

## Parshiot Mattot and Masei

This concludes the Book of Numbers.

MATTOT 1 An entire section discusses oaths and vows - how binding they are and who has permission to fulfill or nullify them.

2 God commands Moses to attack the Midianites because of their having joined with the Moabites in hiring Balaam - all of the men and women, except virgins, were slaughtered and the spoils divided equally among those who fought and the others.

3 Preparation continues to divide the land - the Reubenites and Gaddites have permission to settle east of the Jordan as long as they are available for defense when needed.

MASSEI 1 A reiteration of the voyages of the Israelites.

2 The geographical distribution of Canaan continues and maintains the integrity of the tribes.

3 Levitical cities of refuge are mandated - they are sanctuaries for those accused of murder, which may be manslaughter, not deliberate murder, in which to remain until a trial assesses their guilt or innocence.

4 The tribal heads were concerned that land allocated to the daughters of Zelophehad and other women would be lost to the tribe if they married outside of it; thus a new regulation stipulated that if any woman inherited property, she must marry within her own tribe.