

Vayeilech

THE WEISS EDITION

Light points

FROM THE TEACHINGS OF
THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE ON THE
WEEKLY TORAH PORTION

Lightpoints
לזיכרון ולעילוי נשמת
הרה"ח הרה"ת
הר"ר ישעי' זושא
ב"ר אברהם דוד ע"ה ווילהעלם
נלב"ע ביום ד' שבט ה'תשפ"ב
תנצב"ה



To receive the booklet
via email or by mail,
scan this barcode.



וילך Vayeilech

לא:ב | 31:2

בֵּן מֵאָה וְעֶשְׂרִים שָׁנָה אָנֹכִי הַיּוֹם לֹא אוֹכֵל עוֹד לְצֵאתָת וְלָבוֹא

Today I am one hundred and twenty years old; I can no longer go out or come in.

The Perfectly Timed Yahrzeit

On the last day of Moshe's life, he said, "Today I am 120 years old." The Talmud¹ interprets the word "today" to mean that it was his birthday. "This teaches," says the Talmud, "that G-d sits and completes the years of the righteous from day to day and month to month."

What is the significance of the righteous passing away on their birthdate?

The Tanya teaches that the soul of a *tzaddik*, a righteous person, can influence his disciples even more so after his passing than when he was alive. For in the *tzaddik*'s lifetime, when his soul was contained within a physical body, only a

1. Kiddushin 38a.

glimmer of his soul was able to radiate beyond his body, reaching his disciples only through his thoughts and words. After his passing, however, the *tzaddik* is no longer limited in this way. Moreover, the ascent of the *tzaddik*'s soul to its source causes sublime spiritual energy to radiate upon all whom he influenced to become servants of G-d, instilling thoughts of repentance and good deeds in their hearts.²

Thus, in a sense, the day of the *tzaddik*'s passing completes his birth. For on the day of his passing, his gift to the world is fully revealed and effective, whereas on the day he was born it was only in potential. G-d therefore "completes the years of the righteous from day to day and month to month," because a *tzaddik*'s *yahrtzeit* is synonymous with his birthday.

—*Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 16, p. 350

2. Tanya, Iggeres Hakodesh, epistle 27.

 לא:יב | 31:12

הַקְהֵל אֶת הָעָם הָאֲנָשִׁים וְהַנְּשִׁים וְהַטַּף וְגֵרְךָ אֲשֶׁר
 בְּשַׁעְרֶיךָ לְמַעַן יִשְׁמְעוּ וְלְמַעַן יִלְמְדוּ וְיִירָאוּ אֶת ה'
 אֱלֹהֶיךָ וְיִשְׁמְרוּ לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת כָּל דְּבָרֵי הַתּוֹרָה הַזֹּאת

*Assemble the people—the men, the women, the children,
 and your foreigner who is in your gates—in order that
 they will hear, and in order that they will learn and fear
 Hashem your G-d, and they will be careful to do all the
 words of this Torah.*

Hakhel: Bracing for Change

Moshe's final message to Yehoshua included instructions regarding the mitzvah of Hakhel: every seven years, during the year following the Shemittah year, the entire Jewish nation should gather in the Beis Hamikdash, the Holy Temple, to hear the king read select portions of the Torah.

Why was this mitzvah not taught earlier, when Bnei Yisrael were instructed in the observance of Shemittah?

The mitzvah of Hakhel, more so than other mitzvos—including those that are likewise only obligatory in the Land of Israel—is particularly associated with the change that Bnei Yisrael were about to experience at the end of their desert journey.

The Rambam describes the observance of Hakhel:

All must focus their attention and direct their hearing to listen with reverence, awe, and rejoicing while trembling, as on the day the Torah was given at Sinai... Scripture established it [Hakhel] to strengthen the true faith. One should view himself as though he was instructed now for the first

time regarding the Torah, as though he is hearing it now from the Almighty.³

Accordingly, Moshe taught Bnei Yisrael about Hakhel specifically at the end of their forty-year sojourn, as they prepared to enter the Land of Israel. The essence of the mitzvah of Hakhel is that when Bnei Yisrael are in circumstances drastically different from those in which they experienced the great G-dly revelation at Sinai, they should strengthen their commitment to the Torah by periodically recreating and reliving that Sinai experience. So, as Bnei Yisrael prepared to part from the desert in which they received the Torah, and from Moshe who had taught it to them, they were commanded to recreate the ambiance of the giving of the Torah through Hakhel, in order to strengthen their eternal adherence to the Torah's commands.

—*Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 34, pp. 187-190

3. Mishneh Torah, Hil. Chagigah 3:6.

 לא:יב | 31:12

הַקָּהֵל אֶת הָעָם הָאֲנָשִׁים וְהַנְּשִׁים וְהַטַּף וְגֵרְךָ אֲשֶׁר
 בְּשַׁעְרֶיךָ לְמַעַן יִשְׁמְעוּ וּלְמַעַן יִלְמְדוּ וְיִרְאוּ אֶת ה'
 אֱלֹהֶיכֶם וְשָׁמְרוּ לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת כָּל דְּבָרֵי הַתּוֹרָה הַזֹּאת

*Assemble the people—the men, the women, the children,
 and your foreigner who is in your gates—in order that
 they will hear, and in order that they will learn and fear
 Hashem your G-d, and they will be careful to do all the
 words of this Torah.*

Welcome to the Faith. Hakhel!

In describing the observance of Hakhel, when the entire Jewish nation should gather in the Beis Hamikdash, the Holy Temple, to hear the king read select portions of the Torah, the Rambam makes particular mention that “even converts who do not understand” the Holy Tongue, in which the Torah is read, must attend the assembly.⁴

The source for the Rambam’s unique emphasis on the attendance of converts who do not understand the reading of the Torah can be found in the words of the verse that enumerates the attendees: “The men, the women, the children, and your foreigner who is in your gates.”

The Torah alternates between a number of expressions when referring to converts, including “The foreigner who dwells in your midst,”⁵ “Your foreigner who is in your camp,”⁶

4. Mishneh Torah, Hil. Chagigah 3:5–6.

5. Shemos 12:49.

6. Devarim 29:10.

and “Your foreigner who is in your gates.”⁷ The simple difference between these expressions is that the terms “foreigner who dwells in your midst” and “foreigner who is in your camp” imply that the convert has long been part of the Jewish community, whereas the term “foreigner who is in your gates” can be interpreted as referring to a convert who is just barely “in the gate”—he has only recently joined the Jewish community.

Since the Torah mentions the convert’s participation in the Hakhel assembly specifically using the expression “the foreigner that is in your gates,” the Rambam understands that even the newest converts, for whom the original language of the Torah may still be foreign, are an integral part of the Hakhel assembly.

—*Sichos Kodesh 5735, vol. 1, pp. 50–51;*
Likkutei Sichos, vol. 36, p. 245

7. Shemos 20:10, Devarim 5:14, et al.

לא, יב-יט | 31:12-19

הַקָּהֵל אֶת הָעָם... לְמַעַן יִשְׁמְעוּ וּלְמַעַן יִלְמְדוּ וַיִּירָאוּ אֶת ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם וְשִׁמְרוּ לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת כָּל דִּבְרֵי הַתּוֹרָה הַזֹּאת... וְעַתָּה כְּתֹבוּ לָכֶם אֶת הַשִּׁירָה הַזֹּאת וּלְמַדְהָ אֶת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל שִׁימָה בְּפִיהֶם

Assemble the people... in order that they will hear, and in order that they will learn and fear Hashem, your G-d, and they will be careful to do all the words of this Torah... And now, write for yourselves this song, and teach it to the children of Israel; place it into their mouths...

Two Last Instructions

In his last days, Moshe conveyed to Bnei Yisrael two final positive commandments: the mitzvah of Hakhel and the mitzvah of writing a Sefer Torah.

These two mitzvos share a common objective: to allow future generations to experience some degree of what Bnei Yisrael experienced at the giving of the Torah. With Hakhel, we replicate the events at Sinai by gathering the entire Jewish nation in one place and listening to the king read select passages from the Torah, to “encourage them to perform mitzvos, and strengthen them in the true faith.”⁸ Everyone in attendance, says the Rambam, “should view himself as though he was instructed now for the first time regarding the Torah, as though he is hearing it now from the Almighty.”⁹ Similarly,

8. Mishneh Torah, Hil. Chagigah 3:1.

9. Ibid. 3:6.

when a person writes a Sefer Torah for himself, “Scripture regards it as if he had received it at Mount Sinai.”¹⁰

Why do we need two such mitzvos, which fulfill the same purpose?

Prior to receiving the Torah, Bnei Yisrael declared, “We will obey, and we will listen,”¹¹ expressing their commitment to both aspects of the giving of the Torah that would take place at Mount Sinai: the giving of the Torah itself (to study and know it), and the giving of the commandments within it (to obey and observe them).

The mitzvos of Hakhel and of writing a Sefer Torah, whose shared purpose is to recreate the experience of receiving the Torah, each focus on one of these aspects. Hakhel focuses on invigorating our acceptance of the mitzvos, as the Torah articulates, “In order that they will... fear Hashem, your G-d, and they will observe to do all the words of this Torah.” In contrast, the primary emphasis of writing a Sefer Torah is to strengthen our *study* of the Torah, as the Torah emphasizes, “And now, write for yourselves this song, *teach it* to Bnei Yisrael; place it in their mouths.”

—*Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 34, pp. 189–190

10. Menachos 30a.

11. Shemos 24:7.

לעילוי נשמת
האשה מרת **מרים** בת ר' **משה** ע"ה
פלאטניק

גלב"ע ה' תשרי ה'תשס"ו
תנצב"ה

לעילוי נשמת
הרה"ת **מרדכי צבי** ב"ר **משה** ע"ה
סיימאן

גלב"ע י"א תשרי תשפ"ג
תנצב"ה



נדפסה על ידי בני משפחתו שיחיו

לזכרון
הצדקנית הרבנית
מרת חנה ע"ה שניאורסאהן
בת הצדקנית הרבנית מרת רחל ע"ה
ובת הרה"ג הרה"ח ר' מאיר שלמה ע"ה
נפטרה ביום השבת קדש,
ו' דעשי"ת, בעלות המנחה
שנת ה'תשכ"ה

תנצב"ה

♦

אמו של כ"ק אדמו"ר זי"ע

Light points is Project of

