



CONGREGATION TIFERETH BETH DAVID JERUSALEM

Shabbat Bulletin

שבת פרשת מטות-מסעי
א אב ה'תשפ"א

Shabbat Parshat Matot-Masei
July 9 - 10, 2021 / 5781

Please print this bulletin before Shabbat.

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SHABBAT SHALOM • שבת שלום

Rosh Chodesh Av is on Shabbat July 10 / Molad is on Friday, July 9 at 9:59pm and 9 chalakim

Shabbat Parshat Matot-Masei

Haftara: Yirmiyahu 2:4 - 2:28, 3:4

When davening at home, it is preferable
to do so at the same time as the rest of the
community.

Friday, July 9

4:00pm Daf Yomi on Zoom
6:55pm Mincha, Kabbalat Shabbat
& Maariv - Sanctuary
6:55pm Mincha, Kabbalat Shabbat
& Maariv - Tent
7:07pm Plag Hamincha
8:26pm Candle Lighting
8:44pm Sh'kiah

Shabbat, July 10 / 1 Av 5781

Rosh Chodesh Av

8:00am Shacharit - Upper Social Hall
8:20am Shacharit - Tent
9:08am Sof Zman Kriyat Shma
9:30am Shacharit - Main Sanctuary
10:00am Kef Club Programs for Kids-Tent
7:07pm Plag Hamincha
8:20pm Mincha and Maariv - Sanctuary
8:20pm Mincha and Maariv - Tent
8:44pm Sh'kiah
9:40pm Havdala
9:45pm Daf Yomi on Zoom

Our weekly "Musical Havdala with Rev. Bender" is on hiatus until after Tisha B'Av.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Mazal Tov to **Carolyn & Arnold Steinman, Marla & Peter Veres** and Judy & Michael Daniels of Lincolnwood, Illinois on the birth of a great granddaughter and granddaughter Wednesday, July 7 in Chicago. Proud parents are Alyssa & Eytan Veres. Sharing in their simcha are great grandparents Huguette Veres and Michael Nussbaum and many delighted aunts, uncles and cousins.

SPONSORSHIPS AND THANK YOUS

Rabbi Freundlich's Drashot on Shabbat are sponsored by **Reesa & Ephriam Kandelshein** in memory of Ephriam's beloved grandparents Hinda & Simcha Kandelshein z"l who perished in the Holocaust (Hinda bat Avraham - 1 Av and Simcha ben Yosef - 1 Av).

This Shabbat Bulletin is sponsored by **Pnina & Abe Brodt** in memory of Abe's beloved father Joseph Brodt-Nussbaum z"l (Yosef Yekuti'el Zishe ben Avraham Abba - 5 Av).

TISHA B'AV 5781

Fast begins at 8:39pm on Motsa'ei Shabbat, July 17.

Fast ends at 9:22pm on Sunday, July 18.

Full schedule of services, shiurim and programs will be distributed next week.

ASPECTS OF MOURNING DURING THE THREE WEEKS

No weddings are held. However, engagement ceremonies are permitted.

We do not listen to music.

We avoid all public celebrations -- especially those which involve dancing and musical accompaniment.

We avoid exciting and entertaining trips and activities.

No haircuts or shaving. Fingernails may be clipped up until the week in which Tisha B'Av falls.

We do not say the blessing She-hechianu on new food or clothes, except on Shabbat.

ASPECTS OF MOURNING DURING THE NINE DAYS (starts on Shabbat, July 10)

We avoid purchasing any items that bring great joy.

We suspend home improvements, or the planting of trees and flowers.

We avoid litigation with non-Jews, since fortune is inauspicious at this time.

We abstain from the consumption of meat (including poultry) and wine. These foods are symbolic of the Temple service, and are generally expressions of celebration and joy.

- On Shabbat, meat and wine are permitted. This applies also to any other seudat mitzvah -- for example, at a Brit Milah or at the completion of a tractate of Talmud.
- Wine from Havdala should be given to a child to drink.

We refrain from wearing newly laundered garments, or laundering any clothes.

- If the "freshness" has been taken out of a garment prior to the Nine Days, it may be worn.
- Fresh clothes may be worn for Shabbat.
- The clothing of small children, which gets soiled frequently, may be laundered during the Nine Days.
- Clothes may not be laundered even if done in preparation for after Tisha B'Av, or even if done by a non-Jew.

We do not bathe for pleasure.

- It is permitted to bathe in order to remove dirt or perspiration, or for medical reasons. This may be done only in cool water.
- Furthermore, the body should be washed in parts, rather than all at one time.
- Bathing in warm water is permitted on Friday in honour of Shabbat.

SCHEDULE FOR THE NEXT WEEK

Mincha will be at **8:25pm** in the Main
Sanctuary and on Zoom.

Candle Lighting on Friday, July 16 will be
at **8:21pm**.

**Due to changing regulations
and necessary adjustment of our
scheduling, please visit our website
(TBDJ.org) and check your emails for
up-to-date schedules and information
on minyan locations and registration.**

The Importance of Recording History

In Parshat Masei, the second of this Shabbat's two Torah portions, we read that Moshe Rabeinu recorded the journeys and the encampments of Bnei Yisrael:

ויכתב משה את מוצאיהם למסעיהם על פי השם ואלה מסעיהם למוצאיהם
*Moshe recorded their starting points for their journeys according to the word of G-d,
 and these were their journeys with their starting points (Numbers 33:2).*

In his comments on the Torah portion, Rashi ponders the meaning of the list of our ancestors' many journeys and encampments. Why were these encampments recorded? It was to indicate G-d's great compassion. Even though G-d had decreed that Bnei Yisrael would wander in the wilderness and move from place to place, do not think that they were in constant motion from one encampment to the next for the entire forty-year period and had no respite whatsoever. In fact, there are only forty-two encampments listed here. Fourteen of them must be excluded from the total since those journeys took place during the first year after the Exodus and before the decree of being in the desert for forty years had been pronounced, when the people traveled from Ra'amses until Ritma from where the spies were sent. A further eight encampments must be excluded, because they took place after the death of Aharon as the people journeyed from Mount Hor until the Plains of Moav in the fortieth year, their last year in the desert. Rashi writes: נמצא שכל שמנה ושלושים שנה לא נסעו אלא עשרים משאות. Thus, over the course of thirty-eight years, there were only a total of twenty encampments (42 - 14 - 8 = 20). This explanation is from the work of Rabbi Moshe HaDarshan (cited by Rashi on Verse 33:1). Rashi also comments concerning the naming of all of the encampments recorded in Torah: *And Rabbi Tanchuma taught another homily concerning this: it may be compared to a king who took his sick son to a distant place to be healed. On the way back, the father began to enumerate all the stations on the way, saying: There we slept, there we felt chilled, there your head hurt, etc.* Although Bnei Yisrael's forty year journey through the desert was a punishment for חטא המרגלים - The Sin of The Spies, it was a process which lent itself to the growth and maturing process of our young Jewish nation, as different things happened to them, and for them, at the different encampments.

On the topic of journeys, Rabbi Yehonatan Chipman of Yerushalayim cites a sermon that he heard on Parshat Masei delivered by Art Green to a group comprised mostly of people in their sixties. He spoke, in half-jocular tone, of Parashat Masei as the chapter of "trips" - of life as a series of "trips," and of the more serious Chassidic message that life is an ongoing journey, with many different stations or, if you prefer, "trips," in which a person seeks meaning. All these trips taken together, both good and bad, make up who we are. The definitions of some of the names of our ancestors' encampments in the desert are symbolic. Some, such as Charadah (paralyzing fear), Marah (Bitterness), and Tachat (Bottom), are negative; others, like Mitkah (Sweetness) and Har Shefer (Goodness), have a more positive resonance. Or there may be group experiences, like Makhelot or Kehelata, or that of going to the "court" of a Hasidic or other charismatic teacher - Hatzerot. At the end of the journey, however, there is a certain value to remembering all the trips and to knowing that though they seem misguided and seemingly irrelevant at times, in retrospect they are all part of one's life, defining who we are and contributing to the way we live our lives, enhancing our wisdom, coping skills and more.

The Piasecna Rebbe, Rabbi Klonimus Kalman Shapira Hy"d (1889–1943) spoke about the opening verse of Parashat Masei: *Moshe recorded their starting points for their journeys according to the word of Hashem* (Numbers 33, 2). Rabbi Shapira said: *All the hardships are sorts of ropes to reveal the light of G-d but during the journeys, they felt only the hardships.* According to the Rebbe, the list of journeys symbolizes the list of hardships that the Israelites experienced in the desert, but all these difficulties helped them grow and become a revelation of G-d's light. With these words, he tried to help the Jews in the Warsaw Ghetto cope with life under impossible conditions and add a spiritual component to the hardships, dangers and tragedies that enveloped them constantly. He ended these moving words with a desperate hope that the day would come when these experiences would not be seen as hardships and journeys, but that they would eventually be revealed as the word of G-d, whose Name would be sanctified with the redemption of Israel.

As mentioned above, the expansive and exact breakdown of the forty-two journeys and encampments is explained in Chassidic teaching as an allegory of man's journey through life, from the day of his birth until the day of his death. The Baal Shem Tov wrote that just as the Israelites wandered from place to place until they reached the Promised Land, so every person *goes from place to place until he reaches the sublime Land of Life.* (Baal Shem Tov on Masei). In *Pirkei Avot* - The Ethics of the Fathers, the famous statement by Akavia Ben Mahallel serves as a cautionary eye opener regarding our life long journey:

דע מאין באת ולאן אתה הולך ולפני מי אתה עתיד ליתן דין וחשבון

Know from where you came, where you are going, and before whom you are destined to give a judgement and accounting... (Avot 3:1)

We have all been there. We have been to places where positive and negative things have happened to us; where events and experiences may have changed our lives, where significant things happened that we only reflect upon and appreciate later in life. Every so often, we need to remember or, be reminded of, these places. These places are the building blocks of our very lives. Our journey through life is a learning process and our journey sometimes needs the reinforcement of the memories of where things happened in our past. Our life long journey is one that goes from one minute to the next with the events of each and every minute contributing to who and what we are. This is a continuous process which never stops. While the Torah lists the physical journeys and encampments of Bnei Yisrael, we also learn of the significance of the journeys and encampments: the spiritual development of our ancestors with the building of the Tabernacle in the desert, their behavioural practices in mourning for Aharon and Moshe, Hashem supplying their much needed spiritual nourishment with the giving of Torah and its laws, their need for the physical nourishment of water and meat, and much more.

Moshe recorded their starting points for their journeys according to the word of Hashem (Numbers 33, 2). Reading in the Torah about the recording of our history is a valuable lesson. We need to write things down, not only for future generations, but for ourselves as well. Our roots, our 613 commandments and our history come from our written Tanach. The rest we know through the Oral Torah which was transmitted from parent to child and from teacher to disciple. Approximately 1800 years ago, Rabbi Yehudah Hanasi concluded that because of all the travails of Exile, the Oral Law would be forgotten if it would not be recorded on paper. He, therefore, assembled the scholars of his generation and compiled the Mishnah, a (shorthand) collection of all the oral teachings that preceded him. Since then, the Oral Law has ceased to be "oral" and as time passed more and more of the previously oral tradition was recorded. Our ever continuing storehouse of Sifrei Kodesh - holy books written by our sages over the ages on a wide range of Jewish topics are not only a source of Torah and halachic knowledge but enhance our knowledge of our rich history as a nation. Historians and others have put pen to paper over the years and their writings have preserved and enhanced our Jewish knowledge with their writings.

I recently came upon the following quote: *"A people without the knowledge of their past history, origin and culture is like a tree without roots."* The roots nurture the tree – without our roots we cannot be nurtured, we cannot grow. The vast writings of our people are roots that continue to be planted as Torah thoughts and commentary, Jewish history, personal memoirs and more are written and published by the day.

Indeed there is much to read and write about. Lately, I have taken an interest in memoirs of clergy over the years and about how rabbis and chazanim dealt with different challenges in their communities and within themselves. While I enjoy reading about our Jewish past, our history and so much more, I find it increasingly frustrating trying to find source references. It seems that while many people have taken the time to record their journeys through life, others haven't. When the pandemic broke out, one of the things that piqued my curiosity was how synagogues dealt with the pandemic crisis during the Spanish flu 100 years ago. I was especially interested as we, the Zoom generation of today, have been pandemically spoiled with a modern plethora of coping remedies: Halachic decisions regarding our spiritual needs which included revising prayer practices and certain leniencies where halachic practices are concerned, medical supplies, fast paced medical research producing the vaccines, television, social media, internet and even the delivery of the newspapers and groceries to our doors during lockdowns and quarantines. The generation that was faced with the Spanish Flu was not so fortunate. Rabbi Akiva Eiger's writings about the cholera epidemic in the 1830's provide information on distancing and social protocols which were adopted in the past year in synagogues around the world. I am continually searching for material about how the shuls and communities coped with the Spanish Flu and other pandemics of the past.

On her internet blog, Rachel Coleman has written that *knowing, recording, and preserving your family history directly impacts you, your family, and even future generations of people you may never know. Find out how and why family history matters.* Coleman lists five things which are enhanced by preserving family history:

Connection - The relationships we form with other people can be incredibly durable, not only with people in our present, but also with people in our past and future. The more we discover about our past, the greater a connection we feel to our ancestors. As we record our own history, we open the opportunity for future generations to connect with us when we are gone.

Compassion - Learning the history of our ancestors helps us gain a greater understanding of the challenges they faced. This compassion can easily translate to our relationships with the living, within our families and outside them. We all face hard things. Remembering that fact in the context of others' shortcomings allows us to be better employees, managers, spouses, parents, children, siblings, and human beings.

Resilience - Knowing our family history builds resilience. In learning about our ancestors' lives, we can see patterns of overcoming failures and surviving hard times. Their stories remind us that surely not everything in life will work easily, that disappointments occur and inequalities exist, but that we can recover, triumph, and find happiness despite hardships.

Selflessness - The ability to cooperate and act selflessly is unique to humanity. Learning our history, recording it, and preserving it is important not only to our related family, but to all around us.

Self-Worth - As we delve into our own family histories, we see events unfold on both a large scale and a personal scale. Our family history goes beyond names and dates. It's about what makes us who we are. It's about people with whom we can form deep connections. It's about people who lived and breathed and suffered and triumphed. It's about all of us.

Years ago I was at a shiva home where there was a tape recorder next to the mourners which recorded the condolences and conversations. The mourners mentioned that they heard stories and anecdotes about their loved one that they never knew! At my Zaida's shiva twenty-five years ago, there was an older gentleman, a Moroccan Jew who came into the room and sat silently in the corner. Nobody knew who he was. He told my family that he came to the shiva house in Jerusalem from his home in Beer Sheva by bus! He told the story of my Zaida helping him settle in Beer Sheva upon his immigration to Israel in the 1950's and he stressed that my Zaida's interest and compassion was a source of help and comfort in that challenging time. The story enhanced and stressed the values that we learned from Zaida while he was with us.

In our synagogue lobby there is a Sefer Hakehillah, the book of our community from the early 1900's in which synagogue activity and news from those days is recorded. Though written in Yiddish, I have been able to understand much of how our kehillah functioned some 100 years ago. It is who we were and who we are as Congregation TBJ, the merger of four wonderful synagogues in our community.

There are many journeys in our lives - traveling journeys, academic journeys, journeys of financial growth, journeys of accomplishment. As we are in the midst of the three weeks of mourning for our Temples in Yerushalayim (among other tragedies which befell our people during this period over the generations), I would like to share a story of a journey from the terrible Holocaust years, a journey to life. This story is recorded in the book of *Hasidic Tales Of The Holocaust* by the late Yaffa Eliach.

The Bluzhover Rebbe, Rabbi Israel Spira, and many other Jews were taken from their barracks in the Janowska road camp to a vacant parking lot with two large pits. They were told that in order to live they had to successfully jump over one the pits. They would otherwise be shot to death. Jumping over the pits seemed impossible and the prisoners in their weakened physical state knew that this challenge was but another devilish game by the SS and the Ukrainian guards, ימח שמו. The Rebbe was standing next to a friend, a free thinker with whom he had developed a deep friendship. The friend told the Rebbe that the efforts to jump over the pits were in vain and that it would be better to sit in the pit and wait for the bullets. The Rebbe answered that *man must obey the will of G-d. If it was decreed from heaven that the pits be dug and we be commanded to jump, pits will be dug and jump we must. And if, G-d forbid, we fail and fall into the pits, we will reach the world of truth a second later, after our attempt. So, my friend, we must jump.* As they were nearing the pit, they saw that the pit was rapidly filling with bodies. Approaching the pit, their time to jump had come. The Rebbe closed his eyes and commanded his friend in a powerful whisper - *We are jumping!* When they opened their eyes they found themselves standing on the other side of the pit. *Spira we are here, we are alive!* The Rebbe's friend repeated to him again and again. *Spira for your sake I am alive, indeed there must be a G-d in heaven. Tell me Rebbe, how did you do it? The Rebbe answered him: I was holding onto ancestral merit. I was holding on to the coattails of my father and my grandfather and my great grandfather of blessed memory. Tell me, my friend, how did you reach the other side of the pit?* The Rebbe's friend replied: *I was holding on to you...*

"Moshe recorded their starting points for their journeys according to the word of Hashem". We must record our journeys, the important things in our lives. Preserving the stories of our journeys as well as those of our nation will ensure the journeys of future generations והם פי השם according to the word of Hashem.

Shabbat Shalom,

Rev. Amiel