



א שטיקל תורה A LITTLE SLICE OF TORAH

פון פרשת דער וואָך FROM THE WEEKLY PORTION

February 14, 2026



"Fostering diverse modes of attention to textual details cultivates correlative forms of attention to the world and divine reality"

Michael Fishbane (1943-), *Sacred Attunement: A Jewish Theology*

ברוך אתה יי, אלהינו מלך העולם,
אשר קדשנו במצותיו, וצונו לעסוק בדברי תורה:

"Tachometer Torah"



...read down to the red line

Parashat-haShavu'a Stats

Weekly Portion: Mishpatim

Consists of: Exodus 21:1-24:18

Sequence—

in annual Torah cycle: 18th of 54

in Exodus: 6th of 11



A Salient Selection from the Portion -

Exodus 24:1-4a

Context: *Exodus, second of the Five Books of the Torah, is an account of how God liberated the Israelites from Egypt and entered into a Covenant with us at Mount Sinai, and a record of the legislations we undertook for the conduct of the society we were to establish in the Promised Land.*

Content: *Last week we read how the Israelites at Mount Sinai willingly agreed to be governed henceforth by the Word of God, both comporting themselves as individuals, and conducting themselves as a society, according to the rules they would be given. Having heard The Ten Commandments in chapter 20, they urge Moses to go up and receive the rest of God's laws... which are recounted to him in chapters 21 through 23.*

24:1] - Then [God] said to Moses, "Come up [the Mountain] to The Eternal One— **you and Aaron**; [his eldest sons] Nadav and AviHu; **and seventy [of the other] elders of Israel**— to bow down from afar. [24:2] - Now Moses alone is to draw near The Eternal One; the others with him shall not approach, nor shall [any of the other] people come up with him."

24:3a] - So Moses went and recounted to the people **all the words of** The Eternal One, and all the rules—

24:3b] - to which all the people responded, with one accord, declaring: "**All the words** that **The Eternal One has spoken**, we will do and obey!"

ואל משה אמר עלה אל יהוה אתה ואהרן נדב ואביהוא ושבעים מזקני ישראל והשתחויתם מרחק ונגש משה לבדו אל יהוה והם לא יגשו והעם לא יעלו עמו

ויבא משה ויספר לעם את כל דברי יהוה ואת כל המשפטים

ויען כל העם קול אחד ויאמרו כל הדברים אשר דבר יהוה נעשה ונשמע

- more over

24:4a] - Whereupon Moses wrote down **all** **the** **Words of** The Eternal One [i.e. Exodus 20-23].

וַיִּכְתֹּב מֹשֶׁה אֶת כָּל דְּבָרֵי יְהוָה

Semantics:	singular	plural	
	noun - absolute דָּבָר	דְּבָרִים	3b
	noun - construct דְּבַר ("the <i>davar</i> of...")	דְּבָרֵי	3a, 4a

דָּבָר	→ "a thing , an item; a matter, an affair, an issue"
	→ "a word , an utterance; a proclamation, a rule"



Roman Holiday (1953) - Audrey Hepburn as Princess Anna asks to meet the representatives of the world press.

The fifth man from the left introduces himself as "Stern; *Davar*, Tel Aviv."

Masthead of *Davar*, publication of Israel's Histradut Labor Union
début issue - June 1, 1925



The translators render דְּבָרִים in Exodus 24:3 and 24:4...

Jerome-Vulgate (382), Saadya-Tafsir RaSaG (c. 930 CE), John Wycliffe (1383), Martin Luther (1522), William Tyndale (1525), Geneva (1560), Reina-Valera (1569), Douay-Rheims (1589), King James (1611), Jewish Publication Society (1917), Aryeh Kaplan (1981), Mesorah (1993), Everett Fox (1995), Robert Alter (2004) **words**

Targum Onkelos (c. 110 CE)	sayings	פְּתָגְמֵיָא	} oration
Jean-Frédéric Osterwald (1744)	utterances	les paroles	

Septuagint (c. 225 BCE)	proclamations	τα ρηματα	} authority
Jewish Publication Society (1999)	commandments		

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A) Exodus 19:7-8 -

וַיָּבֹא מֹשֶׁה וַיְקַרְא לְזִקְנֵי הָעָם
וַיֵּשֶׁם לִפְנֵיהֶם אֶת כָּל הַדְּבָרִים
הָאֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר צִוָּהוּ יְהוָה

On coming back, Moses summoned the leadership of the people, and placed before them **all** these **things** which The Eternal One had commanded him—

וַיַּעֲנוּ כָּל הָעָם יְחִידוֹ וַיֹּאמְרוּ כָּל
אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר יְהוָה נַעֲשֶׂה

to which **all** the people answered together: “**All** that The Eternal One **has said**, we will do.”

B) Exodus 24:3 -

וַיָּבֹא מֹשֶׁה וַיְסַפֵּר לָעָם אֶת כָּל
דְּבָרֵי יְהוָה וְאֵת כָּל הַמִּשְׁפָּטִים

So Moses went and recounted to the people **all** **the proclamations of** The Eternal One, and **all** the ordinances—

וַיַּעַן כָּל הָעָם קוֹל אֶחָד וַיֹּאמְרוּ כָּל
הַדְּבָרִים אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר יְהוָה נַעֲשֶׂה
וְנִשְׁמָע

to which all the people responded, with one accord, declaring: “**All** **these matters** of which The Eternal One **has spoken**, we will do and obey!”

How much constitutes “**All of God’s Words...**”?

Exodus 19 -	The Ten Commandments	Exodus 20:2-14
Exodus 24 -	“ “ “ and civil legislations	“ “ plus 21:1-23:33
Exodus 34 -	Covenant Redux	Exodus 34:11-26
Numbers 36 -	body of administrative, legislative, and ritual rules	Number 25-36
Deuteronomy 27 -	Promised-Land Prescription	Deuteronomy 27:15-26
Joshua 8	Promised-Land Ratification	Joshua 8:32-35
<p align="center">וַיִּכְתֹּב שָׁם עַל הָאֲבָנִים אֶת מִשְׁנֵה תוֹרַת מֹשֶׁה</p> <p align="center">[Joshua] wrote upon the altar a copy of the Torah of Moses</p> <p align="center">קָרָא אֶת כָּל דְּבָרֵי הַתּוֹרָה . . . לֹא הָיָה דְּבָר מִכָּל אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה מֹשֶׁה אֲשֶׁר לֹא קָרָא יְהוֹשֻׁעַ</p> <p align="center">He read aloud all the words of the Torah; there was no word, from among all that Moses had commanded, which Joshua did not read.</p>		
Ezra 8	Ratification on return to the Land	Ezra 8:2-3, 9:3
<p align="center">וַיִּקְרָא בּוֹ מִן הָאוֹר עַד מַחְצִית הַיּוֹם</p> <p align="center">וַיִּקְרְאוּ בְּסֵפֶר תּוֹרַת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיהֶם רַבְעִית הַיּוֹם</p> <p align="center">[Ezra] read from the Torah book from first light to mid-day. . . .</p> <p align="center">[Ezra and the communal leaders] read from the book of the Torah of The Eternal One, their God, for a fourth of the day. . . .</p>		

Number of Words in the Hebrew text of...				
	Book	characteristic	words	@ 130 wpm
1)	Genesis	preliminary history	32,046	4.1 hours
2)	Exodus	narrative & legislative	11,723	1.5 hours
3)	Leviticus	“ “ “ “	11,950	1.6 hours
4)	Numbers	“ “ “ “	16,368	2.1 hours
5)	Deuteronomy	reprise history	23,008	3 hours
	entire Torah		95,085	12.2 hours
	less Genesis		63,039	8.1 hours
	legislative content alone		40,071	5.13 hours

הַדְּבָרִים “the Words...” as sacred utterances

דְּבָרֵי יְהוָה	the Words of The Eternal One	} authority
דְּבָרֵי אֱלֹהִים	these, My Words	
דְּבָרֵי הַתּוֹרָה	the words of this Torah	} partnership
דְּבָרֵי הַבְּרִית	the words of this Covenant	
דְּבָרֵי הָאֱלֹהִים	the words of this Sacred Oath	

C) Yehezkel Kaufmann (1889-1963), *Great Ages and Ideas of the Jewish People* - In the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, an event of enormous significance took place: the Torah was fixed and canonized. The motive in this undertaking was that **true repentance could only be shown if Israel made God's Torah the basis of its life.**

In previous ages it had existed as a type of literature, composed in varied styles and variously formulated by the circles of priests and scholars who cultivated it. The new aspiration to live by the Torah made it necessary to collect the ancient scrolls, to combine and consolidate them into **an organized, integral whole that the people might know the will of God.** There arose a desire to establish a canon of sacred writings, authorized by the consent of the people and the sages.



ולפי' נתבעו אומות העולם כדי שלא ליתן פתחון פה להם כלפי שכינה לומר אלו נתבענו כבר קיבלנו עלינו

D) Midrash M'chilta d'Rabi Yishma'Eil, baChodesh 5 - **Initially the Torah was offered to every nation on earth**, so that none should subsequently have occasion to com-

- continued

plain before The Divine Presence: “Had it been offered to us, we would have readily accepted it upon ourselves!”

הרי שנתבעו ולא קבלו עליהם שנאמ' ויאמר ה' מסיני בא

But, indeed, it was offered to them—and they were unwilling to accept it; even as it is said in Scripture “The Eternal One **has come from Sinai** [and shone upon them from Seir, appearing from Mount Paran and approaching from Riv'vot-Qodesh” - Deuteronomy 33:2].

**ונגלה על בני עשו הרשע ואומר להם מקבלי אתם
את התורה אמרו לו מה כתיב בה**

God manifested before the descendants of the wicked Eisav [elder brother of Jacob, father of the Edomites, founder of the inimical nation to the southeast of Israel,] and said to them: “Would you like to be given the Torah?” They asked: “**What is written in it?**”

אמר להם לא תרצח

He told them: “You may not murder.”

**אמרו זו היא ירושה שהורישנו אבינו שנאמר על
חרבך תחיה**

They replied: “The very heritage which our father left us was ‘You shall live by your sword’ [Genesis 27:40].”

**נגלה על בני עמון ומואב אמר להם מקבלים אתם
את התורה אמרו לו מה כתוב בה**

God then manifested before the descendants of Ammon and Mo'av[, the illegitimate children of Abraham's nephew Lot, founders of the inimical nations to the east of Israel across the Jordan,] and said to them: “Would you like to be given the Torah?” They asked: “What is written in it?”

אמר להם לא תנאף

He told them: “You may not commit adultery.”

אמ' לו כלנו מניאוף דכתיב ותהרין שתי בנות לוט מאביהם והיאך נקבלה

They told him: “All of us are children of adultery”—even as it is written: “Thus were both the daughters of Lot with child by their father” [Genesis 19:36].

**נגלה על בני ישמעאל אמר להם מקבלין אתם את התורה אמרו לו מה כתוב
בה**

God then manifested before descendants of Yishma'Eil [, elder half-brother of Isaac, founder of the inimical desert tribes to the south of Israel,] and said to them: “Would you like to be given the Torah?” They asked: “What is written in it?”

אמר להם לא תגנוב

He told them: “You may not steal.”

**אמרו לו בזו הברכה נתברך אבינו דכתיב הוא יהיה פרא אדם וכתוב כי גנוב
גנבת**

They replied: “The very blessing that had been pronounced upon our forebear Ishma'Eil was: ‘he shall be a wild ass of a man[, his hand upon everything’ ” - Genesis 16:12]. (Moreover, it is written [that Joseph declared in Egypt] “For, indeed, I was stolen away [out of the land of the Hebrews” by the Ishmaelites - Genesis 40:15].

**וכשבא אצל ישראל מימינו אש דת למו פתחו כלם פיהם ואמרו כל אשר דבר
ה' נעשה ונשמע**

- more over



Yet when God approached the Israelites— and “at His right hand was a fiery law to them” [Deuteronomy 33:2]— they all eagerly declared: “**All** The Eternal One **has spoken**, **we will** do and **we will** obey!”

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם

E) Prayerbook, benediction over Torah - Praised are You, Eternal One— our God,
and universal Sovereign—

אֲשֶׁר בָּחַר בָּנוּ מִכָּל הָעַמִּים

Who had chosen us (**from among all other peoples!**)

וְנָתַן לָנוּ אֶת תּוֹרָתוֹ

and given us Your Torah.

F) RaMBaM (Musa ibn-Maimun, 1135-1204), Commentary on the Mishnah -

ז - אֲנִי מֵאֲמִין בְּאַמוּנָה שְׁלֵמָה שֶׁנְּבוֹאֵת מֹשֶׁה רַבֵּנוּ עָלָיו הַשְּׁלוֹם הִיְתָה אֱמֻתִּית וְשֶׁהוּא הָיָה אָב לְנִבִּיִּאִים לְקוֹדְמִים לְפָנָיו וְלַבָּאִים אַחֲרָיו

7. I believe with complete faith that **the prophecy of Moses** our teacher, peace unto him, **was true**; and that he was foremost of all prophets— both prior, and subsequent.

ח - אֲנִי מֵאֲמִין בְּאַמוּנָה שְׁלֵמָה שֶׁכָּל הַתּוֹרָה הַמְצוּיָה עִתָּה בְּיַדֵּינוּ הִיא הַנִּתּוּנָה לְמֹשֶׁה רַבֵּנוּ עָלָיו הַשְּׁלוֹם

8. I believe with complete faith that **the entirety of the Torah** which we now possess **was given to Moses**, our teacher, peace unto him.

ט - אֲנִי מֵאֲמִין בְּאַמוּנָה שְׁלֵמָה שֶׁזֹּאת הַתּוֹרָה לֹא תִהְיֶה מַחֲלֶפֶת וְלֹא תִהְיֶה תּוֹרָה אַחֶרֶת מֵאֵת הַבּוֹרֵא יִתְבָּרֵךְ שְׁמוֹ

9. I believe with complete faith that **this Torah will not be changed**, and that there will be no other Torah given by the Creator, blessed be His name.

תּוֹרַת אֱמֶת נָתַן לְעַמּוֹ אֵל עַל יַד נְבִיאָו נֶאֱמָן בֵּיתוֹ

G) Daniel ben-Y'hudah of Rome – Yigdal (1404) -

A Torah of truth **did God present to His People**,
by means of His prophet, most faithful of His House!