Points to Ponder

Devarim 5781

**אֵ֣לֶּה הַדְּבָרִ֗ים These are the words that Moshe spoke (1:1)** - THESE are the words? The only words? What happened to everything else Moshe said? **Rav Nissan Alpert ztl** explained that these are Moshe’s words of Tochacha and this is the primary focus of the book. At the same time, there are expansions on the words of the Torah from the first 4 sefarim as well. It teaches us that reproof without Torah words are meaningless. Torah WITH Musar combine in order to impact and endure.

**הָב֣וּ לָ֠כֶ֠ם אֲנָשִׁ֨ים חֲכָמִ֧ים וּנְבֹנִ֛ים וִֽידֻעִ֖ים לְשִׁבְטֵיכֶ֑ם Select for you men who are wise and intelligent and known to your tribes (1:13) - Rav Schachter Shlita** pointed out that he recalled Rav Soloveitchik insisting that even on the weekdays (Shabbos Mincha, Monday, Thursday) prior to Shabbos Devarim, this Aliyah be read. Rav Schachter explained that since one of the main reasons for the destruction of the Beis HaMikdash was due to the inappropriate judges and corruption and the opposite is identified in the second Aliyah of the parsha, it is only fitting that in the weeks prior to Tisha B’Av this idea be underscored repeatedly.

**הָב֣וּ לָ֠כֶ֠ם אֲנָשִׁ֨ים חֲכָמִ֧ים וּנְבֹנִ֛ים וִֽידֻעִ֖ים לְשִׁבְטֵיכֶ֑ם Select for you men who are wise and intelligent and known to your tribes (1:13**) - The Midrash explains that a judge needs to have 7 attributes -- 3 which are recorded here and 4 recorded elsewhere. Why couldn’t they keep the 7 attributes together? The Midrash explains that if one cannot find all 7 attributes in a judge at least find 4 of them. For we find Eishes Chayil Mi Yimtza. What does the posuk of Eishes Chayil have to do with things here? **Rav Schlessinger Shlita** quotes the Aderet who notes that the reference is a mistake in interpreting an abbreviation -- it should refer to Anshei Chayil MiKol Yisrael.

**וְהַדָּבָר֙ אֲשֶׁ֣ר יִקְשֶׁ֣ה מִכֶּ֔ם תַּקְרִב֥וּן אֵלַ֖י וּשְׁמַעְתִּֽיו: And that which is too hard for you bring to me and I will listen (1:17) - Rabbi Dr. Abraham J. Twerski ztl.** noted that the Posuk does not say that Moshe promised to solve it, just that he would listen. Quoting the **Gerrer Rebbe**, Rav Twerski explained that sometimes just being there to listen helps someone figure out the solutions to his dilemma.

**וַתֵּרָֽגְנ֤וּ בְאָֽהֳלֵיכֶם֙ And you complained in your tents (1:27)** - Whose tents? **Rav Dovid Feinstein ztl.** noted that the complaining in the tents refers to an allusion to the Jewish wives and mothers who maintain the home and nurture the next generation. Crying that night in the tents would mean that the future generations would learn to complain and maintain that unnecessary tears are part of Jewish tradition -- a destructive tradition.

**רַב־לָכֶ֕ם סֹ֖ב אֶת־הָהָ֣ר הַזֶּ֑ה פְּנ֥וּ לָכֶ֖ם צָפֹֽנָה Enough of going around this mountain turn to the north (2:3) - Kli Yakar** interprets that we ought not flaunt our wealth to the outside but rather keep it internal not to raise the wrath of the Goyim. **Rav Yaakov Bender Shlita** explained that this is not only true of the nations of the world but also internally that it is not good to provoke Jews either -- because causing jealousy or resentfulness is not worth it.

**ק֣וּמוּ סְּע֗וּ וְעִבְרוּ֘ Arise, carry and pass (2:24)** - Hashem’s announcement about capturing the land happened on Tu B’Av (Acc. to Bava Basra 121a) which became a day of celebration because of the message to capture the land**. Rav Neriah ztl.** explained that the joy was a parallel to the sadness of Tisha B’Av and a response to it. Rav Neriah added that therefore it, like Yom Kippur are the 2 happiest days on the calendar because they are days of forgiveness.

**Haftara:**

**עַמִּ֖י לֹ֥א הִתְבּוֹנָֽן My nation didn’t contemplate (Yeshayahu 1:3)** - What exactly is Hisbonenus and why is it important? **Rav Wolbe ztl.** explains that **Ramchal** compares Torah to a fire and every word like a coal. Left on its own, a coal will merley glimmer but if fanned by toiling in order to understand and fully grasp Torah, each coal will burst into a fiery flame. That fanning, adds Rav Wolbe, is achieved through Hisbonenus. It is the motor that triggers the Seichel but at the same time it is also the tool that a person uses to get to know himself.