

# PARASHAT KI TAVO

## *Deuteronomy 26:1–29:8*

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*Parashat Ki Tavo* addresses the time when the Israelites will settle in the Land of Israel. Moses instructs them to place in a basket the first fruits they have harvested and present them, together with a prayer, to the priest at the sanctuary. Their prayer is to be a formula recalling they were slaves in Egypt, liberated by God, and given the land whose first fruits they now enjoy. They are also to set aside a tenth part of their yield for the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and they are to keep all the commandments given to them. In this way they will be a treasured people to God. Moses and the elders tell them, when they have settled in the land, to write the commandments on large plastered stones and set them up on Mount Ebal, where they are also to build an altar to God. Then representatives of the tribes of Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph, and Benjamin are to stand on Mount Gerizim to hear the blessing describing the good times that will come as a result of observing God's commandments. Facing them on Mount Ebal, representatives from the tribes of Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali are to stand to hear the curse resulting from disobeying the commandments. God promises the Israelites blessings of plenty, security, and peace if they observe faithfully the teachings of Torah. Curses of destruction, agony, want, and exile will befall them if they spurn the teachings of Torah. "Observe faithfully all the terms of this covenant," Moses warns, "that you may succeed in all that you undertake."

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