

Behold, I set before you today, a blessing and a curse. (11:26)

Why did Moshe wait forty years to notify *Bnei Yisrael* that they stood at the threshold of receiving a blessing? Why was this blessing not offered during their entire stay in the wilderness? In a departure from the standard *pshat*, interpretation of the *pasuk*, **Horav Nissan Alpert, zl**, says that Moshe was not informing the people that they would receive blessing. Rather, he was telling them that the moment had arrived when they, themselves, were able to effect blessing. They could now serve as a vehicle for generating blessing. They were now a *m'kor* of *brachah*, source of blessing. Accompanying blessing is its unfortunate counterpart. They would also be the source of curse. It was now up to them. They had come of age.

Until this day, their entire existence had been dependent upon Hashem. He sustained them with bread from Heaven, quenched their thirst with water from a well, and taught them *Torah* through the quintessential lawgiver, Moshe *Rabbeinu*. He provided every detail of their physical and spiritual existence. All they had to do was one thing - follow in the ways of Hashem. Now, things were rapidly changing. The idyllic lifestyle which they had been accustomed to living was nearing an end. Moshe *Rabbeinu* was taking leave of this world. They were entering *Eretz Yisrael*. They now had the responsibility to conquer the land, divide it among the tribes, build the *Bais Hamikdash* and arrange their lives in accordance with the Law of Hashem.

Would they be able to stand on their own? Could they now assume the awesome responsibility that lay before them? Moshe told them that they would be able to do it. They could effect Hashem's blessing upon their own endeavors. "*Behold! I set before you a blessing and a curse.*" Hashem has given you the opportunity to progress. You have earned the right to catalyze your own blessing. Do as you have been taught; act as Hashem has commanded you to, and you will succeed in generating His blessing.