

SICHA SUMMARY

PROJECT LIKKUTEI SICHOS | 5783 - YEAR OF HAKHEL



Likkutei Sichos, Vol. 18

Shavuos, Sicha 2

Three Leaders:

Moshe, King David, and the Baal Shem Tov all share a bond with the holiday of Shavuos. Moshe gave the Torah which we commemorate on Shavuos, and King David and the Baal Shem Tov both passed away on Shavuos.

What is the thematic connection between these three unique leaders and this holiday?

The Explanation:

One of the central themes of the Giving of the Torah was G-d's designation of the Jewish people as a "a kingdom of princes and a holy nation." (Shemos 19:6) The essence of royalty is the limitless, unbounded power of the monarch. Nothing can deter or restrain the king from fulfilling his goals or desires; anything he needs for the pursuit of his goals is granted to him. For the Jewish people, becoming a "kingdom of princes" means being empowered to overcome any obstacle in the natural world to their duty to fulfill

Torah and mitzvos, including the providing of all physical and material needs.

This is fine in theory, but we live in a physical world with demands and limitations. How can we exercise our royal power, how can we manifest our inner "prince" and overcome the natural obstacles to Divine service? This is the role of the Jewish leader: Moshe, King David, and the Baal Shem Tov each reveal our inner royalty in their respective eras.

1. Moshe guided the Jews out of Egypt and through the desert with open miracles. They literally experienced the world as "kings" who overcome any opposition to their goals. They never had to toil for their sustenance, receiving bread from Heaven, and they vanquished their enemies with Divine miracles. Moshe revealed the essential royalty of the Jewish soul.
2. King David was the first king of the Davidic dynasty; he guided the Jewish people once they were settled in the Land of Israel, where they had to earn their sustenance through natural means. Yet, King David revealed to his generation that even in their struggle to earn sustenance from the natural world, it was still G-d's blessing that was the

source of their sustenance. That blessing was channeled through the natural processes, but in its essence, it was G-d's providence, accentuated in the holy land, that brought them success. Thus, King David revealed the princely nature of the Jewish soul even in the natural paradigm.

3. The Baal Shem Tov arrived during the darkest days of exile, when the Jewish people were materially ravaged and impoverished. Even with their natural efforts, it was still difficult to earn a living. Yet the Baal Shem Tov revealed to his generation that G-d is present within every situation, and is one with all of reality. In doing so, he again revealed how a Jew can live proudly, with the confidence of a royal, even within exile, for G-d is with every Jew at all times.

The Lesson:

All three of these eras are present in some form in our daily lives. From each of these leaders we draw the strength to manifest the princely nature of our soul throughout the oscillating periods of our days.

During Torah study, we transcend the world and its limitations. Torah elevates us above our constraints. From Moshe, we draw the power to act as princes when we study Torah. Prayer is a time when we request G-d for sustenance within the natural world. From King David we draw the strength to see our sustenance as G-d's blessing, and thus not being trapped by the demands of the natural world. And from the Baal Shem Tov we derive the power to maintain our princely nature even in the mundane stretches of our days when we are enmeshed in the world of business.
