



**ALEPH
INSTITUTE**
No One Alone,
No One Forgotten.

TORAH WEEKLY

T"01

16 - 22 July, 2017

22 - 28 Tammuz, 5777

Torah:

Numbers 30:2 - 36:13

Haftorah:

Jeremiah 2:4-28; 4:1-2

■ **GRAPE JUICE & MATZAH**

Aleph offers free Grape Juice and Matzoh for you to be able to make the blessings every Shabbos. Please have your chaplain / Rabbi contact us to enroll, it is available to all prisons.

■ **ALEPH LIBRARY**

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You can then ask the librarian to order that book

■ **TORAH STUDIES**

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LOW-SPEED TRAVEL

For the past century, we have been perfecting the art of high-speed travel. We can now get from any point on the globe to another in a matter of hours. But apparently that is not fast enough for some—they want to get there within minutes. And the sky is no longer the limit. Futuristic modes of travel include personal space flights, and high-speed tubes such as Elon Musk's hyperloop.

But where are we headed at such breakneck speed?

We find a few instances in the Torah of preternaturally shortened travel. When Abraham's servant Eliezer traveled from Canaan to Aram to seek a wife for Isaac, he covered the distance, a three-day journey by foot, in just one day (*Genesis 24:42 and Rashi there*). Similarly, the road shortened for Jacob on his way from Beersheba to Charan to find a wife (*Talmud, Sanhedrin 95a*).

During their initial journey in the desert, it seemed that the Jewish people were likewise on the express track. On the verse "It is an eleven-day journey from Chorev to Kadesh Barnea" (*Deuteronomy 1:2*), Rashi comments that the Jewish people traversed this distance in only three days.

But despite the early head

start, matters played out quite differently. Instead of going supernaturally fast, we went supernaturally slow, and spent 40 years wandering in the desert.

It seems that the Torah leaves room here for only two extremes—either a dramatically shortened journey or a dramatically drawn-out one.

The Jewish people set out from Egypt destined for the Promised Land. And there were two possible ways of getting there. One way was high-speed travel. G-d could have whisked them off, posthaste, and settled them in the Land of Israel without delay.

But something would have been missing. The Jews would have missed out on an important process of soul-searching and self-growth had they entered Israel immediately. They needed a transition period. They needed time to shed the habits and outlook that had grown on them during more than 200 years of slavery in Egypt. They needed to process and internalize all that they had been taught at Mount Sinai. And they needed to do it through their own efforts. From this perspective, an express trip to Israel would have done them no favors.

The Baal Shem Tov teaches that each of the 42 journeys that the Jews took in the desert represents a different

stage of life (*Likkutei Sichot, vol. 4, p. 1083*), and we all pass through these stages on the way to our personal Promised Land. How we get through them is up to us.

Ultimately, the purpose of receiving the Torah and settling the Land of Israel was to accomplish a merger of the physical and spiritual—to transform the earth into a home for G-d. When it is handed to us from above, it may be easier and faster, but unsatisfying in the long run.

There is a dual message for us, living as we do in the high-speed era. Our attention span measures in seconds, and we expect to have everything—from our video-on-demand to our food order—delivered immediately. But certain things in life cannot be rushed. In our haste to cover ground, we may not be paying enough attention to the details of the journey. We need time to savor the process and truly experience each stage as it comes.

On the other hand, perhaps we are mastering high-speed travel for a reason. During the course of our 2,000-year exile, we've taken a slow and tortuous route. We've done it the long way and the hard way, and now we're through. In retrospect, we are grateful for the grueling journey that we completed through our own efforts. But we're past the point where further

wandering would be beneficial. It's time to come home. We want Moshiach and we want him now...

By Chaya Shuchat

LAWS OF THE TEMPLE:

The Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson of blessed and sainted memory, encouraged us to study the laws of the holy temple, its construction and use, during the three weeks we mourn its destruction.

By studying these laws, and increasing in our love and kindness to our fellow Jew and fellow man, we will merit the evil decree of our exile be annulled.

Send a note to our office and we will send out learning materials, so you can become well versed in the laws of the Temple.

“YOUR BROTHERS GO INTO BATTLE AND YOU WILL SIT HERE?”

Before Israel crossed the Jordan into Canaan, several tribes approached Moses for permission to remain in trans-Jordan. They were shepherds and that land had excellent pasture. Moses retorted sharply to them, “Your brothers go into battle and you will sit here?” (*Numbers 32:6*). Here a familiar integral theme of Torah recurs.

Anyone living in comfort and security finds it difficult to realize the situation of those in want and peril. We may read of famines in India and sympathetically nod, Living in comfort and security, it is difficult to realize the situation of those in want and peril but undismayed we will turn to the next item in the newspapers and with little appreciable loss of appetite will sit at the dinner table. Only a person of responsibility to mankind, one with rare compassion will be moved enough to share his good with the deprived, even more, to share the troubles of the unfortunate.

With Israel especially, one Jew's peril is every Jew's concern. No Jew anywhere in the world can hide behind a golden curtain, depending on wealth or status to insulate him from the problems plaguing other Jews. We may have great flocks and have found rich pastura-

ge, but while our brothers are in peril we cannot enjoy peace obliviously.

By Rabbi Zalman Posner

In Jewish History

Tuesday, 24 Tammuz, 5777 - July 18, 2017

Jews of Jerusalem are set aflame (1099)

When the crusaders captured Jerusalem during the First Crusade, the Jews of Jerusalem fled into a synagogue. The crusaders then set flame to the synagogue, burning alive all the Jewish men, women, and children who had taken refuge there. All Jews were barred from living in the city of Jerusalem for the following 88 years.

Friday, 27 Tammuz, 5777 - July 21, 2017

Third expulsion from France (1322)

After having been allowed back into France in the year 1315 (after the expulsion in 1306 by Philip IV), the Jews were once again expelled from France by Charles IV, who thus broke the pledge made by his predecessors in 1315 that the Jews would be able to stay in France for at least 12 years.

Shabbat, 28 Tammuz, 5777 - July 22, 2017

Passing of “Yismach Moshe” (1841)

Tammuz 28 is the *yahrzeit* of Rabbi Moshe Teitelbaum (1759-1841) of Uhely, Hungary, author of *Yismach Moshe* and patriarch of the Hungarian Chassidic dynasties.

Passing of Rabbi Shlomo Ganzfried (1886)

Rabbi Shlomo Ganzfried (1804-1886) was born in Uzhhorod (Ungvar) in the Carpathian region of the Habsburg Empire (now Ukraine). When he was eight years old, Shlomo's father, Rabbi Yosef, passed way, and Ungvar's chief rabbi, Rabbi Tzvi Hirsh Heller, assumed legal guardianship of Shlomo. In 1830, he abandoned his work as a wine merchant and accepted the position of Rabbi of Brezovica (Brezevitz). In 1849, he returned to Ungvar to serve as a rabbinical judge. Realizing that the average Jew required a basic knowledge of practical halachah, Rabbi Ganzfried compiled the *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch*, an abbreviated digest of Jewish law. To this day, the *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch* remains a classic halachic work, and it has been translated into many languages.

In addition to the *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch*, he authored many works including *Kesset HaSofer*, a halachic primer for scribes, and *Pnei Shlomo*, a commentary on the *Talmud*.