



THE SHALOM BAYIT JOURNAL



Parashat Mas'ei

It Takes a Journey

Understanding the Torah and the Human Experience

Developmental psychologists have long recognized that growth is rarely linear. Instead, it unfolds through seasons of progress, setbacks, waiting, and transition. While we often focus on the destination, it is the journey that transforms us.

Parashat Masei concludes Sefer Bamidbar with a detailed record of the forty-two journeys of the Jewish people through the wilderness. Rather than simply stating that Israel traveled from Egypt to the borders of the Promised Land, the Torah records every encampment along the way.

Rashi explains that this list reflects Boreh Olam's compassion. He compares it to a father who, after bringing his sick child safely home, begins "מונה כל המסעות"—recounting every stage of the journey—saying,

כאן ישננו, כאן הוקרנו, כאן חששת את ראשך

"Here we slept. Here we were chilled. Here your head ached."

The purpose is to recognize that every stop along the way mattered. The Torah reminds us that life is not measured only by where we arrive, but by the obstacles, and growth along the way.

The Arizal teaches that the forty-two journeys of Israel reflect the journey of every soul through life. While each person's path is unique, every stage carries its own opportunities for growth and refinement of character.

Each stage of life presents new challenges and opportunities that shape who we become.

Like the forty-two journeys of Israel, our own lives are shaped not only by the milestones we celebrate, but by the struggle and change that quietly transforms us.

Psychology teaches that growth is not linear, while the parasha reminds us that no stage of the journey is without purpose.

Rather than asking, "Why am I here?" we can ask, "Who is Boreh Olam shaping me to become?" That question transforms obstacles into opportunities for growth, reminding us that every stop along the journey is preparing us for the person we are meant to become.



About The Shalom Bayit Journal

The Shalom Bayit Journal explores the intersection of Torah, psychology, relationships, and the human experience. Through thoughtful essays and practical reflection, the Journal seeks to make timeless wisdom meaningful and accessible for everyday life.

