

SICHA POEM

PROJECT LIKKUTEI SICHOS | 5783 - YEAR OF HAKHEL



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Mishpatim, Sicha 5

— By Rabbi Mottel Friedman, Coral Springs, FL

In preparation for Matan Torah Moshe came up high
To where Hashem would speak to him, the top of Har Sinai
“Moshe came within the cloud,” is what the Torah writes
“And he went up to the mountain, staying forty days and forty nights.”

Rashi says not of a usual cloud does the pasuk talk
Rather this cloud was “a kind of smoke, with a path for Moshe to walk”
The Rebbe asks: what difficulty or problem did Rashi see
Which led him to take the simple word cloud and explain it to mean smokey?

A second question the Rebbe asks is why did Rashi explain
That in this cloud Hashem cleared out for Moshe a path and a lane?
A pasuk in Parshas Yisro mentions a cloud too
But there Rashi doesn't feel the need to explain how Moshe got through?

The Rebbe tells us the answer, making everything clear
There's a good reason why Rashi explained the word “cloud” only here:
Since a previous pasuk already said there was a cloud where Moshe ascended
When repeating “Moshe came within the cloud” something else must have been intended

So Rashi concludes that the cloud mentioned here and the one there are not the same
The cloud in our pasuk is more like smoke which is the result of a flame
Since the previous pasuk said that Hashem was atop Har Sinai “like a fire”
The cloud that it caused was smoke and soot, as would result from a pyre

Why Rashi says "a kind of smoke" – from the Rebbe we learn
 Is since this was on a mountain top there wasn't much there to burn
 There wasn't anything flammable – a mountain's just a rocky place
 So the smoke made by the fire was there because of a neis

And since this wasn't a regular cloud, it was a cloud of smoke
 Hashem made a nice path through it before to Moshe he spoke
 So Moshe would not be covered by the smoke and the soot and the smell
 He'd be clean as is becoming the leader of Bnei Yisroel

On a deeper level we take a look at how smoke comes to be
 There's thin smoke when burning a paper, much thicker when burning a tree
 Spiritually the smoke represents the burning of that which resists
 All that's divine and holy, after which only kedusha exists

When Hashem came down on Har Sinai there was very thick smoke indeed
 The world was resisting kedusha, a lot of burning it did need
 But later when Moshe went up on the Har, the Aseres Hadibros we'd already heard
 A general refining and nullification of the world had already occurred

So Rashi tells us that the cloud Moshe entered was "a kind of smoke" and thin
 Most of the work was already done to the world to bring kedusha in
 Yet there is still some work to be done, there's a "kind of smoke" in play
 Which we continue to work on, doing more every day

And we must not say "I do not wish to dirty up my soul
 My neshamah might get covered in soot if I work towards that goal!"
 Because Hashem has created a path for us which we can safely go through
 The Moshe in us can and will bring Moshiach Tzidkeinu!
