

## D'var Torah by Rabbi M. Jaroslawicz for Parshas Vayeilech 5775 (2015)

The very first words of this week's Parsha are, "Vayeilech Moshe." Meaning, "and Moshe 'WENT OUT'!"

Many commentaries explain that this scene is very different than last week's situation when Moshe said, "You are gathered here today." Then, the Jewish people gathered around Moshe. Here, Moshe actually went out into the "Machane Yisroel" (the Yisroel encampment) as a friendly gesture to help the people feel secure that they would not be left without a leader after he is gone.

Just afterwards in the Parsha, Moshe Rabbeinu tells the Jewish people:

"I am a hundred and twenty years old today; I can no longer go out and come in."

Which one is it? How can Moshe say, "and I can no longer 'GO OUT'" when we see that he just went out? He was standing in *THEIR* living quarters?

Rav Tzadok Hakohein answers this apparent contradiction with a comment to which we alluded last week.

Unlike an angel, which is called a "Tamid [Stationery]" and remains motionless for all other than the one mission for which it was created, a human being is called a "Holeich," always in motion. He must always be moving. Either he is moving forward or, by definition, he is retreating backwards. Growing, or slipping! There is no such thing as a "status quo" when it comes to people. Always in motion!

Rav Tzadok says that Moshe Rabbeinu reached a spiritual level of "Lo yuchal ohd latzais," that he could no longer slip backwards. And, thus, his position was also such that he could no longer go higher than where he was. As long as one can fall, one can also climb to the next level. Once you are no longer a Holeich and can no longer fall, you can also no longer climb.

The highest level one can achieve is this level of "Lo yuchal ohd latzais."

This week is the first Shabbos of the year, as well as the last Shabbos before Yom Kippur of 5776.

The physical temptations that surround us daily confront us with a bottomless chasm into which we can keep falling. But that also means that there is a diametrically-opposite soaring summit available for us to conquer.

We need to maximize every available Jewish moment available to us this week. We need to fortify our Davening, solidify our learning, maximize our doing good deeds, stretch ourselves to the limit with giving Tzedaka and re-evaluate and improve both our "Bein adam la'chaveiro" as well as our "Bein adam la'Makom."

May Hashem use all of His Thirteen Attributes of Mercy while judging us this week. May we become meritorious of living to a hundred-and-twenty "gezunta" years and emulating Moshe Rabbeinu, "Lo kohasoh eino, v'lo nos leicho [his eye did not dim and his moisture did not leave him]."

We should all be blessed with health and Gezunt and Yiddish Nachas from our children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. And from each other.

G'mar Chasima Tova