

And if you will not listen to Me....and I will set My face against you. And you shall be smitten before your enemies.....and I will bring a sword upon you executing the vengeance of the Covenant....and you shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy. (29:14,17,25)

The main feature in *Parashas Bechukosai* is the *Tochachah*, admonition, the curses to befall *Klal Yisrael* as a result of their transgressions. The *Torah* speaks in a sharp tone as it describes in detail the terrible calamities to strike us for our iniquitous behavior. Destruction, havoc, terrible illness and devastation are the main topics of these curses. Did the *Torah* have to go into such detail? Could the punishments not have been tempered, expressed in milder language? Such strong words could really frighten someone!

Horav Moshe Swift, zl, feels that this specifically was the *Torah's* intention. Tell it like it is! Let the people see the results of their behavior. People always seem to find excuses for dismissing *Shabbos*, *kashrus*, *taharas ha'mishpachah*, purity of family life. It has almost become the battle cry of those who have chosen an alternative to the *Torah* way of life: "The *Torah* is archaic. Its laws and admonitions do not apply in today's progressive society." They have the audacity to dismiss the *Torah*.

To these skeptics, the *Torah* responds in a language that is not ancient, a language that everyone can understand. If you keep the *Torah*, if you choose *mitzvos* as a way of life -- you will be rewarded. If you choose to ignore the *Torah*, to desecrate its laws, to abolish its commandments, then you may expect the *tochachah*. You can look forward to the dreadful details, to the curses all described in detail. No cover up - just plain, simple terms. If you comply, then Hashem is near you. You will reap the benefits of your commitment. If you are determined to rebel--well; you may look forward to desolation, destruction and misery. Can it be stated any more simply?