

Today (29:9) – The Torah mentions the word “Today” three times in the opening of the Parsha. Why? **Rabbi Dr. Abraham Twerski Shlita** notes that there are 2 roadblocks placed before us as we endeavor to become better people and Jews. The first is the fear of the future as we look ahead to the challenges that we might encounter and our frustration in meeting them and overcoming them. The second is the guilt we feel about the past which can make us feel unworthy and depressed. The Torah tells us to ignore the roadblocks and focus on the present. We are here now and can achieve that which is with us in the moment. Attaching moment to moment can help create great things.

He will bless himself in his heart saying I will be at peace...Hashem will not be willing to forgive him for then Hashem's anger and jealousy will smoke against that man (29:18-19) – How can one be so foolish to think he will be ok? **Rav Betzalel Ashkenazi ztl. (Shittah Mikubetzes)** explains that the world needs many different kinds of people who make different contributions to it. Lest a person think that since the world cannot exist without him and thus he can sin to his heart's content, Hashem says “not so.” The world will indeed exist without him.

The HIDDEN is for Hashem, our G-d, but the REVEALED is for us and our children forever, to carry out all the words of this Torah (29:28)- On a simple level, the Torah is encouraging us to engage in the keeping of Torah and Mitzvos as a community with responsibility for one another. However, **Rav Moshe Stav Shlita** saw a deeper message here: Often we look at the Galus as a punishment, there is also a positive aspect embedded within it. In exile our own Emunah became more real, and any progress in the values, belief in One G-d, and morality of mankind stem from the impact of Bnei Yisrael in one way or another. The entire route of the exile is guided by a Hand that directs all events toward the perfection of the world. Our minds cannot grasp this idea, let alone understand it! Certainly we cannot base any of our personal life decisions on this idea, for this Ultimate Providence is hidden. We must only think in terms of reward and punishment to do as we are commanded. Providence will guide our lives to different places and situations so that our actions will lead to the appropriate goals. This is one level of the possuk The hidden Hand that guides all of history is G-dly, and we merely have a faint awareness of it. However, "the REVEALED," i.e., observing the mitzvot and learning Torah, even though we may not see the immediate purpose in them, is in our hands to live by. In the end of days, we will see that everything was under G-d's guiding Hand.

It will happen that when all of these things come to you—the blessing and the curse we will do Teshuva (30:1)- **Rav Schachter shlita** would point out that this is one of the fundamentals of the faith – that there will be a coming of Moshiach after Hashem sees to it that we will do Teshuva and there will be a Kibbutz Galiyos. The Rambam adds that if one does not believe in the coming of Moshiach, he is contradicting the words of Moshe. Hashem does not do a miracle unnecessarily and Hashem miraculously created a world for which there must be a purpose. So far, that purpose is not defined. We believe that this miracle will have a purpose –and that will be clear with the arrival of Moshiach.

The matter is close to you it is in your mouth and your heart to do (30:14) – **Rabbi Jonathan Sacks Shlita** noted the Jewish tendency to seek spirituality by going far from Judaism. This is unnecessary. In Judaism Hashem is quite close. He is in the Shul waiting to hear our voice and at the table waiting to enjoy our meal and at work and on the playground waiting to see us act within a manner that inspires respect and honor. All we need to do is to call out to Him while being true with ourselves.

Life and death I have placed before you – blessings and curses – so choose life (30:19) – Rav Wolbe ztl. pointed out that the most elementary form of Bechira is the ability to know that one need not sin and can choose not to sin. Rav Wolbe decried the fact that in our generation there is a belief that we are certainly not responsible for our actions. This is a big mistake. Integrating our responsibility will help us see our ability and in return, will help us in our Avodas Hashem as we develop strength to know that we CAN change and that we WILL.

And their children will hear and learn to fear Hashem (31:12) – Or HaChaim asks who the children are who are too young to understand. Are they toddlers? He answers that this refers to the children who can understand the concept of Yiras Shomayim. Why does the possuk continue to refer to the days YOU are crossing the Yarden as opposed to the days that THEY cross? **Rav Mordechai Kamenetzsky Shlita** explained that children need to be trained not for post-parental existence but rather while the parent is still there – to enjoy the nachas and experience the passing of the torch of Torah that is our Mesorah. It needs to begin in life – not only in replacement.

Haftorah: Until He shall prepare and until Yirushalayim shall become a praise in the land (Yeshayahu 62:7) – Rav Nebenzahl Shlita points out that based on the Trup (Darga Svir) on the words Yirushalayim Tehillah the possuk CANNOT mean that Hashem will make Yirushalayim into a praise but rather that Yirushalayim is already a praise in the world. Thus, the Possuk speaks of a Yirushalayim Shel Maala which needs to be BROUGHT to the Aretz.