

Ed Grobman

Ed passed away early Friday morning, the day before we would read the portion called Masei in the synagogue. Masei is the last parsha in the book of Bamidbar –Numbers.

At the beginning of Masei we read of the 42 camping sites that our ancestors stopped at during their 40 years of wandering in the wilderness. The Torah says : *vayeechtov Moshe et motzaaihem lemaseihem al-pee Adonai veaileh maseihem lemotzaeihem.* – and Moses wrote their goings forth, stage by stage, by the commandment of the Lord, and these are their stages at their goings forth. God wanted the Israelites to remember each stage of their journey to the Promised Land. The question remains – why?

The commentator Rashi suggests that the Israelites needed to remember the good and the bad that had happened to them during the wilderness journeys so that they would have a degree of perspective when they reached their new home. Knowing how they had successfully come through many trials and travails would give the Israelites a sense of accomplishment and security.

I think in some ways this is similar to the eulogies that are delivered at funerals. In preparing the words that will be delivered we have the opportunity to sit with family and reflect back on the life of our loved one. Ed worked very hard together with his family to carry on the business that his father had started when he came over from the old country. But Ed also had the opportunity to take the next step by helping in the founding and the continuing operation of the North Battleford synagogue so that Jewish life could exist in a small community.

He recognized the need for Jewish education for his children and the others in the town so that the knowledge of the laws of our people given to Moshe would be carried on to future generations. By establishing good relations with the native community and the other citizens of North Battleford and surrounding area he helped our community gain respect and continued success. While the Jewish community no longer exists as it once did in North Battleford its legacy continues as the Torahs and ritual articles continue to be used in other synagogues and the children and grandchildren contribute to the good of Jewish communities throughout the world.

Just as the Torah helps us recall the good and the bad times that our ancestors went through so do eulogies like we heard today help us understand how journeys even in our own time influence us to be the people we are today. Let us take the lessons we learned from Ed's life help us as our future journeys influence those around us, our children and generations to come.

Tehee neeshmato tzrurah beetzror hachaim
May his soul be bound up in the bond of life.