

Bringing the Farbrengen Home

59 OR 60?

by R' Shaul Wertheimer

The parsha opens: "And Moshe went and spoke the following words to all of Israel."

Moshe went... but where did he go? All the people were already assembled, so he didn't need to go anywhere!

The contextual meaning, as expressed by Ibn Ezra and others, is that Moshe knew that this was the last day of his life, and he went to each tribe to comfort and encourage them; Yehoshua would be his successor, we would not be left without a spiritual guide.

The Targum Yonasan adds another layer of understanding: Where did Moshe go? *He went to the Beis Midrash (House of Study) to learn Torah!*

In other words, before he addressed us on his final day, he looked in the Torah.

Think about it: Moshe had reached a state of material and spiritual completion; furthermore, on the day of the passing of a Tzaddik, everything he did during his entire life comes together. Moshe received the Torah directly from G-d on Mt. Sinai; our sages tell us that he never forgot anything.

And nevertheless, when it came time for his parting address to the Jewish people, he wouldn't speak without first looking into and consulting the Torah!

Not only that, but he did it in a way of *Vayeilech* (the name of the parsha, which literally means to walk or to go) -- meaning that he left his current spiritual state and went to the Beis Midrash to learn.

A message from Parshas Vayeilech is that whenever a question arises in our life,



whenever we are faced with a new challenge, we consult the Torah. Even if we think we already know the answer, we don't rely on our memory.

We become a *Vayeilech Yid* by going away from our current state and look into the Torah before making any decision.


The Torah is infinite, so even if I do indeed already know the answer to a question -- maybe I even learned it yesterday -- I anyway look again.

The fourth Lubavitcher Rebbe once said that one must study a Chassidic discourse 60 times.

They asked him: What is the difference between the 59th and 60th time?

He said: The same as the difference between the first and 60th time.

The Torah contains infinite multitudes.

Moshe gives us the strength to follow in his footsteps: At every crossroads in life, we do what we've been doing for thousands of years: Vayeilech. We turn to the Torah. 

HAYOM YOM

This week's Hayom Yom is a 5-day guide to Teshuva, using the letter of the word Teshuvah to teach 5 interrelated ideas...



Just Me שו"ת A Question

Q: Did every shevet (Tribe) originally have their own nusach and if so, do we know what they said?

A: According to Kabbalah, there are 12 nuschaot - one for each Tribe, in accordance with the unique and distinct spiritual quality of each.

Rabbi Dovber the Maggid of Mezritch explains (based on sources is gemora and Kabbalah), that there is a 13th nusach, a general, all-inclusive nusach for all Jews, no matter to which Tribe they belong.

When you know which Tribe you belong to, it is preferable to pray with that nusach. However, if you don't know, then the 13th nusach, commonly known as Nusach HaAri, is ideal.

4 Tishrei

My father's explanation of teshuva,

T: *Tamim...*, "Be sincere with G-d." This represents the avoda of teshuva that comes through sincerity. Sincerity, or "wholeness," takes any number of forms and has many levels. In reference to teshuva the highest form is wholeness of heart - called "earnestness"; as Torah says of Avraham, "you found his heart faithful before You."

5 Tishrei

Sh: - *Shiviti...*, "I have set G-d (Havayah) before me always." *Havayah* indicates the creation of the universe and creatures. Bringing all of Creation into being and sustaining it is accomplished by bridging an infinite gap - from *ayin* (non-being, nihilo) to *yesh* (being). This form of the avoda (service) of teshuva results from one's constant awareness of the way in which the universe and all that is in it, is (constantly) brought into being.

The conflict between body and soul

Ivri Anochi, I Am A Jew

by Tzipah Wertheimer


Yonah is finally confronted by the others on the ship. They ask him, "who are you and what is your mission?" His soul is awoken and he realizes that he is completely off track.

Yona says, "I am a Jew (Ivri Anochi) and I fear the Lord." He will need three days in the belly of a large fish to finally get on task, as the story continues - but in this moment he has awoken from his slumber at the bottom of the ship.

As I was learning this Navi in preparation for Yom Kippur (Wednesday & Thursday night) I was reminded of Daniel Pearl. He was an American journalist who worked for the Wall Street Journal. He was kidnapped and later killed by terrorists in Pakistan.

While Pearl did not lead an outwardly observant life, some of his final words were "My father is Jewish, my mother is Jewish, I am Jewish." At the moment when his very existence was being threatened, he volunteered his religious identity in the most hostile environment.

The narrative of Yona can be read as a conflict between body and soul. No matter how deeply the body longs to slumber in the depths of the ship, the soul is constantly screaming and pushing to fulfill her ultimate mission. No soul should ever be tested like Daniel Pearl!

May you be signed and sealed in the Book of Life with blessings for an incredible year beyond your greatest expectations. May all of your prayers be answered. 



HAYOM YOM

6 Tishrei

U - V'ahavta..., "Love your fellow as yourself." The Alter Rebbe taught that this love is an instrument, a means to "Love the Eternal your G-d." This is explained in the statement, "Whoever is pleasing to man is pleasing to G-d." This service of teshuva stems from goodness of heart.

7 Tishrei

V - B'chol..., "In all your ways, know Him." A person who sets his heart and mind to observe all that happens to him and around him, will perceive G-dliness tangibly in evidence; as the Mittlerer Rebbe pointed out, men of affairs have an advantage over secluded scholars, in that the former can witness actual manifestations of G-dliness. This form of the service of teshuva comes from one's perceiving hashgacha p'ratis, (particular Divine Providence).

8 Tishrei

H - Hatznei'a..., "Walk discreetly with your G-d." One must take care not to be conspicuous or ostentatious in the slightest. It is said "Man should always be artful in piety." The artfulness lies in seeing that his piety not be noticed at all. We know that a number of the early chassidim concealed their true selves, and when discovered were sincerely distressed. This is the avoda of teshuva that comes from hatznei'a lechet, being discreet.

Chassidic Story

The Baal Shem Tov gave a bracha to a childless couple, stressing that when the baby is born the father should guard and cherish him as the 'apple of his eye.' With great joy the parents celebrated the birth of their baby boy.


When the boy turned two, the Baal Shem Tov passed away. Three years later a man came to town with a dancing bear! The boy's nurse ran to see the excitement and left the child alone. After just a few minutes she returned but the boy had vanished.

The distraught father traveled to the home town of the Baal Shem Tov and sought the advice of his daughter Odel. She prayed at the grave of her father and returned saying, "my father advises that you travel and visit every inn. Tell each inn-keeper that you are looking for your son."

The heartbroken father traveled through the night visiting many inns and before dawn just as he was falling asleep he noticed one last inn. He poured out his sad story and the inn keeper said, "it seems to me that your child is in this village.

"There is an old childless Poritz (land owner) who was advised by his priest to steal a Jewish child. He plans to convert the boy and in fact an important ceremony is planned for today. They are simply waiting for the Bishop to arrive," explained the inn-keeper.

"The Bishop has a reputation for being kind," the inn-keeper continued, "go to him and explain your situation. Perhaps he will help."

The Bishop listened intently and told the man that he would see if he could help. "Meanwhile wait near the gate of the Poritz's courtyard." The father waited with a hopeful heart..... (to be continued) 

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Bracha Chana bas Yechiel
on her 25th yahrzeit, 13 Elul

6:27 pm Candle Lighting
6:30pm Mincha & Kabbalas Shabbos
8:45am Chassidus
10:00am Davening
5:15pm Shabbos Shuva Drasha
with Rabbi Shaul Wertheimer
6:15pm Mincha & Shiur
7:24pm Maariv & Shabbos Ends