

# Parashat Nitzavim & VaYeilech / פרשת נצבים ופרשת וילך

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## Forcing Our Emotions to Fit with God's Word

### This Weeks Reading List:

Torah: Numbers Deut 29:10-30:20; Deut 31:1-31:30

Haftarah: Isaiah 61:10-63:9; 55:6-56:8

B'rit HaChadashah: Romans 10:1-12; 10:14-18

This week's parsha contains the last speech that is given by Moshe before his death. Within Sefer Devarim (book of Deuteronomy) Moshe has given four speeches. Moshe's last speech actually begins at the end of last week's parsha, Parashat Ki-Tavo. The locations of the 4 main speeches in Sefer Devarim are summarized in the following table if you are interested in going back and reviewing the sections of scripture.

	CHAPTERS	TOPIC
1.	1 through 4	Introductory speech (why 40 years have passed)
2.	5 through 26	The main speech: the "mitzvot" to keep in the land
3.	27 through 28	Brit Har Eival and the Tochacha (תוכחה, admonition)
4.	29 through 30	The final speech → Parshat Nitzavim

In Moshe's final speech he is warning us to obey God. The significance of Moshe's last speech I feel deals with choice and our emotions. The choices we make each day are usually based upon our emotions. I think most everyone would agree because life wouldn't be life if we did not act upon our emotions and feelings. How we respond to others, loving and taking care of our pets, etc. all play an active and important part of life, even our spiritual journey by choosing to walk with God or not to walk with God. In this study however I want to discuss our emotions and anger. Let's explore this a little further but first lets read a short section of verses from Moshe's speech.

### ***Deuteronomy 30:9-16***

*30:9 Then ADONAI your God will give you more than enough in everything you set out to do - the fruit of your body, the fruit of your livestock, and the fruit of your land will all do well; for ADONAI will once again rejoice to see you do well, just as he rejoiced in your ancestors. 30:10 "However, all this will happen only if you pay attention to what ADONAI your God says, so that you obey his mitzvot and regulations which are written in this book of the Torah, if you turn to ADONAI your God with all your heart and all your being. 30:11 For this mitzvah which I am giving you today is not too hard for you, it is not beyond your reach. 30:12 It isn't in the sky, so that you need to ask, 'Who will go up into the sky for us, bring it to us and make us hear it, so that we can obey it?' 30:13 Likewise, it isn't beyond the sea, so that you need to ask, 'Who will cross the sea for us,*

*bring it to us and make us hear it, so that we can obey it?' 30:14 On the contrary, the word is very close to you - in your mouth, even in your heart; therefore, you can do it! 30:15 "Look I am presenting you today with, on the one hand, life and good; and on the other, death and evil - 30:16 in that I am ordering you today to love ADONAI your God, to follow his ways, and to obey his mitzvot, regulations and rulings ; for if you do, you will live and increase your numbers; and ADONAI your God will bless you in the land you are entering in order to take possession of it.*

According to Moshe we have to make the decision to follow God's way and obey his mitzvot. Moshe tells us what would happen if we choose to follow God's way, God will bless us in all that we do. However, it is possible that our emotions can lead us away from the right choices. Sometimes our emotions can get in the way of what we know in our heart is right to do.

## **We have to force our emotions to fit to God's Word**

As a result this requires us to take our emotions and force them to fit with God's word. Let me explain with an example on swearing. When we get angry it is easy to swear whether it is at a particular person or inanimate object. But we have to ask why does a person swear? I feel it is because swearing makes one feel good. The root of the feeling is centered upon how best one can put down someone verbally, it is a pride issue. This becomes evident when one begins to fabricate new more foul sentences, the fouler the better (shock value). When we live from our emotions we naturally choose to hurt people in order to make ourselves look and feel better. The problem arises when we know in our heart what we are doing, or saying is wrong yet for some reason it seems we can't resist or we too quickly spout the verbal obscenities before thinking. In this instance, one has to force themselves to stop swearing; it takes a conscious decision to stop, along with prayer and seeking the Lord in his Holy word.

So what is the conclusion we can make here? We have to **"DO"** the Word because our emotions have a tendency to take us in the direction we do not want to go. Our emotions will cause us to say "I don't feel like it" for example (i) I don't feel like praying, (ii) I don't feel like reading and studying God's Holy word, (iii) I don't feel like going and spending time with a friend who needs a listening ear (iv) I don't feel like being nice to those persons who hurt me. These emotional responses are examples where emotions not only have a tendency to drive and direct our lives, they also draw us farther away from God and create a division between you and your friends. We have to decide today to proactively take action to force our emotions to fit along side of God's Word. We do this by **"DOING"** what the Word says not based upon how we feel at the moment. When we begin to DO then we will reap the reward, we will bring in a harvest of God's blessing on our lives like it says in this week's parsha the Lord will bless everything that you do by obeying God's mitzvot.

There are two goals or aims which I believe the Torah is designed for (i) the Torah is designed to condition our hearts so that we can have a right relationship with God. Conditioning our heart deals specifically with our emotions for example God uses our emotions to convict us of sin which leads to repentance. Taking the word of God and

place it upon our hearts so we can be more consistent in our walk with God. (ii) To point to God's messiah. Interestingly enough the reading from the b'rit hachadashah for this week is from Romans chapter 10 the apostle Shaul (Paul) ties together this aim of the Torah.

### ***Romans 10:1-18***

*10:1 Brothers, my heart's deepest desire and my prayer to God for Isra'el is for their salvation; 10:2 for I can testify to their zeal for God. But it is not based on correct understanding; 10:3 for, since they are unaware of God's way of making people righteous and instead seek to set up their own, they have not submitted themselves to God's way of making people righteous. 10:4 For the goal at which the Torah aims is the Messiah, who offers righteousness to everyone who trusts. 10:5 For Moshe writes about the righteousness grounded in the Torah that the person who does these things will attain life through them. 10:6 Moreover, the righteousness grounded in trusting says: "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend to heaven?'" that is, to bring the Messiah down 10:7 or, "'Who will descend into Sh'ol?'" that is, to bring the Messiah up from the dead. 10:8 What, then, does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart." that is, the word about trust which we proclaim, namely, 10:9 that if you acknowledge publicly with your mouth that Yeshua is Lord and trust in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be delivered. 10:10 For with the heart one goes on trusting and thus continues toward righteousness, while with the mouth one keeps on making public acknowledgement and thus continues toward deliverance. 10:11 For the passage quoted says that everyone who rests his trust on him will not be humiliated. 10:12 That means that there is no difference between Jew and Gentile - ADONAI is the same for everyone, rich toward everyone who calls on him, 10:13 since everyone who calls on the name of ADONAI will be delivered. 10:14 But how can they call on someone if they haven't trusted in him? And how can they trust in someone if they haven't heard about him? And how can they hear about someone if no one is proclaiming him? 10:15 And how can people proclaim him unless God sends them? - as the Tanakh puts it, "How beautiful are the feet of those announcing good news about good things!" 10:16 The problem is that they haven't all paid attention to the Good News and obeyed it. For Yesha'yahu says, "ADONAI, who has trusted what he has heard from us?" 10:17 So trust comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes through a word proclaimed about the Messiah. 10:18 "But, I say, isn't it rather that they didn't hear?" No, they did hear "Their voice has gone out throughout the whole world and their words to the ends of the earth." (CJB)*

According to scripture, God's ultimate desire is to (i) redeem the nations, (ii) set up and establish for Himself a Holy people Israel, and (iii) finally to live intimately with his people as Father God. This is achieved by the Lord working in our hearts, and our emotions through his Holy Spirit. The life that God expects of us is a life of cleaving to God and oneness with the Father. It consists of a life of obedience which by its very nature is a choice, something we DO. We choose to obey his mitzvot, walk in obedience or choose to live our lives by turning away from Him and walk in the vanity of our own hearts. God providing a way for our salvation in His Messiah is also a choice, one which enables us to enjoy the blessing by the power of his spirit so that we can have a real, living, happy, and joyous relationship with the Lord God as one people in the faith.

The apostle Shaul said ADONAI is the same for everyone and rich toward everyone who calls on him. Trust in God comes from the heart, and we demonstrate that trust by the actions we take, and the words we say. If God desires a relationship with us, and if our heart is the meeting place for our relationship with God and God has revealed this to us in his Holy Word, why wait any longer to come into the blessing God has for you today. Believe upon his Messiah Yeshua, and be blessed!

## **Be Blessed in Yeshua the Messiah**

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**הללויה לאדוננו מורנו ורבינו ישוע מלך המשיח לעולם ועד:**

Hallelujah for our Lord, our Teacher, our Rabbi,  
“Yeshua” King Messiah for ever and ever