

The Mishna in 4:8 (תענית) says, *זה מתן תורה, זה מתן תורה* - referring to the טוב of שבועות, of מתן תורה, פסח, שבועות, and the summer months, has a beautiful essay on the phrase *זה מתן תורה, זה מתן תורה* - the day of the wedding. What is this wedding? It's the חתן and כלה of שיר השירים. He mentions a fascinating מדרש based on a pasuk in (היי"ב) מלכים א, describing the vastness of שלמה המלך's wisdom. The נביא says, *וַיְדַבֵּר שְׁלֹשֶׁת אֲלָפִים מָשָׁל* - he spoke 3,000 משלים. So what if שלמה המלך was able to come up with 3,000 משלים? The famous Dubno Maggid probably had almost as many, if not more. What is the פסוק really telling us?

The נביא isn't just saying that שלמה המלך came up with a lot of משלים. He's describing a chain of 3,000 משלים. שלמה המלך understood the core truth and essence of the מציאות of עולם הזה, and he wanted to share that concept with the rest of us. But that idea was so lofty, so far beyond what the average person could grasp, that he had to express it in a משל. He gave one משל, but it was still too abstract. So he gave a second משל. Still too difficult. A third משל, a fourth משל, and he kept going, lowering it, making it more concrete, more relatable. When he reached the 3,000th משל, then the people understood. What was that 3,000th משל? That was שיר השירים. It describes the union between הקדוש ברוך הוא and כלל ישראל. That union came into being on שבועות. Until then, עולם הבא and עולם שמים were always above, and we were down here in עולם הזה. But on the sixth day of sivan, *וַיֵּרָד ה' עַל הַר סִינַי*. And at the same time, *וְאֵל מֹשֶׁה אָמַר עֲלֵה אֵלַי*. The joining of עולם הזה and עולם הבא.

מתן תורה מתן תורה is clearly understood as a חתונה. It's not that הר סיני is like a חתונה. Rather, we model our חתן, our חתנים and כלות, based on what happened at הר סיני. Interestingly, many have a מנהג that the חתן starts to walk towards the כלה when she's coming down the aisle, like Hashem came down towards the people. The candles that are carried by those walking the חתן and כלה remind us of the flashes of the lightning. The חופה above is like the mountain that Hashem lifted over their heads. A חתן designates his כלה with קידושין as Hashem chose us as His nation. Later on, the לוחות, which serve as the שטר קידושין, are also two to correspond to the חתן and כלה. And they were placed in the holiest place on earth, the קדש קדש, where the two כרובים stood, representing the cosmic couple.

What a gigantic, beautiful משל and a new take on what שבועות is all about. Hashem finished the creation, finished the בריאה, with שבועות. That's where the בריאה found its מנוחה, its tranquility and calm, because the בריאה had finally arrived at its purpose. The חתן and כלה were here. And we are that חתן and כלה. We have to appreciate the magnificence and the majesty of what הר סיני is all about. Yes, we know that כפה כגניגית. We know there was lightning and thunder. We know that there were עננים. We know that כלל ישראל died hearing the voice of Hashem. But the great גדולים of the past, and not even that long ago, the great chassidish gedolim and even the litvish gedolim, had a wonderful feeling for the majesty and the awesomeness of הר סיני. If we just get a little glimpse of that from this little משל, I think it will have been worth the time we spent relaying it to you.

