

PARSHAT VAYEILECH  
DEUTERONOMY 31:1-31:30  
6 TISHREI 5783, 1 OCTOBER 2022



THE BULLS AND THE BEARS  
(S&P 500- LAST 75 YEARS)

1. “Today, I can no longer go or come.” (Deuteronomy 31:2)

“One might think that this means that Moses’ strength had ebbed and that is why he could no longer go or come. Scripture however states regarding Moses: “His eye had not dimmed, nor had he lost his [natural] moisture.” (Deuteronomy 34:7), which teaches us that his powers were intact even on the day of his passing. So, what then is the meaning of “I can no longer?” Here it means: “I am not permitted” because authority was taken from him and granted to Joshua.” (Rashi)

2. “You make most of your money in a bear market; you just don’t realize it at the time.” (Shelby Cullom Davis).
3. Every person experiences ups and downs in life—it’s the nature of the world baked into the DNA of humanity. There will be downfalls, and together with the fall comes the promise that there will be a significant climb.” (Rabbi Tzadok Hakohen of Lublin)

4a. Moses went and spoke *these words*... (Deuteronomy 31:1)

4b. Moses wrote *this Torah* and gave it to the Kohanim...and to all the elders of Israel.

(Deuteronomy 31:9)

4c. Moses wrote *this song* on that day and taught it to the Children of Israel. (Deuteronomy 31:22).

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5. The 613th mitzvah of the Torah, based on Deuteronomy 31:19, is the obligation for each one of us to write a Torah scroll. (Maimonides). “Now, therefore, write down for yourselves *this song*... and teach it to the Children of Israel, place it in their mouth, so that this song may be a witness for Me among the children of Israel.” (Deuteronomy 31:19).

6. This makes clear that the song is the entire Torah. (Nedarim 38a)

7. There is a distinction between poetry and prose. In poetry the subject matter is not plainly set forth as in prose. Additional explanations are necessary in order to indicate the allusions condensed into each expression. Such is the nature of Torah. Its story is not elaborated. It requires additional explanations in order to appreciate its allusions. (*Netziv*, Naftali Zvi Yehudi Berlin, 1817-1893)

8. Frank Sinatra (My Way)

And now the end is here  
And so I face that final curtain  
My friend I'll make it clear  
I'll state my case,  
of which I'm certain.  
I've lived a life that's full  
I traveled each and every highway  
And more, much more than this,  
I did it my (G-d's) way.

Regrets, I've had a few  
But then again too few to mention  
I did what I had to do  
I saw it through without exemption  
I planned each charted course  
Each careful step along the byway  
And more, much, much more  
than this, I did it my (G-d's) way.

Yes, there were times I'm sure you  
knew  
When I bit off more than I could  
chew  
But through it all, when there was  
doubt  
I ate it up and spit it out  
I faced it all and I stood tall and did it  
my (G-d's) way.  
For what is a man, what has he got?  
If not himself (his G-d) then he has  
naught  
To say the things that he truly feels  
And not the words of someone who  
(kneels?)  
Let the record shows I took all the  
blows  
And did it my (G-d's) way.

8. It is with a poetic sense of closure that Moses' life ends with the command to begin again in every generation, writing our own scroll, adding our own commentaries, the people of the book endlessly reinterpreting the book of the people, and singing its song. The Torah is God's libretto, and we, the Jewish people, are (God's) choir. Collectively we have sung God's song. We are the performers of (God's) choral symphony. (Rabbi Jonathan Sacks)

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NOTES:

QUESTIONS: