



Shearith Israel
SPANISH &
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SHABBAT BULLETIN

July 10, 2021 | 1 Av 5781



Parashat Matot-Masei

*The Past as Prelude: Thoughts
for Matot-Masei*
Rabbi Marc D. Angel

It is said that when Alexander the Great reached the peak of his career by conquering the entire known world—he broke down and cried.

One explanation for his crying is that he realized that there were no more battles for him to undertake. His best achievements were in the past. He had climbed to the top and had nowhere else to go. He cried in frustration.

Another explanation is that he realized that his tremendous accomplishment really amounted to very little. Earth is a speck in the universe; even if one were to rule the entire earth, there was a vast universe over which he did not rule. Moreover, humans are mortal; whatever we accomplish, however impressive, is short lived. In a thousand years or a million years—who will know or care what we've done? What difference will it have made? Thus, Alexander cried at the sheer vanity of life, the ultimate emptiness of his life's deeds.

How can we live happy and produc-

tive lives—and not break down crying like Alexander did? This week's Torah portion offers some guidance.

Parashat Masei records each of the stopping places of the Israelites during their 40-year trek in the wilderness. The Midrash explains that this detailed account reflects God's loving concern for the children of Israel. It is compared to a king who had taken his ailing child to a distant place in order to be cured. On the return journey, the king would stop at each resting place and remind his child: this is where we found shelter; this is where we cooled off at an oasis; this is where you had a headache. Each place evoked memories and created a deeper bond between the king and his child.

But the recounting of past stopping places was not a mere experience of nostalgia. Rather, it was coupled with the knowledge that we are now going home, that we are looking forward to a bright future with new challenges and opportunities.

The Israelites, in meticulously reviewing their past travels, were also anticipating their entry into the Promised Land.

Jewish tradition teaches us to review our past and to recount our historical achievements: but it

teaches us to do so without breaking down and crying as did Alexander the Great. Judaism imbues us with a sense that every day has meaning, that we can grow and attain something new and better. Life is not a rut or a routine; we are not trapped or locked in one place. No matter how much we have accomplished, we have not reached the end of our possibilities. There is a Promised Land ahead.

We do not succumb to the frustration or despair that confronted Alexander the Great, because we have a different orientation to the meaning of life. We are not here to achieve egotistical goals such as fame and power, but to serve God and humanity. Greatness is not measured by the number of lines one receives in history books, but by the myriad small deeds of kindness and charity and goodness that we have performed, by our positive impact on family, friends, and society.

The detailed description of the Israelites' travels in the wilderness reminds us of the importance of the past stages of our lives. It also serves to call our attention to the future, to the Promised Land, to the goals not yet attained. Just as we are strengthened by our past, we are energized by the hopes for our future.

they have defied the land.
3) Jeremiah lashes out at everyone: the priests, the "shepherds," [i.e., the political leaders, who should be guiding the people] the priests [that must have not been easy, since he also was a priest;] and the prophets.

4) He accuses the people of a double sin: nor only do they not follow the ways of HaShem, but they are attracted by all sorts of foreign influences.

With two powerful, pithy words, he makes a strong message: *teyasrekh ra'atekh*, that is, your evil ways will themselves chastise you. [Think, for example, of people who have ruined themselves by indulgence in drugs.]

Unfortunately, Jeremiah's message did not get across to his contemporaries. Yet his words have had a tremendous impact on the Jewish people for the past 2500 years.

Shabbat shalom,

SHABBAT SHALOM

Start/Debut
8:25 pm

End/Fin
9:40

SERVICE SCHEDULES

Shabbat Services
Shahrit: 8:30 Minha: 8:30

Sunday: **8:30 am**

Parashat Matot-Masei
Hertz page 702
Haftarah: Jeremiah
Hertz page 725

Week Day Services:
Shahrit: **7:30 am**
Everyday Monday through Friday

Afternoon/Evening Services:
Minha/Arvit : **6:00 pm**

BEIT HAMIDRASH HELWANI WITH RABBI PINTO

Monday through Friday
8:40 am - Hok L'Israel

Dvar Torah
Weekly Debate - Sunday after services
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday
8:25 am - Halaka/Talmud
6:15 pm - Jewish Wisdom

To Resume July 12

Dear friends,

I am here for you. Whether you want to ask a question, consult, learn or just chat, you can call me on my mobile (514) 506-3164 or to my email rabbi@thespanish.org

*I am available 24/7.
Shabbat, emergencies only*

Rabbi Maimon Pinto

*To contact Hazan Daniel Benlolo:
cantorbenlolo@thespanish.org
(514) 892-2859*



QUOTE OF THE WEEK

*The unspoken word is capital.
You can either invest it or squander it.*

Mark Twain | Aish HaTorah

OPINION

Chevra Shaas

Words From
Rabbi Menahem White
MATOT-MAS'EI 5781

Last week, I wrote about the haftarah, from chapter 1 of Jeremiah. So, let's continue with this week's haftarah, which is from chapter 2 of Jeremiah.

Now, this Shabbat happens to be Rosh Hodesh of the month of the month of Av, the month which witnessed the destruction of both Temples in Jerusalem, the destruction of the Land, and the exile. Usually, on Shabbat Rosh Hodesh, we read a special haftarah from the Book of Isaiah. But according to the Vilna Gaon, as quoted by the Chafets Hayyim (Shulhan Arukh OH, 425:1) this week's special haftarah pre-empted the usual Rosh Hodesh haftarah.

Remember last week, we saw that Jeremiah did not want to accept the task of being a prophet: HaShem had to force him to accept. In this week's haftarah, we see the terrible issues with which Jeremiah had to deal. There was pervasive moral corruption throughout the land.

Jeremiah is constantly warning: if the people don't improve their ways, they will go into exile, and the Temple will be destroyed. Unfortunately, his message did not get across.

Here are several examples, taken from this week's haftarah: 1) in a great play on words, he says that the people have gone after hevel, and they became hevel. That is, they are attracted to things that are worth nothing, and the people have become worth nothing!

2) They do not search out HaShem, and don't want to remember how He guided them through the wilderness and brought them to a wonderful land; yet

Our Condolences



It is with great sadness that the family of **Naïm Kattan** announces his passing on Friday, July 2, 2021, in Paris, France. He was a writer, a man of friendship & building bridges between cultures. Husband of the late Gaetane Laniel & partner of the late Annie Goldmann. He will be remembered with love & affection by his son, Emmanuel Kattan, his daughter-in-law, Valérie Monchi, his brother, Jacques Kattan. He was an officer of the Order of Canada, knight of the Order of Québec, officer of the French “Ordre des Arts et Lettres” & knight of the Légion d’honneur.

Congregation Maghen Abraham

Thoughts: Mayer Sasson
MATOT MASEI - The Three Weeks

“And all of your children/builders shall be taught of G-d...” (Yeshaya 54)

During these days “Between the straits” we mourn the destruction of the two Temples; but we also yearn and hope with all our hearts and souls that we merit very soon to the building of the third Temple in its total glory and majesty.

We pray with this yearning daily (after the

Shmoneh Esreh prayer): “May it be Your will, G-d our G-d... that the Beit Hamikdash be built speedily in our days and put our part in your Torah.” We must look into this - Are we able to take part in the building of the third Beit Hamikdash? If so, what can we do to hasten the future Redemption?

We will first bring the words of our Sages ob’m in the gemara that teaches that the

third Beit Hamikdash will be a building of fire, built beautifully, and it will be revealed and come down from Heaven as it says, “The Temple of G-d Your Hands have made”. All of the interpreters wonder about this: Since the third Temple will come down from Heaven beautifully built, how can the Children of Israel fulfill the positive commandment of building the Beit Hamikdash?

The righteous Rabbi of Alsk ob’m explains in his prayer book “Lev Sameach”: When a Jew prays properly and speaks properly – the Divine angels stand and saw out stones from the(se) words for the building of the Beit Hamikdash.”

From his holy words we learn that when Jews pray with proper intention and properly, their prayers ascend to Heaven and the Heavenly angels cut and saw out stones of fire from the words of the prayers that serve for the building of the third Beit Hamikdash. (As we know from our Sages ob’m, letters are also called “stones”.)

Accordingly we can understand why we pray “May it be Your will, G-d our G-d... that the Beit Hamikdash be built speedily in our days and put our part in your Torah”

after the Shemone Esreh prayer, for since the third Beit Hamikdash will be built from the Torah and prayers of Klal Yisrael, we pray “May it be Your will, G-d our G-d... that the Beit Hamikdash be built – from the holy words of our prayers- and we add on and “put our part in your Torah” – that we be able to complete the building of the Beit Hamikdash by learning the holy Torah with our mouths as well.

That is why we begin the Shemoneh Esreh prayer with the words “הי שפתי תפתח” – “G-d, open my lips’ – for the first two words are the initials of ש ח – fire – to teach us that all the words of our prayers are “stones of fire” that serve in the building of the third Temple, speedily in our days, Amen.

And that is what our Sages ob’m said “Torah scholars make more peace in the world as it says “And all of your children/builders shall be taught of G-d...” (Yeshaya 54) – all the sons of G-d deal in Torah and prayers and therefore they are called “builders” – because they build the third Beit Hamikdash by the words of their prayers from the “stones of fire” which will build the third Beit Hamikdash, speedily in our days, Amen.

SHABBAT SHALOM!!

HALAKHA

The “Three Weeks”*cont’d.*
Hazan Daniel Benlolo

One Whose Livelihood Depends on Playing a Musical Instrument

If one’s job requires him to play a musical instrument for non-Jews, one may continue to play music until the week during which Tisha Be’av falls out. Similarly, regarding a music teacher who teaches students to play musical instruments, such as the violin and the like, if one will incur a monetary loss by not teaching during this period, one may indeed continue to teach playing music until the Sunday before Tisha Be’av. It is preferable, nonetheless, to act stringently regarding this matter beginning from Rosh Chodesh Av. Just as music teachers may act leniently regarding this matter, so too, a student learning to play a musical instrument may continue doing so during this period.

Playing Music in Camps

Camps or Daycare programs which operate during the “Three Weeks” and playsongs with musical accompaniment as part of their daily routines may act leniently and continue to do so during the “Three Weeks.” Maran Rabbeinu Ovadia Yosef zt”l and Hagaon Harav Yaakov Kamenetzky zt”l rule likewise.



Got A Question for Hazan Daniel Benlolo?

Dear reader I understand your apprehension but let me shed some light on the symbol and the importance of fixing a mezuzah.

According to a remarkably interesting article on how to run a traditional Jewish household by Blu Greenberg, a Jewish household is created by the people who live in it, by the way they act, the things they do and do not do, and the beliefs they hold. To a great extent, a Jewish way of life is a portable faith: you can take it with you anywhere you go. This is true for Shabbat, kashrut, family purity, daily prayer, and the study of Torah. It is generally accepted that Judaism as a religion is more oriented to holiness of time than holiness of place. There are many locations that we sanctify, but very few places we can holy.

Dear reader, please know that the very place in which we live, our permanent residence, is sanctified by a very concrete ritual, through the mitzvah of affixing a mezuzah.

Mezuzah is of biblical origin and therefore carries great weight. The mezuzah is one of the few divine Commandments for which the Torah states its reward. In this case, the reward is long life for oneself and one’s children as it is written; And you shall inscribe them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates, so that your days and the days of your children may be prolonged upon the land which the L-rd swore to give to your fathers for as long as the heavens are above the earth (Deuteronomy 11:20-21).

The mezuzah not only refers to the parchment which the verses of the Torah are inscribed but it also refers to the case or container in which department is enclosed. Every time you enter or leave, the mezuzah reminds you that you have a covenant with G-d; it also serves as a symbol to everyone else that this dwelling is constituted as a Jewish household, operating by a special set of rules, rituals, and beliefs. The mezuzah has also been referred to as “the coat of arms in the knighthood of G-d.” G-d gave His chosen people signs of this special relationship. Shabbat is a sign in time. Mezuzah is a sign in space.

Just as Shabbat is a sanctuary in time and a Jewish soul is a miniature sanctuary in the dimension of soul, the mezuzah marks a Jewish home as a miniature sanctuary in the dimension of space. By making one’s house a true sanctuary of G-dliness, a Jew not only fulfills his or her mission in life but helps realize the primary purpose of creation -- giving G-d “a dwelling place in the lower worlds.”

I hope this short and somehow concise explanation will bring some sense of reassurance that it is ok to affix a mezuzah on the doorpost of your home and feel pride that you live in a “Bayit Ne’eman B’Yisrael” – a house built on the beliefs of the people of Israel!

Let me know if you need help affixing the mezuzah!

Dear Danny,

I just moved into my new condo and for a few reasons feel somehow apprehensive about fixing a mezuzah on my door. Is it really that important?

PARNASS HAYOM

Shabbat 1 Av - July 10 juillet
Leila & Afram Khamara, in honour of Drs. Samia & Sabbah Bekhor.

Sunday/Dimanche 2 Av - July 11 juillet
Naima Rabie & Family, à la mémoire de Jacob Rabie ז”ר.

Monday 3 Av - July 12 juillet
Dr. David & Maître Claude Haccoun, à la mémoire de leurs père, Chalom Haccoun ז”ר.

Edith Teboul, à la mémoire de son père, Abraham Teboul ז”ר.

Wednesday/Mercredi 5 Av - July 14 juillet
M. & Mme. Marcel Menda, en l’honneur de Rabbin Yehuda Abittan.

Friday/Vendredi 7 Av - July 16 juillet
Tilly & Selman Khazzam, in honour of the birth of our granddaughter, Emma Katie Khazzam.



Upcoming Events



Monday, July 12 | 7:00 - 8:00 p.m.
Chai Mitzvah Program - Unit 4: Death & Loss
Individual reflection

Join on Zoom ID 526 438 1158 - Registration required.



Tuesday, July 13 | 12:00 - 1:00 p.m.
Sisterhood Book Review: “The Man In The White Sharkskin Suit” by Lucette Lagnado. Reviewed by Rose Simon Schwartz.
Zoom ID 811 8002 1585 Password: SISBOOK



Thursday, July 15, 22 & 29 | 10:30 a.m.
Sisterhood Yoga Class with Lisa Shebath

Registration Required. Contact: Grace (514) 979-9779
email:sisterhood2020@hotmail.com or Lisa (514) 708-8967
email: lisashebath@gmail.com



Thursday, July 22 | 7:00 - 8:00 p.m.
Ten Paths to God - Unit 8: ISRAEL The Jewish Land - with Guest Panelists Rabbi Schachar Orenstein with daughter, Chana & Ephraim Heiliczar.

Zoom ID 846 5677 7165 / Password: 058194



Monday, August 2 | 7:00 - 8:00 p.m.
Professionalism: series of five presentations, featuring five groups of professionals.

Engineering and Architecture
Join Zoom ID 847 5180 5878 - Passcode: 168614



Monday, August 9 | 7:00 - 8:00 p.m.
Chai Mitzvah Program - Unit 5: Interpersonal Relationships
Individual reflection

Join on Zoom ID 526 438 1158 - Registration required.



Thursday, August 26 | 7:00 - 8:00 p.m.
Ten Paths to God - Unit 9: Kiddush Hashem The Jewish Task - with Guest Panelists Rabbi Dr. Menahem White, Spiritual Leader, Chevra Shaas Congregation of S&P.

Zoom ID 846 5677 7165 / Password: 058194



Sunday, August 29 | (Save The Date)
Soccer Tournament - Parc Mackenzie-King
Time to be confirmed. Trophy, fun, games!

Contact: Marc Hadid mhadid@mvapower.com