

DEVARIM
 VA'ETHANAN
 EIKEV
 RE'EH
 SHOFTIM
 KI TEITZEI
 KI TAVO
 NITZAVIM-VAYEILEKH
 HA'AZINU
 VEZOT HA-BERAKHAH



HADAR
Children & Families



י"ט - כ"ה אָלוּל תשפ"ד September 22 - 28, 2024



• In This Week's Parashah

- ◆ It's a double parashah! We combine Nitzavim and Vayeilekh this week.
- ◆ Nitzavim is about the בְּרִית (brit, covenant) that bonds God and Benei Yisrael. The brit includes everyone—from the leaders to the children, people who were part of Benei Yisrael at that time, and even those who weren't there. God promises to be our God, and we promise to be faithful.
- ◆ If we do what's right, we will enjoy blessings. And if we don't do what's right... we can always change our ways and do תְּשׁוּבָה (teshuvah, return to God).
- ◆ Moshe emphasizes that Torah and mitzvot are close by and accessible. These are neither up in the sky nor far across the sea. This is something that we can do!
- ◆ In Vayeilekh, Moshe tells Benei Yisrael that he is 120 years old and his life is coming to an end. He will not be able to enter Eretz Yisrael with them.
- ◆ Moshe encourages the people. He tells them not to be afraid, God will take care of them, and Yehoshua will lead them.
- ◆ Every seven years on Sukkot, there's a massive public Torah reading event called הַקְדָּה (hakhel).

◆ God tells Moshe to write down the song of the Torah and teach it to Benei Yisrael.





פְּרָשְׁנוֹת • Commentary

At the beginning of Parashat Nitzavim Moshe explains that God is entering into a full בְּרִית (brit, covenant) with Benei Yisrael.

Devarim 29:12

In order to set you up today for God as a people, and God will be your Lord, just as God spoke to you and swore to your ancestors—to Abraham, to Yitzhak, and to Yaakov.

דברים כט:יב

לְמַעַן הָקִים אֹתָךְ הַיּוֹם לֹא לְעַם וְהוּא יְהִיָּה לָךְ לֵאלֹהִים כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר לָךְ וּכַאֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע לְאַבְרָהָם לְיִצְחָק וּלְיַעֲקֹב:

Rashi explains that Moshe is saying something about the special relationship between the Jewish people and God:

Rashi (France, 1,000 years ago)

God spoke to you and swore to your ancestors that God wouldn't exchange their descendants with a different nation. Therefore, God binds upon you all these promises so that you do not anger God, since God is not able to separate from you.

רש"י

לְפִי שֶׁדִּבֶּר לָךְ וְנִשְׁבַּע לְאַבְרָהָם שֶׁלֹא לְהַחֲלִיף אֶת יוֹרְעָם בְּאַמָּה אַחֶרֶת, לָכֵן הוּא אוֹסֵר אֶתְכֶם בְּשִׁבְעוֹת הַלָּלוּ שֶׁלֹא תִקְנִיטוּהוּ, אַחֵר שֶׁהוּא אֵינוֹ יָכוֹל לְהַבְדִּיל מִכֶּם.

Rashi explains that God is SO committed to us that God can never leave us, no matter how frustrating or disappointing we might be. We should follow the Torah because God loves us, and we should show our appreciation. But even if we fall short, God will never abandon us or separate from us.

Rashi says something similar in Parashat Vayeilekh:

Rashi on Devarim 31:6

God will never let you go; you'll never be abandoned by God.

רש"י דברים לא:ו

לֹא יִתֵּן לָךְ רַפְיוֹן לְהִיּוֹת נֶעְזָב מִמֶּנּוּ:



דְּבָרָה שֶׁל דִּיּוּ • One-Minute Debate

Debate: The Torah is like a song.



How to play:

- ◆ Here are some arguments to get you started, but try to come up with your own. Then debate someone!
- ◆ For a true one-minute debate, give each side 30 seconds to make its best case.



Agree!

- ◆ When we read it in shul, it's read with musical notes.
- ◆ The words of the Torah are very poetic and beautiful.
- ◆ People make a lot of great songs out of different pesukim.



Disagree!

- ◆ There are a lot of sentences. They don't look like songs to me.
- ◆ It's too long to be a song.
- ◆ There are a lot of rules and commandments. Not all of those are songs.

- ◆ How does it feel to think of God as never separating from you and never letting go of you?
- ◆ Does this surprise you? What does this teach us about God? What does this teach us about the Jewish people?
- ◆ Why is this an important idea to learn about as the Torah is coming to an end?
- ◆ **Try it out!** The next time you feel sad or alone, try thinking about the idea that God cannot separate from you or let go of you. What is that like?





שאלות השבוע • Parashah Scavenger Hunt

The answers to the first seven questions can be found in the matching numbered aliyah in the Torah reading. **The answers to questions 8 and 9 are harder and can come from anywhere in the parashah. The answer to question 10 is in this week's haftarah.**

aliyot:

- 1) Devarim 29:9 to 29:28
- 2) 30:1 to 30:6
- 3) 30:7 to 30:14
- 4) 30:15 to 31:6
- 5) 31:7 to 31:13
- 6) 31:14 to 31:19
- 7) 31:20 to 31:30

haftarah: Yeshayahu
61:10 to 63:9

Good luck!



1 What surprising group of people are included in the בְּרִית (brit, covenant)?

2 What word in this aliyah might make you think of an eight-day-old boy?

3 In what two places are God's commands **not** located?

4 What are we told to choose?

5 To whom did Moshe give the תּוֹרָה (torah, teaching) that he had written down?

6 Where should Benei Yisrael place the שִׁירָה (shira, song/poem)?

7 What does God say the people will never forget?

8 In Devash, we often talk about the שָׁרֵשׁ (shoresh, root) of a word. But in our parashah, the word "shoresh" appears, talking about the actual root of a plant. Can you find it? What kind of plant is being described?

9 What two-word phrase does Moshe use twice to tell Yehoshua to have confidence?

10 **From the haftarah:**
Which two pesukim talk about people who are getting married?

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Look for the answers on page 7!



פִּרְשָׁנוֹת • Commentary

Moshe warns Benei Yisrael that, if they stop following God, they'll be sent into exile from their land. But God promises that they'll return:

Devarim 30:3

Then God your Lord will return your displaced people and have compassion for you. God will return and gather you from among the nations where God scattered you.

דברים ל:ג

וְשָׁב ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֶת שְׁבוּתְךָ וְרַחֲמֶךָ
וְשָׁב וְקִבְּצֶךָ מִכָּל הָעַמִּים אֲשֶׁר
הִפְיָצֶךָ ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ שָׁמָּה:



Do you notice that the pasuk twice says וְשָׁב (ve-shav), which means that God will return?

Why doesn't it just say וְהָשִׁיב (ve-heishiv, using the הִפְעִיל/hif'il form of the verb, see p. 7)? Ve-heishiv would mean that God will cause the Jewish people to return. Wouldn't that make more sense here?

Rashi brings an interpretation from the Talmud (Bavli Megillah 29a):

Rashi (France, 1,000 years ago)

The Torah should have said "ve-heishiv," that God will cause the Jewish people to return. Our Rabbis learned from this that it's as if the Shekhinah (God's presence) is immersed in the misery of galut (exile) with Israel. And when Israel is redeemed, the Torah calls that a redemption for God too. For God returns with them.

רש"י

הִיָּה לוֹ לְכַתֵּב "וְהָשִׁיב" אֶת
שְׁבוּתְךָ, רְבוּתֵינוּ לְמַדּוּ מִכָּאן
בְּכִיכּוֹל שֶׁהַשְׁכִּינָה שְׂרוּיָה
עִם יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּצָרַת גְּלוּתָם,
וּבְשִׁנְגָּאֲלִין הַכְּתִיב גְּאֻלָּה
לְעַצְמוֹ — שֶׁהוּא יָשׁוּב עִמָּהֶם.

The word ve-shav makes sense because God is also returning. God comes back from exile together with the Jewish people, because God went into exile with them.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE >>

- ♦ What does it mean that God goes into exile with the Jewish people? What could that represent? What does this teach us about God?

Rashi goes on to describe what God does in the redemption:

Also, the day of kibbutz galuyot (the gathering of the exiles) will be great and hard, as if God needs to take the hands of each and every person to lead them from their place.

וְעוֹד יֵשׁ לוֹמֵר שְׁגָדוֹל יוֹם קְבוּץ
גְּלוּיֹת וּבִקְשֵׁי, בְּאֵלוֹ הוּא עֲצָמוֹ
צָרִיף לְהוֹיֹת אוֹחֹז בְּיָדָיו מִמָּשׁ
אִישׁ אִישׁ מִמְּקוֹמוֹ.

- ♦ Why might kibbutz galuyot be "great and difficult"?
- ♦ Rashi uses a metaphor of God physically holding each person by the hand. Why would God do that? What does holding someone's hand mean? Why would God need to do that to bring us out of exile? What can that teach us about God?



דִּקְדִּיק • Grammar

Let's play a game of "what's different here?" Take a close look at these two phrases from Parashat Vayeilekh, the second of the two parshiyot we read this week. They are both things that Moshe says to Yehoshua, preparing to enter into the land. What do you see?

דברים לא:בג

כִּי אָמַתָּה תָּבִיא אֶת-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל-הָאָרֶץ

דברים לא:ז

כִּי אָמַתָּה תָּבֹא אֶת-הָעָם הַזֶּה אֶל-הָאָרֶץ

They look almost exactly the same, right? One difference is: in the phrase on the right, we see the words הָעָם הַזֶּה (ha-am ha-zeh, this people); in the phrase on the left, we see the words בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל (Benei Yisrael, the Children of Israel). These mean the same thing and are just different ways to describe the Jewish people.

But there is another more meaningful difference. In the phrase on the right, Moshe tells Yehoshua: תָּבוֹא (tavo, you will go) into the land. In the phrase on the left, Moshe tells Yehoshua: תָּבִיא (tavi, you will bring) the people into the land.

And there is another difference hiding in plain sight! The word אֶת (et) is in both of these phrases, but it actually means two totally different things.

In the phrase on the right, it means **with**:

בִּי אַתָּה תָּבוֹא אֶת-הָעָם הַזֶּה אֶל-הָאָרֶץ

You will go **with** this people into the land

In the phrase on the left, it doesn't really have a translation, but it is there to tell you that Yehoshua is bringing Benei Yisrael into the land, and not the other way around. (The really fancy term for this is a "direct object signifier.")

בִּי אַתָּה תָּבִיא אֶת-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל-הָאָרֶץ

This "et" makes it clear that Yehoshua is doing something to the people; the bringing is happening to Benei Yisrael

This second kind of אֶת is more common in the Tanakh. Even though you can't translate it, you should still be grateful when you see it. It can really help you know who is doing what to whom!



If you remember from earlier in the year, תָּבוֹא is the פָּעַל/pa'al form of the verb, the simplest use of the verb "to come." תָּבִיא is the הִפְעִיל/hif'il form of the verb, where you do something to someone else. In this case, you make someone else "come," meaning you "bring" them somewhere.)

Parashah Scavenger Hunt Answers:

1. People who aren't even there! (29:14)
2. וּמָל (umal)—It's from the same root of the word מִלָּה (milah) in the term בְּרִית מִלָּה (brit milah, circumcision) (30:6)
3. In heaven, and across the sea (30:12-13)
4. Life (30:19)
5. The priests from the tribe of Levi (31:9)
6. In their mouths (31:19)
7. הַשִּׁירָה הַזֹּאת (ha-shira ha-zot, this song/poem) (31:21)
8. שָׁרֵשׁ פְּרִיָּה רָאשׁ וְלַעֲנָה (a root sprouting poison weed and wormwood) (29:17)
9. חֲזָק וְעָמַץ (hazak ve'ematz, be strong and brave!) (31:7, 31:23)
10. Yeshayahu 61:10 and 62:5



הַפְּטָרָה • Haftarah



Our haftarah this week mentions clothing quite a few times.

1

Yeshayahu 61:10

I will greatly rejoice in God, my whole being will be happy with my God—

Because God has dressed me in clothing of salvation;

God has wrapped me in a robe of charity,

Like a groom adorned with a turban, like a bride decked out in her finery.

ישעיהו סא:י

שׁוֹשׁ אֲשִׁישׁ בַּה'
תִּגַּל נִפְשִׁי בְּאֱלֹקֵי
בִּי הִלְבִּישׁוּנִי בְּגָדֵי יֵשַׁע
מָעִיל צְדָקָה יַעֲטֵנִי
בְּחָתָן יִכְהֶן פָּאֵר
וּכְכֹלָה תַעֲדֶה בְּלִיָּה:

Yeshayahu is describing how it feels to experience God's kindness. He says it's like being dressed up in the nicest things for your own wedding.

- Why is experiencing God's kindness like being dressed in special clothing? How does it feel when someone dresses you or wraps you in special blankets, robes, clothing, or jewels?

2

Yeshayahu 62:3

You shall be a glorious crown in the hand of God,
And a royal tiara in the palm of your God.

ישעיהו סב:ג

וְהָיִיתָ עֲטֹרַת תְּפָאֶרֶת בְּיַד ה'
וּצִנִּיף מְלוּכָה בְּכַף אֱלֹקֶיךָ:

In this pasuk, the Jewish people are described as God's crown.

- What does it mean to be God's crown? What does a crown symbolize for a king? What does this teach us about how God thinks about the Jewish people?

This is the final of the **שִׁבְעַת דִּנְהֵמְתָא** (sheva de-nehemta), the series of seven haftarot that comfort us after Tisha B'Av. Through these images of clothing—both the Jewish people's and God's—our haftarah promises a wonderful future: God will save us, cherish us, and bring Yerushalayim back to life.

- How can you connect to God through your clothing? What special clothing do you have that can help you connect to God?

