

SICHA SUMMARY

Likkutei Sichos, Vol. 28

Rosh Chodesh Sivan

The Context:

On Rosh Chodesh Sivan, the Jewish people arrived at Mount Sinai, where, the Torah tells us, they encamped “as one person, with one heart.”

The Talmud details the Jewish people’s preparations for the giving of the Torah over the next few days:

“On the first day of the week He did not say anything to them due to the weariness caused by the journey. On the second day of the week, He said to them: “And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests (Shemos 19:6). On the third day of the week, God said to them the mitzva of setting boundaries around Mount Sinai. On the fourth day of the week, the husbands and wives separated from one another (Shabbos 86b)

The Question:

The Jewish people were avidly anticipating the giving of the Torah; they were counting toward it each day. When someone is excited about something, they usually are

not prone to exhaustion. Why, then, upon their arrival at Sinai, when their fervor was fomenting, did G-d “not say anything to them due to the weariness caused by the journey?” The journey as it was, from Refidim to Sinai, was not particularly arduous, the Clouds of Glory simplified the travel. Why would the Jewish people be so weary that G-d did not say “anything at all”?

The Explanation:

The “weariness” here refers to the spiritual journey taken by the Jewish people from their exodus from Egypt until their arrival at Sinai. Every day the progressively moved from the spiritual entrapment of Egypt toward a state of spiritual receptivity for the Giving of the Torah. But each of these steps was incremental, on the day they arrived at Sinai, they took a qualitative leap forward, achieving total unity, “like one person with one heart.” This comes from a profound shift of seeing only the core of the other’s soul, where we all are “of one heart.” This spiritual work was arduous, and that is why on the day they arrived at Sinai, G-d did not instruct them with further preparation.

The Deeper Explanation:

The “weariness” is not just a result of the spiritual work, it actually alludes to and describes the spiritual work itself.

Prior to the giving of the Torah, people studied the Divine wisdom with their own limited capacities. Because no two minds are alike, each person had a different intellectual relationship with the Divine wisdom. When G-d gave the Torah at Sinai, He gave the essence of the Torah itself which transcends comprehension to the essence of each Jew. Therefore, the Divinity of the Torah is equally accessible to each person. To access this, however, the individual needs to shed the intellectual approach to Torah, which separates him from others, and empty himself of all ego so that he relates only to the essence of the soul of every other Jew. When this is

accomplished, the essence of the Torah can be truly given to the community.

Thus, the most critical step of spiritual work the Jewish people needed to do when they arrived was to minimize and quiet their egos so they could become “like one person with one heart.” This is the “weariness” and the silence of the first day. It is the quitting of spiritual aspiration and demands, of erasing our individual abilities and yearning so that we can focus on seeing only the essential unity of all Jews.

After this has been accomplished, then the rest of the preparatory days are focused on building up the conscious spiritual faculties of the person, so they can receive the Torah within the specificity of their own selves. The foundation, however, is the silence and unity of the first day at Sinai.
