

SHABBAT LEARNING MATERIAL

PARSHAT EIKEV

31 JULY & 01 AUGUST
2026
18 AV 5786



YESHIVA MIZRACHI
ישיבה מזרחי



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page 3

Parsha in a Nutshell

❖ *Chabad.org*

Sell the Sizzle, Not the Steak

❖ *Rabbi Eli Scheller Appel (Aish.com)*

Pages 4 – 6

The Spirituality of Listening

❖ *Rabbi Jonathan Sacks*

Pages 8 - 11

Children's Learning

❖ *World HaMizrachi*

Eikev in a Nutshell (Chabad.org)

The name of the Parshah, "Eikev," means "because," and it is found in Deuteronomy 7:12.

In the Parshah of Eikev ("Because"), Moses continues his closing address to the children of Israel, promising them that if they will fulfill the commandments (mitzvot) of the Torah, they will prosper in the Land they are about to conquer and settle in keeping with G-d's promise to their forefathers.

Moses also rebukes them for their failings in their first generation as a people, recalling their worship of the Golden Calf, the rebellion of Korach, the sin of the spies, their angering of G-d at Taveirah, Massah and Kivrot Hataavah ("The Graves of Lust"). "You have been rebellious against G-d," he says to them, "since the day I knew you." But he also speaks of G-d's forgiveness of their sins, and the Second Tablets which G-d inscribed and gave to them following their repentance. Their forty years in the desert, says Moses to the people, during which G-d sustained them with daily manna from heaven, was to teach them "that man does not live on bread alone, but by the utterance of G-d's mouth does man live."

Moses describes the land they are about to enter as "flowing with milk and honey," blessed with the "seven kinds" (wheat, barley, grapevines, figs, pomegranates, olive oil and dates), and as the place that is the focus of G-d's providence of His world. He commands them to destroy the idols of the land's former masters, and to beware lest they become haughty and begin to believe that "my power and the might of my hand have gotten me this wealth."

A key passage in our Parshah is the second chapter of the Shema, which repeats the fundamental mitzvot enumerated in the Shema's first chapter, and describes the rewards of fulfilling G-d's commandments and the adverse results (famine and exile) of their neglect. It is also the source of the precept of prayer, and includes a reference to the resurrection of the dead in the messianic age.

Sell the Sizzle, Not the Steak! (Aish.com)

by Rabbi Eli Scheller

You will eat and you will be satisfied, and you shall bless. (Deut. 8:10)

The verse states "You will eat and you will be satisfied, and you shall bless." This is the commandment to recite *Birchas Hamazon* (Grace After Meals). The Talmud (1) notes that the verse contains an obligation to recite a blessing after eating. From where do we know that one is obligated to recite a blessing *before* eating? The Talmud had a premise to answer based on the following logic: If one is obligated to make a blessing after eating, certainly one must be obligated to make a blessing before eating. (See the Talmud there for the full reasoning.)

The Talmud asks further: we have a verse which tells us that one is obligated to recite a blessing *before* learning Torah. How do we know that one is obligated to recite a blessing *after* learning Torah? Here the Talmud suggests reasoning based on the opposite premise: If one is obligated to recite a blessing *before* learning Torah, then certainly *after* learning Torah one is obligated to recite a blessing. The question arises: why is it more easily understood that one has to recite a blessing *before* eating than after eating, while for learning it is the opposite: it is more obvious that one recites a blessing *after* learning than before?!

In the physical world anticipation is a most powerful force, but the pleasure never lives up to the promise. Every pleasure is over-promised and under-delivered. The hype is always greater than what you actually get. One of the rules of marketing is: *sell the sizzle, not the steak*. Advertisers understand well that *anticipated* pleasure is far greater than actual pleasure. Just looking at the steak your mouth begins watering. However when you actually bite into it, it's just not the same. The sizzle is always better than the steak.

The Spirituality of Listening

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks ZT"l

It is one of the most important words in Judaism, and also one of the least understood. Its two most famous occurrences are in last week's parsha and this week's: "*Hear* O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one" (Deut. 6:4), and "It shall come to pass if you *surely listen* to My commandments which I am commanding you today, to love the Lord your God and to serve Him with all your heart and all your soul" (Deut. 11:13) – the openings of the first and second paragraphs of the *Shema*. It also appears in the first line of the *parsha*: "It shall come to pass, if you *listen* to these laws" (Deut. 7:12).

The word, of course, is *shema*. I have argued elsewhere^[1] that it is fundamentally untranslatable into English since it means so many things: to hear, to listen, to pay attention, to understand, to internalise, to respond, to obey. It is one of the motif-words of the book of Devarim, where it appears no less than 92 times – more than in any other book of the Torah. Time and again in the last month of his life Moses told the people, *Shema*: listen, heed, pay attention. Hear what I am saying. Hear what God is saying. Listen to what he wants from us. If you would only listen ... *Judaism is a religion of listening*. This is one of its most original contributions to civilisation.

The twin foundations on which Western culture was built were ancient Greece and ancient Israel. They could not have been more different. Greece was a profoundly visual culture. Its greatest achievements had to do with the eye, with seeing. It produced some of the greatest art, sculpture, and architecture the world has ever seen. Its most characteristic group events – theatrical performances and the Olympic games – were spectacles: performances that were watched. Plato thought of knowledge as a kind of depth vision, seeing beneath the surface to the true form of things.

This idea – that knowing is seeing – remains the dominant metaphor in the West even today. We speak of *insight*, *foresight*, and *hindsight*. We offer an *observation*. We adopt a *perspective*. We *illustrate*. We *illuminate*. We *shed light* on an issue. When we understand something, we say, "*I see*."^[2]

Judaism offered a radical alternative. It is faith in a God we cannot see, a God who cannot be represented visually. The very act of making a graven image – a visual symbol – is a form of idolatry. As Moses reminded the people in last week's *parsha*, when the Israelites had a direct encounter with God at Mount Sinai, "You heard the sound of words, but saw no image; there was only a voice." (Deut. 4:12). God communicates in sounds, not sights. He speaks. He commands. He calls. That is why the supreme religious act is *shema*. When God speaks, we listen. When He commands, we try to obey.

Rabbi David Cohen (1887–1972), known as the Nazirite, a disciple of Rav Kook and the father of R. Shear-Yashuv Cohen, Chief Rabbi of Haifa, pointed out that in the Babylonian Talmud all the metaphors of understanding are based not on seeing but on hearing. *Ta shema*, "come and hear." *Ka mashma lan*, "It teaches us this." *Shema mina*, "Infer from this." *Lo shemiyah lei*, "He did not agree." A traditional teaching is called *shamaytta*, "that which was heard." And so on.^[3] All of these are variations on the word *shema*.^[4]

This may seem like a small difference, but it is in fact a huge one. For the Greeks, the ideal form of knowledge involved detachment. There is the one who sees, the subject, and there is that which is seen, the object, and they belong to two different realms. A person who looks at a painting or a sculpture or a play in a theatre or the Olympic games is not an active part of the art or the drama or the athletic competition. They are acting as a spectator, not a participant.

Speaking and listening are not forms of detachment. They are forms of engagement. They create a relationship. The Hebrew word for knowledge, *da'at*, implies involvement, closeness, intimacy. "And Adam *knew* Eve his wife and she conceived and gave birth" (Gen. 4:1). That is knowing in the Hebrew sense, not the Greek. We can enter into a relationship with God, even though He is infinite and we are finite, because we are linked by words. In revelation, God speaks to us. In prayer, we speak to God. If you want to understand any relationship, between husband and wife, or parent and child, or employer and employee, pay close attention to how they speak and listen to one another. Ignore everything else.

The Greeks taught us the forms of knowledge that come from observing and inferring, namely science and philosophy. The first scientists and the first philosophers came from Greece from the sixth to the fourth centuries BCE.

But not everything can be understood by seeing and appearances alone. There is a powerful story about this told in the first book of Samuel. Saul, Israel's first king, *looked* the part. He was tall. "From his shoulders and upward he was higher than any of the people," (1 Sam. 9:2, 1 Sam. 10:23). He was the *image* of a king. But morally, temperamentally, he was not a leader at all; he was a follower.

God then told Samuel to anoint another king in his place, and told him it would be one of the children of Jesse. Samuel went to Jesse and was struck by the appearance of one of his sons, Eliab. He thought he must be the one God meant. But God said to him, "Do not be impressed by his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. God does not see as people do. *People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart*" (1 Sam. 16:7).

Jews and Judaism taught that we cannot see God, but we can hear Him and He hears us. It is through the word – speaking and listening – that we can have an intimate relationship with God as our parent, our partner, our sovereign, the One who loves us and whom we love. We cannot demonstrate God scientifically. We cannot prove God logically. These are Greek, not Jewish, modes of thought. I believe that from a Jewish perspective, trying to prove the existence of God logically or scientifically is a mistaken enterprise.^[5] God is not an object but a subject. The Jewish mode is to relate to God in intimacy and love, as well as awe and reverence.

One fascinating modern example came from a Jew who, for much of his life, was estranged from Judaism, namely Sigmund Freud. He called psychoanalysis the "speaking cure", but it is better described as the "listening cure."^[6] It is based on the fact that active listening is in itself therapeutic. It was only after the spread of psychoanalysis, especially in America, that the phrase "I hear you" came into the English language as a way of communicating empathy.^[7]

There is something profoundly spiritual about listening. It is the most effective form of conflict resolution I know. Many things can create conflict, but what sustains it is the feeling on the part of at least one of the parties that they have not been heard. They have not been listened to. We have not "heard their pain". There has been a failure of empathy. That is why the use of force – or for that matter, boycotts – to resolve conflict is so profoundly self-defeating. It may suppress it for a while, but it will return, often more intense than before. Job, who has suffered unjustly, is unmoved by the arguments of his comforters. It is not that he insists on being right: what he wants is to be heard. Not by accident does justice presuppose the rule of *audi alteram partem*, "Hear the other side."

Listening lies at the very heart of relationship. It means that we are open to the other, that we respect them, that their perceptions and feelings matter to us. We give them permission to be honest, even if this means making ourselves vulnerable in so doing. A good parent listens to their child. A good employer listens to their workers. A good company listens to its customers or clients. A good leader listens to those they are leading. Listening does not mean agreeing but it does mean caring. Listening is the climate in which love and respect grow.

In Judaism we believe that our relationship with God is an ongoing tutorial in our relationships with other people. How can we expect God to listen to us if we fail to listen to our spouse, our children, or those affected by our work? And how can we expect to encounter God if we have not learned to listen. On Mount Horeb, God taught Elijah that He was not in the whirlwind, the earthquake or the fire, but in the *kol demamah dakah*, the "still, small voice" (1 Kings 19:12) that I define as *a voice you can only hear if you are listening*.

Crowds are moved by great speakers, but lives are changed by great listeners. Whether between us and God or us and other people, listening is the prelude to love.[8]

[1] See *Covenant & Conversation* on Mishpatim: "Doing and Hearing."

[2] See George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, University of Chicago Press, 1980.

[3] This appears in the opening pages of his work, *Kol Nevuah*.

[4] To be sure, the Zohar uses a visual term, *ta chazi*, "Come and see." There is a broad kinship between Jewish mysticism and Platonic or neo-Platonic thought. For both, knowing is a form of depth-seeing.

[5] Indeed, many of the great medieval Jewish philosophers did just that. They did so under the influence of neo-Platonic and neo-Aristotelian thought, itself mediated by the great philosophers of Islam. The exception was Judah Halevi in *The Kuzari*.

[6] See Adam Philips, *Equals*, London, Faber and Faber, 2002, xii. See also Salman Akhtar, *Listening to Others: Developmental and Clinical Aspects of Empathy and Attunement*. Lanham: Jason Aronson, 2007.

[7] Note that there is a difference between empathy and sympathy. Saying "I hear you" is a way of indicating – sincerely or otherwise – that I take note of your feelings, not that I necessarily agree with them or you.

[8] For more on the theme of listening, see above, *Covenant & Conversation* on parshat Bereishit, "The Art of Listening," and on parshat Bamidbar, "The Sound of Silence."



AROUND THE Shabbat Table

1. Why does Moshe choose to explain the 'why' of Judaism here, at this point in the Torah?
2. If you had to sum up all of Judaism into a brief mission statement, what would you say?
3. Do you think Judaism and the Jewish people are making an impact on the world today? How?



VOL 3 • NO 41

הַמִּזְרָחִי

HAMIZRACHI

PARSHA WEEKLY

YOUTH EDITION

*A project of the Mizrachi Schools Department***PARSHAT EIKEV 5786 • 2026**

PARSHA SUMMARY

In this week's parsha, Moshe continues his final speech to Bnei Yisrael as they prepare to enter Eretz Yisrael. He teaches that if they follow Hashem's commandments, they will enjoy a life of blessing in the Land.

Moshe reminds the people that they are not inheriting the Land because of their own righteousness, but because of Hashem's promise to the Avot and the wickedness of the nations living there. He also recalls mistakes they made in the desert, including the sin of the Golden Calf, Korach's rebellion, and the spies' report, while reminding them that Hashem forgave them and gave them the second set of luchot after they repented.

Moshe describes the special qualities of Eretz Yisrael – a land flowing with milk and honey, blessed with the Seven Species: wheat, barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives, and dates. He warns the people never to forget that all their success comes from Hashem and commands them to remove idolatry from the Land.

The parsha concludes with the second paragraph of the Shema, teaching that when Bnei Yisrael remain faithful to Hashem, He blesses the Land with rain and abundance, but turning away from Him brings spiritual and physical consequences.



MESSAGE FROM ISRAEL

Egypt and Israel

The Nile River provides an endless supply of water to Egypt, whereas the land of Israel was fully dependent on rainfall.

This, it says in the parsha, highlights the uniqueness of the land of Israel. Just as our lives depend on rainfall and the weather which are unpredictable and beyond our full understanding, so too is the land dependent on the ongoing Divine care and supervision of Hashem.

Hashem took a special interest and concern in the land of Israel more than any other. Just as the land and State of Israel continue to experience miracles and Hashem's blessings despite many challenging events that have occurred, may this special Divine blessing transform our challenges into celebration and our pain to joy and elation.

Shabbat Shalom

Rabbi Doron Perez

Executive Chairman, World Mizrachi



Dedicated by the Moshal family to the life and legacy of our family patriarch John Moshal – יוחנן הלל בן מרדכי ז"ל – a generous lifelong supporter of Jewish education.

QUESTIONS ON THE PARSHA

1. Why did Hashem have the Jewish people wander in the desert for 40 years?
2. What does Moshe remind the Jewish people to help them not be scared of fighting bigger nations?
3. What does Moshe say will happen if we forget Hashem?
4. How does Moshe describe the Jewish people?
5. What are the Shivat Haminim?
6. How many sets of Luchot were there?
7. How many days did Moshe spend on Har Sinai altogether?
8. On what day did Moshe come down from Har Sinai having received complete forgiveness for the Jewish People?
9. Why were the Levi'im chosen by Hashem?

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Being Strict... With Yourself

In this week's parsha we read: "וְאָכַלְתָּ וְשָׂבַעְתָּ וּבֵרַכְתָּ אֶת ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ" - "You shall eat, be satisfied, and bless Hashem your G-d" (Devarim 8:10). The Torah teaches that Birkat HaMazon is required after a satisfying meal. However, Chazal taught that we should recite it even after eating just a kezayit (a small olive-sized amount). The Gemara says that Hashem praises Bnei Yisrael because they are careful with themselves, going beyond what is required. What does this mean? The Torah Temimah explains: When it comes to ourselves, we are willing to be extra strict. Yet when it comes to helping others, we do the opposite - we make sure they have more than enough. The Torah says about giving to those in need: "וְאָכְלוּ בִּשְׁעָרֶיךָ וְשָׂבַעוּ" - "They shall eat within your gates and be satisfied" (Devarim 26:12). Real greatness means choosing higher standards for ourselves, while being generous, patient, and caring toward others. Our chumrot (extra stringencies) should never come at someone else's expense.

Dilemma of the Week – Who Gets the Bigger Slice? It was pizza day at school. There were only two slices left, and four friends were still hungry: Ari, Noam, Eitan, and Yehuda. Ari had already eaten three slices but wanted one more because he was still a little hungry. Eitan had only managed to eat one slice before helping clean up the room. Noam suggested cutting the slices into smaller pieces so everyone could have some. Ari replied, "I got here first - I should take one." Yehuda paused and remembered what they had learned in this week's parsha. Should he stay quiet, or suggest that those who had eaten the least should be offered the slices first even if it meant he would get less himself?

Discussion Questions

Who Comes First? Should being first in line always decide who gets something?

Being Strict on Yourself: What does it mean to expect more from yourself than from other people?

Fair or Generous? Is there a difference between being fair and being generous? Which fits this story better?

Living the Parsha: How does Yehuda's choice reflect the message of "וְאָכַלְתָּ וְשָׂבַעְתָּ וּבֵרַכְתָּ"?

Small Actions Matter: Can you think of another situation at school or home where giving up something small could make someone else much happier?

SOLVE IT AND SEND IT!

In 2005, Tel Chatzor was named a UNESCO World Heritage Site together with two other famous biblical tels in Israel. Which ones are they?

Send the answer to hamizrachiyouth@mizrachi.org to be entered into our monthly raffle!

PARSHA RIDDLE

Can you solve this Parsha riddle?

I fell from heaven every day,
Except on Shabbat,
when I stayed away.
In the desert, I was food for all,
Teaching Bnei Yisrael
to trust Hashem's call.
What am I?



The answer is in next week's edition!

Last Week's Answer: The Shema



This week, try to be a little stricter with yourself and a little kinder to someone else. What is one thing you can happily give up to help another person feel truly cared for?



WORD OF THE WEEK

לִמּוּד – Limud – Learning

(Devarim 11:19) לִמְדֶנָּה אֶת בְּנֵינוּ

The Hebrew word לִמּוּד (limud) means “learning.” The root of the word is ל-מ-ד (Lamed–Mem–Dalet). The same root appears in מְלַמֵּד (melamed), meaning “teacher,” and תַּלְמִיד (talmid), meaning “student.” In Hebrew, the teacher and the student share the same root, reminding us that learning is a lifelong journey – great teachers never stop learning, and great students can one day become great teachers.



THIS MONTH IN JEWISH HISTORY

21 Av

The Passing of Rabbi Chaim Soloveitchik (5678 / 1918)

Rabbi Chaim Soloveitchik, known as “Reb Chaim of Brisk,” was one of the greatest Torah scholars of the late 1800s and early 1900s. He developed the famous Brisker method of learning Gemara, encouraging students to think deeply and carefully about every detail of the Torah. This approach transformed the way Torah is studied in many yeshivot and is still widely used today. His influence continued through his family. His grandson, Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik (“The Rav”), became one of the most important rabbis in America, inspiring generations with his Torah scholarship and Religious Zionist leadership.



MEET OUR READERS!

NAME: TALIA CANTOR

AGE: 6

LOCATION: EFRAT, ISRAEL



WHERE I'D LIKE TO TRAVEL IN ISRAEL: The Kotel because I want to leave a note there.

FAVORITE PARSHA: Parshat Vaera, because I like the frogs!

FAVORITE JEWISH FOOD: Challah

A FUN FACT ABOUT ME: I made Aliyah from Virginia when I was 3.

A MEANINGFUL JEWISH MEMORY: My mesibat Bereishit at Maarat Hamachpela.



WANT TO BE FEATURED IN A FUTURE EDITION?

If you'd like to be featured in an upcoming Youth Edition, and have a chance to win a prize, fill out the form at mizrachi.org/youthfeature or scan the QR code!



PARSHA ANSWERS

- To test us and know what was in our hearts.
- Moshe told them to remember what Hashem did to Pharaoh and all of Egypt, and that He would do the same to the nations they would meet.
- We will perish like the nations before us.
- He calls them stubborn people.
- The Shivat Haminim are wheat, barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives, and dates.
- There were two sets of Luchot: the first set which Moshe broke, and the second set which Hashem told Moshe what to write.
- Moshe spent a total of 120 days on Har Sinai.
- The tenth of Tishrei, Yom Kippur.
- Because they did not participate in the sin of the golden calf.

JOURNEY THROUGH ISRAEL



PHOTO: PUBLIC DOMAIN / WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Archaeologists digging at Tel Chatzor found jars filled with grain that had been burned over 3,000 years ago – along with statues whose heads had been deliberately smashed off. Many scholars believe these findings line up remarkably well with the Torah's account of the city's destruction under Yehoshua!

Tel Chatzor (תֵּל חָצוֹר)

In the northern part of Israel, near the Chula Valley (עמק החולה), lies Tel Chatzor – the largest of the roughly 200 biblical mounds scattered across the Land of Israel. Many years ago, Chatzor was one of the mightiest cities in Canaan – so powerful that the Torah calls it “ראש כל הממלכות האלה,” the head of all these kingdoms. When Yehoshua led Bnei Yisrael into the land, he battled the king of Chatzor, conquered the city, and burned it to the ground. Later, in the days of the Shoftim, a new king of Chatzor named Yavin oppressed Bnei Yisrael for twenty years, until Devorah (דְּבוֹרָה הַנְּבִיאָה) and the general Barak defeated his army, commanded by Sisera. Centuries afterward, Shlomo HaMelech rebuilt Chatzor as one of his great fortified cities, alongside Yerushalayim, Megiddo, and Gezer. Visitors today can walk through impressive gates, ancient walls, storehouses, and a remarkable water system.

קום התהלך בארץ

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

Can you find 10 differences between these two parsha pictures?

