

THE WHOLE TEXT OF OUR TORAH SERVICE/MATTOT MASEI



“Before We Cross Over”

Before the Reading of the Torah:
The Summary

Shabbat Shalom Dear All

I am honoured this morning in coming up to the Torah and in the good company of The Women of Heart Centered Torah Study – with those that could not be here this morning, with those who will not be speaking today, and with those who will be: Barbara Silver, Tiferet Welch, Ros Kunin, Emma Mas, Tanya Paz, Rahel Cela Behar, and Kathy Brandon whose words I will share. We are honoured to be with you!

We open hold now the very last two chapters of the Book of B'Midbar, In the Wilderness. We stand, at last, on the bank of the Jordan looking towards Jericho and our new homeland, and we are about to enter The Promised Land. The words inscribed here in the Torah hold us upright, holding us in honour of the sacred vows we will make and we will speak. These last words before our crossing over hold us steady, despite the tugs and pulls and terrific struggles we may encounter with those who we will still meet and who might oppose us. These last words shape how we will live with each other in the land – how we will be able to create homes and cities for ourselves and for those who have become dispossessed.

From the brief amended summaries, courtesy of Nutshells by Chabad, here are Matot/Masei

Parashat Matot discusses laws of vows, the destruction of Midianite towns, and negotiations of the Reubenites and Gadites to settle land outside of Israel.

Parashat Masei discusses the stations of the Israelites' journeys, instructions for taking the land of Israel, the six cities of refuge for the Levites, and the bequeathment of land to the daughters of Zelophehad.

In this triennial year two, we are reading in the Torah, 7 aliyot from Chapters 32 – Chapters 33. I have chosen two of them – the very first (the Reubenites' and Gadites' request to stay on the pasture lands east of the Jordan) and the very last (the recounting of the death of Aharon on Mount Hor and so the passing on of this leadership and priesthood to his son, Eliazer and the nation).

So, in this day and in this time, we are looking here for home coming, for where we do belong, at what has been given to us and what belongs to us. We are looking at settlement. We are looking here at making peace with what we love, where we are safe, what we will be given, and what we will give.

We will have only two Aliyot this morning and the second will include the Healing Aliyah.

Aliyah 1

מקנה: מקום המקום והנה גלעד ואת־אֶרֶץ יַעֲזֹר ואת־אֶרֶץ וִירְאֹוּ מֵאֵד עֲצִיִּים וּלְבִנֵי־גַד רְאוּבֹנָה לְבִנֵי הָהָר רֹב וּמִקְנֵה
The Reubenites and the Gadites owned cattle in very great numbers. Noting that the lands of Jazer and Gilead were a region suitable for cattle,

the Gadites and the Reubenites came to Moses, Eleazar the priest, and the chieftains of the community, and said,

“Ataroth, Dibon, Jazer, Nimrah, Heshbon, Elealeh, Sebam, Nebo, and Beon—

{ס} מקנה: וְלַעֲבָדֶיךָ הָיָה מִקְנֵה אֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל עַדְתָּ לְפָנֶי יְהוָה הַבָּה אֲשֶׁר הָאָרֶץ the land that the LORD has conquered for the community of Israel is cattle country, and your servants have cattle.

It would be a favor to us,” they continued, “if this land were given to your servants as a holding; do not move us across the Jordan.”



THE ALIYAH

May all who long for a way to stay right where they are

No matter what the surge

No matter what those near to us ask us and of us

No matter what the forces might be to ask us to do in the midst of our living

May this blessing call up those who long to hang on to where they are

to see and hear what they have and where they most long to stay

May all those come up to the Torah to receive blessing and strength in

speaking their truth and their yearning to remain just where they are

and in this way to serve life

All those who feel called, please rise and stand for this first Aliyah. The words of the Blessing before the reading of the Torah are found on page 79 of our Siddur. Please unmute yourself so that we may sing this blessing before and after together.

The Mi Sherberach

May the One who blessed our ancestors —

Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah, Bilhah and Zilpah

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,

Bless you here

May you be blessed to know just where you are and how you live

May you be blessed to see clearly how it serves you to stay in this place of your living

despite what the outside world urges you to do

May you be blessed with clarity and insight to know the goodness of where you remain

*May you be blessed to understand how you may support those near and dear to you
without leaving your place and your stand*

May those near to you and dear to you see the wisdom of your choice and so love you

and honour you and bring you their blessing

May you be blessed with joy and health and long life and let us say Amen

Aliyah 2

33 37:41

אֶדוֹם: אֲרָץ בְּקֶצֶה הַהָר בְּהָר וַיִּחַנוּ מִקֶּדֶשׁ וַיִּסְעוּ They set out from Kadesh and encamped at Mount Hor, on the edge of the land of Edom.

בַּחֹדֶשׁ מֵצָרִים מֵאֲרָץ בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵיצֵאת הָאֲרָבָעִים בְּשָׁנָה שָׁם וַיָּמָת יְהוָה עַל־פִּי הָהָר אֶל־הָר הַכֹּהֵן אֶהֱרֹן וַיָּעַל Aaron the priest ascended Mount Hor at the command of the LORD and died there, in the fortieth year after the Israelites had left the land of Egypt, on the first day of the fifth month.

{ס} הָהָר: בְּהָר בְּמָתוֹ שָׁנָה וּמֵאֶת וְעֶשְׂרִים בְּנֵי־שָׁלֹשׁ וְאַהֲרֹן Aaron was a hundred and twenty-three years old when he died on Mount Hor.

יִשְׂרָאֵל: בְּנֵי בָבֶא כְּנָעַן אֲרָץ בְּנִגֶב וְהוּא־יָשֵׁב עָרֹד מֶלֶךְ הַכְּנַעֲנִי וַיִּשְׁמַע And the Canaanite, king of Arad, who dwelt in the Negeb, in the land of Canaan, learned of the coming of the Israelites.

בְּצַלְמֹנָה: וַיִּחַנוּ הָהָר מִהָר וַיִּסְעוּ They set out from Mount Hor and encamped at Zalmonah.



THE ALIYAH

*May all those who long for a new way in their living
For holding and cherishing what they have been given
and who long for a new understanding of what they have been given
so that they establish within them a new strength that is theirs to have
come to the Torah.*

*May those that yearn to recognize the beauty of what they have been taught
and yearn to make use of it in ways that are more uniquely theirs
Come now to the Torah for the blessing.*

And this Aliyah will also be a healing blessing

All those who feel called, please rise and stand for the second Aliyah which is also the Healing Aliyah and let us sing the words of the Blessing before the reading of the Torah. The words of blessing are found on page 79 of our Siddur. Please unmute yourself so that we may sing this blessing before and after together.

The Mi Sheberach

May the One who blessed our ancestors

Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah, Bilhah and Zilpah

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,

Bless you

May you be blessed to know just what you have been given how you live

*May you be blessed to see clearly how it serves you to cherish this gift of bequeathment
and transmute it into what you long to hold*

*May you be blessed with clarity and insight to know the goodness of at you have been
given*

*May you be blessed to understand how you may support those near and dear to you
with how you choose to use what you have been given*

*May those near to you and dear to you see the wisdom of your choice and so love you
and honour you and bring you their blessing*

May you be blessed with joy and health and long life and let us say Amen



The Healing Mi Sheberach

May the One who blessed our ancestors —

Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah, Bilhah and Zilpah

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob

bless and heal the one who is ill

May we call and say their name

May the Holy Blessed One

overflow with compassion upon him/her/they

to restore him/her/they

to heal him/her/they

to strengthen him/her/they

to enliven him/her/they

*The One will send him/her/they speedily,
a complete healing —
healing of the soul and healing of the body —
along with all the ill,
among the people of Israel and all humankind,
soon,
speedily,
without delay,
and let us all say: Amen!*

The D'Var

I offer you now our D'var



*If you will, close your eyes and let yourself relax
Breathing in
Please let yourself imagine
that
We sit together virtually
in this open space out of time and place
Let yourself imagine before you
A hearth place
Around the hearth place
a group of 8 women
and they, having heard the words of the of the Torah sung,
they sit to write – each woman responding to the call of the Teaching
responding to what calls them and is resonant in their hearts
After the women write, they share their words
and then they listen again and look again to what they have written
They will hear/feel a phrase, a sentence, a distillation of what is most alive there
and they will offer it to each other
Each places on the hearth, something: a thing, an idea, a hope, a blessing
So now please, let yourself listen as we share what we have heard and written
and offered
there at the hearthplace . . .*

Each woman speaks and in this order – Barbara Silver, Tiferet Welch, Ros Kunin,
Emma Mas, Tanya Paz, Rahel Cela Behar, Kathy Brandon

Mattot Massei D'var July 10, 2021

Our legacy comes from our ancestors and from our reincarnate souls, but it is not ours
to keep.

We are here to act as channels for Divine inspiration and justice.

Some to stand with feet on the ground to stabilize the planet.

Others to advocate for justice and change.

Yet others. to inspire through courage and art, beauty, music and poetry.

Although we all have our differences on the Journey, let us not forget that we are part of
a larger Divine Plan,

And on the Hearth, I place a Map.

Dibarti

Barbara Silver

Perspective

Matot-Massei

Each stands before their own

River Jordan.

A steady stream of people

Standing along a narrow edge.

Turn our head,

In any direction,

And recognize

Our fellow travelers, there.

There was a man, yesterday,

In the graveyard

Where I was eating my sushi lunch,

In the near-quiet of the street.

"I have autism", he says,

"I will probably say too much".

His mother was buried

Ten days ago.

He was returning from an interview

With our national paper.

His mother was an eminent feminist scholar;

"A woman in charge."

"An Order of Canada recipient."

She chose from the roster of physicians

Who would serve in her MAiD.

"She wanted a woman", he said.

Consistent with a solid life's work.

In the finest detail,

One talent of such a mind,

He calculated the time,

Following the final of her four medications.

Comfort, enough,

To sing her over.

In rousing baritone,

A man with his beard

In two unequal braids,

A homemade walking stick,

A couple necklaces,

And a few too many bracelets,
Pants tucked into rubber boots,
On a dry and warm summer's day,
Pacific Ocean glinting,
Between sentinels of trees,
He sang to me,
The sea shanty
Of his mother's
Last, and eventual,
Wave.

Tiferet Welch

Matot D'var July 2021

Before they crossed the Jordan, the tribes of Rueben and Gad wanted to make their homes in the rich land that had already been conquered, but Moses pointed out that it was not fair that they could just settle into their new homes while the rest of Israel was still homeless. They had to help the other tribes acquire homes first. So, too, must those of us who are housed think of those without homes whether in Lytton, the downtown east side or the man who was sleeping last night on the lawn outside my home in South Granville.

Ros Kunin

Don't have me cross the Jordan.

The river is rushing by me, and time is a thief, and I can't ask the moon to release the rising tides but I can ask you to let me stay.

We aren't ready to grow until commanded, and maybe still not then.

I'm comfortable here.

And there's a promise you made on one side but that egg hasn't hatched and I don't know if its shell is home to a bird or a snake. I've made promises too, but none truer than to bloom where I'm planted.

This is not my home-coming.

I have always been home.

Emma Mas

The wandering Jew.

Setting out here and encamping there. Over and over.

The opposite of what most of us have been doing for almost 18 months: no travelling.

When we go for walks now we're not carrying physically what they must have been schlepping.

Instead, in this global pandemic and global climate emergency there is nowhere to wander to, nowhere to go to avoid it.

What we carry instead is emotional stress, witnessing death & destruction, feeling overwhelmed by it all.

Now, the world is on fire, literally, including fires in oceans and seas, human made.

This is a time of transition, of crossing over, for new leadership like from Aaron to Eleazar.

A time to prioritize the survival of our species and other species over profits.

This is an emergency.

Will it require a different transition?

Taking leadership from older generations, not waiting for their surrender like Aaron did?

Moving from the shadow of death (Zalmora) to perplexity (Punan) to the Promised Land.

I offer a jar of clean air and a glass of clean water for all for the hearth.

Thank you,
Tanya Paz

'Moshe instructs them in God's Teaching that a man should do, whatever he commits to from his mouth.'

Vows

I promise I will do...
Don't talk take action!

I promise I will love you forever
Don't tell show me

I will...I will... I will...
Don't promise do it!

Words and actions
Be in harmony...
On my heart I placed promises.

Rahel Cela Behar

Numbers 32: 1-5 Numbers 33: 37-49

Our people have journeyed for 40 years – step by step – setting forth to experience something new with each step. Life is a journey of steps, choices, experiences. Our people come to a place that feels like home, and they express their desire to stay. Home can be a place, a person, or a community of people, and is always a living vibration of God.

Kathy Brandon



*And now, dear community, if you would
Allow yourself some time and from these offerings
Let yourself hear what resonates within you
and let yourself hear ask what it is that you would like for either yourself or the
community and let yourself hear it as a one word
Please ask for what blessing you would like to receive or bestow for
your own “coming home”
and when you are ready, please open your eyes and share your word of longing for this
blessing*

TODAH RABAH V'BRACHOT

*May our prayers and blessings be heard and answered by
The One, The Source of All Blessings*

Amen

Dael Adams Segal
July 10th 2021/ 1 Av 5781