

Parashat Chukat

Numbers (*B'midbar*) 20:1-13

First Aliyah

The Israelites arrived in a body at the wilderness of Zin on the first new moon, and the people stayed at Kadesh. Miriam died there and was buried there. The community was without water, and they joined against Moses and Aaron. The people quarreled with Moses, saying, “If only we had perished when our brothers perished at the instance of the Eternal!

Second Aliyah

Why have you brought the Eternal’s congregation into this wilderness for us and our beasts to die there? Why did you make us leave Egypt to bring us to this wretched place, a place with no grain or figs or vines or pomegranates? There is not even water to drink!” Moses and Aaron came away from the congregation to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, and fell on their faces. The Presence of the Eternal appeared to them.

Third Aliyah

And the Eternal spoke to Moses, saying, “You and your brother Aaron take the rod and assemble the community, and before their very eyes order the rock to yield its water. Thus you shall produce water for them from the rock and provide drink for the congregation and their beasts.” Moses took the rod from before the Eternal, as he had been commanded.

Fourth Aliyah

Moses and Aaron assembled the congregation in front of the rock; and he said to them, “Listen, you rebels, shall we get water for you out of this rock?” And Moses raised his hand and struck the rock twice with his rod. Out came copious water, and the community and their beasts drank. But the Eternal said to Moses and Aaron, “Because you did not trust Me enough to affirm My sanctity in the sight of the Israelite people, therefore you shall not lead this congregation into the land that I have given them.” Those are the Waters of Meribah—meaning that the Israelites quarrelled with the Eternal—whose sanctity was affirmed through them.