

Life Changing Ideas from the Parsha

Text by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks



Monday, November 9, 2020
22 Mar Cheshvan 5781

We were deeply pained to hear that Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks (HaRav Ya'akov Zvi ben David Arie'el z"l) passed away early this past Shabbat, November 7, 2020, morning, Mar Cheshvan 5781.

In 5778, Rabbi Sacks developed his Life Changing Ideas series for Covenant & Conversation, his weekly commentary on the parsha (weekly Torah portion). In 5779, Areyvut posted those infographics weekly with the goal of educating, engaging, motivating and inspiring others every parsha and week of the year. The impact was far reaching.

Until now we haven't posted the Life Changing Ideas series as a complete unit. We do so now to enable all those who wish to learn from this eloquent teacher of Torah and spokesman for Torah values within the Jewish community and beyond. Rabbi Sacks was an intellectual giant whose unique blend of Torah scholarship, academic achievement, human sensitivity, and social awareness allowed him to speak to the issues of our times to the broadest of audiences, and he did so with courage, clarity and optimism.

Rabbi Sacks was the preeminent leader of our age, a deep thinker, a gifted orator and a prolific writer. He was a world-renowned scholar, teacher and leader who enlightened and inspired, influenced and empowered, world Jewry, global leaders and communities throughout the world. Rabbi Sacks was a beacon of Kiddush Hashem, whose thoughtful teachings actively improved the world and invariably brought honor to the Torah and the Jewish people. He demonstrated with eloquence and an unwavering passion the enduring importance of God and religious values in our contemporary society.

Rabbi Sacks' unique voice, novel and insightful ideas, unfailingly relevant messages and outstanding leadership will all be sorely missed.

His legacy will continue through all the lives elevated by his teaching.



Bereishit

Life Changing Ideas from the Parsha

Inspired by Rabbi Sacks

God believes in us
even if we don't always believe in ourselves.



Remember this
and you will find the path from darkness to light.

 Areyvut

kindness • charity • social action

Noach

Life Changing Ideas from the Parsha

Text by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

Next time you meet someone radically unlike you,



try seeing difference not as a threat
but as an enlarging, possibility-creating gift.

Lech Lecha

Life Changing Ideas from the Parsha

Text by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

Follow the inner voice, as did those who came before you,



continuing their journey by bringing timeless values
to a rapidly-changing world.

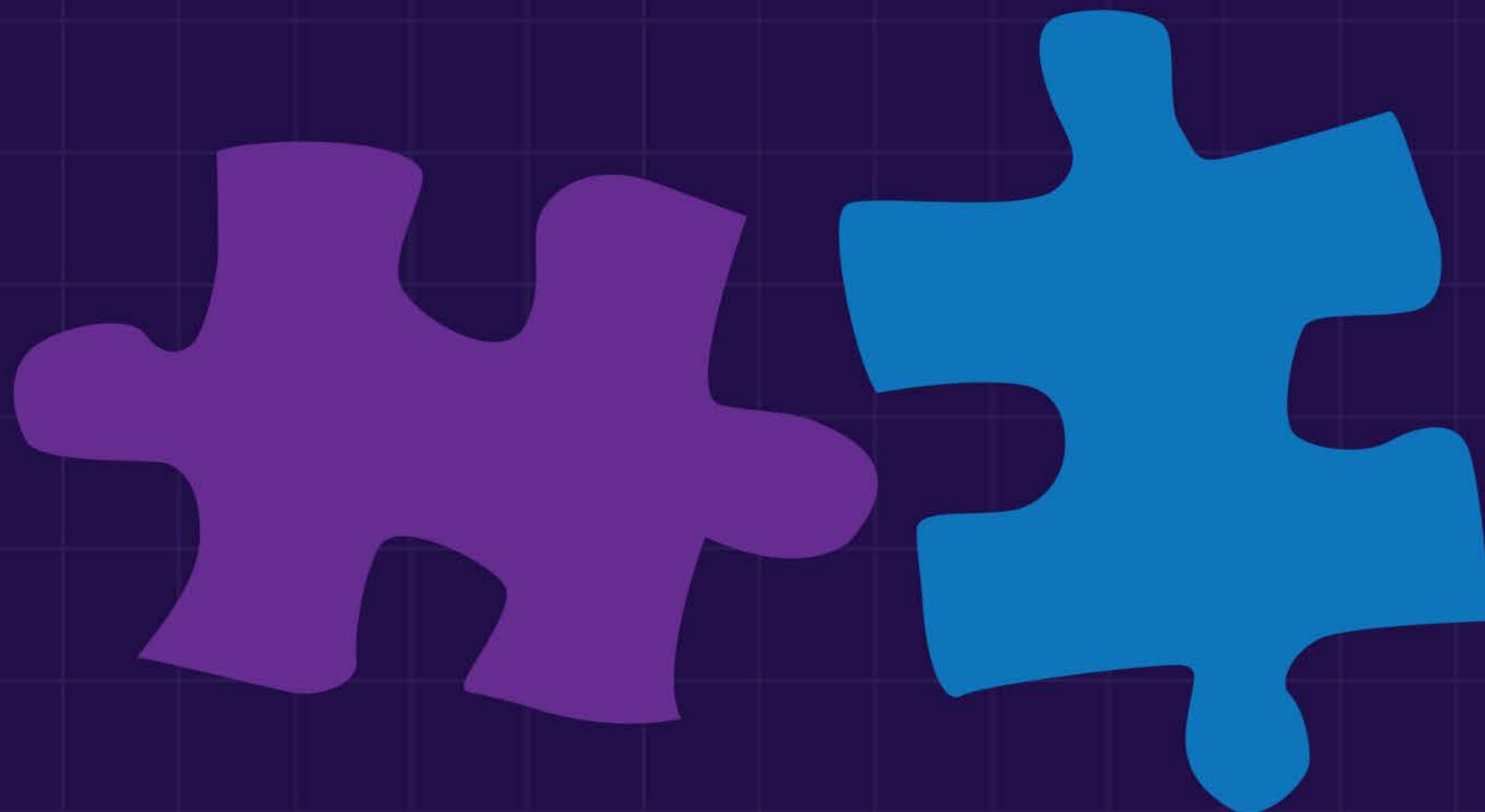


Vayera

Life Changing Ideas from the Parsha

Text by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

First separate, then connect;



it is the carefully calibrated distance that allows us to grow
as individuals and create stronger relationships together.



Chaya Sara

Life Changing Ideas from the Parsha

Text by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

To survive tragedy and trauma, first build the future.



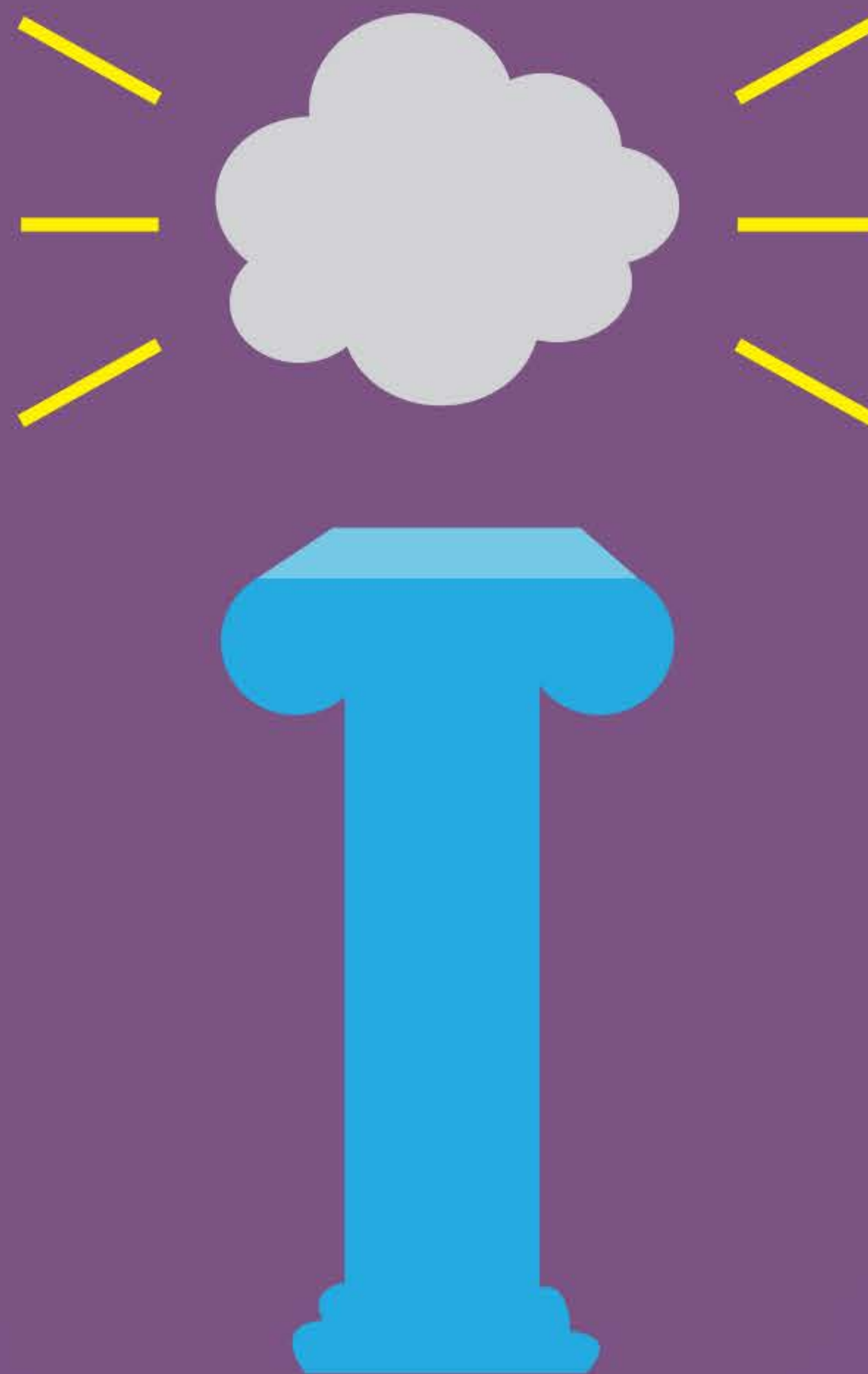
Only then, remember the past.

Toldot

Life Changing Ideas from the Parsha

Text by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

You are as great as your ideals.



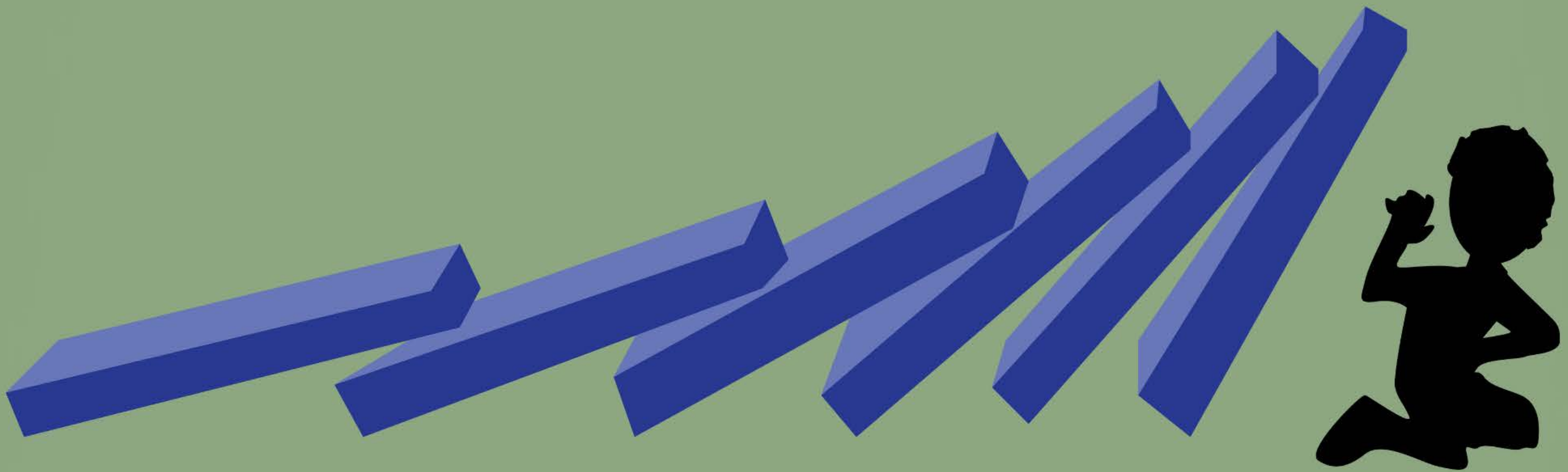
If you truly believe in something beyond yourself,
you will achieve beyond yourself.

Vayetse

Life Changing Ideas from the Parsha

Text by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

The deepest crises of your life can turn out to be



the moments when you encounter the deepest truths
and acquire your greatest strengths.



Vayishlach

Life Changing Ideas from the Parsha

Text by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

If you find yourself struggling with faith,



you are in the company of Jacob-who-became-Israel,
the father-in-faith of us all.

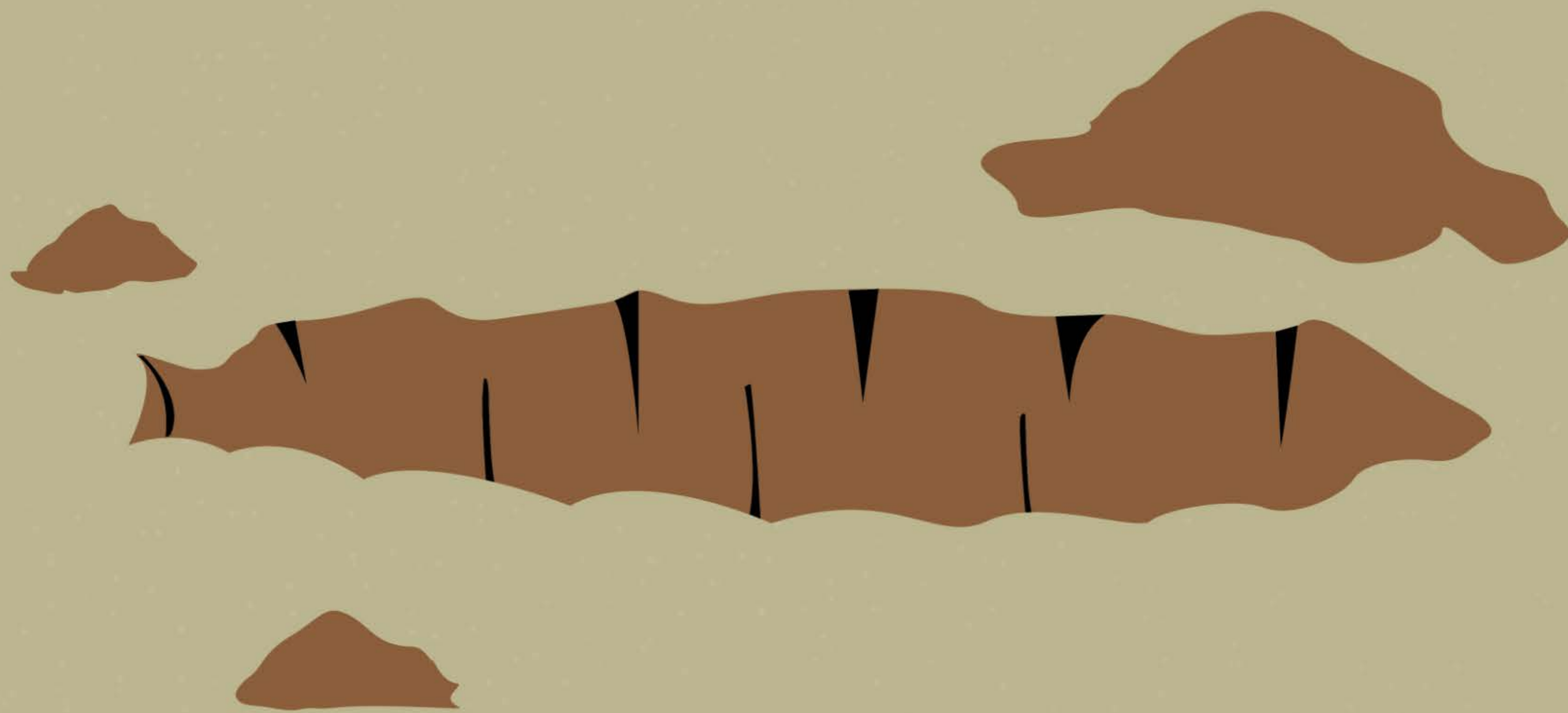


Vayeshev

Life Changing Ideas from the Parsha

Text by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

Seen through the eye of faith,



today's curse may be
the beginning of tomorrow's blessing.



Mikketz

Life Changing Ideas from the Parsha

Text by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

What can be healed is not holy.



God does not want us to accept poverty and pain
but to cure them



Areyvut

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Vayigash

Life Changing Ideas from the Parsha

Text by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

We are not prisoners of events



but active shapers of them.

Vayechi

Life Changing Ideas from the Parsha

Text by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

Judaism allows us to inhabit a culture of grace and hope.



If we work hard enough on ourselves, we can be forgiven.



Shemot

Life Changing Ideas from the Parsha

Text by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

When you learn to listen to views different from your own,
realizing that they are not threatening but enlarging,



then you have discovered the life-changing idea of
argument for the sake of heaven.

Va'era

Life Changing Ideas from the Parsha

Text by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

Freedom is an achievement.



It is a muscle that needs to be exercised daily:
use it or lose it.



Bo

Life Changing Ideas from the Parsha

Text by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

Know your own story, because a story told across the generations is a gift.



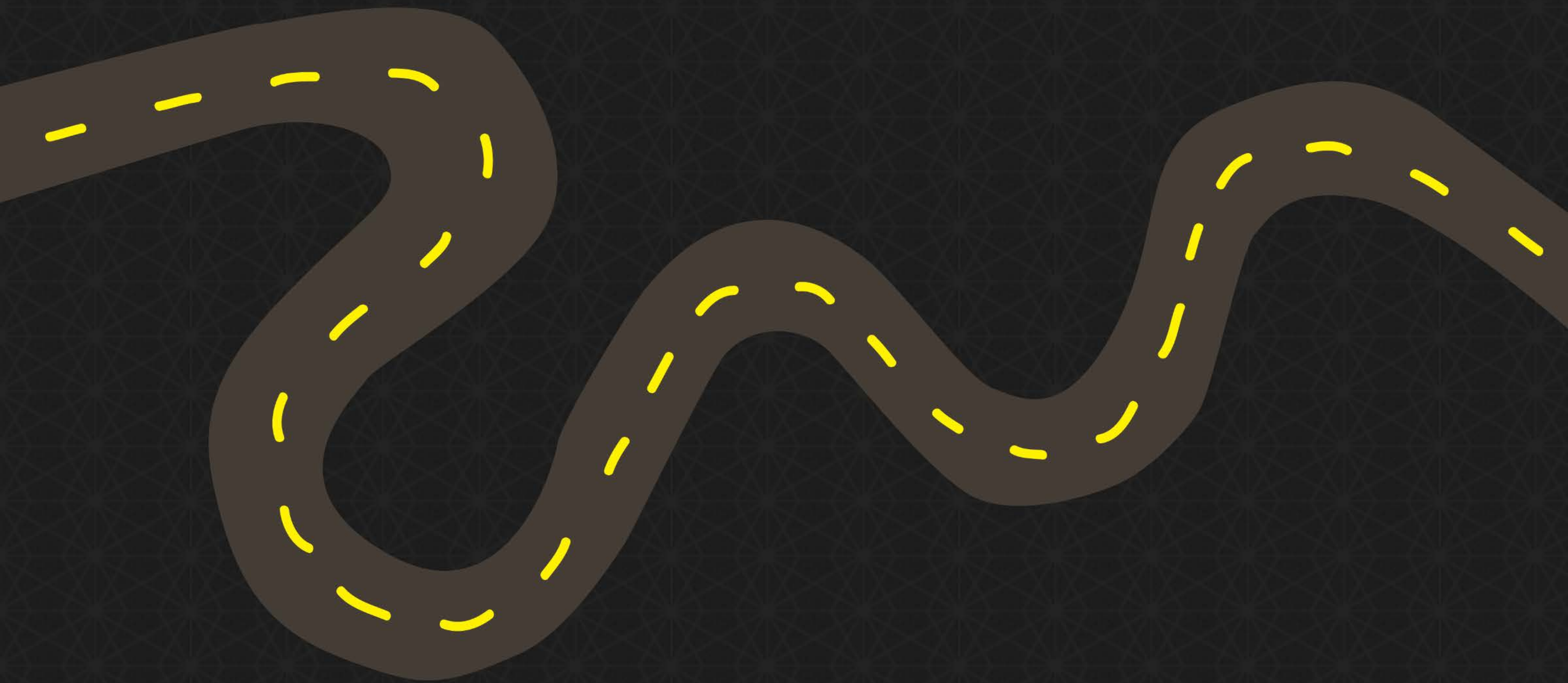
When you know who you are and why, you can navigate the wilderness of time with courage and confidence.

Beshalach

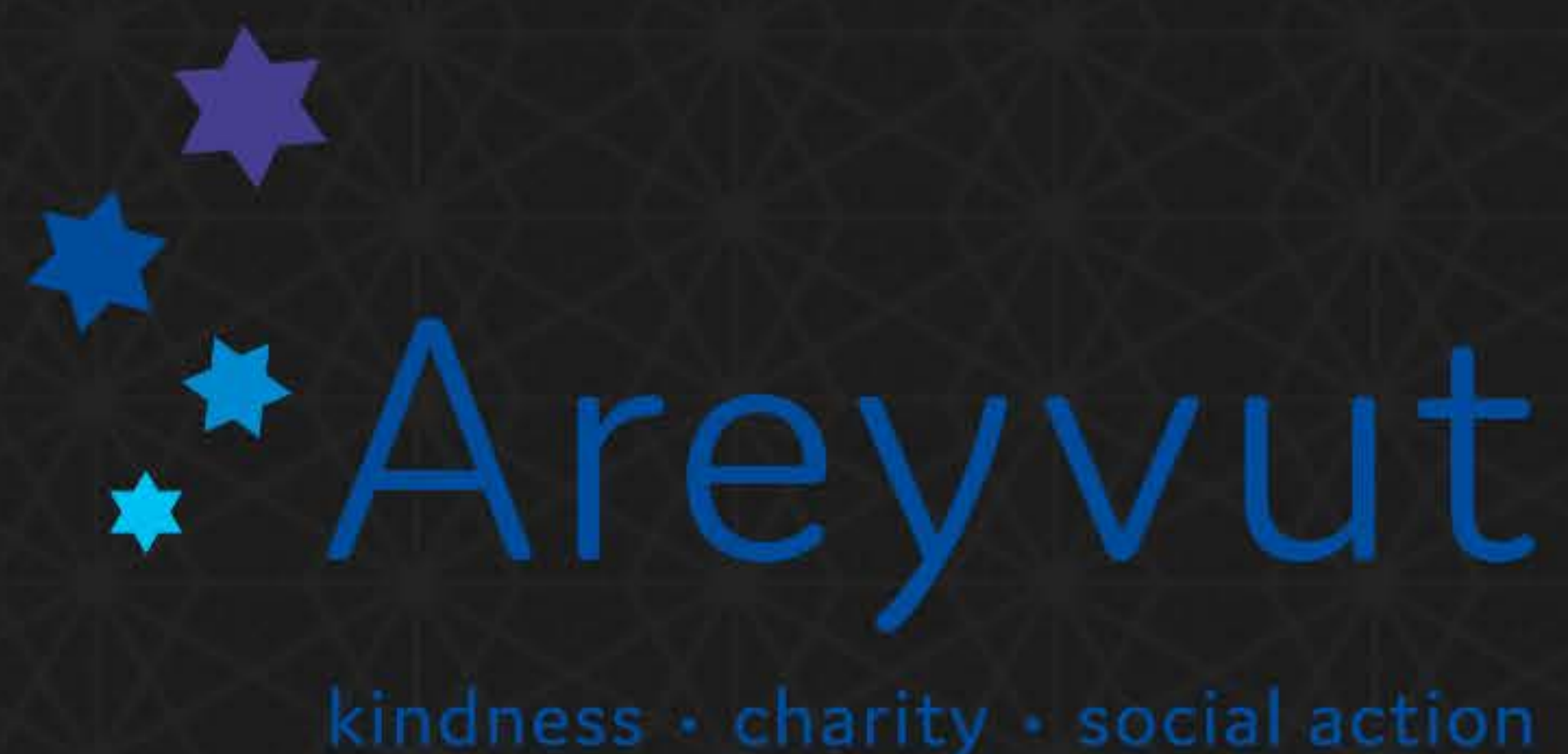
Life Changing Ideas from the Parsha

Text by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

There are no fast tracks. Lasting achievement takes time.



You can never get there by the shortest road.
The harder it gets, the stronger you become.



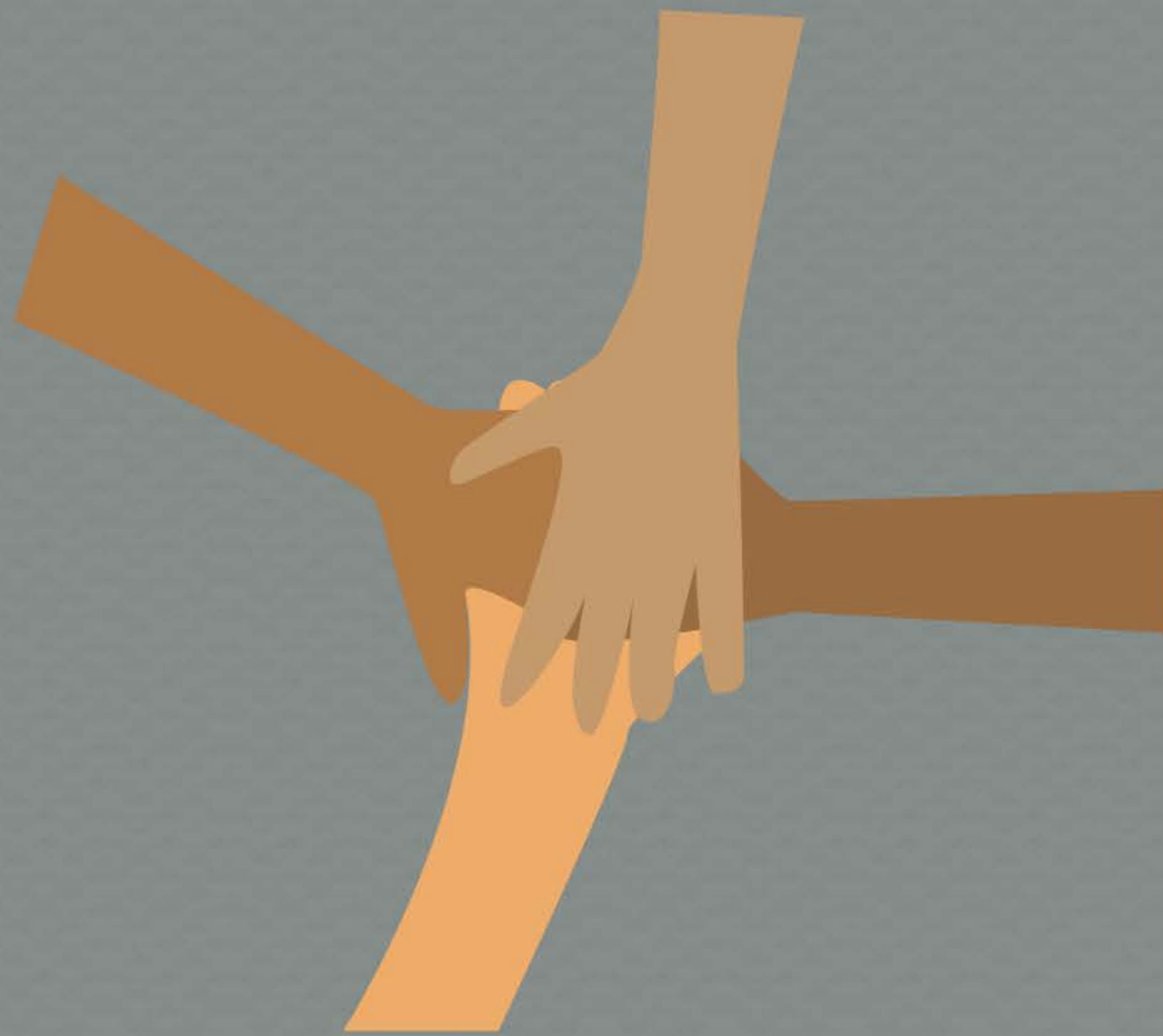
kindness • charity • social action

Yitro

Life Changing Ideas from the Parsha

Text by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

If you find yourself in a situation of conflict that threatens to break something apart, framing a covenant will help keep people together.



There are certain things we can do together that none of us can do alone.

Mishpatim

Life Changing Ideas from the Parsha

Text by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

If you seek to change anyone's behaviour, you have to enter into their mindset,



and then say the word or do the deed that speaks to their emotions, not yours.

Terumah

Life Changing Ideas from the Parsha

Text by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

The effort you put into something does not just change the object: it changes you.



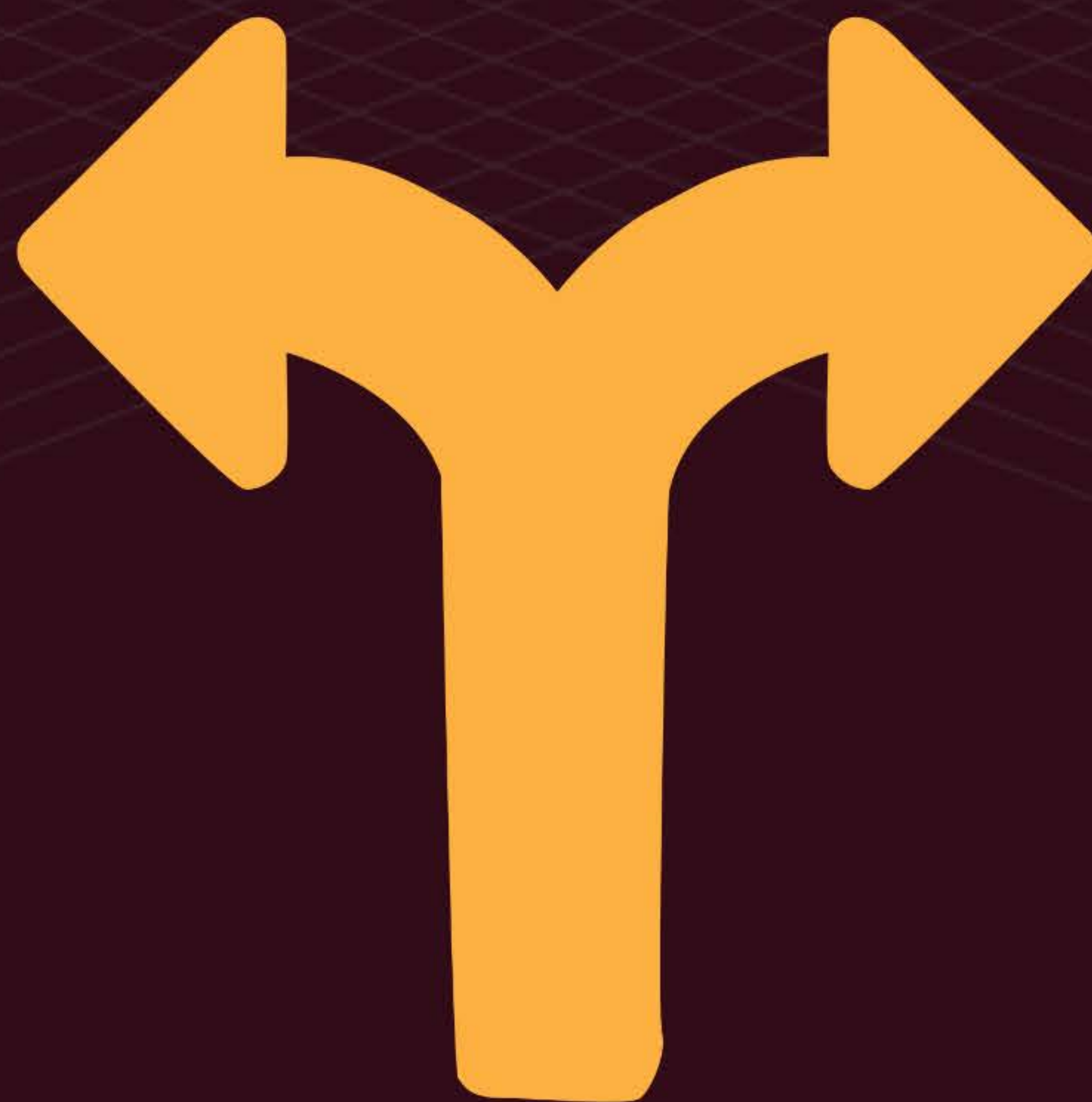
The greater the labour, the greater the love for what you have made.

Tetzaveh

Life Changing Ideas from the Parsha

Text by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

When you experience suffering, the question to ask is,
“Given this has happened, what then shall I do?”



for this has an answer not of thought but of deed.



Ki Tissa

Life Changing Ideas from the Parsha

Text by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

We should never feel anger.



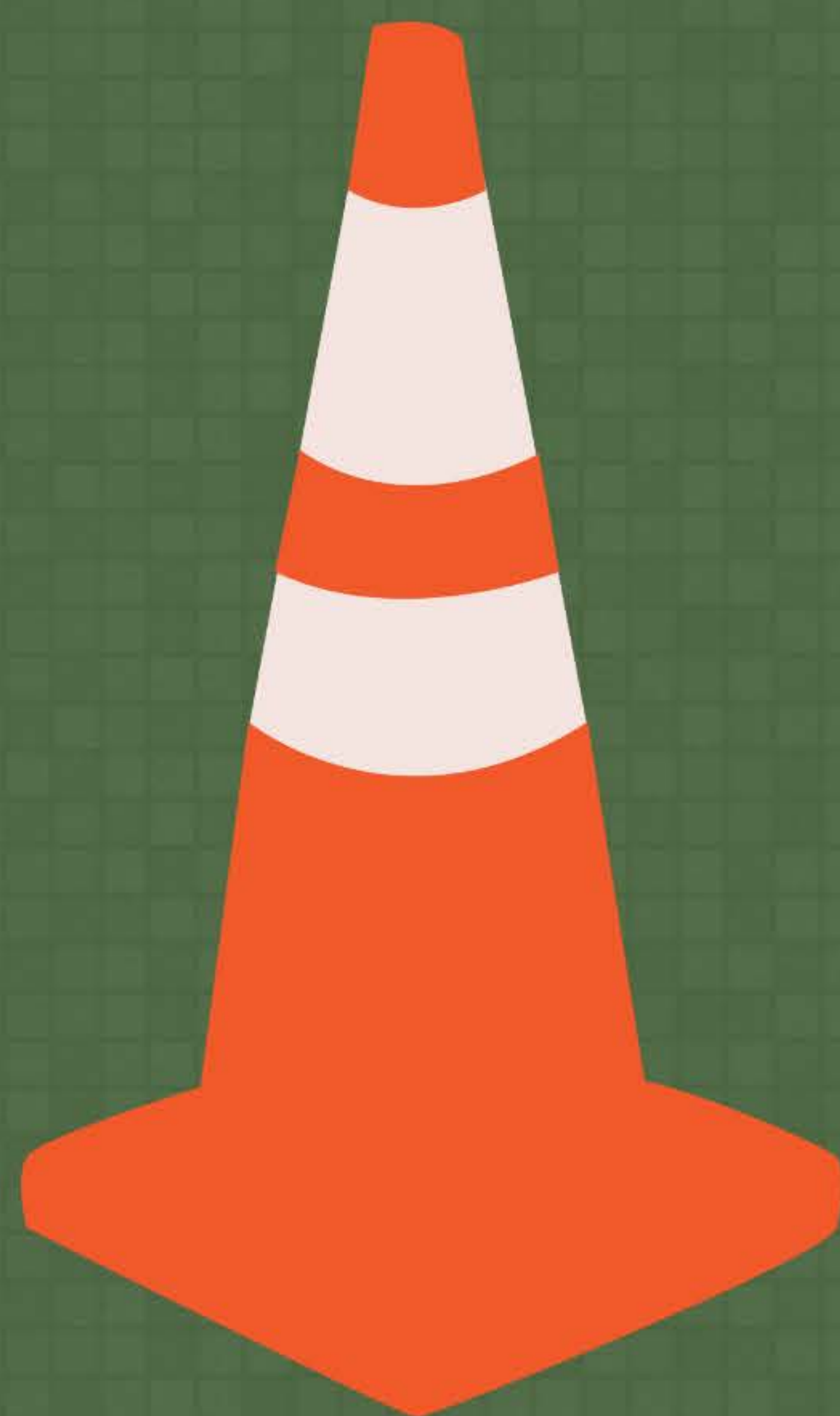
But there are times when we should show it.
People sometimes need that shock
to help them change their lives.

Vayakhel & Pekudei

Life Changing Ideas from the Parsha

Text by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

The highest achievement is not self-expression
but self-limitation:



making space for something
other and different from us.

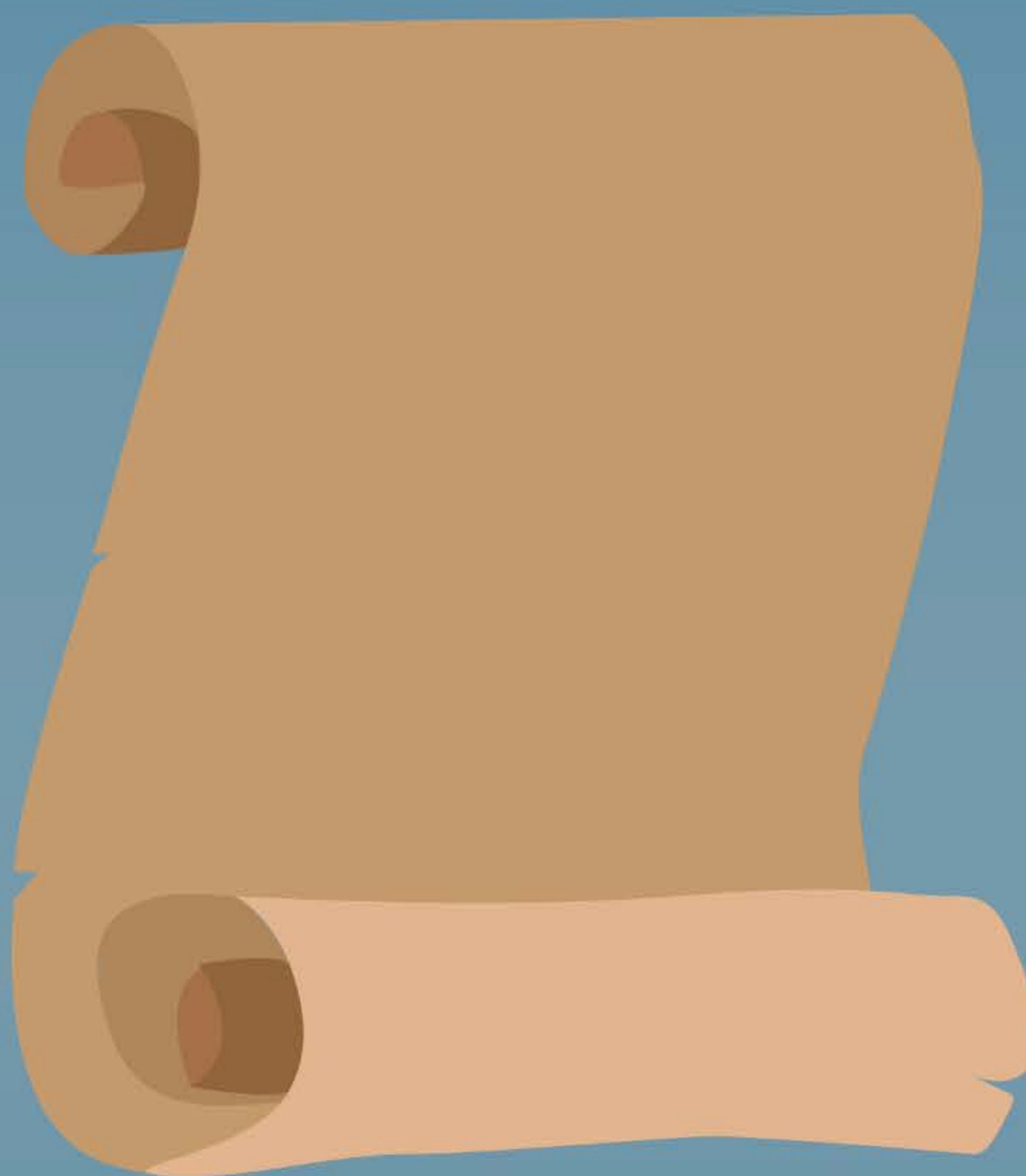


Vayikra

Life Changing Ideas from the Parsha

Text by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

For each of us God has a task.



Discerning that task, hearing God's call,
is what gives a life meaning and purpose.

Tzav

Life Changing Ideas from the Parsha

Text by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

The more you celebrate the good,



the more good you discover that is worthy of celebration.

Shemini

Life Changing Ideas from the Parsha

Text by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

What you think of as your greatest weakness can become,



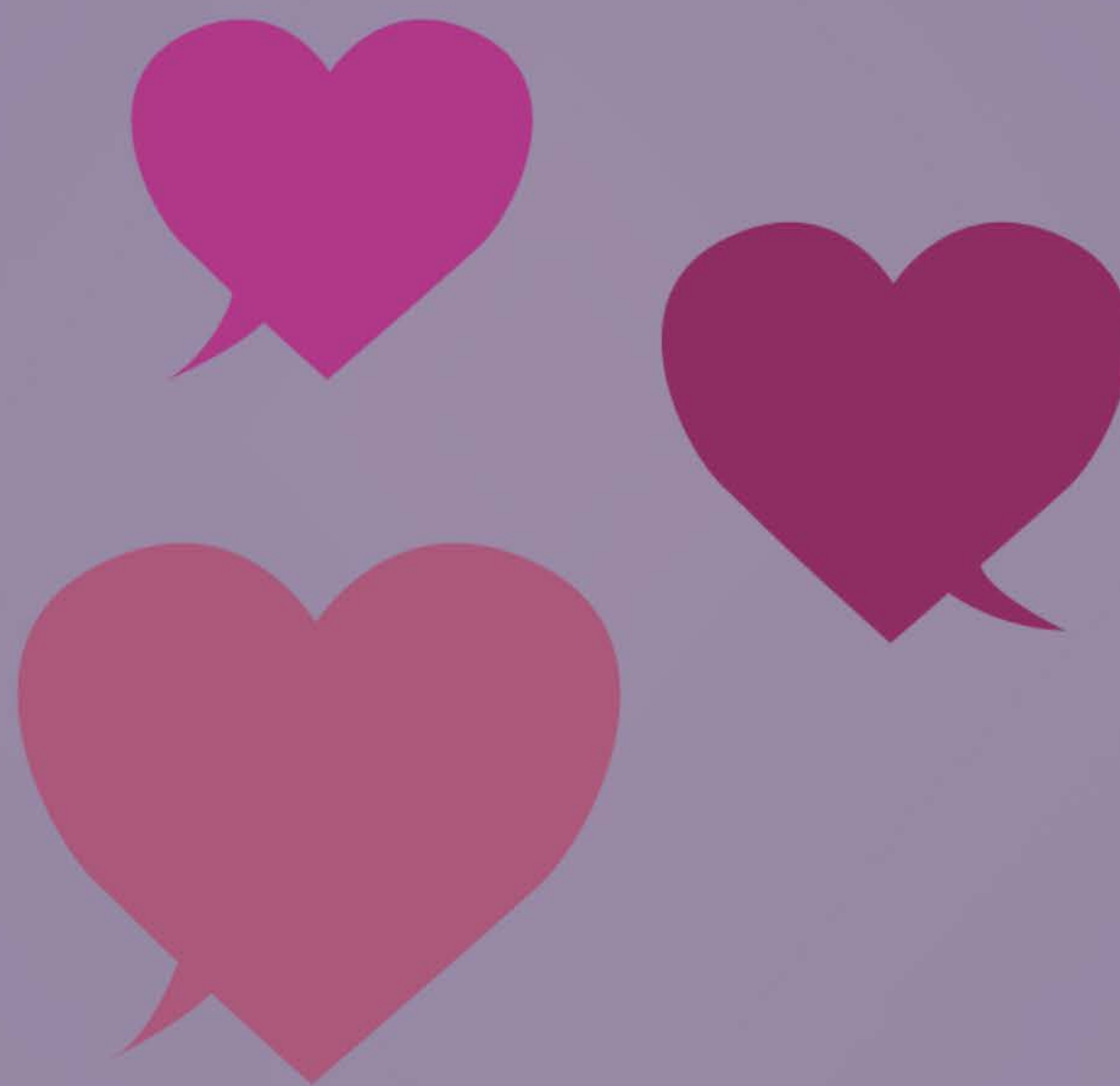
if you wrestle with it, your greatest strength.

Tazria-Metzora

Life Changing Ideas from the Parsha

Text by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

In any relationship that matters to you, deliver praise daily.



Seeing and praising the good in people makes them better people, makes you a better person, and strengthens the bond between you.

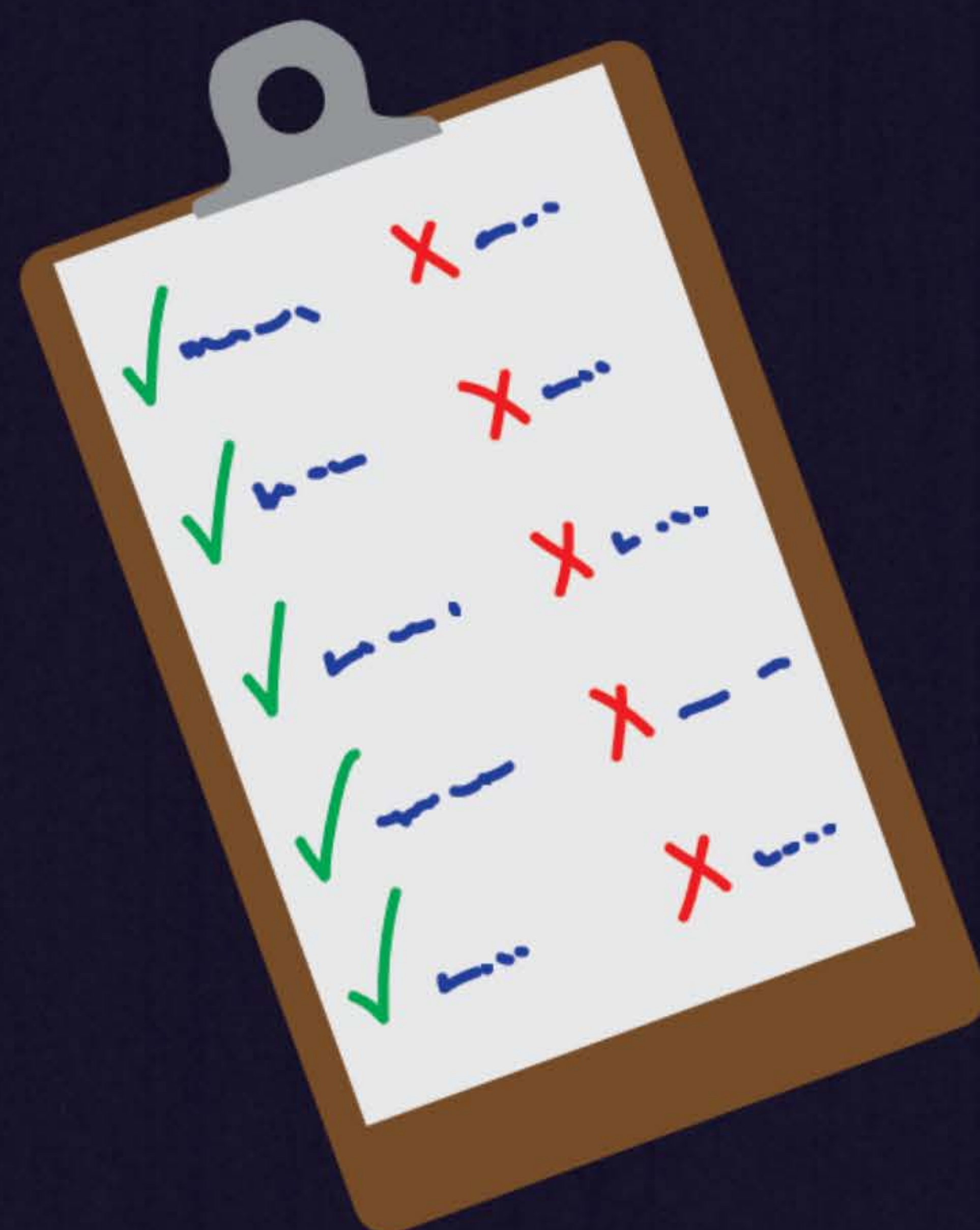


Acharei Mot-Kedoshim

Life Changing Ideas from the Parsha

Text by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

Clear rules and proper discipline help to establish, maintain and expand order for more fulfilled children, families, and society.



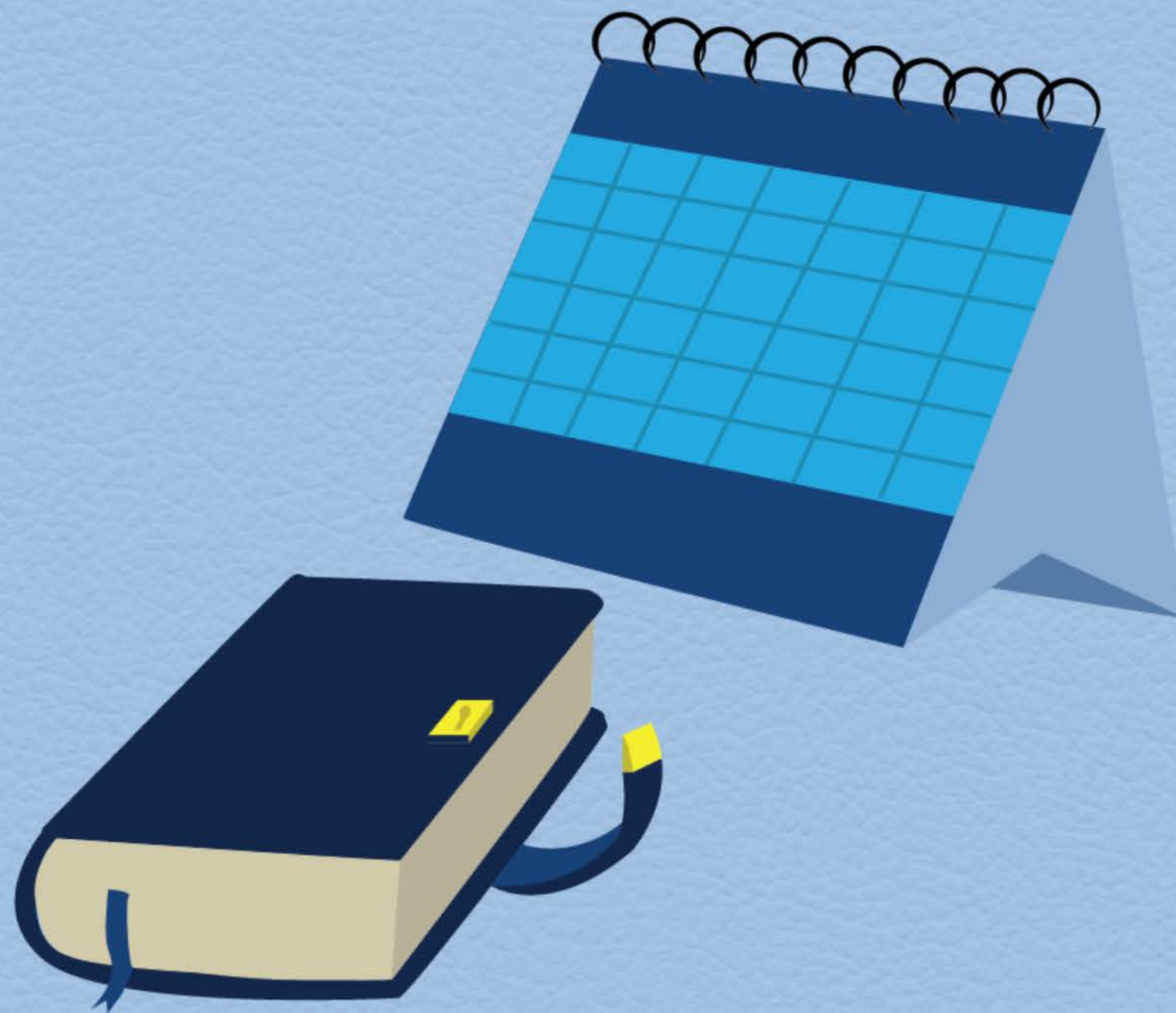
Love is not enough. Relationships need rules.

Emor

Life Changing Ideas from the Parsha

Text by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

Do not rely exclusively on To Do lists. Use a diary.



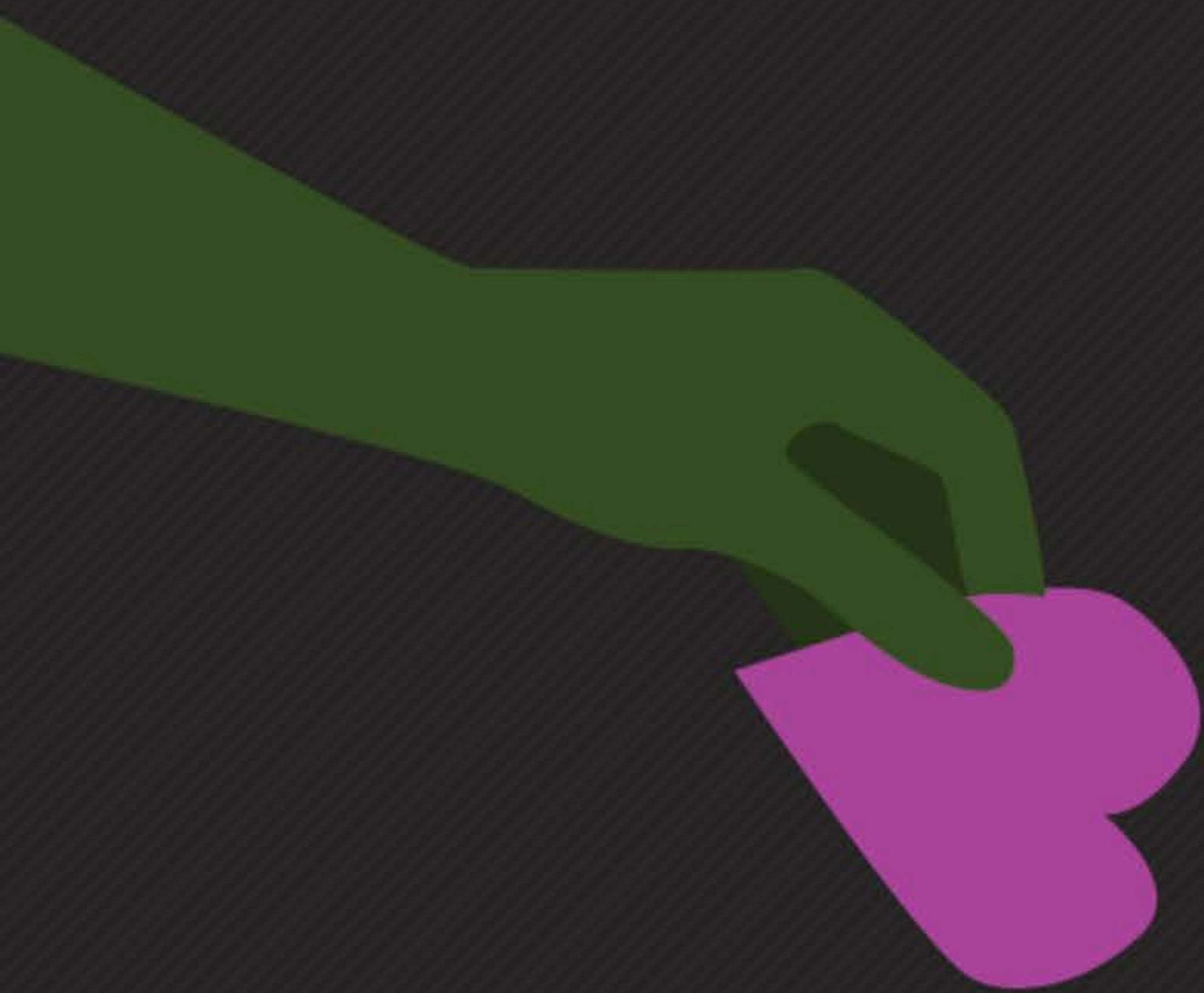
And live by the Jewish calendar to experience the things that give life a meaning.

Behar

Life Changing Ideas from the Parsha

Text by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

In life, ask not, "what can I gain?" But "what can I give?"



Be a blessing to others and you will find that life has been a blessing to you.

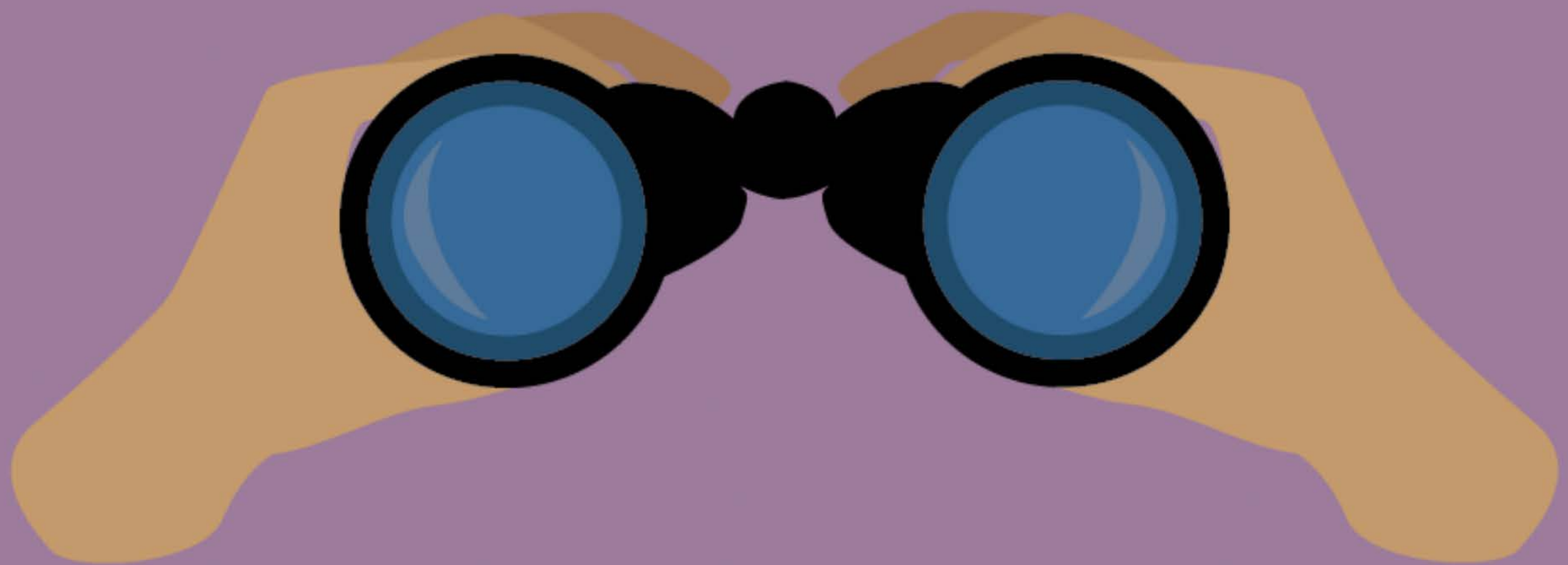


Bechukotai

Life Changing Ideas from the Parsha

Text by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

Search for meaning



and you will discover strength, fulfillment and peace.



Bamidbar

Life Changing Ideas from the Parsha

Text by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

Remember your destination.



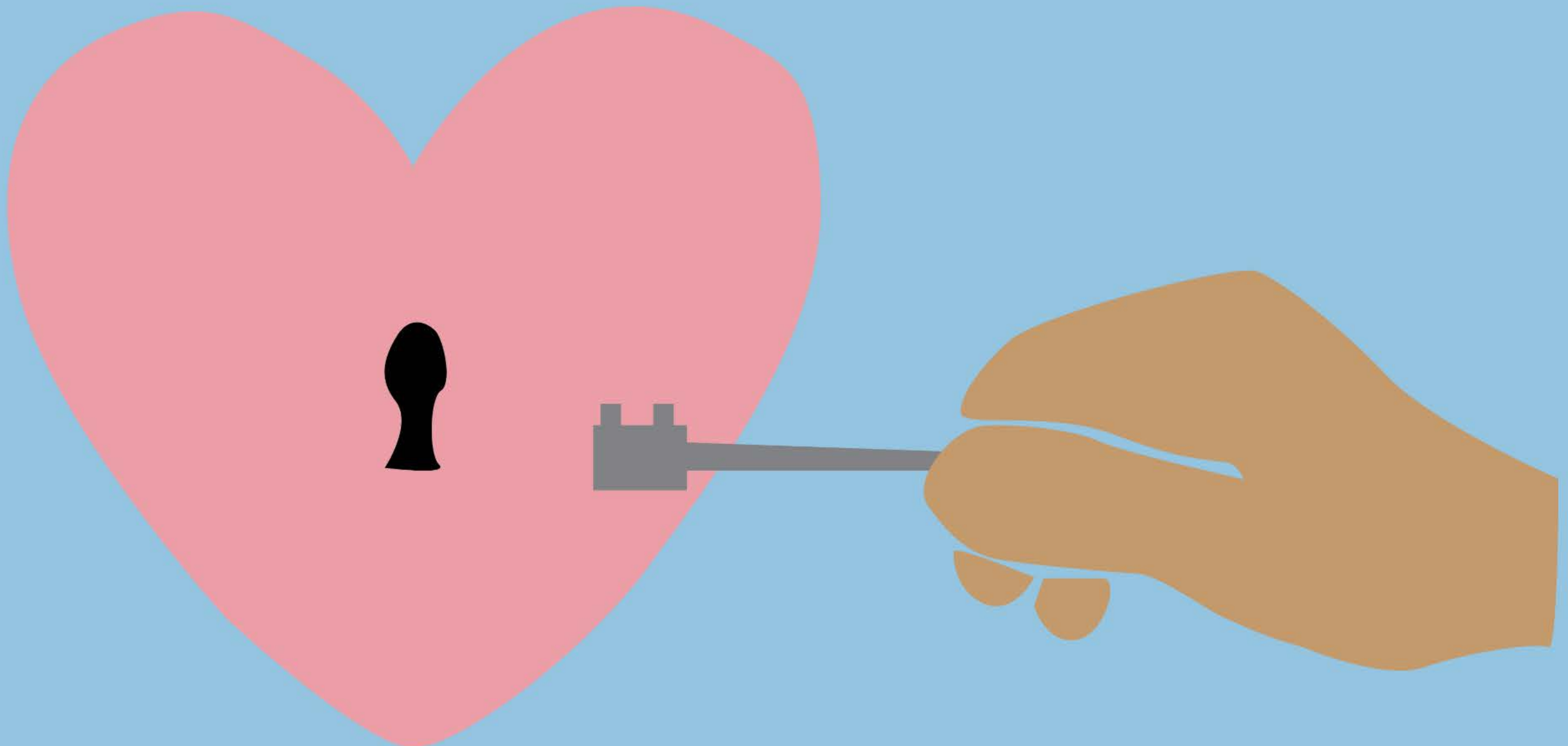
This will help you to distinguish between an opportunity to be seized and a temptation to be resisted.

Naso

Life Changing Ideas from the Parsha

Text by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

You are as important



as you make other people feel.

Beha'alotecha:

Life Changing Ideas from the Parsha

Text by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

We tend to become what our friends are.



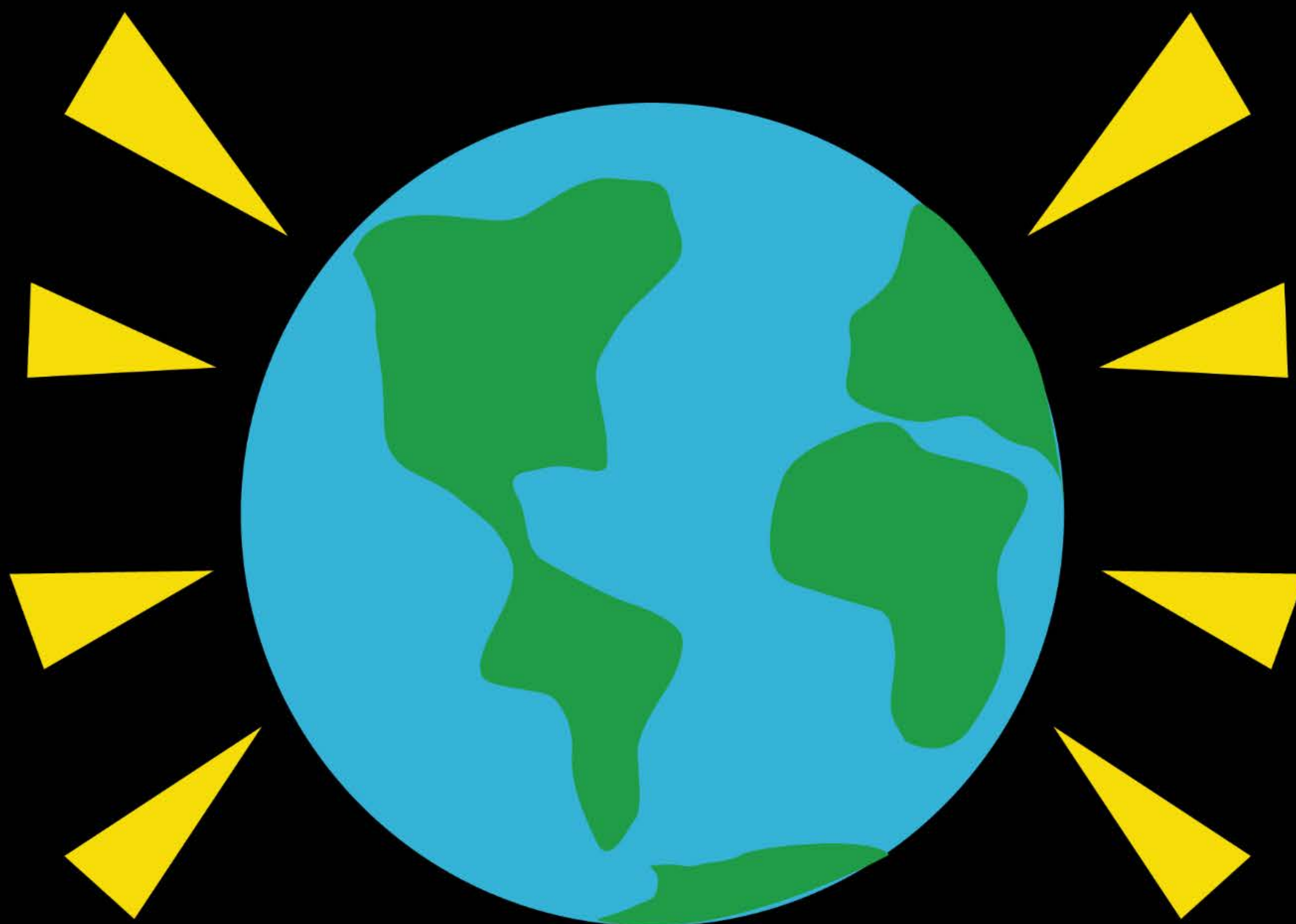
So choose friends who are what you aspire to be.

Shelach

Life Changing Ideas from the Parsha

Text by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

Never let negative emotions distort your perceptions.



To see the world as it is, not as you are afraid it might be,
let faith banish fear.

Korach

Life Changing Ideas from the Parsha

Text by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

If you seek to learn, grow, pursue truth and find freedom,



seek places that welcome argument and respect
dissenting views.



Chukat

Life Changing Ideas from the Parsha

Text by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

Life lives in the tension between our physical smallness and our spiritual greatness.



Life is short, but when we lift our eyes to heaven, we walk tall.

Balak

Life Changing Ideas from the Parsha

Text by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

By being what only we are,



we contribute to humanity what only we can give.

Pinchas

Life Changing Ideas from the Parsha

Text by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

If we truly wish to hand on our legacy to our children,



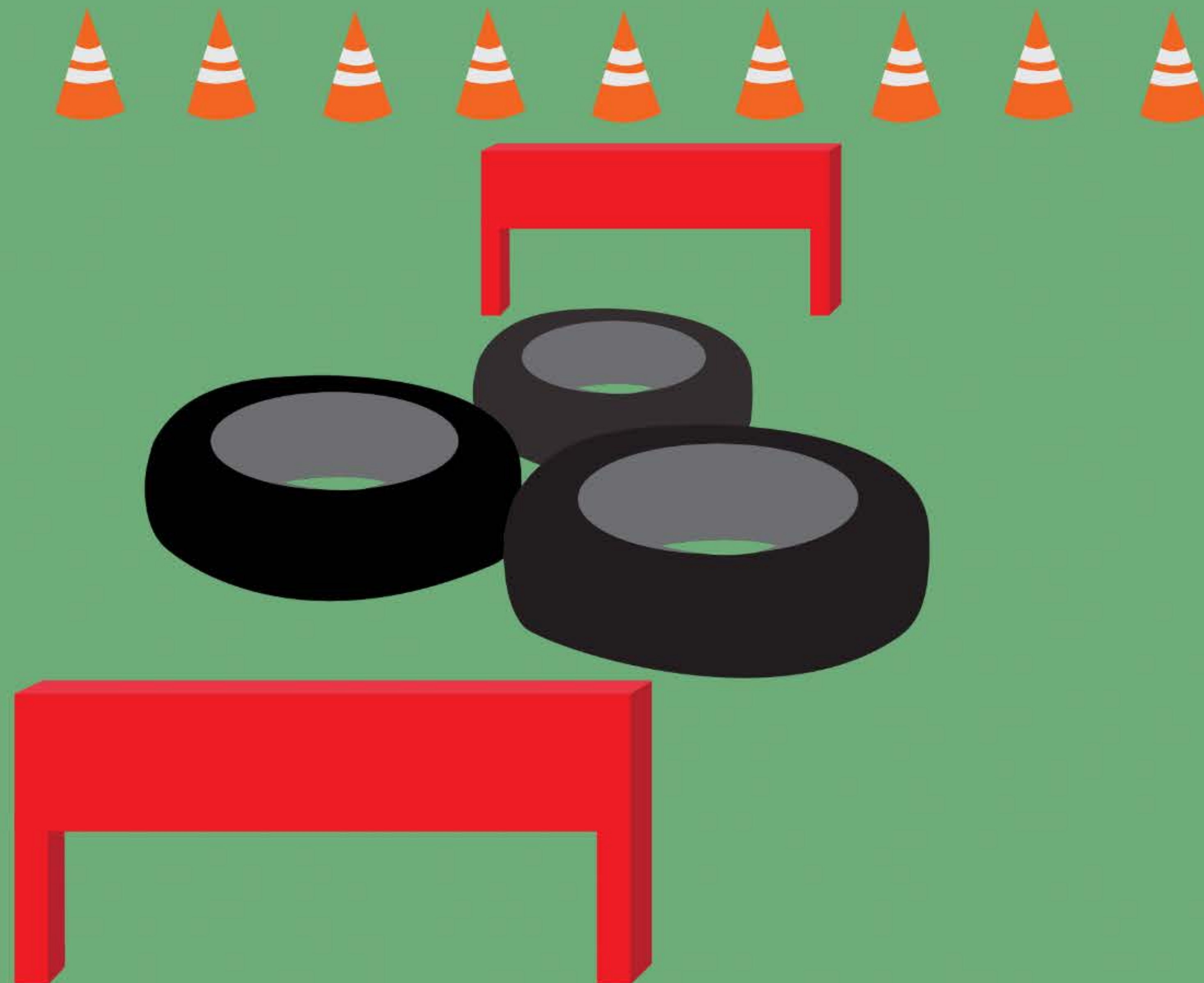
we must teach them to love it.

Matot-Masei

Life Changing Ideas from the Parsha

Text by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

Life is a journey, not a destination.



We should constantly set ourselves new challenges that take us out of our comfort zone. Life is growth.

Devarim

Life Changing Ideas from the Parsha

Text by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

If you seek to change someone,
make sure that you are willing to



help them when they need your help,
defend them when they need your defence,
and see the good in them, not just the bad.



kindness • charity • social action

Va'etchanan

Life Changing Ideas from the Parsha

Text by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

To make love undying,



build around it a structure of rituals.



Eikev

Life Changing Ideas from the Parsha

Text by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

Listening is the greatest gift



we can give to another human being.



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Re'eh

Life Changing Ideas from the Parsha

Text by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

Never define yourself as a victim.



There is always a choice,
and by exercising the strength to choose,
we can rise above fate.

Shoftim

Life Changing Ideas from the Parsha

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To lead is to serve.



The greater your success, the harder you have to work
to remember that you are there to serve others;
they are not there to serve you.

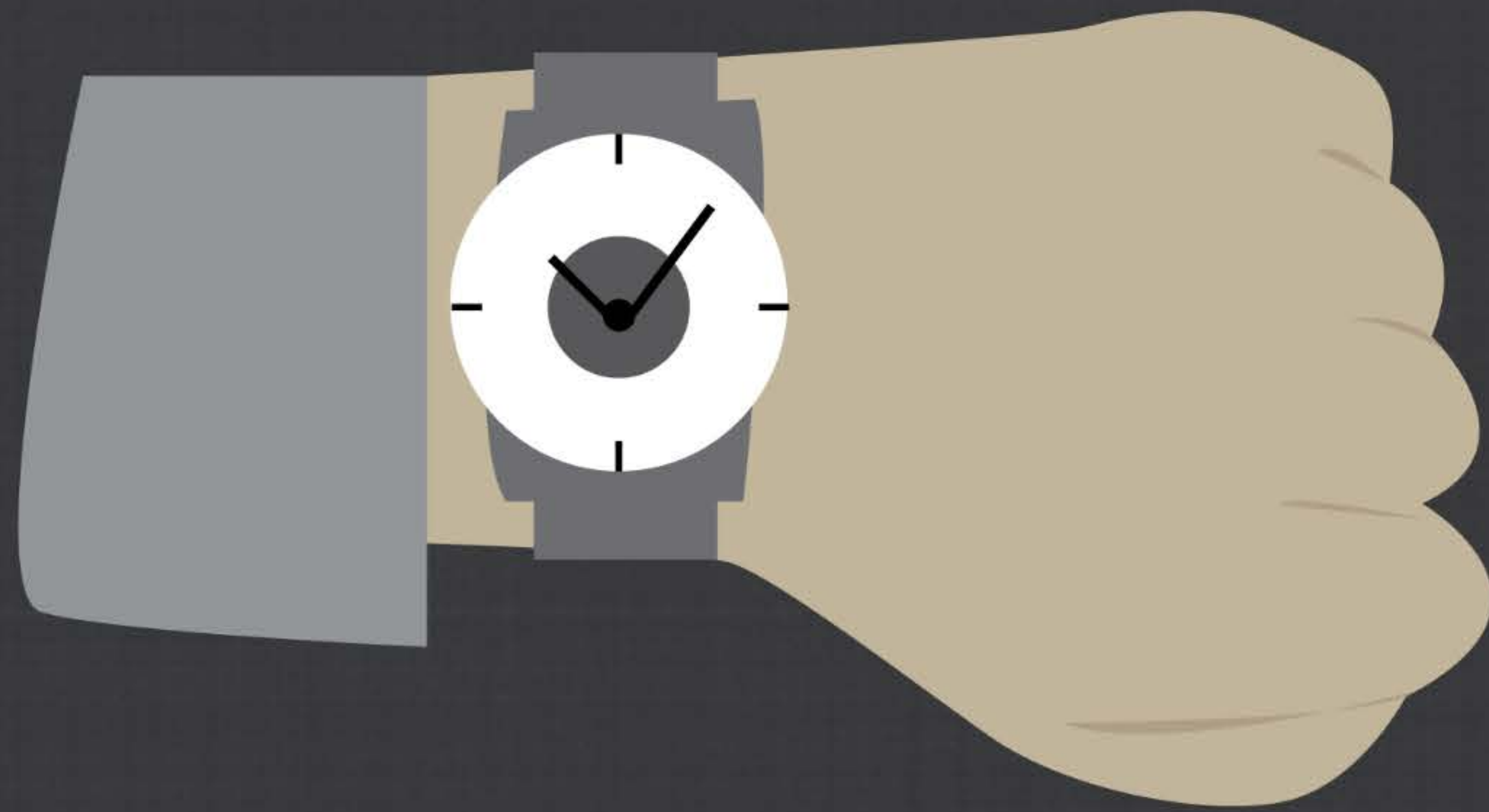


Ki Teitse

Life Changing Ideas from the Parsha

Text by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

Never be in too much of a rush



to stop and come to the aid
of someone in need of help.



Ki Tavo

Life Changing Ideas from the Parsha

Text by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

Make sure the story you tell



is one that speaks to your highest aspirations,
and tell it regularly.

Nitzavim

Life Changing Ideas from the Parsha

Text by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

Don't wait for the world to get better.



Take the initiative yourself.
The world is waiting for you.



Vayelech

Life Changing Ideas from the Parsha

Text by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

Whatever your achievements,
there is always a second mountain to climb,



and it may turn out to be
your greatest legacy to the future.



Ha'azinu

Life Changing Ideas from the Parsha

Text by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

If you want to change lives,



Speak to people's feelings, not just to their minds.



kindness • charity • social action

Vezot Habracha

Life Changing Ideas from the Parsha

Text by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

We are mortal; therefore make every day count.
We are fallible; therefore learn to grow from each mistake.



We will not complete the journey;
therefore inspire others to continue what we began.

