

Devarim

In the haftarah, whose opening word provides the name for today's special Shabbat, *Chazon*, 'Vision' (of Isaiah), the prophet inveighs against religious exhibitionism and the distortion of sacred principles: *I cannot endure iniquity combined with (attendance at) solemn assemblies* (1:13). Isaiah's message is so pertinent to our age, wherein so-called religious leaders even justify terrorism on religious grounds.

Va'etchanan

Herzl's famous slogan, 'If you wish it, it is no fable,' energized the fledgling Zionist movement. As a secular Jew, he was probably unaware that the identical notion occurs in today's sidrah: 'But you will beseech from there [the lands of the exile] the Lord Your God, and you shall find Him – if *you search with all your heart and with all your might*' (Deut.4:29).

Eikev

The influence of the Bible on the English language is enormous, and the name of today's sidrah is but one example of such a borrowing. *Eikev* means, literally, 'a heel,' but the Torah applies it figuratively, in the sense of 'following on after,' 'to be a consequence or corollary of.' Hence the opening phrase, *Vehahah eikev tishme'un*, 'And it shall be that, **on account of** your having hearkened to...' This directly inspired the term, 'following *in the heels of*.'