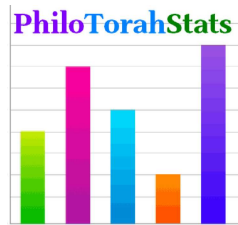


EIKEV

46th of the 54 sedras;
3rd of 11 in D'varim



231.83 lines in a Torah; rank: 14th

10 Parshiyot; 6 open, 4 closed

111 p'sukim - rank: 26th (4th in D'v.)

Same number as Vayikra, but larger

1747 words - rank: 16th (3rd in D'v.)

Same number as Ki Tavo; Ki Tavo has more p'sukim; Eikev has more letters

6865 letters - rank: 14th (3rd in D'v.)

Eikev's p'sukim are long - 3rd longest in the Torah in words and letters per pasuk. This accounts for rise in ranking in those categories.

MITZVOT

8 of 613: 6 positives, 2 prohibitions

Eight mitzvot might not seem to be a lot (and it isn't), yet it is more than 34 other sedras have, and fewer than 19 other sedras.

Aliya-by-Aliya Sedra Summary

[P>] and [S>] indicate start of a parsha p'tucha or s'tuma. X:Y is Perek:Pasuk of the beginning of the parsha; (Z) is the number of p'sukim in the parsha.

Numbers in [square brackets] are the Mitzva-count of Sefer HaChinuch AND

Rambam's Sefer HaMitzvot. A=ASEI; L=LAV (prohibition). X:Y is the perek & pasuk from which the mitzva comes.

The reading at Mincha the previous Shabbat and on Monday and Thursday mornings for Eikev is the longest of all sedras. (Some have a custom to read more for Mas'ei, which extends the regular first aliya by reading all of the Travelog without interruption.)

Kohen - First Aliya - 25 p'sukim - 7:12-8:10

[P> 7:12 (5)] Moshe Rabeinu reiterates the "simple" deal that HaShem offers us: If we observe the mitzvot then He will keep the promises that He made to our ancestors. He will love us, bless us, and see to it that we flourish. We will be the most blessed among all the nations.

We would do well to consider this fact, that G-d repeatedly presents us with the alternative results of our faithfulness to Him and the opposite. This is what makes the second passage of the Sh'ma (see later in this sedra) so important to our daily routine. Although there is much overlap between the first two passages, it is the second one that states "the Deal", and it is supposed to be a (twice) daily reminder and gentle warning.

Following this, Moshe issues another of the many warnings against idolatry.

SDT: In the context of the opening p'sukim of the sedra, the word EIKEV means "on the heels of", "in the wake of..." (following G-d's words).

Rashi takes the word to indicate mitzvot that people belittle and crush under their heel. With the careful observance of these mitzvot, G-d will keep His side of the deal.

Baal HaTurim presents a mini-mussar lesson based on the choice of the word EIKEV. The heel represents humility... We must realize that humility is an important key in our following G-d's words. Thus, the opening words of the sedra can be saying: "If you are humble and follow G-d's commands, then..." (Note also that the heels support the entire body.)

[S> 7:17 (10)] Do not wonder how it will be possible to prevail against the many nations in the Land, and do not fear them. The miracles witnessed in Egypt (and in the Midbar) will be repeated with other nations. Conquest of Eretz Yisrael will be slow so that the Land will not be overrun by wild animals.

Ponder this: Commentators ask, could not G-d, Who split the sea and performed many other miracles, prevent the problem with animals without drawing out the period of conquest? They explain that the period from Yetzi'at Mitzrayim until entering the Land was supernatural,

filled with open miracles, but it was an unnatural time. Food from heaven, miraculous well-water, clothes that we did not outgrow, feet that did not blister or swell despite difficult walking conditions, and protection and climate-control from the Clouds of Glory, all demonstrated G-d's special relationship with the People and helped develop within them a special faith in G-d, but was not to be their way of life. Just as the fetus is protected and provided for during gestation and then emerges from the womb into the less perfect but "natural" world, so too Israel is soon to emerge from its womb to face the reality of the natural, "real" world. Hence, the warning about the animals. One can say that by warning us about the length of the period of conquest, G-d is telling us that the period of open miracles is ending (not completely), but a more exciting, more alive, more "real" life is to come.

No one will be able to stand before Israel. [This is as it SHOULD be, but its happening in reality depends on our "behavior".] The idols of the nations shall be destroyed and we shall not desire their rich trappings. It is forbidden to derive benefit from the adornments of idolatry, even if they have not been worshiped [428, L22 7:25]. Nor may we have anything to do with idolatry, directly or even peripherally. We may not benefit from that which is consecrated to idolatry [429, L25 7:26].

[S> 8:1 (18)] All that G-d commands us in the Torah is for the purpose of living... in Eretz Yisrael.

SDT: This is an oft-repeated theme of Moshe's words to the new generation that is soon to cross the Jordan River. It emphasizes the interdependence and inseparable nature of the three fundamental events that define the Jewish People - the Exodus, Matan Torah, and entry into Eretz Yisrael.

Moshe next asks us to remember the experiences of the years of wandering, the miracles as well as the tribulations. That was a testing period which set the stage for real life in Eretz Yisrael.

The Land is beautifully described and the Seven Species are enumerated.

This gives prominence to grain products (bread, pastry, etc.) in the realm of brachot and gives priority to wine and the five special fruits (among the Seven Species - the first two are grains).

The Torah commands us to "bench" after meals [430, A19 8:10].

MITZVAnotes

Chazal augmented this rule with a wide range of brachot to be recited before and after partaking of food, by which we express our appreciation and thanks to G-d for the bounty of His world. So too, the Sages required

us to say brachot before mitzvot, as well as blessings of praise, request, and acknowledgment in prayer - to make us constantly aware of G-d and His role in the Creation and continuing maintenance of the world.

The gemara in Brachot (20b) relates a conversation (so to speak) between G-d and the heavenly angels. The angels said to G-d: Master of the World, You wrote in Your Torah (in Parshat Eikev) that You are impartial and do not show favoritism or take bribes. Yet You definitely favor the Jewish people as evidenced by the blessings You bestow upon them via Birkat Kohanim. G-d answers them: And how should I not favor them? I commanded them to bless Me after they eat a full satisfying meal. And the Sages of Israel require Birkat HaMazon even after consuming a KAZAYIT and/or a K'BEITZA. (And they require a before-bracha on even the tiniest bit).

Based on the words of the command to say Birkat HaMazon, we are not only thanking G-d for the food, as would be expected, but also for the Land. This is reflected in the texts of Birkat HaMazon and AL HAMICHYA. Since Birkat HaMazon is a mitzva which applies in all places (not just in Israel), commentaries ponder the significance of the reference to the Land.

Ramban says that when one looks

back at the oppression in Egypt and remembers the harshness of the Wilderness, and is now enjoying the bounty of the Land of Israel, there is special cause to thank G-d. Even during times of exile, the significance of the Land (and the Torah) to the life of the Jewish People must not be overlooked. To paraphrase a chasidic interpretation of the pasuk which commands us to "bench": One can eat anywhere and be satisfied physically, but to be spiritually satisfied as well - that happens only in THE natural environment of the Jew and his Torah - in Eretz Yisrael.

Furthermore, Sefer HaChinuch speaks of the brachot for Torah-learning in the same context as Birkat HaMazon. "And you will eat and you will be satisfied..." - this refers to both physical and spiritual food - food of the body and food for the mind, heart, and soul.

The implication of Ramban's words is that only in Eretz Yisrael can one be genuinely fulfilled in the performance of mitzvot. One can keep (many) mitzvot outside of Israel, but there is something vital lacking under those circumstances.

Levi - Second Aliya - 13 p'sukim - 8:11-9:3

Until now, the People have periodically displayed lack of faith in G-d

in troubled times (hunger, thirst, fear). At this point, Moshe issues a very different kind of warning. When the People will enter the Land, successfully defeat the nations therein, and begin to benefit from the spoils of war and the bounty of the Land, the potential exists to discount G-d's role in their good fortune. Moshe warns: be careful to remember the One Who took us out of Egypt and fed us in the wilderness. Do not say: look what I accomplished with my own powers. Always remember that it is G-d who continuously keeps his promises to our ancestors.

SDT: In the opening passage of Rosh Chodesh Benching we ask G-d to give us a long life, a life of peace, a life of... many different things. There is one thing that we ask for twice - A life that has in it YIR'AT SHAMAYIM, fear of G-d. Why do we ask for this twice?

One answer suggested is that after asking for YIR'AT SHAMAYIM, we ask for CHAYIM SHEL OSHER V'CHAVOD, a life of wealth and honor. In that case, we had better repeat our request for YIR'AT SHAMAYIM, since wealth often turns a person away from proper fear of G-d. This is similar to the warning that Moshe Rabeinu issues at this point in the sedra.

Another 'answer' is that the type or level of Yir'at Shamayim for each time it is mentioned, differs. Just look with what the Yir'at Shamayim is part-

nered with each time. Once with YIR'AT CHEIT. And then with AHAVAT TORAH. Qualitatively different.

[And one last point of interest: This introductory passage is modified for monthly use from a prayer composed by RAV, related to us in the Gemara (B'rachot 16:), originally intended by its composer for daily recital. The original has YIR'AT SHAMAYIM only once.]

[P> 8:19 (2)] Know well that turning from G-d towards idolatry will result in annihilation, as it does for other nations.

[P> 9:1 (26)] Notwithstanding the might of the nations we are about to face, have confidence that G-d will lead us to victory.

Note that the words that Moshe uses to describe the nations that we will face in Eretz Yisrael are very similar to the words used by the Meraglim when they panicked the People with their evil report on the Land. Moshe is not glossing over the difficulties that lie ahead. He is rather instilling confidence in the People that will come from faith in G-d and His promise to fight on our behalf. If an enemy is strong, you don't mislead the people by saying that he is weak. You tell the truth and explain the special protection and help that we will have from G-d in battle.

Sh'lishi - Third Aliya - 26 p'sukim - 9:4-29

Moshe next "put things in perspective". We must not think that we deserve all that G-d is giving us, but rather we must remember the many times we angered G-d in the wilderness AND even at Sinai!

It is not that generation that deserves to enter Eretz Yisrael. Rather, it is a combination of the wickedness of the current inhabitants of the land and the promises that G-d made to our Avot.

Some mitzva-counters consider this ZACHOR to be among the 613; Rambam and the Chinuch do not. This does not, however, minimize the significance of this command.

Moshe now tells the People about the devastating event of the Golden Calf. How glorious the events should have been when Moshe descended the Mount with the first Luchot. Moshe tells how G-d wanted to destroy the People and how he (Moshe) smashed the Luchot, interceded on behalf of the People, and returned to the mountain for another 40 days and nights of fasting and prayer.

Aharon too was subject to G-d's anger.

Rashi explains that G-d was angry at Aharon for "going along" with the People as far as he did. The implication, is that Aharon lost his sons as a result of G-d's anger with him.

Moshe's prayers on behalf of his brother were partially successful - Aharon's other two sons lived.

Inter alia, Moshe mentions other places and events where the People angered G-d.

Moshe tells the People that he smashed the Luchot when he saw the Golden Calf. He also tells them of the different "arguments" he put to HaShem to get His forgiveness.

R'vi'i - Fourth Aliya - 11 p'sukim - 10:1-11

[P> 10:1 (11)] Moshe continues by telling about the second set of Luchot and the ARON constructed to contain them.

He then tells of the travels of the People, the death of Aharon (again), and the succession of his son, Elazar. Moshe also tells of the special role given to the tribe of Levi as a result of the (improper) behavior of the rest of the People.

Chamishi - 5th Aliya - 20 p'sukim - 10:12-11:9

[S> 10:12 (20)] "And now, People of Israel, what does G-d want from you? ONLY to revere Him, follow His ways, love Him, and serve Him with all your heart and soul. To fulfill all that He commands - for our own good."

Moshe says, even though G-d is the

Master of all, He has a special relationship with our ancestors and with us. We must not be stubborn; we must be good, for G-d is truly great and not subject to bribery.

We are required to especially love the convert [431, A207 10:19] - we know how being a stranger among others is (even though it isn't the same kind of strangerhood).

Revere (fear) G-d [432, A4 10:20], serve Him [433, A5 10:20], cling to Him (by adhering to Torah scholars) [434, A6 10:20], and swear in His Name [435, A7 10:20] when necessary to swear.

MITZVAnotes

Rambam counts the commandment to pray daily as Biblical (needs further details to be understood properly), based on "and Him you shall serve" and "and to serve Him with all your heart" (and other similar texts), defining service of the heart as prayer. Ramban, on the other hand, holds that prayer is a rabbinic mitzva altogether, albeit inspired by the p'sukim in the Torah and stories of the Avot and others, who prayed on various occasions. At first look, it seems problematic that there is no specific command in the Torah "Thou shalt daven."

But if you think about it, SERVE HIM WITH ALL YOUR HEART is the best

way to command us to daven, because it tells us clearly the high value placed on KAVANA in respect to davening. With davening, kavana is the essential element, not just a component of the mitzva. This is so - we can suggest - specifically because the Torah did NOT command us to pray, but rather to serve G-d with all our hearts.

To further clarify the issue of T'FILA being a Torah law or Rabbinic. Everyone agrees that the number of times a day, the timings of the different davenings, and what to say at each time - these are all by Rabbinic rules. The dispute is only on the level of the basic mitzva to pray - anything. When a mother has a son in the army and his unit is sent to Gaza, and she turns to G-d with a heartfelt plea to Him for her son's safety - this is an example of a basic prayer. The Rambam would hold that this prayer is a fulfillment of the Torah's requirement to pray. Ramban would consider it a Rabbinic mitzva. OTOH, saying Ashrei, the Amida, and Aleinu sometime between half of a halachic hour after halachic noon (the time known as Mincha Gedola) and sunset - this is the fulfillment of the Rabbinic mitzva to daven Mincha. (These were just examples.)

Let's take a closer look at the issue of davening being d'Oraita or d'Rabanan - Torah Law or Rabbinic legislation.

If it is a Torah law, then the Torah obligates us to pray daily. How we do that, how much emotion and intent we put into it, is the way we fulfill the mitzva.

But if davening is Rabbinic - and not obligated by the Torah - then there is perhaps, another message. The Torah did not have to require us to daven any more than it did not have to require us to breathe in and out. Breathing is what we do to live. As to davening, the Torah only has to show us examples of davening and inspire us to serve G-d in this way, and that should be enough to result in our praying. I'm not sure that I am making my point clear enough, but I hope you get the point anyway.

He is our G-d and He formed a mighty nation from a family of 70 souls. Love Him and do His mitzvot (do His mitzvot out of love for Him). Learn the lessons of Jewish history - the miracles and wonders of the Exodus, the crossing of the Sea, and the punishment of Datan and Aviram (here singled out for their arrogant, unforgivable insult to Eretz Yisrael, as opposed to Korach whom Moshe was able to forgive, sort of).

Again, Moshe emphasizes that the purpose and proper environment for Torah is Eretz Yisrael.

Shishi - Sixth Aliya - 12 p'sukim - 11:10-21

[S> 11:10 (3)] The Land that the People are about to enter is a land that is "accountable to G-d" in obvious (and less obvious) ways. G-d is demanding of it and of its soon-to-be inhabitants (us). The main physical distinction mentioned explicitly is Israel's reliance upon rain.

G-d is demanding of the Land of Israel and of the People of Israel - always, from one end of the year to the other.

[S> 11:13 (9)] This Aliya concludes with a restating of the "deal" that opened the sedra. This parsha is the second passage of the Sh'ma. If we keep the mitzvot then we will have bountiful rain and abundant yields; if not, then...

T'filin, Torah learning, and Mezuzah are restated. So too is the correlation between mitzvot and long life in the Land clearly stated. This second portion of the Sh'ma is one of the two passages in a Mezuzah and one of the four parshiyot in T'filin.

Remember that four weeks after Parshat Eikev we will be reading Ki Tavo with the Tochacha. Essentially, the Tochacha says the same thing as the second passage of the Sh'ma from Eikev - but in a much more heavy-handed way. V'HAYA IM SHAMO'A is a firm but 'calmer' warning than what's coming in Ki Tavo. And, Ki Tavo is once a year (add

B'chukotai with the other Tochacha making it twice a year) and Sh'ma is every day - twice a day. Maybe if we properly heed the daily reminder, we won't need the devastating warning of the Tochacha. Furthermore, different people react differently to the different styles of reproach and warning.

Sh'VII - Seventh Aliya - 4 p'sukim - 11:22-25

[S> 11:22 (4)] Once again, the "deal" that the sedra began with is repeated at its conclusion - If we will keep all the mitzvot, motivated by a love of G-d; if we follow in his footsteps (by performing acts of kindness) and cling to Him... then we will prevail against mightier nations than ourselves. Every place in Eretz Yisrael that we walk upon, will be ours. No one will stand up against us. The sedra concludes with promises of successful conquest of the Land - if we keep our side of the deal. That's all it takes.

These four p'sukim are not only Sh'vii, but they are reread for the Maftir, as well.

Haftara - 27 p'sukim - Yeshayahu 49:14-51:3

Second of the 7 Consolation Haftarot. G-d's message is that He has not forgotten Zion nor forsaken His People. Sometimes it might seem like that, but

there will come a time when the People will return to their roots and be restored to their Land. There was never a "divorce" between G-d and the People of Israel. G-d will help in the battles against the mighty nations that oppress His People. G-d has (will) comforted Zion; the desolated areas will flourish...