

Tell a story
Parshah Eikev
by Julie Zhuk on 2022-08-20

Comments

The word Eikev translates to Because. It is in this Parshah that Moses reiterates the message to the Jewish people of keeping the laws of the Torah and mitzvot. If they do this, G-d in return will prosper the land. The Jews will be able to conquer and settle in it once and for all. This was G-d's original promise to the Jews' forefathers. Another part of the message Moses gives them is reprimanding their failings in their first generation as a people. This referred to the Jews at the time they used a golden calf to worship it. The Jews had rebelled in the time of Korach when he was jealous of Moses being the leader of the Jews.

There was also the time before the Jews entered the land when a group of men went to check it out. They were spies and they angered G-d when they came back and said there was much to fear in that part of the land. Moses spoke to the Jews about forgiveness and G-d forgiving them of their many transgressions.

G-d gave the Jews the two tablets filled with the ten commandments. He gave this to them, once they had done teshuva. Moses reminded the Jews that when they spent forty years in the desert it was G-d who kept them going. He did this by providing them with daily manna coming from the sky. The Jews ate the manna, which was a lesson from G-d, teaching them that "man does not survive by living off bread alone".

G-d was trying to teach the Jews that it was by the utterance of the mouth of G-d that man can survive. Moses talked for a long time and the last topic he covered was what the land would look like. He described it as a land flowing with milk and honey. The land was blessed with seven things, these things were: wheat, barley, grapevines, figs, pomegranates, olive oil, and dates. The land was the focus of G-d's providence in His world. G-d commanded for the Jews to destroy the idols that belonged to those living in the land before the Jews came. Moses warned the Jews to not become haughty because they needed to remember it was the power of G-d and His hand that got them this far. The point Moses was trying to make was whatever wealth the Jews had now, it was all because of G-d. He was their real source of help.

The key passage in the Parshah this week comes from the Shema. It's found in the second chapter of the Shema. It repeats the fundamental mitzvot enumerated in Shema's first chapter. It describes the many rewards Jews will get if they keep up with the Torah laws and follow through with their mitzvah.

The second chapter of the Shema also describes what will happen to the Jews if they turn away from G-d, the Torah laws, and doing mitzvot. There would be a famine for the Jews and an exile for them to go through. The Shema is also the source of prayer and there is a reference to the resurrection of the dead in the messianic age.

There is another view about everything that is said in this Parshah. It comes from a Chabad website, saying that in every Jew there is a spark of Moses. In fact, in every generation, there is

a Moses who imparts that inspiration to the people of his time. When Jews consider that spark of Moses inside of us, we look at the essence of the godliness within ourselves. We realize that we are fearing G-d and it is no small thing. That little piece of Moses inside of every Jew was directing his remarks that he mentioned to the Jewish people thousands of years ago. When we only scrape the surface of our inner selves, we can discover the layers of spirituality and connectedness that are within us.

We can have it all, the purpose is for us to use it when it's convenient for us. The life we live is a very confusing one, we learn in this Parshah that the sky is not the limit. Having that little spark of Moses within us, we can reach the infinite, we can be so connected to G-d that there would be no limits and no restraints. We could do whatever we wanted and at the end of the day, we would be judged fairly. We would be judged according to our strengths, weaknesses, our successes, and our failures. We will all be evaluated by the talents and gifts that we have to offer and what our potential is.

If we can come to appreciate and love the truth of Judaism, then we can enjoy a meaningful and spiritual relationship with G-d. We can achieve the world and beyond it. We always have to remind ourselves that inside of each one of us there is a little Moses. For Moses to be G-d fearing was no small thing.