



PARASHAT  
MASEI

פרשת מסעי

Numbers 33:1-36:13

Note to the adult teacher: It will be necessary for you to give the scriptural context and background for each of the points listed below.

**Great Discoveries in This Week's Parashah (Torah Portion)**

- 33:1 Summary of Israel's Wilderness Journey
- 34:1 The Boundaries of the Land of Israel
- 34:16 The Leaders of the Tribes Who Will Lead the Israelites into Their Promised Land Possession
- 35:1 Cities for the Levites
- 35:9 Cities of Refuge for One Who Kills Another by Accident
- 36:1 Laws Concerning Tribal Intermarriage
- 32:20 In Light of These New Conditions Moses Changes His Mind

**Exploring This Week's Parashah:**


**1 Drive Out Evil! (Numbers 33:51-53)**

Let's explore the concept of temptation to do evil. Temptation is the desire to do something that is wrong or unwise. Temptation is also something that attracts us do something that is wrong or not good for us. Think about it: Are you ever "tempted" to obey YHVH's laws, to keep his Shabbat, to love your neighbor as yourself, to control your tongue and to not speak evil against someone, to not get angry, to not lie? Of course not. We are only tempted to do wrong things. Therefore, temptation is NOT a good thing!

- (a) What are some things that cause us to be tempted? Why do you think it is so easy for us to be tempted to sin? What is inside of our hearts and minds that cause us to naturally fall into temptation? (Read Jeremiah 17:9; Psalms 51:5; 52:2-3; Matthew 15:19; Romans 8:7.)
- (b) Do you ever struggle between doing what is right and what is wrong? List five weak areas of temptation in your life where you struggle the most not to sin. Put this list in your Bible and then pray over it each day asking your Father in heaven for help and strength to resist the temptation to sin.

Have you ever seen the cartoon figure of a person trying to decide whether to do the right thing or the wrong thing? Part of him wants to do right and another part of him wants to do evil. The evil temptation is likened to a tiny devil-looking figure that's hovering over the person's head, while the good desire is like an angel hovering over the person's head. The angel and demon are each trying to sway the person in his direction. The Apostle Paul describes this struggle in Romans 7:14-25. (Read it.) In Jewish thought, that thing inside of us trying to get us to do evil is called the evil inclination (yetzer ra), and the good part of us trying to get us to do the right thing is called the good inclination (yetzer tov). This battle takes place in our minds and hearts first, and then the outcome—whether we yield to the good or evil side—will determine the words that come out of our mouths, how we think, and how we act or what we do.




-  (c) How do temptations start? Think of the times you have been tempted to do something wrong. What caused you to start going down the path that led you to commit a sin? On a piece of paper, make a point-by-point list of how temptation starts for you and the steps that occur that lead you to acting on that temptation so that you commit a sin. Put that list with the list in your Bible of the sins you struggle against. Pray to YHVH for strength to resist and to overcome the sinful inclinations.

You see, being aware of the sins and then knowing the steps that lead to your giving in to the temptation is important. If you know these things, then you can tell when you're going down the path of sin and you can stop the process before you actually sin. You can pray to YHVH for strength and then determine in your heart and mind not to sin.

Temptations start the same way that a huge tree got its start. First, it was a tiny seed planted in the ground. Sin starts as a little thought, an impulse or an urge that suddenly appears in your mind to do something or say something wrong. It could be something we see that we start to lust after. (Lust is strongly desiring something that is wrong to have or to do.)

The world around us is full of much sin and evil. It is full of things that try to get people to sin.

-  (d) Once the Israelites had come into the land of Canaan—a land that was full of godless and wicked heathens, what did YHVH tell his people to do? (Read Numbers 33:51-53.) What can we learn from YHVH's instructions to the Israelites, and how are we to deal with the evil around us today?



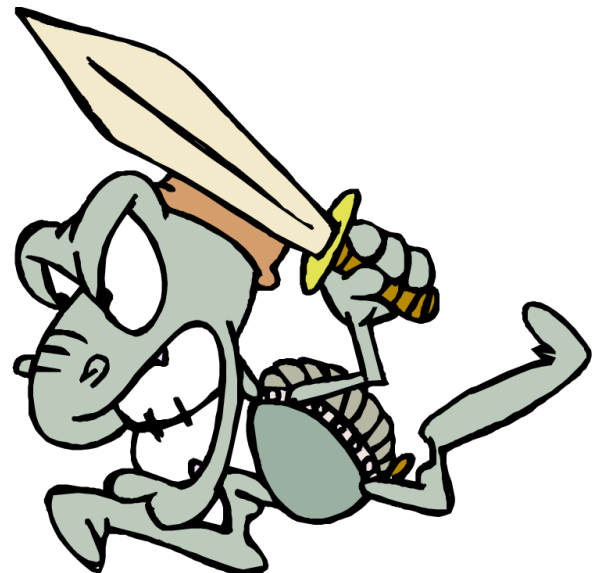
Here are some pointers to help us deal with the temptation to sin:

1. One of the ways the Israelites dealt with the temptation to sin was by getting rid of heathen peoples who lived in the Promised Land before the Israelites got there. It is not our job today to remove the heathen around us by killing them or by driving them out of the land, but we can remove ourselves from the heathen by not hanging out with them and by not letting them influence us. We can choose who are and who are not our friends, for example. We can even choose who we work with and where we live.

2. We can remove evil influences from our homes. Things that may tempt us to do evil such as bad music, books, pictures, magazines and videos. We can stop watching evil things on television and remove any pagan and evil objects from our homes.
3. We can learn to dress modestly (in a way that covers our bodies so that others cannot see our nakedness or see our body curves) so that others won't be tempted to have lustful thoughts.
4. When evil thoughts, lusts or impulses come into our minds, while they are still only a small seed, we must pray to Yeshua for help and strength. We must take that thought captive and choose to do what is right and to follow Yeshua instead of the path of temptation that leads to sin. (Look at 2 Corinthians 10:3-5.)
5. When temptations to do evil come, we must flee or run from them. (Read 2 Timothy 2:22.)
6. We must resist evil. (See James 4:7.)
7. We must use or quote the Word of Elohim (Bible Scriptures) to fight against temptations to sin as Yeshua did when resisting the devil. (Note Matthew 4:1-11.) This means that we need to be studying the Bible daily and find specific verses that we can use against the temptation when it comes.
8. We must resolve, determine or make up our mind ahead of time that we are not going to fall to the temptation to sin, and we must pray for YHVH's strength to not give in when the temptation comes.
9. We can fill our minds with good things by constantly praying to YHVH, studying his Word, the Bible, and thinking about his ways. In this way, our minds are washed of evil thoughts and our hearts and minds are renewed or changed to want to do what is right. (Read Romans 12:2; Ephesians 5:26; Hebrews 10:22; Titus 3:5.)
10. We must hang out with people who believe as we do—who have the same standards of righteousness and who do not want to sin. We must not hang out with people who give in to lust and temptation, since they will be a bad influence on us. (See 2 Corinthians 6:14-18; James 4:4; 1 John 2:15-17; 1 Corinthians 15:33.)
11. We must attend a weekly fellowship or gathering of believers where we can be strengthened by Bible teaching, praise and worship and be in fellowship with others who want to do what is right by resisting sin and obeying the Word and commandments of Elohim. (Read Hebrews 10:24-25.)



We strengthen ourselves to resist sin by studying the Word of Elohim!




We must fight against sin!

If we follow these pointers, it will be like hanging on our hearts and minds a "No Trespassing" sign to temptation!


 (e) In conclusion, explore James 1:12-15 and discuss.

## 2 What Happens If We Don't Drive Out Evil (Numbers 33:55-56)

When the children of Israel went in to take the Promised Land, YHVH commanded them to kill or drive out the heathen inhabitants, and destroy all their pagan influences.

 (f) Why was YHVH so firm about the Israelites driving out the heathens? (Read Numbers 33:55-56.)

You see, if we allow evil influences to remain in our lives or in our homes, eventually they will come back to tempt us in a moment of weakness. Everyone goes through moments of weakness when their spiritual guard is down. We may be weak when we are physically tired, when we get discouraged or upset, when we become weary, when someone has treated us unkindly or when things just don't go right and we have a bad day. It is during these times when we are most likely to listen to that little evil voice inside of us (our fallen nature or wicked carnal man called the evil inclination) and yield to temptation and sin.

 (g) Read 2 Corinthians 10:3-5; James 4:7-8 and Ephesians 6:10-18. What do these Scriptures teach us about resisting temptation to sin? What is Paul describing in Ephesians 6:10-18?



When it comes to fighting temptation and sin, are you the victor or the victim? The winner or the loser?

