

Do Not Forget: Faithfulness in the Small

Things

Parashat Eikev — Deuteronomy 7:12–11:25

Primary texts: Deuteronomy 7:12; 8:10–18; 10:12–13; 11:18–21

Ketuvim HaNotsrim: Luke 16:10; James 1:22–25

Central message

We rarely forget The Almighty in a single moment. Forgetfulness usually begins when we stop recognizing Him in the ordinary moments of life. Covenant faithfulness is built through small, repeated acts of remembrance, gratitude, and obedience.

Purpose of the lesson

To encourage the congregation and Internet viewers to see daily obedience not as a burdensome list of insignificant duties, but as the practical means by which we remain close to The Almighty, express gratitude for His goodness, and develop a faithful heart.

Distinction from “The Blessing That Could Not Be Cursed”

The lesson from Balak emphasized that outside opposition could not overturn the covenant purposes and blessing of The Almighty.

This lesson takes the subject in a different direction:

- Balak concerned what an enemy could not take away.
- Eikev concerns what Israel must not forget.
- Balak emphasized divine protection against outside opposition.
- Eikev emphasizes inward faithfulness through daily remembrance.
- The central question here is not, “Can someone curse what The Almighty has blessed?”
but, “How should people who have been blessed respond?”

There may be some natural overlap concerning blessing, but the emphasis will be gratitude, daily habits, personal responsibility, and spiritual growth.

Lesson Outline

I. Covenant Life Is Walked One Step at a Time

Opening thought

We often notice the great moments of faith:

- A major decision
- A serious trial
- A dramatic answer to prayer
- A public act of courage
- A life-changing spiritual experience

But most of our lives are not lived in dramatic moments.

Most of life is lived in ordinary moments:

- How we speak when we are tired
- Whether we keep our word
- Whether we thank The Almighty for what we have

- Whether we pray when nothing is wrong
- Whether we obey when no one is watching
- Whether we show kindness when there is nothing to gain

We sometimes imagine that faithfulness will be proven someday in one great test. But faithfulness is normally formed long before the great test arrives. It is formed through the small decisions we make every day.

Parashat Eikev teaches us that covenant life is not maintained only through dramatic miracles or national events. It is maintained through hearing, remembering, teaching, thanking, and obeying.

That brings us to the subject of this lesson: “Do Not Forget: Faithfulness in the Small Things.”

Opening question

Do we usually forget something important all at once, or do we gradually allow other things to crowd it out?

Allow a brief moment for reflection.

Moshe was speaking to a new generation preparing to enter the land. Their greatest danger would not always be an enemy standing in front of them. One of their greatest dangers would be forgetting the One who had brought them there.

II. Eikev/Because: Hearing Must Lead to Action

Read Deuteronomy 7:12

“Then it shall come about, because you listen to these judgments and keep and do them, that The Almighty your God will keep with you His covenant and His lovingkindness which He swore to your forefathers.”

We need to recognize the sequence:

1. Listen
2. Keep
3. Do

Hearing Torah is important, but hearing alone is incomplete. The purpose of hearing is to produce faithful action.

The word *eikev*

The word עֵקֶב — **eikev** in this verse means “because,” “as a result,” or “in consequence of.”

There is also a traditional Jewish teaching that connects *eikev* homiletically with the similar Hebrew word for “heel.” It pictures commandments that people may consider so small that they figuratively trample them beneath their heels.

This is not the primary lexical meaning of *eikev* in Deuteronomy 7:12, but it provides a useful lesson:

We must be careful not to dismiss an instruction merely because we consider it small.

Clarifying the point

Torah itself recognizes that some offenses carry more serious consequences than others. The point is not that every commandment is identical in weight or consequence.

The point is that we do not have the authority to decide that something The Almighty instructed is unworthy of our attention.

Illustrations

A person might say:

- “It was only a small exaggeration.”
- “I was only a few minutes late.”

- “I only said it because I was angry.”
- “No one will notice.”
- “It does not really matter.”
- “That commandment is not as important as the others.”

But small choices shape our character.

Key statement

The small act may seem unimportant, but the attitude behind it may reveal something very important about the heart.

Ketuvim HaNotsrim connection

Luke 16:10:

“He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much.”

Yeishua was not teaching that small matters are unimportant. He was teaching that small matters reveal whether someone can be trusted with greater responsibility.

Transition

But Parashat Eikev does not merely warn Israel about neglecting commandments. It warns Israel about something even more subtle: forgetting The Almighty while enjoying His blessings.

III. Forgetfulness Often Begins When Life Becomes

Comfortable

Read Deuteronomy 8:10–14

10 “When you have eaten and are satisfied, you shall bless the Adonai your Elohim for the good land which He has given you. 11 “Beware that you do not forget the Lord your God by not keeping His commandments and His ordinances and His statutes which I am commanding you today; 12 otherwise, when you have eaten and are satisfied, and have built good houses and lived in them, 13 and when your herds and your flocks multiply, and your silver and gold multiply, and all that you have multiplies, 14 then your heart will become proud and you will forget the Lord your God who brought you out from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

Let us focus particularly on these words:

“When you have eaten and are satisfied, you shall bless The Almighty your God...”

And:

“Then your heart will become proud and you will forget The Almighty your God...”

Notice when the warning was given

Moshe did not say only:

“Be careful that you do not forget The Almighty when you are suffering.”

The warning concerns the time when Israel would:

- Eat and be satisfied
- Build good houses
- Increase its livestock
- Accumulate silver and gold
- Experience security and prosperity

The danger was not that these blessings were evil. They were gifts from The Almighty.

The danger was that Israel might enjoy the gifts while gradually forgetting the Giver.

Uplifting clarification

This passage does not teach that we should feel guilty whenever something good happens.

The Almighty gave Israel the land. He promised its produce. He wanted His people to eat, become satisfied, and enjoy His provision.

The proper response to blessing was not guilt. It was gratitude.

Key observation

Deuteronomy 8:10 provides the safeguard before the warning:

“When you have eaten and are satisfied, you shall bless The Almighty your God.”

Israel was taught to answer satisfaction with thanksgiving.

Biblical forgetting

Forgetting The Almighty does not necessarily mean that a person stops believing He exists.

A person may still speak about Him, attend services, possess a Bible, and identify with a congregation while functionally forgetting Him in daily decisions.

To forget The Almighty is to live as though:

- Our abilities came entirely from ourselves
- Our possessions belong only to us
- Our time is ours to use without accountability

- Our words have no spiritual consequence
- Our success proves our superiority
- We no longer need divine instruction

Read Deuteronomy 8:17–18

17 “Otherwise, you may say in your heart, ‘My power and the strength of my hand made me this wealth.’ 18 “But you shall remember the Lord your God, for it is He who is giving you power to make wealth, that He may confirm His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as it is this day.

Emphasize balance

The verse does not deny human labor. Israel would still plow, plant, harvest, build, and manage the land.

The correction concerns the source behind their ability.

We may work hard, but we did not create our minds, bodies, opportunities, strength, or the world that makes our labor fruitful.

Key statement

Gratitude does not deny our effort. Gratitude places our effort within the larger reality of the goodness and provision of The Almighty.

Transition

How, then, does Israel prevent forgetfulness? Torah does not leave remembrance to chance. It gives Israel daily practices that keep the words of The Almighty close.

IV. Remembering Is More Than Thinking About the Past

Read Deuteronomy 10:12–13

12 “Now, Israel, what does the Lord your God require from you, but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in all His ways and love Him, and to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, 13 and to keep the Lord’s commandments and His statutes which I am commanding you today for your good?”

Identifying the progression

Moshe describes a complete covenant life:

- Fear The Almighty
- Walk in His ways
- Love Him
- Serve Him
- Keep His commandments

These are not competing ideas.

Love does not replace obedience. Obedience is one of the principal ways covenant love is expressed.

Emphasizing “for your good”

The commandments are not presented merely as arbitrary restrictions.

Moshe says that they are:

“For your good.”

This gives the lesson an uplifting direction.

The Almighty is not looking for opportunities to make life unnecessarily difficult. His instructions teach His people how to live within the covenant, treat others justly, worship faithfully, and avoid destructive paths.

Explain active remembrance

In Scripture, remembering frequently means more than mentally recalling information. It means bringing something to mind in such a way that it affects what we do.

For example:

- Remembering Shabbat leads us to treat the day differently.

- Remembering that Israel was enslaved produces compassion toward the stranger.
- Remembering deliverance produces gratitude.
- Remembering the commandments leads to obedience.
- Remembering our dependence upon The Almighty produces humility.

Key statement

Biblical remembrance is memory put into action.

Practical comparison

It is possible to remember a birthday date but fail to acknowledge the person.

Likewise, it is possible to remember biblical information without allowing it to shape our conduct.

Knowing is important, but covenant remembrance moves from the mind into the life.

Ketuvim HaNotsrim connection

James 1:22:

“But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves.”

James does not oppose hearing. He warns against hearing that never becomes action.

Moshe then describes how Israel can place remembrance into the ordinary rhythms of life.

V. Build Remembrance Into Everyday Life

Read Deuteronomy 11:18–20

“You shall therefore impress these words of mine on your heart and on your soul... You shall teach them to your sons, talking of them when you sit in your house and when you walk along the road and when you lie down and when you rise up. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.”

Notice the ordinary settings

Moshe does not limit Torah instruction to formal gatherings.

He mentions:

- Sitting in the house
- Walking along the road
- Lying down
- Rising up
- Teaching children
- Entering and leaving the home

These are ordinary moments.

Torah was meant to become part of the rhythm of life.

Main lesson

The Almighty gave Israel practices of remembrance because He knows that human beings forget.

These reminders were not evidence of weak faith. They were tools for developing durable faithfulness.

Congregational application

Our regular practices can serve the same purpose:

- Reciting the Shema
- Giving thanks before and after meals
- Welcoming Shabbat
- Attending congregational worship
- Reading the weekly Torah portion
- Teaching children and grandchildren
- Displaying a mezuzah
- Speaking about Scripture during ordinary conversations

- Praying at regular times
- Pausing to acknowledge blessings
- Asking forgiveness promptly
- Performing an act of kindness without seeking recognition

These practices do not earn the love of The Almighty. They train us to live consciously before Him.

A pastoral caution

A practice can become empty when performed without thought. But the answer is not necessarily to abandon the practice.

The answer is to restore meaning to it.

When we say a blessing, we should remember why we are saying it.

When we recite the Shema, we should hear its call to love The Almighty.

When we touch or notice a mezuzah, we should remember that the words of Torah are to govern the life within the home.

Key statement

Repetition does not have to become empty ritual. Repetition can become faithful reinforcement.

Transition

The encouraging message of Eikev is that faithfulness is not restricted to people who accomplish dramatic things. Every person can practice faithfulness in the ordinary parts of life.

VI. Small Acts Become a Faithful Life

Bringing the main ideas together

We do not normally become faithful through one isolated decision.

Faithfulness grows when we repeatedly choose to:

- Tell the truth
- Keep a promise
- Control an angry word
- Thank The Almighty
- Help someone who is overlooked
- Return what we borrowed

- Admit when we are wrong
- Pray even when life is going well
- Study when we would rather be distracted
- Obey when no one else will know

None of these actions may appear dramatic.

But together they shape a faithful person.

Positive emphasis

Some congregants or viewers may feel that they are not doing anything especially important.

They may not teach publicly.

They may not lead services.

They may not have a dramatic testimony.

They may feel that their contribution is small.

Eikev reminds us that The Almighty sees faithfulness in the ordinary places.

He sees:

- The quiet prayer

- The private act of integrity
- The meal prepared for someone else
- The patient response
- The encouraging telephone call
- The person who arrives early to help
- The parent or grandparent who teaches a child
- The person who keeps doing what is right without public recognition

You do not have to accomplish something spectacular to live a life that honors The Almighty.

You must faithfully take the next step He has placed before you.

Return to Luke 16:10

“He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much.”

The “little thing” is not wasted. It is part of the preparation.

VII. Conclusion: Remember, Respond, Repeat

Three words summarize the lesson:

1. Remember

Recognize where your life, strength, opportunities, and provisions come from.

2. Respond

Allow remembrance to produce gratitude, obedience, mercy, and humility.

3. Repeat

Build faithful actions into the ordinary rhythm of life.

Weekly challenge

Choose **one small act of covenant faithfulness** for the coming week.

Examples:

- Begin each morning with a brief prayer of gratitude.
- Thank The Almighty deliberately after one meal each day.
- Repair one strained relationship.
- Keep a promise that has been delayed.
- Read a portion of Torah each morning.
- Encourage someone who is often overlooked.

- Remove one dishonest or harmful habit.
- Speak more patiently to someone in the household.
- Review the Shema slowly and thoughtfully.
- Perform one act of kindness without telling anyone.

The point is not to choose ten things and become discouraged.

Choose one meaningful step and practice it faithfully.

Closing question

Let us ask ourselves - What small area of obedience or remembrance has The Almighty placed before me that I have been overlooking?

Pause briefly.

Closing statement

We do not usually forget The Almighty all at once. We forget Him when the ordinary moments of life are allowed to pass without remembrance, gratitude, or obedience. But the opposite is also true. We build a faithful life one remembered blessing, one obedient decision, and one act of kindness at a time.

May we remember Him when we sit in our homes and when we walk along the way, when we lie down and when we rise up. May His words remain upon our hearts, and may our faithfulness in small things prepare us for every responsibility He places before us.