

**Parshat Ki Tavo**  
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*Class of 2017*

Parshat *Ki Tavo* begins and ends with the retelling of the exodus from Egypt.

The first retelling of the exodus from Egypt is during the ceremony of *Bikurim* (the first fruits). We are told to take our first fruits in a basket to the Cohen in the Temple, and in the ritual of the giving of the fruits, the giver will retell the story of the exodus from Egypt.

In this version of exodus story, we focus on how God protected and saved the Children of Israel. They went down to Egypt to save themselves from a famine, but when the Pharaoh tried to destroy them, God answered their cries and brought them out of Egypt to the land of Israel.

Only a few verses following the laws of *Bikurim*, we learn about the laws of *Ma'aser* (tithing) where we are told that we should make sure to give “to the poor, to the Levite, to the convert, to the orphan, and to the widow, and they will have eaten in your cities and be satisfied” (Devarim 26:12). It becomes our job to act like God, to take care of those in our communities who are in need.

At the end of the Parsha, following the list of blessings and curses, Moshe tells the Children of Israel another version of Exodus. This retelling is about the strength and abilities of God, about His great power to cause destruction and preservation. The Children of Israel are told to remember that Egypt was destroyed, as was Sichon and Og. To remember the miracles that occurred when they left Egypt. The end of Moshe's retelling, he reminds the Children of Israel to keep the laws, as that is the only way they will be continue to exist.

The two stories of exodus come to teach us two aspects of God in our lives. On the one hand we are taught to walk in the way of God, just like God cares and protects, we too should also care and protect. On the other hand we are reminded of God's power, even though we want to try to emulate God, we must remember to stay humble as we are still only human.



*Rabbi Eryn London, is a chaplain resident at New York Presbyterian - Weill Cornell Medical Center. She earned her B.A from Goucher College, where she majored in theatre, minoring in psychology and Judaic studies. Eryn subsequently earned an M.A. at Goldsmiths, University of London. She specialized in applied drama: theatre in educational, community, and social contexts. Eryn made aliyah in February of 2010 and studied at the Pardes Institute of Jewish Studies and at the Susi Bradfield Women's Institute of Halachic Leadership at Midreshet Lindenbaum. She is one of the co-founders of "Gam Yachad", a multi-denominational Beit Midrash for Israeli rabbinical students. Eryn has served as scholar in residence and rabbinic intern at the ACT Jewish Community in Canberra, Australia, Adath Shalom B'nai Israel in Chicago, Illinois, and at the Mt. Freedom Jewish Center in Randolph, New Jersey. In addition, Eryn has lectured in various communities in Israel, Canada, Colombia, Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States.*