



Parshas Matos-Masei

July 9, 2021

## A Taste of Torah Travelogue

by Rabbi Chaim Yeshaya Freeman

The parsha opens with a list of all the journeys of the Jewish people in the desert. Rashi is bothered by an obvious question: Why were these journeys recorded? He cites an explanation from Rabi Moshe Hadarshan that it is meant to show the kindness of Hashem. Although Hashem had decreed that the Jewish People would wander in the desert for a total of forty years, one should not think that they were constantly on the move, wandering and moving about from place to place with little rest. The Torah records the journeys to allow us to make the calculations of the travels and see that the Jewish People rarely travelled during the period of the decree of wandering.

Rashi continues: There are a total of forty-two journeys listed in the parsha. Deduct the fourteen journeys which occurred in the first year (prior to the Sin of the Spies) and another eight journeys which occurred in the fortieth year (after the decree of death for the generation had ended). Accordingly, during the entire thirty-eight years from the Sin of the Spies until the decree ended, the Jewish People travelled only twenty times.

Rashi cites a second interpretation from Rabi Tanchuma. He compares the travels of the Jewish People to a king whose son was ill, and the king needed to take his son to a distant place to obtain a cure. On the way home, the king recounted the events that had occurred during their journeys together: "Here we slept;" "Here we felt cold;" "Here you had a headache." By recounting the journeys, and some of the events that occurred during

those journeys, we are able to review and reflect upon the experiences of the forty-year sojourn through the desert.

The Maharal (Rabbi Yehuda Loew; 1512/1526-1609) in his Gur Aryeh commentary on Rashi expounds on the explanation of Rabi Tanchuma. He writes that "here we slept" is a reference to the tranquil times experienced while in the desert. "Here we felt cold" is a metaphor to times when the Jews were lacking something. Finally, "here you had a headache" represents the suffering the Jews sometimes endured in the desert.

Having explained the symbolism of Rabi Tanchuma, the Maharal wonders why it is important for Hashem to remind us about every detail that occurred in the desert. He answers that Hashem was trying to show the efforts He put forth throughout the long journey in the desert to convey how much He loves and cares about His People. By reviewing the events that occurred, the loving relationship between Hashem and the Jewish People is strengthened, as the Jewish People realize how much Hashem cares for them.

This is an interesting insight into the proper outlook for life's experiences. A person can go through difficult periods in life. Once the struggles are over, it is normal for the person to try and move on, and he may want to never think about those harrowing events again. The Torah teaches that it may be worthwhile to reevaluate those circumstances and gain a new appreciation for them in retrospect.

### Stories for the Soul

#### Not for Sale

A *bachur* (young man) once took a *farher* (entrance exam) for the Mesivta of Long Beach, but was informed by the administration that he was not accepted.

Nonetheless, the boy wanted to attend the yeshiva, and so his parents contacted a cousin who was an alumnus of the Mesivta of Long Beach. The cousin called the dean of the yeshiva, Rabbi Yitzchak Feigelstock, asking him to accept the *bachur*. The alumnus added that the boy's parents were financially well-off and would write a generous check to the yeshiva upon their son's acceptance.

Rabbi Feigelstock asked his former student for several days to look into the matter. After a few days, he called him back and said that he had spoken with the administration, who felt that the *bachur* was not a good match for the yeshiva, and so he could not accept him.

The former student, realizing that Rabbi Feigelstock did not regard the financial windfall as a factor in the decision, pleaded with his rebbi. "I am asking that the yeshiva accept this boy as a *tova* (favor) for me."

"A *tova* for a student?" said Rabbi Feigelstock. "I am happy to accept him as a *tova* for you."

"With the check, or without the check?" asked the student.

"Without the check, of course!" replied Rabbi Feigelstock.

Following the successful battle

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## Kollel Happenings

### EXPLORING THE ADVENT OF THE MESSIANIC ERA THIS MONDAY EVENING

Join Kollel Senior Educator Rabbi Mordechai Fleisher. this Monday, July 12, 7 pm @the Sonstein home, 9142 E. Tufts Pl. for part 2 of this series, titled *Worth the Wait: What's Special About the Era of Mashiach?* For men & women. Also on Zoom, <https://zoom.us/j/3038202855> Password 1234; Phone: 669 900 6833 Meeting ID: 303 820 2855

### MOTZOEI SHABBOS NACHAMU KUMZITZ

The Kollel's annual Motzoei Shabbos Nachamu Kumzitz will take place on Motzoei Shabbos, July 24th, 10 pm, location TBD. Live music, inspirational singing, refreshments and divrei Torah. Stay tuned for more info!

### SUMMERNIGHT SEDER FOR BACHURIM CONTINUES

The Kollel's Summer Night Seder for Bachurim is in full swing at the West Denver Kollle Torah Center. Boys join the Kollel's night seder. Refreshments and raffles nightly. A weekly stipend is available for those who attend consistently. Contact Rabbi Mordechai Fleisher, [rmf@denverkollel.org](mailto:rmf@denverkollel.org), for more details. Sponsored in memory of Reuven ben Yosef.

## Halacha Riddles

**Last week's question:** When would one possibly skip *ritzei* in *Birkas Hamazon* following the Third Meal?

**Answer:** If *Rosh Chodesh* begins on *Motzoei Shabbos*, and one's Third Meal continued past nightfall into *Rosh Chodesh*.

Normally, if one's bread meal extends from daytime into the night of *Rosh Chodesh*, and one ate a *kezayis* (olive's-volume) of bread after nightfall, one would recite *ya'ale veyavo*, since one ate part of the bread meal on *Rosh Chodesh*. On *Motzoei Shabbos*, however, there is an innate contradiction, as one is already reciting the *ritzei* addition due

to the meal having begun on *Shabbos*, while reciting *ya'ale veyavo* indicates this meal is connected to *Motzoei Shabbos*, and not *Shabbos* itself. There are three different opinions as to what should be recited in this scenario: Just *retzei*, just *ya'ale veyavo*, or both. One can avoid the question by not eating any bread after nightfall, but if one did so, one ruling cited by the *Mishna Berura* is to recite just *ya'ale veyavo* (*Mishna Berura* 188:33).

**This week's question:** When would different parts of *Havdala* be performed on two different days by the entirety of the Jewish People?

## Lives of Our Torah Leaders

### Rabbi Meir Shapiro - Part VII

At age 23, Rabbi Meir took his first rabbinic position in a town called Galina, near Lemberg. The Jewish residents of the town were desperately poor, and Rabbi Meir, seeking to alleviate the poverty that was rampant, opened a yeshiva called *Bnai Torah* which included vocational instruction. Including vocational training within the confines of a yeshiva was controversial, but Rabbi Meir sought and received approval from the *Tchortkover Rebbe* for the endeavor.

Rabbi Meir also opened a traditional yeshiva geared for full-time Torah study. Already in Galina, Rabbi Meir's astounding talent for fundraising

manifested itself, and he raised enough money for his institutions to provide proper living quarters for the students and proper salaries for those who taught therein. This was a stark contrast to many yeshivos of the time, which were always lacking funds and thus often could not provide food for the students. It was common in many yeshivos of the era for the students to eat meals at the homes of local residents, a system known as "*essen teg*." This system was usually demeaning to the students and often created resentment among the local populace, who felt they were being pressured into sharing the meager food they had for their families with strangers.

## Stories for the Soul

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against Midian, the Jewish soldiers were praised for abstaining from grabbing the loot. Rather, it was carefully divided, with significant portions of the spoils given to *hekdesh* (sanctified

property used for the *Mishkan*). Money is a temptation, and one must invest great effort to resist its allure, even when there is room to justify giving in.