

Yitro's Invitation

MOSES ROUGHLY WIPES THE SWEAT FROM HIS BROW.

ANOTHER BEAD TRACES DOWN HIS CHEEK.

TOO WEARY TO CARE, HE LIFTS HIS PIERCING BROWN EYES.

THE CLOUDLESS SINAI GAZES BACK AT HIM.

HUMILITY AS HE SHEPHERDS HIS PEOPLE HUNDREDS OF MILES

ACROSS THIS CRACKED, BARREN DESERT CONTENDS WITH

GROWING RESENTMENT.

TODAY HE LISTENED TO HIS PEOPLE'S DISPUTES SINCE THE SUN ROSE—

SO MANY GRIEVANCES,

SO MUCH ANGER AND SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS,

AND SO MANY QUESTIONS.

YET MOSES KNOWS HE HELPS THE PEOPLE.

SINCE CROSSING THE SEA,

HE LEARNED HOW TO PIERCE THE HEART OF EACH DISPUTE.

HE SOLVED GRIEVANCES BOTH PETTY AND IMMENSE.

BUT HIS FLOCKS' TROUBLES ARE UNENDING.

THE WEIGHT OF THESE PROBLEMS CRUSHES MOSES' SPIRIT AT TIMES,

SO DISTANT THE INNER PASSION HE FELT
AFTER THEIR FIRST STEPS ON FREE GROUND.
THE ENERGY AND EXUBERANCE OF HIS VISION,
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH GOD, SLACKEN.

MOVEMENT AT HIS SIDE
STARTLES MOSES FROM HIS FLURRY OF TROUBLED THOUGHTS,
AND HE LOWERS HIS EYES
JUST AS HIS MOST VALUED MESSENGER HURRIES TO HIM.
“I HAVE WORD FROM YOUR FATHER-IN-LAW, YITRO.
HE IS ON HIS WAY TO YOU, ALONG WITH TZIPPORAH YOUR WIFE. //
HER TWO SONS ARE WITH HER.”

YITRO’S SUBTLE IMPLICATION HANGS IN THE AIR.

“**HER** TWO SONS.”

MOSES HAS NOT SEEN HIS BOYS IN MONTHS.

THEIR YOUNG FACES FLASH THROUGH HIS MIND.

GERSHOM PROBABLY HAS A BEARD BY NOW.

MAYBE ELIEZAR NO LONGER CHASES THE DESERT IBEX?

HE DID THAT ALL DAY LAST TIME MOSES SAW HIM....

TURNING SLOWLY BACK TOWARD THE ENCAMPMENT,
MOSES STEELS HIMSELF FOR YITRO'S VISIT.
HIS FATHER-IN-LAW HAS OPINIONS,
AND MOSES' GROWING WEARINESS IS NO MATCH FOR THEM TODAY.
AS MOSES NEARS HIS TENT,
HE SEES TZIPPORAH AND THE BOYS STANDING WITH YITRO.
HE STRUGGLES TO READ THE EXPRESSION IN HIS WIFE'S GAZE.
NOT ANGRY EXACTLY, MAYBE MORE DETACHED?
GERSHOM SEEMS UNINTERESTED
AND SHYLY ELIEZER APPROACHES HIS FATHER.
YET, YITRO WASTES NO TIME.
HE STEPS FORWARD AND BOWS LOW BEFORE MOSES.
MOSES BOWS BACK, HIS GAZE FIXED ON HIS WIFE.
SHE LOOKS DIFFERENT NOW, MORE HARDENED.
EVEN HER SKIN SEEMS ROUGH.
TZIPPORAH STARES BACK AT HIM.
AS MOSES TAKES A STEP TOWARD HER,
YITRO STEERS HIM TOWARD THE TENT,
TZIPPORAH'S DARK EYES PEER ENIGMATICALLY AT HIS BACK.

THE COOL AIR OF THE TENT BRUSHES MOSES' SKIN.
HE LOOKS OVER AT YITRO.

HIS FATHER-IN-LAW'S KIND EYES SOFTEN

AND THE TWO MEN SMILE FAINTLY.

YITRO IS A GOOD MAN.

HE IS OPINIONATED, OF COURSE,

BUT HIS ACUITY ALWAYS IMPRESSES MOSES.

A FAINT SMILE ON YITRO'S LIPS

EASES THE FOREBODING KNOTS IN MOSES' STOMACH.

RELAXING, MOSES ALLOWS A SLOW EXHALE BETWEEN HIS LIPS.

[SIGH]

YITRO GESTURES FOR MOSES TO REST ON ONE OF THE SOFT RUGS

LAYERING THE TENT FLOOR.

“WHY DO YOU ACT ALONE WHILE ALL THE PEOPLE CROWD ABOUT YOU
FROM MORNING UNTIL EVENING?”

HIS FATHER IN LAW QUERIES SOFTLY.

“THE PEOPLE COME TO ME TO INQUIRE OF GOD.

HOW CAN I NOT HELP THEM?

WHEN THEY HAVE A DISPUTE, IT COMES BEFORE ME.

I DECIDE BETWEEN ONE PERSON AND ANOTHER,

AND I MAKE KNOWN GOD'S LAW AND TEACHINGS.”

HIS FATHER-IN-LAW HOLDS MOSES' GLANCE STEADILY,

“LO TOV HA'DAVAR ASHER ATAH OSEH.

WHAT YOU ARE DOING IS NOT RIGHT.

YOU WILL SURELY WEAR YOURSELF OUT, AND THESE PEOPLE AS WELL.

FOR THE TASK IS TOO HEAVY FOR YOU.

YOU CANNOT DO IT ALONE.”

YITRO BEHELD HIS SON-IN-LAW INTENTLY,

“NOW LISTEN TO ME. I WILL GIVE YOU COUNSEL,

AND GOD WILL BE WITH YOU!

YOU REPRESENT THE PEOPLE BEFORE GOD.

YOU BRING THE DISPUTES BEFORE *ADONAI*

AND MAKE KNOWN THE PRACTICES PETITIONERS MUST FOLLOW.

RATHER, SEEK OUT TRUSTWORTHY MEN TO ACT AS CHIEFTAINS.

LET THEM JUDGE THE PEOPLE AT ALL TIMES.

HAVE THEM BRING EVERY MAJOR DISPUTE TO YOU,

BUT LET THEM DECIDE EVERY MINOR DISPUTE THEMSELVES.

MAKE IT EASIER FOR YOURSELF

BY LETTING THEM SHARE THE BURDEN WITH YOU.

IF YOU DO THIS—AND GOD SO COMMANDS YOU—

YOU WILL BE ABLE TO STAND UPRIGHT

AND ALL THESE PEOPLE, TOO, WILL GO HOME UNWEARIED.”

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THIS *MIDRASH* IS MY CREATION.

WE DO NOT KNOW THE NATURE OF MOSES' DISCONTENT.

WE DO NOT KNOW THE FEELINGS

SURROUNDING HIS SENSE OF IMBALANCE.

BUT WE DO KNOW THAT YITRO ESSENTIALLY SAYS TO MOSES,

“I SEE YOU MOSES.

I SEE THAT YOU ARE UNHAPPY.

I SEE THAT YOUR OLD SYSTEM ISN'T WORKING.

LET US RETHINK THE STRUCTURE OF YOUR DUTIES.”

YITRO RECOGNIZES THAT DISPUTE RESOLUTION HAS TO CHANGE.

HE IS ABLE TO STEP BACK TOWARD THE LARGER PICTURE,

TO UNDERSTAND WHAT WAS ESSENTIAL TO MOSES' LEADERSHIP

AND WELL-BEING.

YITRO'S SUGGESTION ENABLES BOTH MOSES AND THE ISRAELITES

TO “STAND UPRIGHT AND GO HOME UNWEARIED.”

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WE HAVE ALL HAD MOMENTS WHEN WE KNOW WE ARE UNHAPPY.

WE KNOW OUR LIFE IS NOT BALANCED THE WAY WE WANT IT TO BE.

SOMETIMES WE ARE NOT SURE HOW TO MAKE IT BETTER.

SOMETIMES WE KNOW WHAT WOULD MAKE IT BETTER,

BUT EFFECTING THAT SEEMS IMPOSSIBLE.

IN THOSE MOMENTS, WHO IS OUR YITRO?

HOW DO WE CONSTRUCT OUR LIVES TO IMPLEMENT OUR VALUES?

EACH OF US BALANCES MULTIPLE PRIORITIES.

WE CARE ABOUT THE HEALTH OF OUR FAMILY,

OUR RELATIONSHIPS, OUR WORK, OUR PHYSICAL WELL-BEING,

AND THE HEALTH OF OUR *NESHAMA*, OUR SPIRIT.

WE CANNOT FOCUS EVERYWHERE SIMULTANEOUSLY.

ALWAYS OUT OF BALANCE, WE YEARN FOR *TIKKUN*,

STRUGGLING TO REPAIR OUR *SHLEIMUT*, OUR WHOLENESS.

HUMAN DISUNITY

IS A TORAH TROPE FROM THE BEGINNING OF CREATION.

IN EDEN, ADAM AND EVE ENJOYED HARMONY

BETWEEN THE POLES OF MALE/FEMALE EXPRESSION

AND THE DIVINE/HUMAN RELATIONSHIP.

NEVERTHELESS, AS ONE OF MY RABBIS, NORMAN COHEN WRITES,

“TRUE WHOLENESS REQUIRES THE STRUGGLE

BETWEEN COMPETING ELEMENTS.”¹

¹ Norman J. Cohen, *Self, Struggle, and Change*, Jewish Lights Publishing: Woodstock, Vermont, 1995, p. 32.

THE COVENANT BETWEEN US AND THE ETERNAL
DOES NOT EXIST IN THE PARADISE OF THE GARDEN.
ONLY THROUGH EXPERIENCES OF FRAGMENTATION, ISOLATION,
AND LONELINESS OUTSIDE OF EDEN
CAN WE FIND ONENESS.

GODLINESS ITSELF ALWAYS SEEKS EQUILIBRIUM.
WITHIN KABBALAH,
THE ETERNAL'S ATTRIBUTES MANIFEST AS DUALITIES.
JUSTICE HARMONIZES WITH MERCY, STRENGTH WITH KINDNESS,
AND SO ON.
IF THE ETERNAL EXPRESSES MULTIPLE ASPECTS OF BEING IN THE WORLD,
WHY SHOULDN'T WE AS HUMANS STRUGGLE?

AS THE NEW YEAR BEGINS, WE TAKE STOCK OF OUR LIVES.
PROUDLY, WE REFLECT ON OUR GROWTH OVER THE PAST YEAR.
WE SEARCH FOR WAYS TO IMPROVE.
WE MAY SUMMON OUR INNER YITRO, THE WISE CREATIVE COUNSELOR,
TO CREATE A LESS WEARYING, MORE FULFILLING REALITY.

WHERE MIGHT WE ENCOUNTER OUR YITRO?

HOW WILL WE RECOGNIZE HIM?

WHAT GUISE WILL HE BE WEARING?

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THE MOMENTS I HAVE MOST YEARNED FOR YITRO

CENTER AROUND TECHNOLOGY'S EXPANSION

AND HOW IT FRAGMENTS MY LIFE

AND MY ABILITY TO BE TRULY PRESENT WITHIN MYSELF

AND WITH OTHERS.

WITHOUT A DOUBT,

TECHNOLOGY ENABLES CONNECTION AND PRODUCTIVITY.

HOW MANY TIMES

HAVE I REVITALIZED A RELATIONSHIP WITH A FORGOTTEN FRIEND

THROUGH FACEBOOK?

HOW OFTEN HAS MY GOOGLE MAPS APP SAVED

ME FROM BIKING IN CIRCLES ON A RIDE?

HOW WONDERFUL IS IT TO BE ABLE TO BE THERE FOR MANY OF YOU

BECAUSE I CAN READ YOUR EMAILS REMOTELY?

AT THE SAME TIME,

IN THE LAST YEAR I HAVE MORE DEEPLY FELT THE PROFOUND WAYS

TECHNOLOGY FRAGMENTS MY LIFE.

I SPOKE SEVERAL YEARS AGO ABOUT A WALK AROUND GREENLAKE
WHEN A FRIEND KEPT UNSUCCESSFULLY TRYING TO LOOK UP
THE NAME OF A RESTAURANT
WHILE IGNORING DUCKLINGS WADING ALONG THE MARSHY SHORELINE
AND THE LAZY AFTERNOON SUN DANCING ACROSS GINKO LEAVES.
A MEAL WITH FRIENDS
WHERE ONE PERSON CONTINUALLY WHIPS OUT THEIR CELL PHONE
INTERRUPTS OUR CLOSENESS.
WHAT WE REALLY DESIRE IS THEIR AUTHENTIC PRESENCE,
NOT ADDITIONAL FACTOIDS.
FOR ME, TECHNOLOGY'S INTRUSION
INTO MOMENTS OF POTENTIAL DEEP CONNECTION WITH OTHERS
LEADS TO A FRAGMENTED, OVERWHELMED EXISTENCE.
YITRO'S GENIUS RECOGNIZED THE BURDEN AND DISHARMONY
OF MULTIPLE NEEDS, REQUESTS, AND FEEDBACK
HITTING US AT ONCE.
HE REMINDS US THAT WE NEED A SYSTEM
TO SET BOUNDARIES AND EXPECTATIONS.

THE CULTURAL EXPECTATION OF INSTANTANEOUS RESPONSES
TO OUR EMAILS, TEXTS, AND TWEETS
IS ONE OF THE HARDEST CHALLENGES.

THAT CONSTANT NOTIFICATION “PING”
PRODUCES THE SAME RESPONSE IN OUR BRAIN
AS A FIGHT OR FLIGHT RESPONSE.
I WANT TO REPEAT THIS...
THE “PING” OF A NEW EMAIL, ANOTHER TEXT,
AN EXPLODING INBOX
PRODUCES THE SAME PHYSICAL AND NEUROLOGICAL RESPONSE
AS BEING CHASED BY A SABER-TOOTHED TIGER.
EVOLUTION HAS NOT CAUGHT UP WITH TECHNOLOGY.
OUR NATURAL URGE IS TO RESPOND RIGHT AWAY,
TO STAY ON TOP OF AN UNENDING INFLUX OF EMAIL DEMANDS.

ALL OF THIS TECHNOLOGY ENABLES OPPORTUNITIES FOR CONNECTION.
AND TECHNOLOGY ALSO NEEDS TO BE LIMITED
SO WE CAN BE TRULY PRESENT
FOR GENUINE ENCOUNTER WITH OTHERS.
TECHNOLOGY-BRED OVERSTIMULATION
CAN MAKE US FEEL PULLED IN 16 DIRECTIONS AT ONCE.
WE DO NOT WANT A CONSTANT FEELING OF OVERLOAD
TO BURDEN OUR LIVES WITH THE NAGGING FEELING
THAT WE ARE ALWAYS BEHIND.
WHEN SOMEONE ASKS US HOW WE ARE,

HOW OFTEN DO WE RESPOND THAT WE ARE TOO BUSY?

LIKE MOSES,

WE DO NOT WANT TO FEEL SO WEARIED THAT WE CANNOT STAND UP.

THE CONTINUAL DISTRACTION OF MULTIPLE TECHNOLOGICAL DEMANDS

LIMITS OUR OPPORTUNITIES TO BE TRULY PRESENT WITH OTHERS,

TO INVITE THE ETERNAL INTO OUR INTERACTIONS,

AND TO SAFEGUARD TIME TO REFLECT ON OUR LIVES

AND THE VALUES WE LIVE.

I INVITE US, AND MANDATE FOR MYSELF,

CREATING MORE SPACE FOR LIVING

WITHOUT THE INTRUSION OF TECHNOLOGY.

MAY WE TURN OFF THE NOTIFICATIONS ON OUR PHONES,

SET ASIDE SPECIFIC TIMES TO ANSWER EMAILS,

AND REMOVE THE PRESSURE

TO WORK ON THE WEEKENDS—AND EVERY FREE MOMENT.

I URGE US TO CLAIM A REAL SHABBAT

FOR OURSELVES AND OUR FAMILIES.

A DAY OF REST CELEBRATES THE ETERNAL'S CREATION.

SHABBAT IS WORTH OUR COMMITMENT. //

I REALIZE THAT MANY OF US DO NOT FEEL
 WE HAVE THE LUXURY TO LIVE THIS WAY EVEN IF WE WANTED TO.
 JOB CONSTRAINTS, WORK EXPECTATIONS,
 OR OUR CHILDREN'S SCHEDULES
 INSIST WE CANNOT LUXURIATE IN SHABBAT.
 I WILL SHARE WITH YOU THAT I REMIND MYSELF--TO START SMALL.
 CHOOSE A FEW HOURS ON SHABBAT
 TO DEDICATE TO *KEDUSHA*, HOLINESS.
 COMMIT TO NO WORK EMAILS AFTER YOU GET HOME,
 ESPECIALLY ON FRIDAY AND SATURDAY.
 FIND WHAT WORKS FOR YOU.
 WE DESPERATELY NEED A CHANCE TO REFLECT.
 ARE WE IN TOUCH WITH OUR *NESHAMOT*, OUR SPIRITS?
 ARE WE LIVING THE LIVES WE SEEK TO LEAD?
 ARE WE CREATING AN INTENTIONAL SPACE FOR INTROSPECTION?

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IT IS TOO EASY TO LOSE CONNECTION WITH OUR BEST SELVES
 IN THE STRESS OF THE MUNDANE.
 WE PUSH ASIDE THE ESSENTIAL QUESTION,
 "WHAT IS MY PURPOSE IN THIS LIFETIME?
 WHAT DO I NEED IN ORDER TO LIVE DEEPLY AND MEANINGFULLY?" //
 WE REQUIRE A TOUCHSTONE,

SOMETHING THAT WILL HELP OUR *TESHUVAH*,
OUR RETURN TO DIVINE PURPOSE,
SO YITRO DOES NOT HAVE TO INTERVENE.

FOR ME, REFLECTIVE MINDFULNESS PRACTICES
HAVE BEEN AN INVALUABLE TOOL TO CONNECT WITH MY *NESHAMA*
WITHIN THE STRESS OF THE MUNDANE.

MINDFULNESS ALLOWS ME
TO GENTLY MOVE AWAY FROM OUR HUMAN TENDENCY
TO HYPER-FOCUS ON NEGATIVE TRAITS,
THOSE HARMFUL INTERNAL STORY-LOOPS WE RECITE
ABOUT OTHER PEOPLE OR OURSELVES,
AND ALL OF THE PRACTICED PATTERNS
DETRACTING FROM OUR DIVINE SPIRIT.
THESE ARE UNIQUE TO EACH OF US.

SOME OF US WRESTLE MORE WITH OUR INTERNAL HABITS
SUCH AS GUILT OR SELF-DOUBT
AND OTHERS SEEK TO IMPROVE INTERPERSONAL INTERACTIONS.

JUDAISM PROVIDES A PATH FOR OUR IMPROVEMENT
THROUGH *MUSSAR*.

MUSSAR IS A SET OF JEWISH TEACHINGS

TO HELP US CULTIVATE PERSONAL GROWTH
AND SPIRITUAL CONNECTION IN THE MIDST OF EVERYDAY LIFE.
AGAIN, WE CAN USE MOSES AS AN EXAMPLE. WE KNOW MOSES'
SELF-DOUBT WAS A STUMBLING BLOCK.

A PERSON WHO CONSTANTLY FEELS UNWORTHY
OF THE TASK BEFORE HIM
CAN NEVER REALIZE HIS OR HER FULL POTENTIAL.

MUSSAR OFFERS A WAY TO GENTLY EXAMINE THIS SELF-DOUBT
AND REFINE ONESELF THROUGH INTROSPECTION AND TORAH.

OR TAKE MOSES' IMPATIENCE AND QUICKNESS TO ANGER.
DURING TIMES WHEN THE ISRAELITES WHINED OR ACTED OUT,
MOSES REACTED VIOLENTLY.

MUSSAR EXAMINES THE ATTRIBUTE OF PATIENCE
AND HOW TO CULTIVATE IT MORE FULLY.

FOR THOSE OF YOU INTERESTED IN *MUSSAR*,
THE BOOK *EVEYDAY HOLINESS* BY ALAN MORINIS
PROVIDES A WONDERFUL RESOURCE
WITH MORE TECHNIQUES TO EXPLORE.

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I SEE SO MUCH BEAUTY, POTENTIAL, AND PASSION
IN THE SOULS SITTING BEFORE ME.

AND I ALSO SEE WEARINESS.

I HOPE THAT THOUGHTFUL BOUNDARIES AROUND TECHNOLOGY
AND A JEWISH LENS TO EXAMINE OUR THOUGHTS AND BEHAVIORS
MIGHT SERVE AS A *TESHUVAH* TOUCHSTONES FOR US.

IN TURN, WE CAN REALIZE OUR POTENTIAL FOR LIVES OF MEANING,
KESHERIM, ☺ CONNECTION, AND EXUBERANCE.

SOME OF US MAY BE SAYING, “RABBI, THIS ALL SOUNDS GREAT,
AND I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT THE ETERNAL WANTS OF ME
OR WHAT ‘UNIFIES’ MY SOUL.” //

FOR ME, THE BEST REMINDER OF THE *SHLEIMUT*, THE WHOLENESS I
SEEK, IS TO THINK BACK ON TIMES WHEN I FELT MY SPIRIT SOAR.

WHEN DID I FEEL DEEPLY CONNECTED TO MY PURPOSE IN LIFE?

DEEPLY CONNECTED TO OTHERS?

REASSURED THAT I WAS LIVING MY VALUES?

THE MOMENTS WHEN IT SEEMS THAT TIME STOPS,

WE FEEL WHOLE AND CONTENT.

ALL OF LIFE’S PROSAIC CHALLENGES FADE AWAY.

THESE EXPERIENCES DIFFER FOR EACH OF US.

THEY MAY CENTER ON RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS—

BOTH STRANGERS OR THOSE WITH WHOM WE ARE VERY CLOSE,
HELPING TO HEAL OUR BROKEN WORLD, CREATING COMMUNITY,
OR NURTURING OUR FAMILY.

CONSIDER YOUR INDIVIDUAL OR COMMUNAL VALUES.

SET AN INTENTION, A *KAVANA*, FOR THE COMING YEAR.

ONE OF YOU IS COMMITTING

TO MORE REGULAR ACTS OF PHILANTHROPY.

ANOTHER PLEDGED TO CALL AN OLD FRIEND EACH WEEK

REVITALIZING RELATIONSHIPS THAT HAVE EBBED.

SOMEONE ELSE IS PRIORITIZING LIGHTING CANDLES

EACH FRIDAY NIGHT WITH HER FAMILY.

ANOTHER WILL TRY TO APPROACH HER MOTHER

WITH INCREASED *CHESED*, LOVINGKINDNESS.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO HAVE A CONVERSATION

ABOUT WHAT MIGHT BE NECESSARY

TO ACTUALIZE A UNIFIED, MEANINGFUL,

NOURISHING VISION YOUR LIFE,

I WOULD BE HONORED TO SHARE THAT CONVERSATION WITH YOU.

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HOW CAN WE CREATE MORE OF THOSE MOMENTS OF *SHLEIMUT*,
WHOLENESS?

HOW CAN WE FIND OUR OWN YITRO ADVISOR?

OUR OWN PRACTICAL PLAN TO REORGANIZE

HOW WE STRUCTURE OUR TIME?

HOW CAN YITRO'S ABILITY TO ENVISION A NEW DESERT REALITY
INFORM OUR NEW YEAR?

SADLY, WE ARE EACH TOO AWARE OF LIFE'S FRAGILITY.

AND THAT AWARENESS COMMANDS US TO LIVE EACH MOMENT
AS FULLY AS POSSIBLE.

THERE IS NOT ENOUGH TIME

TO SPEND TRAPPED BY INFINITE EMAILS, SELF-DOUBT, OR ANGER
EXCEPT WHEN IT ROUSES US TO ACTION.

IT IS UP TO US TO CREATE A PLACE FOR THE ETERNAL
WITHIN OUR LIVES.

I INVITE US, RIGHT NOW, TO CLOSE OUR EYES...

TO FIRST RELEASE A LONG BREATH, AN EXHALE OUT,
EXPPELLING INNER FRAGMENTATION, AND DISUNITY.... //

NOW INHALE A SLOW BREATH IN

AND ABSORB YITRO'S INVITATION... //

CONSIDER ONE WAY

YOU WOULD LIKE TO BUILD A FOUNDATION

OR CLEAR SPACE FOR YOUR TRUE PATH.

WHAT DAILY OPPORTUNITIES

FOR YOUR DIVINE ESSENCE ARE POSSIBLE?

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THE BANALITY OF THE EVERYDAY

IS OUR TREK THROUGH THE DESERT,

A METAPHOR FOR LIFE'S JOURNEY.

WILDERNESS IS OUR CONTINUING STRUGGLE

AND CAN BE OUR POSSIBILITY FOR CHANGE.

IN IT, WE SEEK THE SOURCE TO QUENCH OUR THIRST,

RESTING PLACES TO BREATHE AND REJUVENATE,

MOMENTS OF JUBILATION AND SONG,

AND THE ETERNAL'S SACRED PRESENCE

IN THE DESERT SANDS OR NESTLED INSIDE OF US.

L'SHANA TOVA,

MAY IT BE A SWEET, UNWEARIED,

AND INSPIRING YEAR FOR ALL OF US.