



## **Sicha Summary**

Chelek 19 | Nitzavim | Sichah 1

### **The Context:**

*Parshas Nitzavim* opens with Moshe addressing the entire nation, from the “heads of the tribes” to the “water carriers.” “You are standing today, all of you... for you to pass [the people] into a covenant of G-d...” (*Devarim* 29:9-11)

### **The Rashi:**

On the words, “You are standing today,” Rashi comments: “This teaches us that Moshe gathered them before the Holy One, blessed is He, on the day of his death, to bring them into the covenant.”

### **The Question:**

What does Rashi add by informing us that the purpose of Moshe gathering them was to “bring them into the covenant”? The verse says so explicitly!

### **The First Explanation:**

Towards the end of the previous *parshah*, *Ki Savo*, the Torah relates, “Moshe summoned all of Israel and said to them, ‘You have seen everything that G-d did before your eyes in the land of Egypt...’” Moshe then continued to recount the miracles that G-d had performed for the people in the desert.

Rashi says that the purpose of Moshe gathering them was to “bring them into the covenant,” in reference to the gathering at the end of *Ki Savo*. The purpose of this gathering was not the speech that Moshe then gave. Rather, he gathered them to establish the covenant made in the beginning of *Nitzavim*. The speech reviewing G-d’s miracles was an introduction to the real purpose of the gathering — the covenant in our *parshah*.

### **The Second Explanation:**

The weakness of this explanation is that it does not explain why the verse uses the unusual word *nitzavim* which literally means, “standing firm and tall.”

Rashi therefore cites a second, *aggadic* explanation: After hearing the curses in the previous *parshah*, the Jewish people were frightened. “Moshe began to console them saying, “You are standing firmly (*nitzavim*) today,” even though you have caused anger... behold, you exist before Him.” (*Rashi to Devarim 29:12*)

This explanation satisfactorily answers why the verse used the word *nitzavim* – standing firm.

According to this explanation, this gathering took place shortly after the curses, which could not have been “on the day of Moshe’s death,” because on that day, he blessed the people. Therefore, *Rashi* continues to explain that the word “today” in this reading means, “like this day which exists and becomes dark and light, so did He give you light....” (*Ibid.*)

### **The Third Explanation**

This explanation is difficult, however, because if the purpose of Moshe’s gathering was to placate the people after the curses, it should have taken place immediately after the curses in the previous *parshah*!

Rashi therefore offers a third explanation: “*You are standing* implies that since Israel was going from leader to leader, from Moshe to Yehoshua, he made a standing assembly of them in order to exhort them [to follow their new leader]. (*Ibid.*)

### **The Inner Rashi:**

The word “today” in our verse alludes to Rosh Hashanah. (*Likkutei Torah, Nitzavim*) The “covenant” we forge with G-d on Rosh Hashanah is an essential one, binding the Essence of G-d with the essence of our souls. This

essential bond transcends the minutiae of Torah and *mitzvos*. But to attain this deep level of intimacy with G-d, we first must heed Moshe's preceding speech in *Ki Savo* which exhorts the people to "keep the words of this covenant," meaning, to dedicate ourselves to Torah and *mitzvos*. Once we are one with G-d's Torah, then we can become one with G-d Himself.