

And it shall come to pass when you listen to the Mitzvos (7:12) – Rashi notes that the word eikev is used as it reminds us of Mitzvos that one tends to treat as insignificant and tramples on with his heel. If we correctly observe even these, we can be sure that Hashem will reward us. **Rav Elyashiv ztl.** added that one must also be on the lookout for the Aveiros that one tramples through. Like Yonah in the boat, whose sin seemed to be much smaller than those of the idol worshippers on the boat with him and still was to blame for the hurricane at sea, we too do not know the value of the Mitzvos and Avairos and therefore cannot judge which ones to trample through.

And Hashem gave me the 2 tablets of stone (9:10) – It is interesting that while the word is read in the plural, it is written as a single word (Luchas). This teaches us that the Dibros had the same significance as if they had been written on the same tablet. **Rav Dovid Feinstein Shlita** highlights this point by noting the redundancy in the word shnei and Luchos both of which imply a multiple. The Torah wants us to know that one cannot properly fulfill the first 5 without properly doing the second and vice versa. True Torah observance requires a person to link his Bein Adam L'Makom with the Bein Adam L'Chaveiro.

Now Yisrael, what does Hashem ask of you save Yiras Hashem (10:12) – What is Yiras Shomayim? Why does it use the word Yirah – fear, if that is so opposite the style of today's world? **Rav Shlomo Freifeld ztl.** explained that Yiras Shomayim is not based on fear – as in fear of personal harm. Rather, it is an experience of reverence – where one finds something bigger in the world around him or her – like looking at the declaration of independence or the Mona Lisa. Both have boundaries so as not to get too close. There is a fear...That same reverence needs to be within us if we are to appreciate Godliness in the world and in the Torah that built and runs it. If we get THAT idea, we will get the keys to our future.

And you should circumcise the Orlah of your hearts (10:16) – **Rav Gifter ztl.** explained the metaphor here by noting that just like the foreskin covers something that ought to be revealed, earthly desires need to be curbed as these extras hold us back from finding our true hearts that serve Hashem.

Hashem is the loftiest of Gods, great awesome etc...and he loves the stranger to give him bread and clothes (10:17-18) – Rashi cites the Gemara in Megillah (31a) which notes that where we find the greatness of Hashem we also find his humility. **Sivan Rahav Meir** pointed out that many modern philosophers think that the greatness of Hashem is seen in his ability to change nature. However, the true greatness of Hashem is in the fact that while he is the Hashem over great things, His towering presence does not preclude his involvement in helping even the most downtrodden in society. To be a Gadol, sometimes we need to listen to the smallest of things.

Your eyes see all of the great work that Hashem did (11:7) – If we are supposed to “see” Hashem's miracles so clearly through his handiwork, why is it that some see more clearly than others? **Rav Mordechai Pogremonski ztl.** likened this to one walking through an art museum with a smudge on his glasses. While the art is magnificent, the wearer only sees smudges and imperfections. It is our attunement that needs to be clued in if we are to be able to perceive the greatness of Hashem.

A land of mountains and valleys where you can drink the rainwater (11:11) – Rashi notes that the mountain is better than the plains for crop growth. **Rav Avigdor Nebenzahl Shlita** pointed out that this is a proof to the Tamud's (Taanis 3b) statement that one snowfall is as good for the mountains as 5 rains for the ground. Rav Nebenzahl explains that the mountains need 5 times the amount of rain since it

grows 5 times of the amount of crop. This is one of the great Niflaos HaBorai that he sees to it that more moisture comes to the mountains (in the form of snow) in order to improve the growth conditions.

Haftorah – Could a woman ever forget her nursing child?...even these can be forgotten I will not forget you (Yeshayahu 49:15) – Even if it is possible for a mother to forget her child, Hashem promises that he will not forget us. The **Yalkut Shimoni** offers a deeper explanation – noting that while the Jews declared “Eleh Eloheicha Yisrael” about the Eigel and heard “Anochi Hashem” at the base of Har Sinai, the Nechama is that the “Eleh” will be forgotten in the future while the Anochi shall not. (**Rav Schachter Shlita** suggested that this is the elusive connection to the Parsha where Moshe describes Maamad Har Sinai and the Eigel episode), Why will Hashem overlook one and not the other? **Rav Schachter Shlita** explained that like in a spouse or a city one lives in, there are positive and negative qualities. However, in the successful ones, the positives far overwhelm the negatives to the point of making the negatives unrecognizable. Hashem will do the same for us as a nation in the future as well – noting that our positives will outweigh our challenges. This is a huge Nechama.