

Devarim Aliyah Summary

General Overview: This week's reading begins the Book of Deuteronomy, the fifth and final book of the Five Books of Moses. Moses begins his final monologue, five weeks before his passing. He recounts the story of the Israelite's travel through the desert, placing emphasis on, and rebuking them for, the story of the spies. He describes Israel's conquest of the Emorites and the Bashanites.

First Aliyah: The Israelites are situated on the eastern bank of the Jordan River, on the verge of entering the land of Canaan, and Moses' death is imminent. This is the setting for Moses' final statements to the nation he lovingly tended for four decades. After delivering a veiled rebuke to the nation for their many past misdeeds, Moses revisits the period, some 39 years earlier, before the Israelites left Mount Sinai at G-d's behest, with the intention of immediately invading and entering [Canaan](#). At that time, Moses expressed to the Jews his inability to single-handedly bear the burden of leadership, because "[G-d](#), has multiplied you, and behold, you are today as the stars of the heavens in abundance."

Second Aliyah: After the Israelites consented to the idea, Moses appointed a hierarchy of judges to preside over the nation. Moses recalls instructing them the basics of judicial integrity. Moses then recounts how the Jews traveled through the desert and quickly reached Kadesh Barnea, on the southern border of the Holy Land.

Third Aliyah: But at that time the Israelites approached Moses and demanded the right to send out scouts to reconnoiter the land. Moses recounts the tragic episode in detail, how the scouts delivered a frightening report, claiming that the land was unconquerable. Despite Moses' protests, the Israelites adopted the scouts' attitude and decided not to enter Canaan. This caused G-d to bar that entire generation from entering the Promised Land.

[Fourth Aliyah](#): Moses continues: At that time G-d instructed the Israelites to reverse course and head back to the desert. Realizing their dreadful error, a group of Israelites proceeded to advance toward Israel — in the face of Moses' objections. Lacking divine protection, they were immediately attacked and massacred by the Emorites. At this point, the Israelites heeded G-d's command, and headed back to the Sinai Desert.

[Fifth Aliyah](#): Moses fast-forwards 38 years. The generation which left Egypt had perished. Now their children were ready to enter Canaan. But first G-d instructs the Israelites regarding three nations whose land was off-limits for them: Seir (Edom), Moab and Amon. These lands were the rightful inheritance of the descendants of Esau and Lot. Instead, the Israelites circled these lands and approached the land of Sichon, king of the Emorites, and requested passageway through his land. Sichon refused the Israelites' request.

[Sixth Aliyah](#): Moses recalls how Sichon led his nation in battle against the Israelites. The Israelites were victorious and took possession of his land. When the Bashanites then attacked, they meet a similar fate. The lands of the Emorites and the Bashanites were given to the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh.

[Seventh Aliyah](#): Moses delineates the borders of the lands allotted to the aforementioned tribes. He then repeats the instructions he gave to these tribes to cross the Jordan together with their brethren and participate in the battle against the Canaanites before returning to their land on the eastern bank of the Jordan. Joshua, who will lead the nation into Israel, is enjoined not to be fearful of the battles which he will face, because "it is the L-rd, your G-d, who is fighting for you."