

This week is a double portion, Matot-Masei. As is true with other double portions, there is often something to be learned by looking at the names of the portion together. The most famous example of this idea is Acharei Mot-Kedoshim, After Death-Holiness, but this week's Torah portions also have something to teach us as well.

Matot-Masei literally means, Tribes-Journeys. And while the two portions are about largely different topics, when viewed together, we are reminded something important about the journeys that we take through our lives: it isn't where we go, it is with whom we are traveling. When Staci and I staffed USY on Wheels, a 7-week teen program that traveled across North America on a coach bus, the memories shared at the end of the summer were rarely about the sites that we visited but rather about the experiences shared with their fellow Wheelniks.

As we reflect on the most meaningful moments in our lives, as we have journeyed through the years, it is, more often than not, the people that we shared those moments with that matter the most. As the Israelites prepare to enter the land of Israel, God is reminding the people that what is special about this moment isn't just where you are going, but remember that you are all in this together. You are strongest when you come together as a collection of tribes rather than simply as individual clusters.

As we reflect on our lives and as we look towards our future, let's remember to go amazing places and do amazing things, but even more importantly, let's make sure we are sharing those moments with the people that mean the most to us. Experiencing them, together.