

Moshe continues his tutelage to Bnei Yisroel.

רָאָה אֲנֹכִי נָתַן לְפָנֵיכֶם הַיּוֹם בְּרָכָה וּקְלָלָה:

“See! I gave before you, today, blessing and curse.” (Devarim 11:26).

What is the lesson from the word “see?” Clearly, they were not *seeing* the actual blessings and curses. Why is blessing and curse singular? Also, if it were referring to actual given blessings and curses that Bnei Yisroel can see, it should have said “*the* blessings and *the* curses.” Also, who is I? Did Moshe put before Bnei Yisroel blessing and curse? Why would he choose to curse Bnei Yisroel?

Gemara Yerushalmi Sotah 7:4 says, *this pasuk teaches that the blessings and curses were said on both Har Eval and Har Gerizim. The entire people answered amen to both the blessings and the curses. However, the mountains were divided so that when answering amen to the blessings the people faced Har Gerizim and amen to the curses toward Har Eval.*

Rashi says, *these blessings and curses are later to be said on the mountains, Harei Gerizim and Eval. If so, how does this help understand the illusion of “see” when it’s to take place in the future? See implies something present.*

Ibin Ezra says, *see is like ‘behold.’ Moshe was talking to each individual.*

Sforno says, *Moshe was giving them the two extremes. Do not be like other nations that find middle ground. There is only good and evil – blessing and curse – that awaits you. Follow the good.*

Chizkuni says, *until now Moshe focused their attention on fear of the Lord. Now he is moving them toward concentrating on specific mitzvoos.*

Daas Zekeinim says, *in this world there is blessing and curse. When Moshiach arrives [more likely, later during Olam Haboah] there will only be blessing.*

Kli Yakar points out, *“see” is singular and “before you” is plural. A person must view himself as seeing half the world is good and half evil. He is the deciding factor.*

Rabbeinu Bachya says, *singular and plural are used because he was talking to the individual and the nation. He was also summoning the attributes of both mercy and justice in administering the blessing and the curse.*

Ohr Chaim says, *Moshe was talking to them as individuals. Each one was to make a choice between good and evil. In order to do this, he had to show about himself that (1) he had an appreciation for the value of good, and (2) and lived a life toward that goal. In this way the lessons can be taken seriously. He was also conveying to them that they should think of themselves as a somebody. "I put before you," was Moshe talking to himself – I. By including himself he gave the Bnei Yisroel cause to think they can do it, too.*

"See." This is singular but it is also a general statement. See, the act of seeing. There must be something to see. Therefore, it does not refer to future event, but a present one. However, "placed" is past tense. What they were asked to see was already before them. "See" is referring to a past event that was *seen*. אֲנִי refers to the One who calls Himself אֲנִי. That is Hashem. "I am Hashem, your Lord, who took you out of the Land of Mitzrayim, out of the house of bondage." (Shmos 20:2). Ohr Chaim and Daas Zekeinim say the same on this point.

*Seeing* is attached to this event. "He gazed, and there was a bush all aflame, yet the bush was not consumed." (Ibid 3:2). Moshe *saw* the burning bush on Har Sinai. "And Hashem said, 'I have surely *seen* my people's plight.'" (Ibid 3:7). By the Yam Suf crossing, "And when Yisroel *saw* the wondrous power which Hashem had wielded against the Mitzryim, the people feared Hashem." (Ibid 14:31). When it came to the Revelation, "All the people *saw* the thunder and lightning, the blare of the horn and the mountain smoking; and when the people *saw* it, they fell back and stood at a distance." (Ibid 20:15). Moshe was reminding this new generation, that was about to go to Canaan to conquer it and make it Eretz Yisroel, about their covenant with Hashem. Even if many of them did not actually "see" it was incumbent on them and every future descendant to "see."

Thus, the Torah is saying, *See, I, Hashem your Lord, placed before you blessing and curse.* Blessing and curse are referring to items, not categories, thus it is singular. When Hashem took Bnei Yisroel out of Mitzrayim with wonders and crossed the Yam Suf with wonders, and then appeared to them with the *sight* of thunder and lightning, and blare of horns, He placed before them blessing (the Torah) and curse (forsaking the Torah). Moshe was telling Bnei Yisroel, "See, Hashem has placed before you blessing and curse."

Now, at this stage, Bnei Yisroel were stuck with the choice. There was no going back. The people stood from afar at Har Sinai. They did not want to hear, instead they “saw.” Every generation and every individual from then to the future must have the same sight, seeing clearly the wonders Hashem did, and accepting the Torah. There are no other options.