

Parashat Ki Tavo

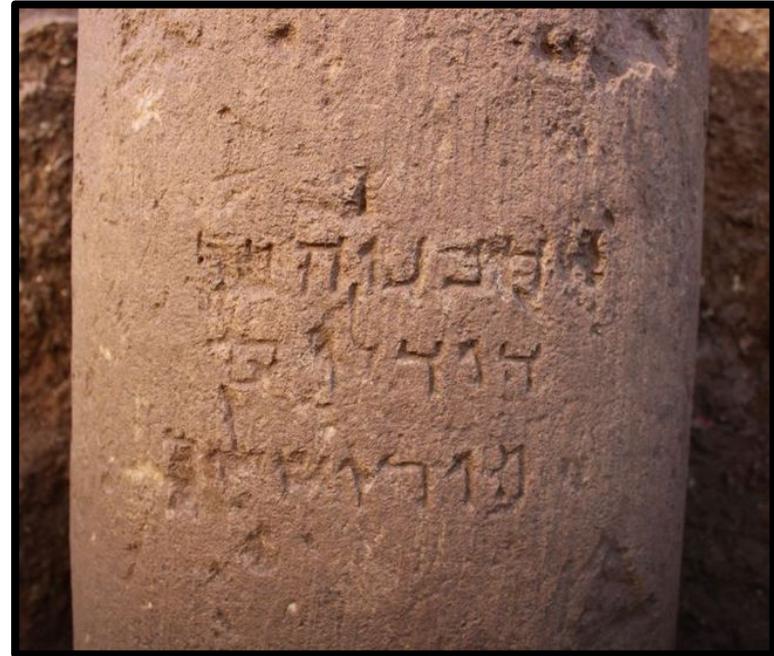
SEPTEMBER 20, 2020

Taught By:

Isaac & Eva

SUMMARY

Moshe and the Israelites are still in the desert preparing to enter the Promised Land. This week *Moshe* continues his very long speech to the Israelites before they enter the Promised Land, focusing on many more of the rules that they should observe when they enter and live there. One of the rules in this *parasha* is that they should present the first fruits they have harvested from each of the seven species of the land of Israel (wheat, barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives, and dates) to the Kohen, or priest, as a way of giving thanks. The farmer presenting these first fruits then was told to recount a story familiar to us from the Passover Haggadah--beginning by talking about living as an enslaved person and finishing by giving thanks for the harvest of these first fruits from their land.



1st / 2nd century inscription reading "Jerusalem" found on a column near the entrance of the city.

Later in the *parasha* the Israelites are taught that once they cross the Jordan River to enter the land, they are responsible for standing stones up, coating them with plaster, then inscribing them with all the words of the Torah. The Israelites are reminded, once again, to be faithful to G*d's mitzvot so that the nation will experience blessing and not curse.

In this week's *parasha* we read that when the Israelites cross over the Jordan River to enter the Promised Land, they are supposed to stand some very large stones up, coat them with plaster, and inscribe the whole Torah on them. Why might G*d tell them to write the whole Torah on these stones?

EVA: The Torah contains the stories of the Jewish people and where we've come from. It reminds us of who we are. I recently asked my dad about his Meru name, Lyboonie, because I had forgotten the particular reason that this was the name that he was given. He told me that it was his grandfather's name and that it was passed down to him. When he told me, it reminded me of how this name connected my dad to previous generations. This made me think that it might be a good idea to write down our family history and the meanings of our names.

Imagine that you were to put a few large rocks in front of your house to remind you of an important message or story. What would you want to carve into these rocks?

ISAAC: If we were to put a large rock with a message on our front lawn, I would just want it to say, "Hello" so that people would see it and know that they are welcome to visit.

ISAAC: It can sometimes be easy to forget things, even important things like our family history. Writing things down can help us remember. Carving stories into large stones that everyone can see seems like a good strategy for helping make sure even more people will remember these stories.

EVA: Sometimes I start playing video games before I finish my homework. I can get sucked into playing, and suddenly a lot of time has passed, I'm tired, and it's tougher to do my homework, so I would write, "Homework before video games" on the rocks in front of my house.

In this week's *parasha* we read that the Promised Land that the Israelites will enter will be a land, "flowing with milk and honey." What do you imagine you would see if you entered "a land flowing with milk and honey," and how would it feel to enter a "land flowing with milk and honey?"

ISAAC: When I hear, "A Land flowing with milk and honey," I imagine that this might mean a place that is calming--like milk and where the food is tasty, like honey.

EVA: Eating or smelling food can help us use our senses to set an intention. When we moved into our new house, a neighbor brought cookies and chocolate so that we would have a sweet move-in. When I hear, "Land Flowing with Milk and Honey" it reminds me of apples and honey--which a lot of Jewish people eat for Rosh HaShanah as a way of setting an intention for a sweet new year.