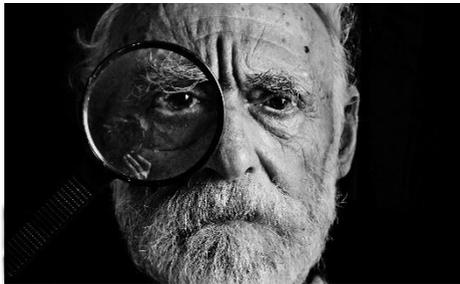

*One Hundred and
Twenty*

Rabbi Alon Meltzer

*A New Page of Talmud –
Vayeilech 5783*



He said to them: I am now one hundred and twenty years old, I can no longer be active. Moreover, Hashem has said to me, "You shall not go across yonder Jordan." It is indeed your God Hashem who will cross over before you, and who will wipe out those nations from your path; and you shall dispossess them. — Joshua is the one who shall cross before you, as Hashem has spoken. — **Devarim 31:2-3**¹ Even if I did not die now, I would not have the ability to wage war. You have no need for any person to help you, for God will destroy the nations. Joshua will do the same. What you saw with your eyes in the war of Sihon and Og is

... I am now one hundred and twenty years old...

בְּיָמַי וְשָׁנַי שְׁנָה אֶנְכִי
הַיּוֹם

Devarim 31:2

proof.— **Rashi on Devarim 31:1**² Moses mentions his age to remind the people that there is no reason to be sad that someone of his age has to die. According to any life expectancy and law of nature, he was no longer fit to go on living by natural means. Even if I were still able, I would not be able to function physically as a leader should, such as leading you in the conquest of the Land of Israel as I am suffering from symptoms of old age. — **Seforno Devarim 31:1**³ On this day Moshe Rabeynu was completed in the truest form of perfection, and God signed His name to this. All the while

one is not complete he may still apprehend more and reach greater heights. Yet he may also, God forbid, lose that which he has already received. After one has reached the state of completion, he will not lose anything he has previously apprehended, nor will he apprehend anything further. This is what Moshe Rabeynu meant when he said "I can no longer go out or come in." "Going out" means that he was complete and God

signed His name on his actions so that it would be impossible to lose what he had apprehended. "Coming in" means that also he

would apprehend nothing further. — **Mei HaShiloach 30:11**⁴ Being a keeper of the meaning means handing on the values of the past to the future. Age brings the reflection and detachment that allows us to stand back and not be swept along by the mood of the moment or passing fashion or the madness of the crowd. We need that wisdom, especially in an age as fast-paced as ours where huge success can come to people still quite young.—

Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks⁵

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