
THE WEISS EDITION

עקב
Eikev



To the Exclusion of All Others

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Light points

FROM THE TEACHINGS OF
THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE ON THE
WEEKLY TORAH PORTION

Lightpoints

לזכרון ולעילוי נשמת

הרה"ח הרה"ת הרה"ג ישעיהו זושא

ב"ר אברהם דוד ע"ה ווילהעלם

נלב"ע ביום ד' שבט התשפ"ב

תנצב"ה

עקב *Eikev*

9:17 | ט:יז

וְאַתָּפֶשׂ בְּשִׁנֵּי הַלֶּחֶת וְאַשְׁלֹכֶם מֵעַל שְׁתֵּי יָדַי וְאַשְׁבְּרֶם לְעֵינֵיכֶם

So I grabbed hold of the two tablets, cast them out of my two hands, and broke them before your eyes.

To the Exclusion of All Others

The commentaries discuss why it was necessary for Moshe to “grab hold” of the Luchos before he broke them, considering that he was already holding them as he descended the mountain.¹

One explanation is that Moshe did so for legal reasons—to establish his exclusive ownership of the Luchos before acting on his decision to break them. Although the Torah states that G-d “gave” Moshe the Luchos,² and the Talmud interprets this verse to mean that the Torah was given to Moshe as a gift,³

1. See Ohr HaChaim, Devarim 9:17.

2. Shemos 31:18.

3. Nedarim 38a.

Moshe had not intended to keep the Luchos for himself, but to confer their ownership on the entire Jewish nation. Moshe therefore “grabbed hold” of the Luchos before breaking them, to reestablish outright ownership over them and avoid the possibility of damaging (or stealing) property that did not belong to him exclusively.

Alternatively, Moshe’s repossession of the Luchos before breaking them stemmed from his extraordinary devotion to the Jewish people. By claiming exclusive ownership, Moshe sought to ensure that the guilt of shattering the holy Luchos would lie squarely on his shoulders, and not on the Jewish people, whose behavior caused him to do so.

—*Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 34, pp. 51–56

 11:19 | י"א:ט

וְלִמַּדְתֶּם אֹתָם אֶת בְּנֵיכֶם לְדַבֵּר בָּם

*You shall teach them to your children
to speak with them.*

First Words

This verse is the source from which we learn that a father is obligated to teach his children Torah. As the Alter Rebbe writes:

A father is obligated to teach his young son Torah... as it is written, ‘You shall teach them to your sons to speak about them.’ From when is he obligated to teach him? From when he begins to speak, he should teach him *Torah tzivah lanu Moshe...*, as well as the first verse of Shema Yisrael.⁴

Earlier, the Torah instructs us, “These words that I command you today... you shall teach them thoroughly to your children.”⁵ That command, however, speaks of a more advanced level of learning—when the child is capable of *thoroughly* grasping and retaining the Torah that he is taught. In addition, our Sages interpret the word “children” in that verse as a reference to students, one’s spiritual children. The mitzvah to “teach them thoroughly to your children” is the obligation upon the learned to teach the Torah to all who desire to study—even those who are not their biological offspring.⁶

In contrast, the mitzvah given here, “You shall teach them

4. Shulchan Aruch Admor Hazaken, Hil. Talmud Torah 1:1.

5. Devarim 6:6–7.

6. See Sifri, Eikev 34.

to your children *to speak with them*,” refers to a very early stage in a child’s education, when he is just beginning to speak. As Rashi explains, this verse is meant quite literally: “From the moment your son knows how to speak, teach him [the verse] *Torah tzivah lanu Moshe*. Let him learn to speak with this.”⁷ This training obviously begins at home, long before the child is old enough to be sent to school. Clearly, then, this verse refers to a parent’s personal mitzvah to teach the Torah to his child—an obligation that goes into effect as soon as the child begins to talk.

—*Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 9, p. 33, fn. 3;
Sichos Kodesh 5737, vol. 2, pp. 387–388

7. Devarim 11:19.

 11:19 | י"א:ט

וְלִמְדָתָם אֹתָם אֶת בְּנֵיכֶם לְדַבֵּר בָּם בְּשִׁבְתְּךָ
 בְּבֵיתְךָ וּבְלֶכְתְּךָ בְּדֶרֶךְ וּבְשֹׁכְבְּךָ וּבְקוּמְךָ

You shall teach them to your children, to speak with them, when you sit in your house and when you go on the way, when you lie down and when you rise.

What's On Your Mind?

Sforno explains the verse “You shall teach them to your children to speak with them when you sit in your house...” to mean that one must teach his children to engage constantly in the words of the Torah—in the morning and at night, and under all circumstances.⁸ On a more literal level, however, one can understand this verse as an instruction to be constantly educating our children—“You shall teach them to your children... when you sit in your house and when you go on the way, when you lie down and when you rise.”

Practically, this means that providing a proper Jewish education to your children—and by extension, to all Jewish children whom you can reach and affect—must constantly be on your mind. You must think about their education, and be active in ensuring it, not only “when you sit in your house”—i.e., when you focus on your family life—but even as you “go on the way”—as you go about your daily affairs. Even when you relax and wind down at the end of the day, your thoughts “when you lie down” to sleep should be about the

8. Devarim 11:19.

importance of providing the next generation with a proper Torah education.

Moreover, the verse continues, “You shall teach them to your children... when you rise up.” In the very first moments after you wake up, along with your recitation of Modeh Ani, thanking G-d for restoring your soul for another day, your first thoughts must be, “How will I best fulfill my duty to teach the Torah to my children today?”

—*Sichos Kodesh 5737, vol. 2, pp. 388–389*

 11:22 | יא:כב

לֹאֲהַבָּהּ אֶת ה' אֱלֹהֶיכֶם לִלְכֹּת בְּכָל דְּרָכָיו וּלְדַבְּקָהּ בּוֹ

*To love Hashem, your G-d, to walk in all His ways,
and to cleave to Him*

Speak as G-d Speaks

How does one walk in all G-d's ways? The Sifri interprets this as a commandment to emulate the virtues that the Torah attributes to G-d:

G-d is called 'merciful and gracious'⁹—so too, you should be merciful and gracious... G-d is called 'righteous,' as it says, 'G-d is righteous in all His ways and kind in all His deeds'¹⁰—so too, you should be righteous.¹¹

In light of this teaching, it can be suggested that we are also obligated to emulate another feat attributed to G-d—namely, just as G-d's speech alone causes things to exist,¹² we too must ensure that our words are effective.

How? By following two strategies taught by our Sages:

Rule one: Be sincere. "Words spoken from the heart enter the heart."¹³

Rule two: Fear G-d. "Anyone who has fear of Heaven, his words will be heeded."¹⁴ If you live a G-d-fearing life, not only

9. Shemos 34:6.

10. Tehillim 145:8.

11. Sifri, Eikev 49.

12. See Bereishis Rabbah 44:22.

13. See R. Moshe ibn Ezra, Shiras Yisrael, p. 156.

14. Berachos 6b.

will your sincere words “penetrate your listeners’ hearts,” but they will be acted upon as well.

In this way, you too can speak as G-d speaks.

—*Igros Kodesh, vol. 15, p. 112*

לעילוי נשמת
מרת ח'י'
בת הרה"ת ישראל נח ע"ה
מאיעסקי
נפטרה כ"א מנחם אב ה'תשנ"ח
•
נדפס ע"י בני משפחתה שיחיו

לעילוי נשמת
הרה"ת יעקב קאפיל
ב"ר משה יוסף ע"ה
רובין
נלב"ע ט"ו מנחם אב ה'תשפ"ג
תנצב"ה
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נדפס ע"י בני משפחתו שיחיו



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