

of the ancient world. In the long exile and in the far-flung diaspora of the Jews, there is no place on our globe that has not seen Jewish settlement or activity. Many commentators saw this phenomenon as a positive thing - the spreading the ideas of monotheism and of Torah values to a pagan and uncaring world. Others have seen it as the source of the angst and punishment of Israel for its betrayal of those very same values and beliefs. Perhaps both approaches are correct and have meaning for us.

Nevertheless, we now live in a shrinking Jewish world. Entire ancient Jewish communities no longer exist and the Jewish people are concentrated in a relatively small number of national enclaves, basically in the Western world and the Land of Israel. One would hope that both our travels and travails will soon come to an end. *Rabbi Berel Wein and torah.org.*

### Haftarah Summary Rabbi Aron Tendler

This week's Haftarah is the second Haftarah forewarning the impending destruction of Yerushalayim. In the 2nd chapter of Yirmiyahu, the Navi detailed the extent of the nations infidelity that led up to the Churban - destruction. The leaders, the Kohanim, and the common man had all betrayed G-d's love. Whereas last week the Prophet left us with a vision of G-d's love for His children, this week his words relentlessly assault our consciousness.

"As the thief is ashamed when he is found, so is the house of

### Minyan Schedule

Erev Shabbat Parashat Masei  
Candle lighting 25/07/14 4.52 pm  
Kabbalat Shabbat (Mizrachi) 5.02 pm

Shabbat Parashat Masei  
Shacharit 26/07/14 9.15 am  
Children's Service 10.00 am  
Mincha 4.50 pm  
Shabbat ends 5.50 pm

Rosh Chodesh Av 28/07/14

Erev Shabbat Parashat Devarim  
Candle lighting 1/08/14 4.57 pm  
Kabbalat Shabbat (Mizrachi) 5.07 pm

### Announcements

**Kiddush is sponsored by**

**Jack and Miriam Stein  
commemorating the  
yahrzeit of Miriam's  
mother, Rivka Leah bat  
Chaim Wolff HaCohen, and  
celebrating the birth and  
Brit Milah of a grandson,  
Menachem Eliyahu**

Israel ashamed; they, their kings, their priests, and their prophets, who say to a piece of wood: "you are my father," and to a stone: "You gave birth to me. ...But in the time of their trouble they will say: Arise and save us. Where are your g-ds that you made for yourselves? Let them arise, if they can save you in the time of your trouble... (Yirmi. 2:26) *Rabbi Aron Tendler and torah.org.*

# Or Chadash

קהילת אור חדש

## WEEKLY BULLETIN

### Shabbat Parashat Masei

28 Tamuz, 5774, 26 July, 2014

**Torah reading:** Stone Chumash page 918,  
Haftarah page 1193.

**President** Jonathan Erlich

**Rabbi-in-residence** Rabbi Franklin

**Consulting Rabbi** R David Freedman

**Dvar Torah**

### The Trek to the Promised Land

**Rabbi Marc D. Angel**

This week's Torah portion offers a detailed description of the travels of the Israelites during their forty year sojourn in the wilderness. It lists the name of each stop on their route from Egypt on their way to the Promised Land. 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 head ache. 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 they were anticipating their entry into the Promised Land.

Perhaps there is a broader message in the recounting the details of where the Israelites encamped. This account might also be viewed as a parable on the nature of life's journey. We live our lives with a goal. We want to be good people, serve our families and communities. We want to bring the world closer to a Messianic time, an era of peace and understanding among all humanity.

Maimonides taught (Hilkhot Melakhim



12:4-5) that our prophets and sages yearned for Messianic times, not so that the Jewish people would rule over others nor for any material benefits. Rather, their desire was to live in an age of peace and prosperity so that everyone could turn their attention to spiritual advancement without disturbances. In the Messianic era, there will be no famine, no war, no jealousy, no strife. People will universally be engaged in pursuing the knowledge of God and will attain their greatest human potential. This is the goal toward which we strive. But we are still in the wilderness of an unredeemed world.

On our journey toward the Messianic era, there are many stops, many detours, many setbacks. We move a bit forward only to fall backward again. We bide time, we go in circles; a generation passes, and we are still in the wilderness. It can become discouraging to wander from place to place without feeling that real progress is being made. But we keep looking ahead to the Promised Land.

The wilderness in which we live today is scarred by ugly fanaticism, violence, hatred, warfare. Israel is under constant attack. Anti-Semitism does not abate. Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik, in his "On Repentance," offers a description of

what it means for a Jew to identify with Keneset Israel, the eternal Congregation of Israel: "The Jew who believes in Keneset Israel is the Jew who lives with Keneset Israel where she may be and is prepared to die for her, who hurts with her pain and rejoices in her joy, who fights her wars, suffers in her defeats, and celebrates her victories. The Jew who believes in Keneset Israel is the Jew who joins himself as an indestructible link not only to the Jewish people of this generation but to Keneset Israel of all generations. How? Through Torah, which is and creates the continuity of all the generations of Israel for all time."

Being part of Keneset Israel does not guarantee a smooth journey through life; but it guarantees that we live a life of idealism and hope. We have many stops and setbacks along the way to the Promised Land, but we never flinch in our faith that we will one day achieve our goal. Our goal, as Maimonides taught, is a goal that should be shared by all humanity; the Messianic era for which we strive will be a time of peace and harmony among all nations and all people.

Parashat Mas'ei reminds us that the trek through the wilderness of life can be long and frustrating;

and yet we will ultimately reach the Promised Land. *Rabbi Marc. D. Angel and the Institute of Jewish Ideas and Ideals.*

## Jewish Movement Rabbi Berel Wein

There is a trend amongst all biblical commentators in the Jewish world to view the biblical description of past events that occurred to our ancestors from the time of Abraham through the beginning of Second Temple times as being not only a description of past events but to also subtly indicate the course of all events that would befall the Jewish people. This type of idea perhaps helps us to understand why the Torah goes into such detail in the naming all of the way stops of the Jewish people during their forty-year sojourn in the Sinai Desert. The Torah indicates to us that the Jewish people were and are a wandering and traveling group.

Even though the commentators point out to us that the Lord favored Israel by allowing it to remain in place at one oasis for thirty-eight years and that all of the many other way station stops listed in this week's Torah reading took place only over a relatively short period of time, of approximately two years, the list of stops and starts is impressive if not even astounding. Since most of these locations are unknown to us today and have limited meaning to later generations, the broader message encompassed in this travelogue is to be considered and studied. All of the commentators to the Bible have advanced insights

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*We have operated since 1995. During the year we arrange special activities including: learning, shiur/lecture series and social events.*

and explanations to enlighten us as to the reasons for this detailed accounting of the travels of Israel in the desert of Sinai.

Rashi sees it as a type of recollected history of the events, failings and triumphs of the Jewish people on the road from Egyptian slavery to the settling of the Land of Israel. The Torah, in its usual cryptic style, only records the names of the places and we are to fill in the missing event that should be part of our memory bank. But that requires a certain amount of knowledge, sophistication and national memory. These items are always in short supply in every generation.

If one views Jewish history as a whole, then one realizes that this pattern of movement, stops and starts, continuing travel and social instability recorded for is in this week's Torah reading, is really an ongoing pattern in all of Jewish history. The Jewish people, again as a whole or in its many subdivisions, have literally seen the entire world in their wanderings.

Already in First Temple times the prophet describes Jewish mercantile activity in faraway places

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Divrei Torah