

PARSHAT RE'EH
23 AV 5780/13 AUGUST 2020



Re'eh

Painting by Yoram Raanan

“It is taught that when we are aligned with goodness, goodness flows down on the mount of blessing, while the other mountain, the mount of curses, absorbs the murky blight of our misdeeds.” (Yoram Raanan)

BLESSINGS AND CURSES
TRANSLATIONS AND TRANSMUTATIONS

1. “See, this day I set before you blessing and curse.” (Deuteronomy 11:26)
2. “From the mouth of the Most High there does not emerge both evil and good” (Lamentations 3:38).
3. “See, I give you today the blessing and the curse (*kelalah*)” (Deuteronomy 11:26).
 - a. “See, I give you today blessing and *lotin* (curse)” (Onkelos, late first century CE Aramaic translation).
 - b. “See, I give you today blessing and *chilufa* (transmutation)” (Translation of Yonatan ben Uziel, early first century CE Aramaic translation).
4. “When Adonai your God brings you into the land that you are about to enter and possess, you shall pronounce the blessing at Mount Gerizim and the *lotin* at Mount Ebal” (Rabbi Yonatan, Deuteronomy 11:29).

5. רְאֵה אֲנֹכִי נָתַן לְפָנֶיכֶם הַיּוֹם בְּרָכָה וּקְלָלָה (Deuteronomy 11:26)

This refers to the Anochi אֲנֹכִי, the first word of the Ten Commandments. We are enjoined to behold the Giving of the Torah every day and it will be for us a blessing. What is remarkable is that the first word of the Ten Commandments Anochi is of Egyptian origin [“The word Anochi is of Egyptian origin,” Midrash Tanchuma], even more so since this word represents the Name of God's Essence. The Rabbis teach us that the use of this foreign word here is to show God's ultimate desire that the Torah descend to and transform the lowest possible levels of reality. (Dov Lederberg)

6. Open your ears and come to Me: listen and you shall live....

Thus, you shall summon a people you do not know,
and people that do not know you shall come running to you,
because of Adonai your God, the Holy One of Israel, who has given you glory.
(Isaiah 55:3, 5; haftarah for Parshat Re'eh)