

## ❖ PARSHAT MATOS-MASEI

In the second of this week's two portions, Masei, the Torah recounts the travels of the Jewish people through the wilderness. "These are the journeys of the Children of Israel, who went forth out of the land of Egypt." Significantly, the Torah uses the plural "journeys" rather than the singular "journey." In truth, only one journey was required to pass beyond the borders of Egypt. Already with their very first journey, from Raamses to Sukot, the Jews left Egypt behind; geographically, all of their subsequent journeys were in the desert.

Then why does the Torah employ the plural, "journeys"? The Jewish people embarked on a total of 42 separate journeys before they arrived in the Land of Israel, "a good and spacious land." Egypt, in Hebrew Mitzrayim, is symbolic of limitations (meitzarim). In Egypt the Jewish people had descended to such a low spiritual level that they were "sunken in the 49 gates of impurity." With their very first journey they were liberated from the Egyptians' enslavement and attained a measure of freedom. This, however, was only an initial step; the Jews would have to undergo 41 more journeys before reaching the "good and spacious land" and true spiritual freedom. Although they had escaped the limitations of Egypt, compared to the state they would ultimately achieve, they were still constrained.

This contains a lesson to be applied in our Divine service: A Jew must never become discouraged. If the entire Jewish people could fall into the "49th gate of impurity" and still be redeemed from Egypt to receive the Torah and enter Israel, surely every Jew has the power to surmount his individual difficulties and ascend upward. At the same time we must remember that the first step, in and of itself, is insufficient. Making a one-time effort is not enough. A Jew must always be moving, striving to attain higher levels of holiness. For with each journey, with every step, we draw nearer to "the good and spacious land." A person might think that he has achieved perfection, that there is nothing left for him to do. Having reached the pinnacle of spiritual accomplishment, he need not expend additional effort. In spiritual terms, he has already gone out of Egypt.

The Torah, however, informs us differently. Even though the Jews had already left Egypt with their first journey, many more were necessary in order to reach Israel. In comparison with the inferior level of Egypt, the first journey placed them on an exalted rung. But relative to the true spiritual freedom of the Land of Israel, they still had a long way to go. We must never content ourselves with past achievements, but must constantly readjust our goals and set our sights ever higher. For when we do, we are assured of ultimately reaching "the good and spacious land." (From: L'Chaim 5758, #528, Adapted from Likutei Sichot, Volume 2)

**"Moshe said to the children of Gad and the children of Reuven, 'Shall your brothers go out to battle while you settle here?' " (32:6)**

QUESTION: If they were settling in a different land, what was the problem with not participating in the war for Eretz Yisrael? ANSWER: Though the Jewish people are dispersed to many parts of the world, they are strongly united and psychologically interdependent. Thus, when a Jew in any part of the world experiences misfortune, Jews throughout the world feel compassion and express concern. Moshe said to them, "Considering the emotions of the Jewish people it would be impossible for you to sit calmly and enjoy your land in Jordan when at the same time your brethren are engaged in war."

Tosafot in Gemara (Menachot 37a) quotes a Midrash that a man with two heads married a woman with one head and they bore both a one-headed and two-headed child. When the father died, the children came before King Shlomo and the one with two heads demanded a double

portion of the estate (inheritance). The wisest of all man covered one of the heads of the two-headed son and poured boiling water over the other. When the covered head bellowed in pain, it was evident that the two heads were part of one person. This story suggests a metaphor for the Jewish people. Being scattered throughout the world, it seems, superficially, that the Jewish people have a number of "heads." Each one has adopted a distinct dialect and way of thinking, and his respective distinctness detaches him from other Jews. While on the surface this may appear true, once "boiling water" is poured over a Jewish community, instinctively, as one unit, all Jews the world over feel the pain and sorrow of their fellow Jews. (From: Vedibarta Bam by Rabbi Moshe Bogomilsky)

**"These are the journeys of the Children of Israel, who went forth from the land of Egypt according to their legions, under the leadership of Moshe and Aharon." (33:1)** QUESTION: The word "eileh" - "these are" - seems superfluous. It could have just said "masei bnei Yisrael" - "the journeys of the Children of Israel"? ANSWER: The Jews were supposed to be in Egypt for four hundred years, but in actuality, they were there only two hundred and ten years. The additional one hundred and ninety years are made up by the exiles encountered after the departure from Egypt. This parshah is not only a record of the past, but also an allusion to the future exiles and the ultimate redemption through Mashiach. The first letters of the words "Eileh masei" are an "alef" and a "mem" and allude to our redeemers. The redemption from Egypt was through Aharon and Moshe. The saving of the Jewish people from annihilation in the days of Achashveirosh was through Esther and Mordechai and, and the ultimate redemption, after which there will no longer be any exile, will come through Eliyahu and Mashiach. (Ibid)

**"Aaron the Kohen went up to Mount Hor at the word of G-d and died there...in the fifth month on the first of the month." (33:38)**

QUESTION: The passing of Aharon is first recorded in Parshat Chukat (20:22 - 29). Why is there no mention there of the date? ANSWER: Aharon passed away on Rosh Chodesh Menachem Av, which is in the middle of the three-week period known as "bein hameitzarim" - "between the straits." His passing was a very sad event and the entire Jewish community mourned (20:29). Parshat Masei is always read in the middle of the three weeks and very close to, or on, Rosh Chodesh Menachem Av. Therefore, it is appropriate to indicate the date of his passing in this parshah.

It is particularly appropriate, as we recall the passing of Aharon, to reflect upon his love for his fellow and endeavor to emulate him. We should love peace and pursue peace, love our fellow creatures and bring them near to the Torah (Pirkei Avot 1:12). One of the primary causes of the destruction of the Beit HaMikdash was sinat chinam - baseless hatred and animosity (Yoma 9b). Through true Ahavat Yisrael we will speedily merit its rebuilding. (ibid)

## ❖ LAWS OF SHABBAT - 39 Melachot: Tochain (Grinding)

Many Poskim state that Tochain is permitted for food preparation if the chopping or grinding is done immediately prior to the anticipated time of the meal or eating. This exemption is known as the condition of *M'yad* (immediate use).

The Melocho of Tochain is permitted with a full-fledged *Shinui*, i.e. the act of grinding is done in an awkward, abnormal manner. EX: The Talmud states that one may ground pepper on a plate by pounding it with the handle of a knife. This method is awkward by comparison to the normal method of grinding this spice with a mortar and pestle. (From: The 39 Melochos by Dovid Ribiat)

IN TORAH-STUDY THE PERSON IS DEVOTED TO THE SUBJECT THAT HE WISHES TO UNDERSTAND AND COMES TO UNDERSTAND. IN DAVENING THE DEVOTION IS DIRECTED TO WHAT SURPASSES UNDERSTANDING. IN LEARNING TORAH THE JEW FEELS LIKE A PUPIL WITH HIS MASTER; IN DAVENING - LIKE A CHILD WITH HIS FATHER. (FROM REBBE'S HAYOM YOM TAMMUZ 26)

*We are all prisoners. But we sit on the keys. Finitude is our cell. The universe is our prison. Our jailkeeper is the Act of Being. The keys to liberation are clenched tight in the fists of our own egos.*

" From: "Bringing Heaven Down to Earth"

**PARTICIPATE IN WEEKLY CLASSES**

<b><u>Sunday</u></b>	<b>8:00 AM</b>	<b>Gemara-Tractate Berachot (men)</b>
<b><u>Monday</u></b>	<b>8:00 PM</b>	<b>Chumash (men and women)</b>
<b><u>Tuesday</u></b>	<b>8:00 PM</b>	<b>Gemara-Tractate Sukkha (men)</b>
<b><u>Wednesday</u></b>	<b>8:30 PM</b>	<b>Halacha and Tanya (women)</b>
<b><u>Thursday</u></b>	<b>10:00 AM</b>	<b>Chassidus (women)</b>
	<b>8:00 PM</b>	<b>Class for Beverly Hills Highschool Students</b>
<b><u>Daily</u></b>	<b>6:45 to 7:15 AM</b>	<b>Chasiddus</b>

**SHABBAT PARSHAT MATOS-MASEI**  
*Shabbos Mevorchim*  
*July 28, 2000*

**Candlelighting: 7:38 PM**  
**Friday Mincha: 7:50 PM**  
**Early Minyan 6:20 PM**

*LATEST TIME FOR SHEMA: 9:30 AM*

**SHABBAT MORNING**

- Tehillim 8:00 AM
- Shacharit 9:30 AM followed by Kiddush, Cholent & Farbrengen
- Pirkei Avos 6:40 PM
- Mincha 7:25 PM followed by Seuda Shlishit
- Shabbat ends 8:38 PM

*Kiddush* this week is being sponsored by Dr. and Mrs. Zeev Rav - Noy in memory of Varda's father, R' Avraham Eshel

*Yartzeits:* Shamshan Feder - Tammuz 26, Frances Bernstein - Av 3

*Happy Birthday* to Ephraim Levy, Ariel Rav - Noy, Michael Yehuda Rav - Noy, Sima Monkarsh

**DAILY MINYONIM:**

**Shacharit: Mon-Fri: 6:00 AM & 7:30 AM**  
**Sunday: 9:00 AM**  
**Mincha/Maariv: 7:50 PM**

**RESERVE THE DATE**

**Next Shabbos (Parshas Devarim - Shabbos Chazon - Aug. 5), the shul is having a Shabbaton with Rabbi Simon Jacobson - noted lecturer and author of the best selling book :  
Towards a Meaningful Life - the Wisdom of the Rebbe.**

**Sponsored by David and Isabelle Suissa**

**GOOD SHABBOS!**



