

Masei-The Exodus from Mitzrayim is Finished in Eretz Yisroel  
By Rabbi Eliyahu Kirsh

The Parsha of Masei opens up with ‘these are the travels of Bnai Yisroel who went out of Mitzrayim.’ My Rosh Yeshiva, Rav Dovid Feinstein, Shlita, points out that the Torah specifically underscores that the travels are documented from when they left Mitzrayim. Even though now they were at the threshold of entering Eretz Yisroel, the Torah makes no mention of this fact. Rav Dovid Feinstein understands from here that the whole purpose of the se travels was to get away from Mitzrayim. Even going to Eretz Yisroel, which was the goal, would be a culmination of the arduous task of getting out of Mitzrayim or ‘getting Mitzrayim out of us’. In other words, not only did they have to leave the physical boundaries of Mitzrayim but the entire mentality and spiritual contamination. This was indeed a long, drawn out process. We know it is one thing to physically leave a place. It is quite another to leave the mentality of a place if one had been there a long time and accustomed to its lifestyle and mindset. We see ourselves how so many of us hold on to childhood memories of places we’ve lived I. In some cases we had to run for safety and in some cases we moved upwards by leaving those places. Yet we tend to be sentimental about pales we spent a significant amount of time in.

Rav Dovid Feinstein then stated that we until we reach the goal of Eretz Yisroel we never really left Mitzrayim, True, we may have left the geographic borders but the purpose of being in the desert was to recondition our whole being to a new way of life and thinking. We needed to purge ourselves of all the moral filth that we were exposed to in Mitzrayim. Furthermore, we needed to be taught that we are avdai Hashem and not meant to just live for this world. Till we reach Eretz Yisroel and build the Bais Hamikdash, this would not be fully accomplished. As a proof of this point we find in Sefer Melachim I 6:1, where the building of the Bais Hamikdash is described, it is counted from our going out Mitzrayim. Thus, in a certain sense, only when the Bais Hamikdash was built and were totally committed to serving Hashem did we leave Mitrayim.