



Shearith Israel  
**SPANISH &  
PORTUGUESE**  
Synagogue of Montreal  
Est. 1768

# SHABBAT BULLETIN

July 15, 2023 | 26 Tammuz, 5783



## Dvar Torah MATOT-MASEI 5783

By: Rabbi Yehoshua Ellis

This week we close the book of Bamidbar and bring to an end the wandering of the Children of Israel. The next and final book of the Torah, Devarim, is all words of advice and reprimand from Moshe; he transmits them to us on the plains of Moab. Bamidbar is the hardest book of the Torah. The book of Bamidbar spans a thirty-eight-year period, yet the text only actually describes about six of those months. The only thing we know about the thirty-seven years that we spent in the desert we learn from this week's Parsha.

So, what does our Parsha tell us about these thirty-seven years? They (the Children of Israel) set out from Ritma, an encamped in Rimom Peretz. Repeat this seventeen times - just change the place names. That's it, no other information is provided. What do we learn from this then, the fact that all the Torah won't leave those thirty-seven years off the record, yet doesn't tell us

anything more meaningful about that time than place names?

The first answer that comes to me is that even when we feel that our efforts or time was wasted, we still need to reflect on it and make an accounting. Maybe nothing of note happened in these places, that too is something to remember and learn from. The act of remembering in and of itself has value, even if not all our memories have clear lessons to teach us.

The second answer is that these various encampments come to tell us about the need to keep moving. Once the Children of Israel found a site that was big enough to accommodate all of them there was no practical reason to leave. Resource degradation was not an issue because G'd miraculously provided food, water, and shelter for us. Pollution was not a problem because the food and water were miraculously completely absorbed into our bodies. Why then did we not remain in one place for the duration of the thirty-eight years we were in the desert? G'd wanted us to move for our emotional and spiritual health.

Staying too long in the same place creates complacency and inertia. We acquire all sorts of things and traits that don't serve us, but we are not motivated to do away with. Nothing quashes spiritual growth more than physical comfort. So, we see that when we were in the desert every two years or so G'd instructed Moshe to strike camp and head for a new location. He did this so that our change from place to place would translate into spiritual movement, that we will come to understand that the only way for us to leave the wilderness is to keep moving.

This all feels particularly relevant to me this year as we prepare, this week, to leave the only home we have known as a family and join a new community at the Spanish Portuguese Synagogue of Montreal. Baruch Hashem, we have had a wonderful life in Katowice and Warsaw. Poland has given me a more amazing family than I ever could have imagined. Still, we have reached the point where the only way for us to keep growing is, like our ancestors in the wilderness, to keep moving forward.

Shabbat Shalom!

## OPINION

## Chevra Shaas Words From Rabbi Menahem White MATOT-MAS`EI 5783

First and foremost: Mazal tov to our centenarian, who joined Shevet Achim before I was born, and who was active in the Shevet Achim shul and sisterhood: our Number 1 member, Helen Scharf-Kern. May HaShem bless you with good health, and good memories, "biz hundert un tvantsig."

\*\*\*\*

We are now in the midst of the period known as the "3 weeks," or, in Hebrew "bein ha-metsarim," [literally "between the borders," perhaps alluding to the word "tsarah," meaning, difficulties. And to take it a step further, perhaps the Hebrew is related to the word "tsar," meaning "narrow," that is, the time when we feel hemmed in, limited in our enjoyment. In Yiddish called the "drai vokhn."]

This is the saddest time of the year. Outward expressions of this sadness can be seen in the fact that we don't get haircuts, don't listen to happy music, and especially don't celebrate weddings during this time.

The feeling of sadness and mourning intensifies this coming Wednesday, the 26 July, with Rosh Hodesh Av; intensifies more on Sunday, 23 July beginning "the week when TBAV falls," intensifying even more Wednesday 26 July, known as "erev TBAV," and then reaches its climax Thursday, 27 July, Tisha Ba'av.

What happened? What caused the Temples to be destroyed and the people to either be killed or go into exile? And to be considered such a great calamity that we still mourn after thousands of years?

One answer, based on what the Talmud says referring to students of R. Akiva during the omer period, could be "she-lo' nahagu kavod zeh bazah," that is, the Jews couldn't get along with one another, leading to a deterioration in

security, and thus weakening the resolve of the people, and strengthening the resolve of the enemy.

And so, we can only pray, as we hear the news from Israel today, that a similar situation is not being created. How is it possible for people to create massive traffic jams, knowing that the lives of innocent people are endangered? [I saw on the news today how a family left their little child in the middle of the highway, in order to add to the traffic woes. What?!!!! A Jew would do that?]

I wish the people of Israel could heed the words of the "man of God" Shemaiah, when Rehav'am the King of Judah and Benjamin was about to embark on a war against Yerav'am, the leader of the Northern tribes, "do not fight against your brethren from the north, go back home!!! ...and they listened to the word of Hashem." [See I Kings, chapter 12]

Let us pray for peace, not just with our external enemies, but especially with our brethren.

Shabbat shalom, Shalom `al Yisrael

## SHABBAT SHALOM

Start/Debut 8:23 p.m. End/Fin 9:36 p.m.

PARASHAT MATOT-MASEI  
HERTZ PAGE 702  
HAFTARAH JEREMIAH  
HERTZ PAGE 725

SHABBAT SERVICES  
SHAHRIT: 8:30A MINHA: 8:15P

## WEEKLY SERVICES SCHEDULE

Sunday  
Shahrit: 8:30A Minha: 6:00P

MONDAY - FRIDAY  
Shahrit: 7:00A Minha: 6:00P

## CHEVRA SHAAS Service Schedule

SHABBOS, July 15<sup>TH</sup>  
Schachris 9:30 a.m.

SUNDAY, July 16<sup>TH</sup>  
Schachris 8:00 a.m.

**ROSH HODESH AV**  
**WEDNESDAY/MERCREDI**  
**JULY/JUILLET 19 2023**

## TORAH CLASS

Join **ANDRE ROTCHEL** every  
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To contact Reverend Hazan  
**Daniel Benlolo:**  
[cantorbenlolo@thespanish.org](mailto:cantorbenlolo@thespanish.org)  
(514) 892-2859

COMMUNAUTÉ SÉPHARADE  
Fédération Sépharade du Canada  
Fédération Sépharade du Québec

La Communauté Sépharade Unifiée du Québec et la Fédération Sépharade du Canada vous invitent à venir rencontrer le grand-rabbin de France, M. Haim Korsia, qui sera présent à Montréal du 18 au 24 juillet 2023.

Le grand-rabbin de France est Officier de la Légion d'Honneur, Commandeur de l'Ordre National du Mérite. Il est titulaire d'un doctorat en histoire contemporaine, d'un doctorat en gestion et il est membre de l'Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques.

CONFÉRENCES

MAR 18 JUILLET 19 H Centre Culturel Marocain Dar Al Maghrib 515 avenue Viger E, Montréal

MAR 19 JUILLET 20 H Congrégation Sépharade Or Shalom 5780 Av. Einstein, Côte Saint-Luc

Sur le thème: «Les enfants d'Abraham»

Avant: Mgr Christian Lépine, Archevêque du Diocèse de Montréal et le Dr Faouzi Skali, spécialiste des sciences des religions.

Sur le thème: «Judaïsme, entre tradition et innovation»

Minha et Aharit: 19 h 15 avec le grand-rabbin de France

LE GRAND-RABBIN SÉPHARADE PRÉSENT AUX DIFFÉRENTS OFFICES

MAR 18 JUILLET 7 H 30 Synagogue Spanish and Portuguese 4894 Av. Saint-Kevin, Montréal

VEN 21 JUILLET 7 H 45 Synagogue Or Shalom 96 Fredrik, Dollard-Des-Ormeaux

MAR 19 JUILLET 7 H 00 Green Shul 156 Netherwood Crescent, Hampstead

JUN 23 JUILLET 8 H 00 Congrégation Sépharade Nahar Chalom 222 Harrow Cres, Hampstead

JEU 20 JUILLET 7 H 30 Communauté Sépharade de Laval 4860 Bout Notre-Dame, Laval

LUN 24 JUILLET 7 H 00 Communauté Sépharade de Pétah Tikva 2650 Rue Saint-Louis, VSL

SHABBATON À SAINT-LAURENT

SAM 22 JUILLET Communauté Sépharade de Pétah Tikva 2650 Rue Saint-Louis, VSL Pour toute inscription: 514 744-3434

Communauté Sépharade Hekhal Shalom 825 Rue Graton, VSL Pour toute inscription: 514 747-4530

Pour toute information, contactez-nous au téléphone 514 733-4998 ou par mail à [reception@csau.org](mailto:reception@csau.org)

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Jewish Calendar  
2022-2023 / 5783  
4814 St. Laurent St. Suite 101  
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514-737-3695 ext. 115  
[www.thespanish.org/form/calendar5784.html](http://www.thespanish.org/form/calendar5784.html)

## QUOTE OF THE WEEK

The value of a promise is the cost to you of keeping your word.

Brian Tracy | Aish HaTorah



**SPANISH & PORTUGUESE ANNUAL SHABBAT KIDDUSH DONOR:**  
Rachel & Michael Gabbay & Family, in memory of her father,  
Zvi Saleh Gabbay z'l.

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**CHEVRA SHAAS SHABBOS KIDDUSH CO-SPONSORED BY:**  
Stanley Goldstein, in honour of an amazing lady,  
Helen Scharf-Kern's 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday!

COMMUNITY

Congregation  
Maghen Abraham  
PERASHA MATOT-MASEI  
Thoughts: Mayer Sasson

FROM ANXIETY TO CHORUS

"...they journeyed from Charada (anxiety) and they encamped in Makeilot (chorus)." (33, 25)

Rabbi Yosef Yisrel Deitsch, Chief Judge of Alasha Yarmat explained the verse that they journeyed from Charada and encamped in Makeilot – When a person has trouble he directs his heart to G-d in prayer that He will save him from his troubles.

However, after the trouble has passed and he returns to the blessed routine, he can forget his Creator.

Therefore, the Torah warns him, "they journeyed from Charada"- when the anxiety and trouble pass on, you must remember to be "Bimakeilot". One must praise and bless G-d "in chorus"- in public by saying the prayer of Hagomel.

SHABBAT SHALOM!!

INSIGHTS

Matot-Masei 5783  
Commit to Commitment  
By: Rabbi Yitzchak Zweig  
(Aish.com)

All my parenting life I have tried to impress upon my children that everything important in life boils down to relationships. Most readers will read that last sentence and think, “Of course, it’s not what you know, but who you know!” In truth, I mean it in a more all-inclusive way, as I shall explain.

Much of the ancient wisdom of the Torah has been distilled into principles of life and ethical behavior and compiled by our sages in the work known as Pirkei Avot – commonly referred to as Ethics of our Fathers. This manual for living a meaningful and principled life was completed about two thousand years ago and the wisdom contained within is quite timeless. Pirkei Avot is part of the Torah known as Mishna – which forms much of the basis of the “oral law.”

We find in the very beginning of Pirkei Avot the following statement attributed to Shimon Hatzadik (“Simon the Righteous”) who was not only the leading Torah authority of his generation but also the High Priest in the Holy Temple. (According to the Talmud, he once had encounter with Alexander the Great while he was on his way to conquering the world see Yoma 69a.)

“The world stands on three things: 1) Torah 2) Worship 3) Acts of Kindness” (Pirkei Avot 1:2). These principles are the three pillars upon which the world is perched. Aside from the fact that they are core values of Judaism, the reason that they are so critical to the existence of the world is that they represent the three relationships that every person must develop. “Worship” represents man’s relationship with his Creator; “Acts of Kindness” represents man’s relationship with his fellow man; “Torah” represents man’s relationship with himself (the Torah represents one’s personal growth from a “rational animal” to a developed person of higher spiritual status).

Just this past week a young undergraduate student in our school asked me a very sophisticated question: “What is the most important relationship we

Got a Question for  
Reverend/Hazan  
Daniel Benlolo?

Dear Danny,

Why are the laws of kashrut so important in Judaism?

Dear reader,

The laws of kashrut, or Jewish dietary laws, hold significant importance in Judaism for various reasons. They serve as a means to cultivate mindfulness, strengthen communal bonds, and deepen spiritual connections. Here are a few key reasons why kashrut is significant:

1. Spiritual Discipline: Observing kashrut allows individuals to exercise self-control and discipline over their actions, reminding them of their commitment to follow God's commandments and leading to a more mindful way of living.

2. Holiness and Purity: Kashrut promotes the idea of maintaining purity and sanctity in everyday life. By adhering to dietary laws, individuals elevate their physical acts to a spiritual level, recognizing the inherent holiness in their actions.

3. Identity and Community: Kashrut serves as a powerful symbol of Jewish identity and unity. Observing these dietary laws creates a common bond among Jewish individuals, fostering a sense of belonging and shared values within the community.

4. Ethical Considerations: Kashrut encompasses not only the types of food that are permitted but also the manner in which they are prepared and consumed. It promotes ethical treatment of animals, encourages gratitude for sustenance, and emphasizes the importance of mindfulness in the act of eating.

Overall, the laws of kashrut help Jews lead a life aligned with their religious beliefs, fostering spirituality, community, and ethical awareness.

until next time...

INSIGHTS (cont'd.)

have?” I looked at him with some admiration; at only 19 years old he was grappling with a very fundamental life question. I explained that, in my opinion, the most important relationship is the one with oneself. It is also, unfortunately, the relationship that is most often neglected. In order for a person to properly have a healthy relationship with others (or the Almighty) he must first know who he is, have a good relationship with himself, and be at peace with himself.

The Talmud (Bava Basra 88a) comments on a verse found in Psalms (15:2) – “(he who) speaks truth in his heart” – as referring to someone who has a true awe of the Almighty. Curiously, the Talmud found it necessary to give an example of such a person: Rav Safra. Rashi, the great Torah and Talmud commentator (ad loc), goes on to explain how Rav Safra came to be the paragon of this virtue.

Rav Safra, a well-known merchant, was in the middle of saying the Shema prayer when someone approached him to buy something that he was selling. The buyer proceeded to offer a sum of money for the item he wished to buy. Rav Safra, who was still in the midst of

Mazal Tov To



Helen Sharf-Kern, on her 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday!



Emmanuelle & Elie Girsowicz, in honour of the birth of their daughter, sister to Michaël.



Peress Family, and proud "Saba" Sass & "Safta" Shoshana Peress on the birth of Ford Spencer (Ness) Peress, son of Stephanie Frank & Justin Peress - California.

Our Condolences To



Arlene Ades & Family, on the loss of father & grandfather, Victor Ades z'l.

Stella Ades Shahin & Sabah Ades, on the loss of their brother, Victor Ades z'l.

COMMUNITY (cont'd.)

An Overview of  
Parashiot Matot and  
Masei

Reverend Hazan Daniel Benlolo

1. Keeping one's word and fulfilling vows: The Parashah Matot begins by discussing the importance of keeping one's word and fulfilling vows or commitments made to others or to God. It emphasizes the seriousness of making promises and the need to honor them. This message underscores the value of integrity, trustworthiness, and personal responsibility. By highlighting the consequences of breaking one's commitments, the text encourages individuals to be mindful of the words they speak and the promises they make.

2. Cities of refuge: The Parashah Masei introduces the concept of cities of refuge, which were designated as places of sanctuary for individuals who unintentionally caused harm to others. These cities provided protection and ensured that justice was served fairly. This message underscores the importance of a just legal system that recognizes the difference between intentional and unintentional actions. It emphasizes the need for compassion and understanding, allowing individuals who made unintentional mistakes to find refuge and be treated fairly.

3. Remembering and commemorating: The Parashah Masei also includes a detailed account of the Israelites' journey through the wilderness, listing the various places they camped and the milestones they reached. This emphasis on recounting their history serves as a reminder of the importance of collective memory and the transmission of traditions from one generation to the next. It reinforces the value of commemorating significant events and milestones in order to preserve cultural identity and pass



PARNASS HAYOM  
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SHABBAT 26 TAMMUZ - JULY 15  
Khamara Family, in recognition of their support & generosity to Beit Hamidrash & Spanish & Portuguese.

SUNDAY/DIMANCHE 27 TAMMUZ - JULY 16  
Leila Khamara, in memory of her father, Salim Elia ז"ל

MONDAY/LUNDI 28 TAMMUZ - JULY 17  
Ouri Ohayon, à la mémoire de Esther Sabbath ז"ל

TUESDAY/MARDI 29 TAMMUZ - JULY 18  
Ouri Ohayon, à la mémoire de Esther Sabbath ז"ל

Shulamit Moulavi, in memory of her mother, Naima Sayegh ז"ל

Kazaz Family, in memory of Isaac Kazaz ז"ל

WEDNESDAY/MERCREDI 1 AV - JULY 19  
Leila Khamara & Family, in honour of Drs. Samia & Sabbah Bekhor.

THURSDAY/JEUDI 2 AV - JULY 20  
Rabie Family, in memory of Jacob Rabie ז"ל

FRIDAY/VENDREDI 3 AV - JULY 21  
Dr. David Haccoun & Maître Claude Haccoun, à la mémoire de leur père, Chalom Haccoun ז"ל

on important lessons and values to future generations.

In summary, the Parashah Matot and Masei convey messages about the significance of keeping one's word and fulfilling vows, the establishment of cities of refuge for unintentional wrongdoers, and the importance of remembering and commemorating significant events in Jewish history. These messages highlight the values of integrity, justice, compassion, and the preservation of cultural identity. Shabbat shalom

Rashi cites has nothing at all to do with keeping your word. After all, Rav Safra was silent the entire time, he never committed to a price. Why was Rav Safra bound to fulfill the price that he had only agreed to in his mind? The answer is that there is a much higher truth to which we are ALL bound – we are obligated to be truthful to ourselves. We don't have to live up to our word because someone else has relied on it and made decisions based upon it. We have to fulfill our word because we said it and we have an obligation to ourselves to make it a reality. This is why the verse says, “speaks truth in his heart.” It has nothing to do with our commitments to other people; the basis for keeping our word is that we owe it to ourselves.

In this week’s Torah reading we find the laws related to fulfilling one’s commitments. “Moses spoke to the heads of the tribes of the Jewish people saying, ‘This is the matter that Hashem commanded: If a man takes a vow to Hashem or takes an oath imposing an obligation on himself, he shall not break his pledge; he must carry out all that has crossed his lips’” (Numbers 30:2-3).

prayers, was silent. The buyer understood Rav Safra's silence as a reluctance to sell because the sum wasn't high enough, so he kept raising his offer until it was a very large sum. Once Rav Safra finished his prayers, he turned to the buyer and told him that he would sell it to him for the original offer. The buyer, shocked that Rav Safra was accepting a much lower price than his final offer, asked him why. Rav Safra explained, “In my mind, I had already decided after hearing your first offer to accept it.”

Most people are raised valuing the concept of “keeping your word.” Unfortunately, modern society seems to have all but forgotten this ideal; in fact, in some cultures a signed contract is only a basis for opening a new negotiation. In general, this notion of being “a man (or woman) of your word” is seen as being morally binding because, once you give your word, someone else has ownership over your expected performance. Based on your commitments they make decisions and commitments of their own.

However, we see from the Talmud that there is a much more profound reason for keeping your word. The story that