

"See, I have set before you this day, (the) life, and (the) good, and (the) death, and (the) bad." (30:15) - "I have set before you the blessing and the curse, therefore choose life so that you shall live, you and your children." (30:19)

The *Torah* clearly equates good and blessing with life, and evil and curses with death. It therefore seems peculiar that the *Torah* enjoins us to "choose life" with its various fringe benefits as opposed to selecting evil and curses which are compared to death. If this mandate is stated to a G-d fearing and morally upright Jew then the enjoinder to "choose life" is hardly necessary. It is unnecessary to convey this message to a non-believer, for he evidently does not embrace this positive definition of life. We also wonder at the *posuk's* sequel, "*so that you shall live, you and your children*". What relationship does this have with the lives of one's future generations?

The *Ateres Mordechai* offers that in serving Hashem and fulfilling His *mitzvos*, there are positive and negative avenues for spiritual access and continued growth. One can choose the "*path of life*" by positively viewing and studying the wholesome, tranquil life of a *Torah* Jew. The joy, happiness, and satisfaction which permeates this individual's lifestyle is something to behold and cherish. The other is the "*path of death*". One can mock and ridicule the path of those who have not chosen the way of *Torah* observance. When a person reflects on family crises along with other troubles resulting from a non-observant lifestyle it can lead him to select a *Torah* way of life. There is however a danger in assuming the negative approach. One may attempt to rationalize and redefine the negative outlook, thus transforming it into an acceptable way of life. This is Hashem's imperative "*choose life*" choose the positive approach by reflecting upon the lifestyle of those who have chosen the lifestyle of "life". There is no "life" other than *Torah*). This explains the *posuk's* sequel, for such an outlook can, and will be passed onto the next generation. Society will not be able to change such an outlook, therefore it will continue and endure for future generations.

The Satmar Rebbe Zt"l notes that the *Torah* commands us to choose life. A person must make a commitment to one way of life. Living a life where he hops back and forth attempting to satisfy his various whims and fancies, choosing different lifestyles, will only result in his failure to choose life.