



## Ekev

*Devarim* (Deuteronomy) 7:12 – 11:25

*Parshat Ekev* begins with Moshe's second speech to the Jewish people. He warns them to obey all the laws and commandments that G-d had given them and promises them blessings for compliance with G-d's word.

The *Parshah* contains a brief description of the years of wandering in the desert. Moses reminds the people that though they have wandered for 40 years, and that those years were filled with trials and difficulty, their clothing did not wear out and G-d provided food and water for them. He tells them not to fear the inhabitants in the Land of Israel whom they would soon encounter, for G-d would help them and stand with them. He also talks of the incident of the Golden Calf and reminds them that had it not been for his intervention with G-d on their behalf, they would all have been destroyed. Moses shares these lessons with the people, not to berate them, but rather to teach them and enable them to learn from the mistakes of the past and refrain from repeating them when they enter into the Land of Israel.

*Parshat Ekev* contains the *Halachic* (Jewish legal) basis for *Birkat HaMazon*, the traditional blessing after meals. While we are all familiar with the commandment to make a blessing before we eat, (e.g. the *HaMotzi* blessing over bread) less well known but no less important, is the blessing after the meal. *Devarim 8:10* teaches, "And you will eat and be satisfied and bless the Lord your G-d for the good he has given you."

*Parshat Ekev* also contains the section that comprises the second paragraph of the *Shema*, providing blessings and rewards for fulfillment of the commandments, and punishments for turning away from G-d. This type of admonition is a recurring theme in the book of *Devarim*.



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