



**עקב *Eikev* / Because**

**[Deuteronomy 7.12—11.25](#) / [Isaiah 49.14—51.3](#) / [Acts 6—7](#)**

**Because** This portion opens with [Deuteronomy 7.12](#), a wealth of words relevant to God’s covenant with ישראל *Yira’el* Israel:

עקב	<u><a href="#">eikev</a></u>	because/if	Because/if
שמע	<u><a href="#">shema</a></u>	hear/obey	you listen to and obey
משפט	<u><a href="#">mishpat</a></u>	judgment/ordinance	these judgments,
שמר	<u><a href="#">shamar</a></u>	keep/guard/observe/give heed	to guard them
עשה	<u><a href="#">asah</a></u>	do/fashion/accomplish/make	and do them,
יהוה	<u><a href="#">YHVH</a></u>	the LORD	then the LORD
אלהים	<u><a href="#">elohiym</a></u>	God	God
שמר	<u><a href="#">shamar</a></u>	keep/guard/observe/give heed	will guard
ברית	<u><a href="#">b’riyt</a></u>	covenant/alliance/pledge	the covenant
חסד	<u><a href="#">chesed</a></u>	goodness/kindness/faithfulness	and the mercy
שבע	<u><a href="#">shaba</a></u>	swear/adjure/take an oath	He swore
אב	<u><a href="#">av</a></u>	father	to your fathers

This passage then lists amazing blessings if we **שמע**, **שמר**, and **עשה**:

- God’s love
- God’s blessing
- Multiplied children, crops, flocks
- Secure in the Land
- Blessed above all peoples
- All people and animals fertile
- No sickness or disease
- Sickness and disease on enemies
- All enemies destroyed
- No worship of their gods
- Signs and wonders against enemies
- Hornet to pursue enemies
- Enemy kings will fall
- Burn their idols



**Circumcision of the Heart** With all this to gain, why would anyone forsake God's Law? Because we, like **ישראל**, are a *stiffnecked* people:

[9.6](#) Know therefore that it is not for thy righteousness that **יהוה** thy God giveth thee this good land to possess it; for thou art a **עם** *am* people-**קשה** *qasheh* hard/cruel/severe/obstinate/stiff-**ערי** *oreph* neck/back of the neck of fleeing foe people.

[9.13](#) I have seen this people and, behold, it is a **עם-קשה-ערי**.

[10.16](#) **מול** *muwl* circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiffnecked.

[31.27](#) I know thy rebellion, and thy stiff neck...

**ערי** is also the root of **ערפה** *Orpah*, the daughter-in-law who turns her back on Naomi in the first chapter of Ruth.

The cure to a stiff neck is to **מול** the heart. **מול** is the removal of an obstacle. When our hearts are hard, we push God away. So God cuts away the barrier: [30.6](#) “And the **יהוה** thy God will **מול** thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the **יהוה** thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live.”

God cuts away the barrier, but we have to **שמר** against hardening the heart, harboring bitterness, jealousy, and the pollution of the world, [James 1.27](#). Instead, we can live by the Spirit, which loves God's **תורה** *Torah* Law/Instruction, forgiving, studying God's Written and Living Word, and worshipping.



[Romans 2.28-29](#) says that outward circumcision is not what makes one a Jew, but this circumcision of the heart. This fits perfectly with [Hebrews 8.8-12](#), quoting [Jeremiah 31.33](#), that the New Covenant is God putting the Law in our minds and writing it on our hearts.

**Difficult Consequences** Pointing out stiff necks, uncircumcised hearts and ears, and testifying to seeing **ישוע** *Yeshua* Jesus/salvation at the right hand of God is what got Stephen killed, [Acts 7.51-60](#).

**A Long Road** God redeems outwardly-circumcised **ישראל** from Egypt and gives the **תורה**. But when the 10 spies return in [Numbers 14](#), **ישראל** forgets about God's promises and power and the whole generation over 20 years old dies in the wilderness. For the most part, this new generation is no longer **קשה**, but **מול** in heart. They've had a death about every fifteen minutes for 40 years. They've fought much stronger enemies and won. Now they are finally ready to believe what Joshua and Caleb told them in Numbers 14.9, "Only rebel not against **יהוה**, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us; their defence is removed from over them, and **יהוה** is with us; fear them not." As a pre-broken movie stunt chair is broken over someone's head, enemies of **ישראל** are pre-broken by God and **ישראל** gets to look good defeating them.

**משה** tells **ישראל** now in [Deuteronomy 8.2](#) that God afflicted them these 40 years to see what was in their heart, whether or not they would keep His commandments.

Our struggle today and the struggle of modern **ישראל** mirror this ancient struggle. We have to decide whether we will trust in ourselves and our government, or God. **ישראל** has to decide whether they will trust in America or God. Here is a typical example of the debate: Keep America as a friend by ceding to terrorists? Or keep **ישראל** safe and risk losing America as an ally?

Published: 08/07/09, 11:29 AM

## **Diplomat Slams Israel for Saying No to America**

by Maayana Miskin

(IsraelINN.com) Israeli diplomat Nadav Tamir has circulated a letter that harshly criticizes his own government for saying "no" to the United States. The letter, titled "Sad thoughts on Israel-U.S. relations," accuses Israel's leaders of reducing American support for Israel and harming the American Jewish community...

Tamir called on Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu and his ministers to "sacrifice tactical issues for the sake of strategic ties." As an example, he brought former Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's agreement to follow the U.S.-backed Roadmap despite reservations.

U.S. diplomats have since demanded that Israel skip parts of the Roadmap requiring the Palestinian Authority to end anti-Israel incitement and violence, and move straight to final-status negotiations and a complete freeze on Jewish growth in Judea and Samaria.

Tamir blamed a loss of support for Israel among American Jews on Netanyahu's refusal to accept some American demands, such as that for a complete building freeze in Judea and Samaria. "The sense of conflict between the Israeli government and the Obama administration puts the American Jewish community in an extremely problematic place... and this conflict draws many of them away from the state of Israel," he claimed...

**Outnumbered** This is what **ישראל** faces today: surrounded on three sides by Muslims (countries in tan) who for the most part swear to destroy it and on the fourth side by the Mediterranean, Israel is a tiny sliver of Land compared to its hostile neighbors. Add Europe, which should be 20% Muslim by 2050, Turkey, Indonesia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the other “Stan” countries, mostly Muslim former Soviet Republics, and you can see **ישראל** is outnumbered and outsized.



When you consider the overwhelming odds, the continued existence of **ישראל** is a miraculous continuation of their biblical struggles. So there's a clear connection between **ישראל** of the Bible, **ישראל** today, and our own choices: **עֵרַף קֶשֶׁה** or **מֹול** our heart.



**A Certain Man, All Men Live by the Word of God** [Deuteronomy 8.3](#) says, “...האדם ha-adam (the) man doth not live by bread only, but by everything that proceedeth out of the mouth of the יהוה doth האדם ha-adam (the) man live.” האדם is normally translated man, but the prefix ה hey in front of אדם adam man changes the meaning to the man. The Septuagint, a translation of the Hebrew text by Jewish scholars into Greek before שׁוֹע, says:

312		1473	3754	3756	1909	740	3441	2198	
αναγγείλη		σοι	ὅτι	οὐκ	ἐπ'	ἄρτω	μόνω	ζήσεται	
he should announce		to you	that,	[ <sup>3</sup> not	<sup>5</sup> by	<sup>6</sup> bread	<sup>7</sup> alone	<sup>2</sup> shall	<sup>4</sup> live
3588	444	235	1909	3956	4487	3588	1607		
ο	ἄνθρωπος	ἀλλ'	ἐπὶ	παντί	ῥήματι	τῷ	ἐκπορευομένῳ		
	<sup>1</sup> A man];	but	by	every	word		going forth		
1223	4750	2316	2198	3588	444		3588		
διὰ	στόματος	θεοῦ	ζήσεται	ο	ἄνθρωπος	8:4	τα		
through	the mouth	of God	shall [ <sup>2</sup> live		<sup>1</sup> a man].				

Strong’s Concordance says, “**444. anthropos anth'-ro-pos** from 435 and ops (the countenance; from 3700); man-faced, i.e. a human being:--**certain, man,**” while the root is “**435. aner an'-ayr** a primary word (compare 444); a man (properly as an individual male):--fellow, husband, **man,** sir.”

The Hebrew האדם is translated into Greek as certain, man, not the more generic “man.” When שׁוֹע quotes this verse in [Matthew 4.4](#), His Word is recorded the same as the Septuagint, ἄνθρωπος [anthropos](#). Various lexicons, such as the one in the previous link, say this could mean generic man. While האדם means a certain man, שׁוֹע could be referring to Himself as that Certain Man, or more generally that all men live by the Word of God.

**Arrogance** משה warns ישראל in [Deuteronomy 8.11-18](#) that as their wealth accrues they may forget God, thinking they became rich by their own power. משה tells them to remember it is God who gives the power to get wealth.

Money is an indicator of a person’s relationship with God. If a person thinks all the money is his, his attitude is, “I throw all my money up to God. Whatever God wants, He keeps. The rest comes back to me.”

Today, ישראל prospers with inventions such as the cell phone and the microchip, more scientific papers per capita than any other country, and advances in farming and weaponry. Yet many in ישראל don’t give God any of the glory for their safety and wealth.



“Remember the Covenant and Your Name” משה retells in [Deuteronomy 9.13-29](#)

how God wanted to destroy יִשְׂרָאֵל in the wilderness. But משה appealed to God not to destroy יִשְׂרָאֵל for two reasons: 1) verse 27 that God should remember His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and 2) verse 28 that God’s Name would be slandered among the nations if the nations thought God couldn’t preserve His people.



יִשְׂרָאֵל pleads with God to save יִשְׂרָאֵל.

Paul echoes this in [Romans 9.1-5](#), when he wishes that he himself were cursed and cut off from יְשׁוּעָה for the sake of יִשְׂרָאֵל.

What of the Church today? In [Romans 11.17-21](#), Paul warns that we are saved by being wild olive branches grafted into the cultivated olive root of יִשְׂרָאֵל, and we share the nourishing sap. Yet many in the Church hold to “Replacement Theology,” thinking the Church has replaced יִשְׂרָאֵל—and they’re happy about it! We, too, like משה and Paul, should appeal to God on the basis of His covenant and His name that יִשְׂרָאֵל be saved.

**Heritage of God and Earnest** In [Deuteronomy 8.29](#), Moses says that יִשְׂרָאֵל is God’s people and נַחֲלָה *nachalah* possession/property/inheritance/heritage. Paul says in [Ephesians 1.11](#) that in Messiah we also have become a κληροῶν *kleyro-oh* heritage/private possession, predestined according to His purpose. In [Ephesians 1.14](#), Paul adds that the Holy Spirit is a ἀρροαβών *arrabon* earnest/pledge or down payment, proof of the salvation which is our נַחֲלָה.

This word ἀρροαβών has an exact parallel in Hebrew, which is used only in [Genesis 38](#), the story of Judah and Tamar. Judah has three sons, Er, Onan, and Shelah. Er marries Tamar, but dies childless. The widow Tamar is given to the next son to have sons for Er. Instead, Onan avoids this responsibility and dies. Judah should give Tamar to his son Shelah, but having lost two sons to Tamar already, he stalls. Tamar plots to have children with Judah by posing as a prostitute. In verses [17](#), [18](#), and [20](#), Tamar insists on a עֲרֵבוֹן *arabown* pledge/security. Judah thinks he will be paying Tamar with a kid from the flock. But it is Judah’s signet, cords, and staff which are Tamar’s עֲרֵבוֹן proving her נַחֲלָה, as the ἀρροαβών of the Holy Spirit is proof of our נַחֲלָה.

**We Get the נחלה** Though Judah didn't realize it at the time, he was authorizing Tamar to continue the line of the Promised Seed of [Genesis 3.15](#), which Judah's father Jacob would later prophecy belongs to Judah in [Genesis 49.9-10](#).

When we turn our hearts to ייִשׁוּעַ, we become part of His ancestral line, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob (יִשְׂרָאֵל), Judah, Perez (whose mother is Tamar), and so on. To those who are faithful to Him, ייִשׁוּעַ gives His signet ring and staff: [Matthew 28.18-20](#) and [Revelation 2.26](#).



**Smashed, Not Dropped** When מֹשֶׁה comes down from the mountain to find יִשְׂרָאֵל sinning, the two tablets are על al on/atop/upon his hands/figuratively arms, [Deuteronomy 9.15](#). Imagine two very heavy tablets of stone, extremely valuable by any standard as they have been inscribed by God Himself with God's תּוֹרָה, and מֹשֶׁה is carrying them probably across his arms like he would carry a heavy, precious load. But after he sees the sin, מֹשֶׁה is so angry that in [verse 17](#) he תִּפַּשׁ taphas lays hold of/seizes/wields the tablets, שָׁלַךְ shalakh throws/casts/hurls and שָׁבַר shavar breaks/crushes/shatters them. Jewish tradition says that מֹשֶׁה needed God's help to maneuver and violently smash these heavy tablets. מֹשֶׁה at any rate makes the point that he did not drop them, but destroyed them on purpose in hot anger. It's interesting that God does not rebuke him for this act of violence against arguably one of the most precious pairs of items ever to exist.

**Sounds Like שמע** [Deuteronomy 10.12-13](#) sounds like the passage known as the שמע shama hear/listen to/obey, [Deuteronomy 6.4-5](#). Both passages also emphasize the need to אהב ahav love God. It would be difficult or impossible to command an emotion. But by acting like we אהב God, by doing what God commands with an attitude that God really does know what's best for us, the emotion will follow. Then the e-motion results in motion. In the New Covenant, we love because God first loved us, [1 John 4.19](#), and that love kick-starts the whole process.



**God of Judgment and אהב** Both passages also emphasize two names of God, אלהים *elohiym* Divine Judge, and יהוה, which accents God's compassion. Like a good parent, God is both strict and loving. And because of the אהב, we can embrace both.

[Deuteronomy 10.17](#) starts with יהוה, then goes on to stress God's power. God's judgment and אהב are like two sides of the same coin. If we study only one side, we are not seeing the God of the Bible. Some people focus on God's judgment and they live in fear or denial of Him. Others focus on God's אהב and live wantonly. By seeing God in תורה, we can come to know the real אלהים.



**The Rain of Your Land** God assures ישראל in [Deuteronomy 11.10-17](#) that the Land they are inheriting is not watered like Egypt (irrigation from the Nile), but watered by heaven, that God keeps His eye on it all year long, and if ישראל keeps the Law diligently, then God will send rain at its proper time and bless the crops. Sin, however, brings famine. Restoration is marked by renewing the rain and the crops: Hosea 2.21-22 ([23-24](#) in Hebrew) and [Joel 2.19](#).

ישראל is over half desert today, but it was not always like that. I own goats and I've seen what they can do to trees. Nearly 2,000 years of absentee ownership of ישראל, leasing it out to goat herders among others who didn't treat the Land well, has created a much different environment today than what those in the Bible knew. Still, ישראל is very prosperous agriculturally, growing seven main crops: Wheat, barley, grapes, figs, olive oil, pomegranates, and honey. And trees are planted at a furious rate.

But there's more than one meaning to this passage. [Deuteronomy 11.14](#) promises the יורה *yoreh* early rain of autumn and the מלקוש *malkoshe* latter rain of spring. [Joel 2.23](#) also promises the early and latter rains, but uses a different description of the early rain, את-המורה לצדקה *et-hamoreh leetsdaqah*, which is מורה *moreh* early rain/teacher צדקה *tsedakah* justice/righteousness, or, as the Young's Literal Translation puts [Joel 2.32](#), God is promising the Teacher for Righteousness—whom we now know as ישוע. As rain comes from heaven to bless us, so does ישוע.



**Choose: Blessing or Curse!** The end of this תורה portion, [Deuteronomy 11.22-25](#), promises ישראל that if they obey these commands, they will possess all the Land God wishes to give them. No man will be able to stand against them—in fact, fear and dread of ישראל will be on their enemies. God does this from the Book of Judges till today.

The rest of the chapter pronounces a blessing for obeying the Law and a curse for disobeying it, which is the beginning of the next Torah portion, ראה [ra'ah](#) Behold.

ישוע has freed us from the curse of the Law. No one but ישוע keeps it: “God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God,” [2 Corinthians 5.21](#). But we can still pursue the blessings by doing what God, through the Written Word, תורה, and the Living Word, ישוע, asks of us.



Glossary, in order of appearance:

עקב	<i>eikev</i>	because
ישראל	<i>Yira'el</i>	Israel
עקב	<i>eikev</i>	because/if
שמע	<i>shema</i>	hear/obey
משפט	<i>mishpat</i>	judgment/ordinance
שמר	<i>shamar</i>	keep/guard/observe/give heed
עשה	<i>asah</i>	do/fashion/accomplish/make
יהוה	<i>YHVH</i>	the LORD
אלהים	<i>elohiym</i>	God
שמר	<i>shamar</i>	keep/guard/observe/give heed
ברית	<i>b'riyt</i>	covenant/alliance/pledge
חסד	<i>chesed</i>	goodness/kindness/faithfulness
שבע	<i>shaba</i>	swear/adjure/take an oath
אב	<i>av</i>	father
עם	<i>am</i>	people
קשה	<i>qasheh</i>	hard/cruel/severe/obstinate/stiff
ערף	<i>oreph</i>	neck/back of the neck of fleeing foe
מול	<i>muwl</i>	circumcise
ערפה	<i>Orpah</i>	Orpah, Naomi's daughter-in-law
תורה	<i>Torah</i>	Law/Instruction
האדם	<i>ha-adam</i>	(the) man
אדם	<i>adam</i>	man
ἄνθρωπος	<i>anthropos</i>	certain, man
נחלה	<i>nachalah</i>	possession/property/inheritance/heritage
κληροῶν	<i>kleyro-oh</i>	(in N.T.) heritage/private possession
ἄρραβών	<i>arrabon</i>	earnest/pledge or down payment
ערבון	<i>arabown</i>	pledge/security
על	<i>al</i>	on/atop/upon
תפש	<i>taphas</i>	lay hold of/seize/wield
שלך	<i>shalakh</i>	throw/cast/hurl

שבר	<i>shavar</i>	break/crush/shatter
שמע	<i>shama</i>	hear/listen to/obey
אהב	<i>ahav</i>	love
אלהים	<i>elohiym</i>	Divine Judge
יורה	<i>yoreh</i>	early rain of autumn
מלקוש	<i>malkoshe</i>	latter rain of spring
את-המורה לצדקה	<i>et-hamoreh leetsdaqah</i>	
מורה	<i>moreh</i>	early rain/teacher
צדקה	<i>tsedakah</i>	justice/righteousness
ראה	<i>ra'ah</i>	behold