

THE TRIBE WEEKLY

PARASHAT EIKEV

31 JULY - 1 AUGUST | 18 AV

ARE WE HARD-HEADED?



BY: **MENUCHA
SAMPSON**

Tribe gap year
student

Have you ever heard someone described as 'hard-headed'? We may use this phrase as an insult, describing someone who is stubborn, as in 'He was too hard-headed to admit he was wrong', or describing someone who is practical and determined, as in 'a hard-headed businesswoman'.

In this week's parasha, Moshe (Moses) uses this expression when describing the people's behaviour in the sin of the Golden Calf. He says they are '*am keshei oref*', a hard-headed (or 'stiff-necked') nation. The first time this

expression is used is in the actual account of the story of the Golden Calf as it happened, when God speaks to Moshe, rebuking the Israelites for their actions (*Shemot* 32:9). Later on, Moshe uses this term in his defence of the Israelites to God (*Shemot* 34:9).

Being 'hard-headed' can be a flaw when it leads us to be stubborn and not admit a mistake, in this case the miscalculation of when Moshe would return from Mount Sinai with the Torah. This stubbornness led to the misunderstanding that resulted in the sin of the Golden Calf; they thought they needed a substitute god or a vessel to connect with God, as they felt He had abandoned them when Moshe didn't return.

At the same time, our 'hard-

headedness' can be a strength when that determination is channelled for the good; it has helped us to be spiritually resilient, giving us the ability to follow God in the desert to our promised homeland. This quality has continued in the Jewish people throughout the centuries, through every expulsion, the pogroms, the Holocaust and now through October 7th and the rise in antisemitism. We are a hard-headed nation and have not only survived these events but adapted and thrived. We are a people who have the '*chutzpa*' to exist and be proud of it.

In general, just like with this trait of hard-headedness, we can decide how we use all the qualities we are given. We must be sure to use our gifts for the good.

Parasha Wordsearch

Find these words in the grid. The words can go in any direction and can share letters as they cross over each other.

Z	T	N	E	I	L	I	S	E	R	W	I	S
G	Y	H	O	U	S	I	E	H	H	B	Y	T
C	O	S	E	I	M	R	Q	K	I	F	K	U
E	N	L	I	S	T	I	I	T	U	B	O	B
X	T	V	D	J	E	A	E	E	Q	B	X	B
A	H	O	M	E	L	A	N	D	H	K	E	O
A	Q	I	J	P	N	C	D	V	C	S	X	R
I	N	O	U	D	O	C	H	N	C	V	O	N
D	Z	X	A	V	A	V	A	U	E	P	M	M
B	I	P	W	L	M	E	H	L	T	F	U	K
B	K	H	V	R	T	K	H	O	F	Z	E	F
N	G	P	L	A	C	I	T	C	A	R	P	D
R	E	A	L	I	S	T	I	C	S	N	P	A

HEAD
NATION
RESILIENT
GOLDEN CALF
CHUTZPA
PRACTICAL
MOSHE
STUBBORN
DEFEND
REBUKE
REALISTIC
HOMELAND

