

## Torah On One Foot Rabbi Matthew Berger



### The Road To Freedom

In this week's Torah portion, *Bo* ("Go"), we learn an important truth. The road to freedom is rarely smooth and easy. Rather it has many twists and turns. After the final three devastating plagues against the Egyptians, the Israelites celebrate their freedom. They observe the first *Pesach* (Passover), our annual holiday commemorating our redemption from Egypt.

Just like keeping a kosher for Passover diet, it will take a great deal of perseverance for the Israelites to travel in the desert. It would have been easy for the Jews to return to Egypt using the now familiar route. So, too, the temptation to go back would be great. This is why God chose such a circuitous path for our biblical ancestors. When we travel by car, more often than not, we rely on GPS to give us the shortest route. Not so with the Israelites. They needed to learn that there is value in working toward something. If something is too easy, it doesn't hold the same value.

Back when I was in school, I quickly learned the difference between using a CliffNotes study guide and reading the entire book. The same concept is true of movements that call for great change. When Martin Luther King Jr. fought for equal rights for African Americans in the 1960s, he realized that his people would need to endure great hardship before realizing lasting change.

Let us find meaning in life's journey, with all of its twists and turns.