

(**Rav Moshe Wolfson Shlita** notes that the reading of the Parsha of Nedarim during the 3 weeks is a response to the Talmud's (Bava Basra 74) comment that a heavenly voice declared that it swore to create an exile and now there is no one to annul the Neder. Our reading of this section is a reminder that Hashem's Torah contains exactly this concept – Neder annulment and it is available to be used by Hashem).

'איש כי ידור נדר לה' **When a man takes a Neder or a Shevuah (30:3)** – The Gemara (Nedarim 8a) notes that one is allowed to take an oath to guarantee that he will do a Mitzva. Although we are all technically sworn already to keep the Torah from our promise at Har Sinai, still it is a good Neder because of its inspiration. Why is it Ziruz to do something that has no value? **The Steipler ztl.** explains that the reason many of us sin is because we fail to see the truth. Instead, we find reasons to permit ourselves to do something that we know is otherwise wrong. Taking a personal oath to strengthen a Mitzva is a means of saying that despite whatever logic that I might employ to erroneously allow myself to do an Aveira, I am doubling down not to use that logic and stick to the Mitzva.

וה' יסלח לה **And Hashem shall forgive her (30:9)** – The Gemara in Nedarim discusses the Heter Nedarim through Charata. How does this work? Why would this undo a Neder? **Rav Schachter Shlita** explained in the name of **Rav Soloveitchik ztl.** that when one argues that his Neder should be expunged he is really arguing that he is a different person from the one who took the Neder. The one who took the Neder was an angry or depressed individual (See Raavad Hil Shavuos 6:12) and now that I am not angry or depressed, I am a changed man and the Neder of the angry or depressed person should not apply. Rav Soloveitchik would add that the recitation of Kol Nidre works the same way – sometimes one seeks a technicality (a Pesach) on the grounds that they thought they would benefit from sin. Alas it was not true. This is a means of Teshuva on technical grounds and would affect the strict language of the Neder. Teshuva through Charata works differently – it argues that the person is a different person and the punishments set for the first, should be null to the “new” person.

ויקצף משה **And Moshe got angry (31:14)** – Moshe got angry 3 times and each time, his anger caused him to forget a Halacha. **Rav Chaim Shmuellevitz ztl.** explains that this is a normal course of events and not a punishment. Rav Chaim explains that since the study of Torah involves not only the amassing of knowledge but also changes the person. The Torah cannot live in a body that is filled with bad Middos, in fact, even the Torah knowledge already there, runs away. The same concept exists in the realm of prophesy. When a Novi is unsettled, he cannot serve as a conduit for the spirit of prophesy.

ויעל אהרן הכהן הר החר **Aharon went up on Hor HaHar on the first day of the 5th month (33:38)** – Why does the Torah repeat this specific information about Aharon's death which is not mentioned anywhere else? **Rav Moshe Wolfson Shlita** explains that Aharon was the physical embodiment of the holiness of the Jewish people – a human Beis HaMikdash. This section of the Torah highlights the travels during the Galus as the Jews made their way to the land of Israel. Herein the Torah details the death of Aharon to tell us that his death in the context of exile is similar to the loss of a Beis HaMikdash and the subsequent exile. It belongs in the section dealing with the travels through the desert too.

והקיתם לכם ערים **And you shall set up cities of refuge for yourselves where one who takes a life inadvertently shall run there (35:11)** – The Talmud (Makos 10a) notes that signs to the Ir Miklat were to be established at the intersections so that whomever was running there should not have to stop (See

Rashi there). **The Brisker Rav ztl.** commented that the Torah employs sensitivity to the one travelling to Ir Miklat. The Torah recognized that the man would be in fear of those pursuing him and might not have bothered to get exact directions. Considering his fears, the Torah commands us to established proper public works projects which included hanging the signs at each intersection so that the one traveling would not need to stop and be in fear for a moment longer. This is in stark contrast to the one going up to Yirushalayim who is not granted the sign because we WANT him to have to stop to ask for directions. In doing so, he might get others to travel WITH him to fulfill the great Mitzva of Aliyah L'Regel.

וְלֹא תַחֲנִיפוּ אֶת הָאָרֶץ **You shall not bring guilt upon the land in which you are for the blood will bring guilt upon the land (35:33)**- Why does the Torah use this unusual expression of L'Hachnif to refer to bloodshed? Doesn't the word refer more to the concept of presenting an external appearance that does not correspond to the inner reality? **Rav Chaim Sabato Shlita** noted that the land of Israel is only in its natural state when the people of Israel dwell within it. When they desecrate its holy nature through the cardinal sins including bloodshed, they are having the land act against the nature of the land, bringing guilt upon itself and exile on its inhabitants.

כֵּן מִטָּה בְּנֵי יוֹסֵף דְּבָרִים **Bnei Yosef are correct (36:5)** – **The Ohr HaChaim** points out that similar to Bnos Tzlofchad, the Torah again uses the word Kein – that they are correct. Why? The Or HaChaim explains that the intent here is to honor Bnei Yosef (as by Bnos Tzlofchad to honor them) because they spoke a truth. The point of these words from Hashem to Moshe was specifically to honor the Bnei Yosef for being able to assess truth. **Rav Modechai Gifter ztl.** added how important it is to honor and value those who uncover the truth in the Torah – being Torah true is an important value to the point that Hashem literally adds to the Torah by speaking to Moshe to highlight “Kein” yes, these people were correct. Seeking and finding Truth in the Torah is an important endeavor and helps us find truth in Hashem himself.

Haftorah: **כִּי שְׁתִּים רָעוֹת עָשָׂה עִמִּי** **For my nation did 2 bad things to me – they left ME, the source of life giving water (Yirmiyahu 2:13)** – **The Alshich** explains what the 2 evils were. He notes that when one cuts off the source of water – not only do we lose the water there and in the water system served by it, we also look for other systems to replace the lost water which eventually turn out to be ineffective and run out too. Similarly, leaving Hashem and then replacing His effect on our need for spiritual purpose with foreign elements were indeed 2 separate issues – leaving a path that was positive and fulfilling and replacing it with a path that is underwhelming, wasteful and limited. This is what Yirmiyahu later refers to as the double sin that needs the double Nechama which we speak about when we say Nachamu, Nachamu Ami.