

PARSHAT NITZAVIM

Deuteronomy Chapter 29

9You are all standing this day (**why standing?**) before the Lord, your God the leaders of your tribes, your elders and your officers, every man of Israel,

10your young children, your women, and your convert who is within your camp both your woodcutters and your water drawers,

11that you may enter the covenant of the Lord, your God, and His oath, which the Lord, your God, is making with you this day,

12in order to establish you this day as His people, and that He will be your God, as He spoke to you, and as He swore to your forefathers to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

13But not only with you am I making this covenant and this oath,

14but with those standing here with us today before the Lord, our God, and [also] with those who are not here with us, this day. (**Why in such detail?**)

15For you know how we dwelled in the land of Egypt, and how we passed among the nations through which you passed.

16And you saw their abominations and their repugnant idols [of] wood and stone, silver and gold which were with them.

17Perhaps there is among you a man, woman, family, or tribe, whose heart strays this day from the Lord, our God, to go and worship the deities of those nations. Perhaps there is among you a root that produces hemlock and wormwood.

18And it will be, when he [such a person] hears the words of this oath, that he will bless himself in his heart, saying, "I will have peace, even if I follow my heart's desires," in order to add the [punishment for the] unintentional sins [of this man] to that of [his] intentional sins. (**Why do we always think we are different from everybody else?**)

19The Lord will not be willing to forgive him; rather, then, the Lord's fury and His zeal will fume against that man, and the entire curse written in this book will rest upon him, and the Lord will obliterate his name from beneath the heavens.

20And the Lord will separate him for evil, out of all the tribes of Israel, according to all the curses of the covenant, written in this Torah scroll.

21And a later generation, your descendants, who will rise after you, along with the foreigner who comes from a distant land, will say, upon seeing the plagues of that land and the diseases with which the Lord struck it:

22Sulfur and salt have burned up its entire land! It cannot be sown, nor can it grow [anything], not [even] any grass will sprout upon it. It is like the overturning of Sodom, Gemorrah, Admah and Zeboiim, which the Lord overturned in His fury and in His rage.

23And all the nations will say, Why did the Lord do so to this land? What [is the reason] for this great rage of fury?

24Then they will say, It is because they abandoned the covenant of the Lord, God of their fathers, [the covenant] which He made with them when He took them out of the land of Egypt,

25For they went and served other deities, prostrating themselves to them deities which they had not known, and which He had not apportioned to them.

26And the Lord's fury raged against that land, bringing upon it the entire curse written in this book.

27And the Lord uprooted them from upon their land, with fury, anger and great wrath, and He cast them to another land, as it is this day.

28The hidden things belong to the Lord, our God, but the revealed things apply to us and to our children forever: that we must fulfill all the words of this Torah.

(What the hidden things and the revealed things?)

Deuteronomy Chapter 30

1And it will be, when all these things come upon you the blessing and the curse which I have set before you that you will consider in your heart, among all the nations where the Lord your God has banished you,

2and you will return to the Lord, your God, with all your heart and with all your soul, and you will listen to His voice according to all that I am commanding you this day you and your children,

3then, the Lord, your God, will bring back your exiles, and He will have mercy upon you. He will once again gather you from all the nations, where the Lord, your God, had dispersed you.

4Even if your exiles are at the end of the heavens, the Lord, your God, will gather you from there, and He will take you from there.

5And the Lord, your God, will bring you to the land which your forefathers possessed, and you [too] will take possession of it, and He will do good to you, and He will make you more numerous than your forefathers. **(How does this passage make you feel about the land of Israel?)**

6And the Lord, your God, will circumcise your heart **(what does this mean?)**and the heart of your offspring, [so that you may] love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, for the sake of your life.

7And the Lord, your God, will place all these curses upon your enemies and upon your adversaries, who pursued you.

8And you will return and listen to the voice of the Lord, and fulfill all His commandments, which I command you this day.

9And the Lord, your God, will make you abundant for good in all the work of your hands, in the fruit of your womb, in the fruit of your livestock, and in the fruit of your soil. For the Lord will once again rejoice over you for good, as He rejoiced over your forefathers,

10when you obey the Lord, your God, to observe His commandments and His statutes written in this Torah scroll, [and] when you return to the Lord, your God, with all your heart and with all your soul.

11For this commandment which I command you this day, is not concealed from you, nor is it far away.

12It is not in heaven, that you should say, "Who will go up to heaven for us and fetch it for us, to tell [it] to us, so that we can fulfill it?"

13Nor is it beyond the sea, that you should say, "Who will cross to the other side of the sea for us and fetch it for us, to tell [it] to us, so that we can fulfill it?"

14Rather,[this] thing is very close to you; it is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can fulfill it. **(What does this mean exactly? How are we close to the Torah?)**

15Behold, I have set before you today life and good, and death and evil,

16inasmuch as I command you this day to love the Lord, your God, to walk in His ways, and to observe His commandments, His statutes, and His ordinances, so that you will live and increase, and the Lord, your God, will bless you in the land to which you are coming to take possession of it.

17But if your heart deviates and you do not listen, and you will be drawn astray, and you will prostrate yourself to other deities and serve them,

18I declare to you this day, that you will surely perish, and that you will not live long days on the land, to which you are crossing the Jordan, to come and take possession thereof.

19This day, I call upon the heaven and the earth as witnesses [that I have warned] you: **I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. Choose life, so that you and your offspring will live; (How do we choose life?)**

20To love the Lord your God, to listen to His voice, and to cleave to Him. For that is your life and the length of your days, to dwell on the land which the Lord swore to your forefathers to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob to give to them