

# Torah Portion Eikev

*Shabbat beginning August 19, 2022*

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This week's parshah begins with the admonition, if we love God and obey the commandments, God will favor us and our descendants. Details include how the Israelites will take over the inhabitants of the land of milk and honey who were even worse than they. Moses recounts how the Israelites prospered but provoked God often, including building the golden calf.

Eikev invites commentators to reflect on the meaning of God. Our ancestors' genius removed physical representations from this meaning, leaving a dynamic, creative, nurturing, and disciplining conception. We find modern models of God in evolution, our bodies and minds, and the infinite connectedness of our natural world.

Loving God means that we love the sources of good that sustained our ancestors. The golden calf showed the difficulty of loving such abstract conceptions. We love our children, spouses, and homes by gentle caring, nurturing, fear of foreboding harm, sharing shame, and sacrificing everything for another's survival. All these apply to loving God. Reflections on Eikev urge us to love Torah, traditions, and community in the same ways. Join us Friday night to reflect on what loving God means to you.