

Torah Portion #46: Eikev (עֵקֵב) "because"

Torah ~ Deut. 7:12-11:25 | Haftarah ~ Josh. 1:1-9; Isa. 49:14-51:3 | Brit Chadashah ~ Heb. 11:8-13; James 2:14-26

In this weeks portion we review the idolatry sin of the golden calf and receive the command of the Lord to circumcise our heart. Then the Lord goes on to once again tell us of the blessings that come from keeping the Words (Devarim) of God.

Circumcise Your Heart

Deut. 10:16 "Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiffnecked." KJV

A stiff neck is a biblical idiom that refers to pride and stubbornness. A person with a stiff neck is not flexible and does not submit to God's will. They are lead by the desires of the flesh instead of the Spirit of God.

In *Jeremiah 4:4*, the Lord once again tells the people of Israel to circumcise their hearts and turn from their evil ways.

The fleshly sin of Idolatry

One of the sinful desires of the flesh is to idolise someone or something in our lives. The definition of idolatry is "the worship of idols or "excessive" devotion to, or reverence for some person or thing." An idol is anything that replaces the one, true God. Idolatry is a major importance to morals and our relationship with God.

Exodus 20:3-4a "(3) Do not have other gods besides Me. (4a) Do not make an idol for yourself" HCSB

Dt. 9:12b "They have quickly turned away from what I commanded and have made an idol for themselves." NCV

Colossians 3:5 "Therefore put to death the earthly parts of your nature--sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed (which is a form of idolatry)" CJB

If we do not circumcise our heart and surround ourselves with Yeshua and His Word, idolatry is an easy sin to fall into.

Circumcision of the heart comes from Yeshua's Lordship

Paul says in *Colossians 2:11*, that the circumcision of our heart takes place when we are born-again through Yeshua. To be born-again is to stop following after the fleshly desires in our life and be lead by the Holy Spirit that now lives in us.

Galatians 5:16 "let the Spirit direct your lives, and you will not satisfy the desires of the human nature" GNT

Galatians 5:24 "Those who belong to Messiah have crucified the flesh with its passions and lusts." MWEB

To be saved (born-again) is more than just knowing in our minds that God is real or that Yeshua exists. Real salvation is making Yeshua the Lord (Master) of our lives and dying to our old fleshly nature by repenting of our sins. Repentance means to earnestly turn from your sins, turn back to God, and obey His commandments.

Peter confirms in *Acts 2:37-38* that repentance is a part of our salvation in Yeshua.

2 Corinthians 5:17 "Therefore if anyone is in Messiah, he is a new creation. The old things have passed away. Behold, all things have become new." MWEB

Matthew 7:21-23 says that not everyone that claims to be a "believer" in Yeshua is really a born-again. (*1 John 2:3-5*)

Matthew 7:16a tells us how we can recognize a believer when it says "You will know them by their fruits." NKJV

James 2:19 "You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble!" NKJV

Acts 16:31 "Believe in the Lord Yeshua the Messiah, and you will be saved, you and your household." MWEB

Deut. 11:13-15 tells us what happens when we truly make Yeshua the Lord of our life and obey Him.

Summary

Deut. 10:12-13 explains how born-again "believers" in Yeshua should behave.

Matt. 6:33 "Seek first God's kingdom and what God wants. Then all your other needs will be met as well." NCV

Aliyah to the Torah

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Torah ~ *Deuteronomy 10:12-16* NKJV

- 12 “And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways and to love Him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul,
13 *and* to keep the commandments of the LORD and His statutes which I command you today for your good?
14 Indeed heaven and the highest heavens belong to the LORD your God, *also* the earth with all that *is* in it.
15 The LORD delighted only in your fathers, to love them; and He chose their descendants after them, you above all peoples, as *it is* this day.
16 Therefore circumcise the foreskin of your heart, and be stiff-necked no longer.
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Haftarah ~ *Joshua 1:6-8* NKJV

- 6 Be strong and of good courage, for to this people you shall divide as an inheritance the land which I swore to their fathers to give them.
7 Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go.
8 This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.
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Brit Chadashah ~ *James 2:19-22* NKJV

- 19 You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble!
20 But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?
21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar?
22 Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect?