



## ALIYA-BY-ALIYA SEDRA SUMMARY

RABBI REUVEN TRADBURKS  
RCA ISRAEL REGION

In memory of **Evelyn Rivers a”h**  
**חווה פֶּעסא בת אהרן זלמן הכהן ע”ה**  
Mother of Reuven Tradburks

### PARSHAT EIKEV

Moshe’s long soliloquy that is the book of Devarim has a deliberate structure. The first 3 parshiot, including Eikev, are prose. The next 3 parshiot are mitzvot; instructions as to how to live in the land of Israel. And the last 5 are a gaze into the future.

In these first 3 parshiot, Moshe is preparing the people to enter the Land – without him as leader. He is nervous about various possible failures. And he tackles these concerns one by one. His first concern is what is on the people’s minds now: how are we going to conquer the Land without Moshe? He encourages the people that they will succeed, reviewing the story of the spies, as if to say, don’t repeat that.

Then he moves on chronologically, from *conquering* the Land to *living* in the Land. Once you are in the Land, I have concerns that you may be drawn to the religion of the Land, the idol worship you will see. To meet that challenge, he reviewed Mt. Sinai: but not the mitzvot of Sinai, but the drama of Sinai. That G-d Bent down to the mountain to speak to You. How could you possibly betray Him after that? And run to idols? You have a covenant, a bond of love between you and Him.

Our parsha tackles different challenges as

you enter the Land. Moshe begins the parsha with a glorious promise. When you are loyal to this covenant, G-d will love you, bless you and make you great. And that, Moshe says, is a conundrum. Because the blessing of riches and success brings its own challenge: the challenge of hubris. Moshe deflects their impending hubris by pointing out their failure in the sin of the golden calf. Hard to think too highly of yourself when you failed so dramatically.

This parsha then winds down Moshe’s instructions on how to be successful in the Land without him. And as he is closing this section, he uses deeply emotive language. Of loving G-d, cleaving to Him, being absorbed with Him. The most emotive and personal section of the entire Torah.



#### 1ST ALIYA (DEVARIM 7:12-8:10)

On the heels of you keeping the mitzvot, G-d will keep His covenant with you. And love you. You will enjoy success: economic, health, military. Should you fear the nations in the Land, wondering how you will prevail over them, remember what G-d did in Egypt. The signs, the wonders, the outstretched arm. He will do similar to these nations. When you enter the Land, remember the manna in the desert. G-d relieved your hunger through manna, to teach you that bread comes from Him. Now when you enter the Land, it will be different: streams and springs, wheat, barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, olive oil and dates. You will eat and be satisfied and bless G-d for all this bounty.

In the long list of concerns Moshe knows the people are feeling, the impending war to conquer the Land comes first. Moshe draws on history to address this concern; remember Egypt. They were more powerful. But G-d intervened with plagues and wonders. You need not fear.

Bounty in the Land is a concern. The food grows on trees, wild wheat and barley. Who needs Him? Remember the manna and Who provides. That manna was a lesson, that He provides. In the Land, it will look to you completely different, what with the food growing from the ground and on trees. But do not let that bounty muscle G-d out; it is still He Who provides. We, this generation of fabulous wealth know all too well how the success of the modern Jew has left little room for the Divine.



### 2ND ALIYA (8:11-9:3)

Be mindful amidst all your success that you not forget its Source. Even after He has led you all these years, you are apt to say “all this success is my doing”. Remember: He is the One Who gives you this success, as an expression of the covenant he made with you. If you forget Him, He will vanquish you. As you vanquish nations in the Land, so too will it be with you, on the heels of your ignoring Him. Great nations await you; fortified cities, strong people. Know that He will champion your cause and they will be overcome by you.

Material success squeezes G-d out of our lives. And so too national success, both military prowess and economic success can squeeze Him out too. We will assume that the architect of our success is me. We will think that we are simply stronger, smarter and more capable than the other nations.



### 3RD ALIYA (9:4-29)

Do not assume your displacement of the nations is due to your righteousness and their folly. It is rather due to their failing and G-d's covenant to you. Remember: you have a long history of your own folly. At Horeb: I ascended the mountain to get the tablets, Divinely inscribed with all He spoke at Sinai, for 40 days. But He ordered me to descend for you had made an idol. With the tablets in hand, I descended, shattering them upon seeing the golden calf. I ascended again to plead for you. And there were other moments of folly. But I pleaded, appealing to the covenant, that you are His people.

When you feel superior to the nations, well, let me remind you. Remember the golden calf, *your* terrible moment of folly. Don't delude yourself, thinking yourself infallible, indestructible. Remember our history. Learn from it. You failed with the golden calf. You survived due to G-d's loyalty to His covenant with you. He champions our cause. He is the source of our success. Don't let it go to your head. You suffer foibles like all others. Bad mistakes. He does not give up on you. But that says more about His greatness than it does about yours.



### 4TH ALIYA (10:1-11)

G-d said to me: chisel 2 stone tablets to replace the first and make an Aron for them. A second set as the first was made and put in the Aron. I descended with the Aron. The Leviim shall be G-d's servants; they bore the Aron. I implored successfully for you not to be destroyed. G-d said: go up and take the Land I promised to your forefathers.

While Moshe told the people the story of the golden calf in order to temper their

feelings of superiority, here, in describing the second set of tablets, he is addressing a different concern. Well, what if we enter the Land and we are rotten again? Will we then forfeit the Land, will we fail and be rejected? No, Moshe says. Remember, we received a new set of tablets. We were completely forgiven, wholly reconciled with G-d. As if to say: you are not a perfect nation. You have failed and you will in the future too. But despair not. If G-d forgave the golden calf – and that was bad, really bad, then obviously His commitment to you is more powerful than your failures.



#### 5TH ALIYA (10:12-11:9)

Now, what really does G-d want of you? Only this: fear Him, walk in His ways, love and serve Him and keep all His commands of you. His is the universe, yet He chose to love your forefathers. So, circumcise your heart and quit stiffening your neck. Fear, serve, cleave to Him. He is your G-d. As you yourself have seen: you descended to Egypt with 70 souls, all the wonders He wrought, the defeat of Egypt's might at the sea, the desert, the earth swallowing the rebellious ones in the Korah rebellion. You have seen all this; hence, keep the mitzvot to prolong your stay on the Land.

These 20 verses are very difficult to summarize, as they are so stunningly beautiful. This is Moshe with his hair down. It is like he leans a bit closer, elbows on the table, and confides: listen, really, what does G-d want? Now, one would think maybe a one word, one phrase answer. Like: loyalty. Or walk humbly with Him. Or truth.

Moshe's answer is not *what to do* but *how to feel*. Moshe answers: you know what G-d wants? He wants emotion, aspiration,

feelings, sensitivity. He wants your deepest being to want Him, love Him, cleave to Him. Drop the inhibitions, the distractions, the fluff of life and give your deepest self to Him. What a phrase: circumcise your heart, quit stiffening your neck. Meaning, give Me your true heart, don't be stubborn.

This aliya ranks up there with the most powerful of the Torah. For Moshe baits us with a simple question: after all, what does G-d want? And in his answer, shares with us his deepest feelings, a most profound answer: He wants you all in, to want Him, love Him, be preoccupied with Him. Hold nothing back.



#### 6TH ALIYA (11:10-21)

The Land of Israel is not like Egypt: Egypt is fertile, with an abundance of water. Israel relies on the rain from the heavens; hence G-d gazes upon the Land the entire year. (2nd paragraph of Shema) And if you will keep the mitzvot and love G-d with all your heart, then there will be rain. If you sway from this and serve other gods, then there will be no rain, nor will the crops grow. Be cognizant of this all the time, speaking of it with your children and in all you do. As this love of G-d will prolong your success in the Land.

This is a new twist on the theme of loving G-d. Not only will your military success depend on your love of G-d. But the rain too. And you'll need rain; not like Egypt. It's almost like G-d is saying: I am bringing you to the promised Land because of My love for you. But it is a tenuous place. Vulnerable. It requires My showering it with rain. And that rainfall is dependent on your love of Me. So, in a nutshell: I love you and I am bringing you to a Land where you will need to love Me.



## 7TH ALIYA (11:22-25)

If you do the mitzvot, love G-d and cleave to him, then you will prevail over the powerful nations of the Land. G-d will make them fear you and none will be able to stand up to you.

Love, cleaving, the heart. The word love appears 6 times, the word heart 4 times in these last aliyot. Moshe has pivoted. From doing. To feeling. From law. To spirit. Doing is not enough. Love, cleave, your heart. Give all in your love of G-d.

## YESHAYAHU 49:14- 51:3

This week's *haftorah* is the second of a series of seven "*haftorot* of Consolation." The exiled Jewish people are concerned that Hashem has abandoned them. Hashem responds by reassuring them that it is not so. God compares His love and mercy for His people to that of a mother for her children.

The navi then describes the ingathering of the exiles which will occur when the Mashiach arrives and then concludes with encouraging

words, reminding us of what had happened to our ancestors, Abraham and Sarah. Just as they were blessed with a child when it seemed impossible, so too, Hashem will send us the Redemption at the end of days. ■



## STATS

46<sup>th</sup> of the 54 sedras; 3<sup>rd</sup> of 11 in Devarim.  
231.83 lines in a Torah; rank: 14<sup>th</sup>.

10 Parshiyot; 6 open, 4 closed.

111 pesukim - rank: 26<sup>th</sup> (4<sup>th</sup> in Devarim).

Same number as Vayikra, but larger.

1747 words - rank: 16<sup>th</sup> (3<sup>rd</sup> in Devarim).

Same number as Ki Tavo; Ki Tavo has

more pesukim; Eikev has more letters.

6865 letters - rank: 14<sup>th</sup> (3<sup>rd</sup> in Devarim).

Eikev's pesukim are long - 3<sup>rd</sup> longest in the Torah in words and letters per pasuk.

This accounts for the rise in ranking in those categories.



## MITZVOT

8 of 613: 6 positives, 2 prohibitions.

## A SHORT VORT

BY RABBI CHANOKH YERES  
RAV, BEIT KNESSET BEIT YISRAEL, YEMIN MOSHE

"And you shall eat, be satiated and bless G-d." (8:10)

Why are the words "and bless G-d" after the words "eat and be satiated"?

The Talmud ( Berachot 21a) points out this as the source that blessing or saying grace after the meal is a biblical obligation.

The question then asked is, wouldn't it be more appropriate to obligate us on a biblical level to bless the food before we eat, like by any other mitzvah? Like blessing learning Torah before we begin learning Torah and not afterwards.

The Meshech Chochmah gives a profound answer. The main difference between eating and learning Torah is that grace after the meal is not purposed to thank G-d, rather to protect man from his own haughtiness that may surface when he is well fed and satiated. Therefore, the mitzvah is to bless G-d after the meal, not to forget G-d's everlasting involvement in providing us with our meal. However, by learning Torah, by blessing G-d beforehand, we insure our true intentions for learning Torah and not for personal gain and honor.