree every four minutes. However, the sun also travels about the same number of degrees around the earth in that amount of time, so the moon has not distanced itself from the "sun" during that time.)

3. The moon is not always visible. When it is close to the sun, it cannot be seen because the sun is so bright and the moon is so dim relative to the sun. How far away from the sun must the moon be in order to be visible? (In other words, what is the earliest time after the Molad that the moon can be seen, under the most favorable conditions?)

Rashi asserts that when the moon has lagged behind the sun for "6 hours" after the Molad and is "3 degrees" away from the sun, the moon can be seen, because the light of the sun is not strong enough to obstruct its visibility. This means that both 6 hours before and 6 hours after the Molad the moon may be visible, and in the twelve hours in between the moon will never be visible.

However, there is another factor which hides the moon from view: the rotation of the earth. Around the time of the Molad, since the moon is so close to the sun it rises and sets only shortly before or after the sun does. Throughout most of the night it is on the other side from the earth (like the sun itself) and therefore it is hidden from view from our perspective.

With these words of introduction, the Gemara can be explained as follows.

When the Gemara discusses the 24 hours during which the moon cannot be seen, it is referring back to the first statement of Rabbi Zeira, "Nolad Kodem Chatzos..." Rabbi Zeira meant by this that if the Molad occurs immediately before midday, the new moon can be seen right after sunset the same evening, since six hours have passed and the moon has distanced itself from the sun sufficiently to see it before it sets (a few minutes after the sun sets). If the Molad occurs "after" midday [by more than about 12 minutes], the new moon cannot be seen that evening after sunset, since less than six hours have passed since the time of the Molad before the moon sets. The Gemara is discussing a 12 hour day (such as at the time of the equinox, when the length of the day and night are equal).

Since the Molad depends on the positioning of the moon relative to the sun (and not to a particular spot on earth), it occurs at the same instant in time the world over. For some places on earth, that instant will be in middle of the day (i.e. while they are facing directly towards the sun and the sun is overhead), while for others it will be in middle of the night, and for yet others it will be at the beginning of the day or the night. The specific case the Gemara is discussing (in Rabbi Zeira's second statement) is one in which the Molad is just before midday in Israel. For one who lives further east, for example in Bavel, the time of day in which the Molad occurs is not before midday, but shortly after midday (since the sun already passed overhead earlier in his more easterly time zone), or about 12:30 PM.

(When we refer to different times, such as 11:59 in Israel and 12:30 in Bavel, we are not referring to the time as based on the standard time zones used today, but on actual sun time for each place. That is, if it is a 12 hour day, the sun will set in 6 hours from now in Israel and 5 1/2 hours from now in Bavel.)

Since in Bavel the Molad is half an hour after Chatzos, the moon will not be visible that evening (six hours will not have passed from the Molad before moonset, which is approximately 6:12 that evening, about twelve minutes after sunset). However, the Molad did occur more than six hours from "sunrise" that morning. Therefore, that morning the old moon was visible in the east, right before sunrise (i.e. to the immediate east of the sun), when the moon is three degrees away from the sun. The first time the people in Bavel will be able to see the new moon "after" the Molad is approximately 18 hours after the Molad, that is, when it rises again the morning after the Molad. This is what the Gemara means when it says that "for us [in Bavel], the old moon is covered for 6 hours, and the new moon is covered for 18 hours."

In contrast, in Eretz Yisrael, since the Molad occurred just "before" noon, the new moon "will" be visible just before sunset, 6 hours later (and it will remain visible until it sets, a few minutes after the sun). However, the "old" moon will not be visible in the morning, since it is within 6 hours of the Molad. The old moon will only be visible before sunset the evening before the Molad, when it is

approximately 18 hours (9 degrees) away from the Molad. (The old moon will set "before" the sun, approximately 36 minutes before sunset). This is what the Gemara means when it says that "for them [in Eretz Yisrael], the old moon is covered for 18 hours and the new moon is covered for 6 hours."

All of the words of Rashi throughout the Sugya are easily understood based on this brilliant explanation.

(b) We asked, why does Rashi write that the new moon is first visible after the Molad "in the south-west corner of the sky" and the old moon is last visible before the Molad in the "south-east corner." It is true that if the Molad is close to midday, the new moon first appears in the west (i.e. when it is setting), and the old moon last appears in the east (i.e. when it is rising). But why does Rashi say that it is in the "south" part of west and the east? Rashi explains in a number of places (see 24a, DH Kan) that the sun does not always rise and set at the same place along the horizon. It moves along the horizon, rising and setting more to the south each day in the winter and more to the north each day in the summer. (Our discussion here, as well as in all the Sugyos dealing with astronomy, is limited to the northern hemisphere.) Since the moon orbits the earth the same way as the sun does for our perspective (i.e. on the ecliptic plane), shortly before or after the Molad, when it is very near to the sun, it should be seen setting approximately in the same place that the sun sets, and therefore its inclination to the north or south of the horizon should also vary according to the season. It should rise and set on the northern side of the horizon in the summer and the southern side in winter. Why does Rashi write that it is always in the south?

There are two possible ways of understanding the words of Rashi.

1. Professor Vidal explains as follows. As we mentioned earlier, when the Gemara said that "if the Molad occurs before Chatzos, the new moon will be seen before sunset," it must be talking about a 12 hour day, in which the sun sets exactly 6 hours after midday. Such a day occurs twice a year, on the vernal equinox and the autumnal equinox (Sept. 21 and March 21). At the equinox, the sun sets exactly at the midpoint of the western horizon, approaching the horizon at an angle from south to north. In such a situation, the new moon -- which is visible right before it sets -- will always be visible when it is slightly south of the midpoint. That is what Rashi means when he says that the new moon is in the "south-west" corner when it is first seen. The same is true for moonrise before the Molad: the moon will be seen rising slightly south of center of the eastern horizon.

However, it is not clear according to this explanation why Rashi writes that it is in the south-west corner "l'Olam" -- "always." Second, why is that called the south-west "corner" ("Keren")? The term "corner" implies, as Rashi himself later (24a) says, the "furthest" point to the south at which the sun sets, and not just slightly south of center. Third, Rashi cites a source for his statement that the moon is always in the south-west -- the Gemara later (24a). Rashi there (DH Kan) repeats this assertion that the new moon is always in the south-west, and he clearly states that this applies both in the summer and in the winter months!

2. A second possible interpretation of Rashi could be that "the south-west corner" does not refer to the south-west of the world, but rather it is a term describing the moon's location relative to the sun's location. Whenever the new moon is seen in the west (close to sunset) it is to the south of the sun. Since the sun is traveling from south to north as it sets in the west, the new moon -- which is further to the east on the same orbit, setting after the sun -- is always to the south of the sun. Similarly, the old moon, when seen over the eastern horizon, is always to the south of the sun, because it rises before the sun and is thus ahead of the sun, traveling towards the south.

According to this interpretation, when Rashi uses the term "south-west" with regard to the moon both here and on Daf 24a it is not consistent with the way he uses the term "south-west corner" with regard to the sun (on 24a), because there it clearly means that the sun is south of the "horizon". (See Insights to 24a.)

(c) We asked that astronomically, it is impossible to see the new moon less than 18 hours after the Molad (Rambam, Hilchos Kidush haChodesh 17:3; see also Ba'al ha'Me'or here -- the same applies to seeing the old moon six hours before the Molad).

1. Dr. Vidal suggests that although it is true that under normal circumstances it cannot be seen before 18 hours, nevertheless, under perfect viewing and atmospheric conditions, it is possible that one who knows exactly where and when to look will be able to see the moon earlier.

Professor Vidal points out (Kuntras Kaf-Daled Sha'os, p. 9) that almost every year, the record is broken for the earliest time that the moon is seen after the Molad. In Teves of 5757, the new moon was seen by the naked eye only 14 hours after the Molad (and with a telescope, 12 hours after the Molad). Rashi is saying that the Chachamim had a tradition as a Halachah l'Moshe mi'Sinai that the very earliest that the new moon could possibly be seen is six hours after the Molad, even under the most ideal conditions. That is how Rashi understands Rabbi Zeira's statement in the name of Rav Nachman. It is not a statement of the average time of visibility of the new moon, but rather it is a statement of the extreme limit of how early the new moon can be seen, so that we can prove witnesses to be liars if they claim to have seen it earlier.

2. Alternatively, it may be suggested that according to Rashi, the Molad referred to in our Gemara is not the true astronomical Molad. Rather, it is the "average Molad" that the Rambam describes in the beginning of Hilchos Kidush haChodesh (based on which we reckon each lunar circuit as 29.5 days and 793 parts of an hour). This Molad does not take into account inconsistencies in the speeds of the earth and the moon at different times in the month or year. Although these inconsistencies balance out over the course of the year, depending on the month they can cause the true Molad to actually occur six to 14 hours before or after the average Molad. Since we are trying to disprove the testimony of witnesses, we cannot ignore the possibility that our calculation of the average Molad was not the time of the true Molad, and the Molad may have occurred 14 hours earlier. Therefore, we believe the witnesses as long as they claim to have seen the new moon at least six hours after the Molad (which could actually be 20 hours after the Molad, taking the variations in orbital speeds into account). It is entirely reasonable for the new moon to be seen that long after the true Molad. (M. Kornfeld)

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