



## On This Week's Torah Portion

### מסעי

This week's *parshat Masei* is the last one in the Book of Numbers. This book begins in the Sinai wilderness and contains many of the Almighty's revelations to the children of Israel. In many ways this book portrays the children of Israel becoming organized to prosper in the future and establishes its religious practices through the Almighty's ordinances and commandments. Examples of the definition of religious practices include Aaron and his descendants' activities as High Priest and Levites' tasks to care for the Sanctuary. This book contains a structure of what is ritually acceptable or ritually unclean, e.g. concerning sexual interactions, and parameters for vows to abstain for certain types of conduct. In this process of organizing a society, Moses' spiritual and political leadership is challenged and relationships between the children of Israel and the Almighty undergo severe tests. In many instances the Israelites "tried the patience" of the Almighty. It can be argued that the Almighty is establishing these parameters so that the children of Israel will be faithful to the ordinances and commandments once they are settled in the Land of Canaan. The *Haftorah* (Jeremiah II 4-28) shows the Jewish people did not always follow many of these *mitzvot*, especially those concerning renouncing of idolatry.

The review of the Book of Numbers brings us to the opening passage of *Masei* which raises a number of ideas. This passage says: "These are the journeys of the children of Israel" (Num 33:1). In looking at the path of the children of Israel, is there a single journey or multiple journeys as they moved from place to place? This *parshat* shows the forty-two "stations" from Egypt to the Promised Land. In this process, did the children of Israel's spiritual level move beyond old limits and find new parameters? The main goal of the children of Israel is to obtain the Promised Land, but in attaining that goal, what spiritual and material goals are explicit or implied? The process of moving from Egypt to the Promised Land formed the identity of the children of Israel. We can ask, How have our individual "journeys" transcended our past limitations? or how will future journeys accomplish that goal?

*Shabbat Shalom,  
Steven Puro*

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## Inside the Parashah: Mas'ei - פרשת מסעי

### Rabbi Seth D Gordon Traditional Congregation, Creve Coeur, MO

#### Aliyot 1 & 2

What place names are familiar in the list of B'nai Yisrael's wilderness travels?  
How many are listed in the first two **aliyot**?

#### Aliyah 3

What is B'nai Yisrael commanded to do in this **aliyah**? Why?

#### Aliyah 4

What is the theme of this **aliyah**? What special note is made?

#### Aliyah 5

What is the theme of this **aliyah**?

## Aliyah 6

What special provision is commanded for Eretz Yisrael? Why?

## Aliyah 7

How does **Sefer B'midbar** conclude?

# UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, July 31      **Intercongregational League Softball Games, come out and support our teams:**

3:40 PM      Traditional Family Values vs. Traditional Tikkunim

### **Tisha B'Av Schedule of Services:**

Monday, August 8:

*Minchah/Arvit*      7:45 PM including the chanting of *Eichah* (Lamentations)

Tuesday, August 9:

*Shacharit*      **6:30 AM** without *Tallit* or *Tefillin*; includes *Kinot* (elegies)

*Minchah/Arvit*      7:15 PM **with Tallit and Tefillin**

Fast Ends      8:03 PM (sunset); 8:43 PM (3 stars)

Monday-Friday, through August 12 **Camp Derech Eretz** at Traditional Congregation

Thursday, August 11      **General Board Meeting**

Wednesday, August 17      **Deadline for receipt of articles, notices, etc. for September Newsletter.**

Please submit to Marian at [tradcong@sbcglobal.net](mailto:tradcong@sbcglobal.net)

Wednesday, August 17 "Facing Arthur," film followed by discussion with Bob Cohn, Jewish Light editor-in-chief emeritus. Award-winning film of the friendship that develops between a Holocaust survivor and a German exchange student. 1:30 PM, Kopolow Building. \$7/person, snacks and drinks will be served. RSVP required by 8/16, 314-442-3720.

**Condolences to...**Dina Rinder on the passing of her father, Arthur Block

### **DAILY SERVICE TIMES**

Sunday morning - 9:00 AM

Monday - Friday morning - 7:00 AM

Monday - Friday evening - 6:30 PM

## **PRAYER**

The Jewish people were the first to whom  
there was revealed the truth that  
there is only One God in the world,

*That He is the God of all nations and all peoples,*

And that He is interested in the welfare and happiness  
of *all* of them.

*Israelites and Moabites may be enemies  
of one another just as fire and water appear to be*

But One God created both of them,  
*And one does not have more privileges in the world  
than the other.*

What is it that Israelites and Moabites have in common?

*They are both children of the One God,  
and He is their parent.*

*Simon Greenberg*

#### **THOUGHT FOR THE MOMENT OF SILENCE**

**It's easy to get a reputation for wisdom. It's  
only necessary to live long, speak little and  
do less.**

*P.D. James*

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