

THE TRIBE WEEKLY

PARASHAT EIKEV

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Unconditional Love



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Do you have house rules in your family? Maybe everyone has to take their shoes off when they come in the house? Perhaps you have to talk kindly to each other. You may have a fixed bedtime that changes as you get older. What's the reason for all these rules and what are the consequences if you break them?

Parashat Eikev is the middle of a very long farewell speech that Moshe (Moses) gives to the Jewish people before he dies, that spans the whole book of Devarim. He recaps the time that he's led the

people, and he notes how well they've been looked after by God, with food falling from heaven, water following them round the desert and shoes that grew with them and never wore out. All this, despite the fact that the people did not 'behave.' They were always 'breaking the rules'! They served an idol straight after receiving the Torah, they were rude and rebellious in the way they spoke to God and about Him, and still He continually saved them from their enemies and looked after them.

Moshe asks the people, "What does God ask of you? Only this: ... to walk in His paths, to love Him, to serve Him with all your heart and soul, to keep His commandments and laws which I command you today, for your good" (Devarim 10: 12-13, paraphrased).

Moshe is making a very convincing argument, that as a nation, we have a special, unconditional connection with God. He reminds the people that since the time they received the rules, they actually haven't kept them well, yet God has looked after them regardless. Although we can't ever lose the relationship, he goes on to explain that if we do follow the rules, it will be to our benefit and we'll reap the rewards. As with your home rules, if you break them, your parents will still love you, but there are consequences... the floor gets muddy, people argue and you'll be overtired. The rules exist for your good, for your benefit, they're designed to make your life better. So too with God's rules, He'll love us unconditionally, but He's hoping we'll embrace them to make our life and the world around us even better.

Eikev Letter Tiles

Rearrange the tiles to reveal 5 of the main topics in Parashat Eikev.

- 1 **vot Rewa ing for keep rds the mitz**
- 2 **tabl f st nd s ets Seco one et o**
- 3 **to l Mitz ove vah God**
- 4 **wing Isra wit h mi oney lk a flo el i land nd h sa**
- 5 **nd p Seco of a arag Shem raph the**

Answers: 1.Rewards for keeping the mitzvot 2.Second set of stone tablets 3.Mitzvah to love God 4.Israel is a land flowing with milk and honey 5.Second paragraph of the Shema