

ברוך אתה יהו"ה
אלהינו מלך העולם
אשר קדשנו במצותיו
ואנו לעסוק
בדברי תורה.

Barukh Atah Adonai
Eloheinu melekh ha-olam
asher kidshanu b'mitzvotav
v'tzivanu la'asok
b'divrei Torah.

Blessed are You, YHVH,
our God, eternal sovereign, who
sanctifies us in God's connecting
command to busy ourselves
in words of Torah.

Numbers 9:15-23

וביום הקים את-המשכן כסה הענן את-המשכן לאהל העדות ובערב יהיה על-המשכן כמראה אש עד-בקר: כן יהיה תמיד הענן וכסונו ומראה-אש לילה: ולפי העלות הענן מעל האהל ואחרי כן יסעו בני ישראל ובמקום אשר ישכן-שם הענן שם יחנו בני ישראל.

15-17. On the day the *Mishkan* was erected, the cloud covered the *Mishkan*, the Tent of Witnessing; on the *Mishkan* there was like the appearance of fire from evening until morning. So it always was: the cloud covered it by day, an appearance of fire by night. When the cloud was raised from the *Mishkan*, after that the Children of Israel journeyed. In the place the cloud abided, the Children of Israel camped.

MYSTERY
Burning Bush?

Visual
communication

Pshat –
straight-up

Remez:
cloud to word

Drash –
Explanation
of what they
needed to do:
keep watch

Sod –
Actual action,
moving?

Courage?
However long
Inspiration?
Timelessness
TRUST?

על-פי יהו"ה יסעו בני ישראל ועל-פי יהו"ה יחנו כל-ימי אשר ישכן הענן על-המשכן יחנו ובהאריך הענן על-המשכן ימים רבים ושמרו בני-ישראל את-משמרת יהו"ה ולא יסעו: ויש אשר יהיה הענן ימים מספר על-המשכן על-פי יהו"ה יחנו ועל-פי יהו"ה יסעו:

18-20. At the word of YHVH, the Children of Israel journeyed, and at the word of YHVH they camped. As long as the cloud tarried on the *Mishkan*, for however many days, the Children of Israel kept watch of the watch of YHVH and did not journey. Whether the cloud was on the *Mishkan* for a few days or many, at the word of YHVH they camped and at the word of YHVH they journeyed.

ולש אשר יהיה הענן מערב עד-בקר ונעלה הענן בבקר ונסעו או יומם ולילה ונעלה הענן ונסעו: או-למים או-חדש או-גמים בהאריך הענן על-המשכן לשכן עליו יחנו בני-ישראל ולא יסעו ובהעלותו יסעו: על-פי יהו"ה יחנו ועל-פי יהו"ה יסעו את-משמרת יהו"ה שמרו על-פי יהו"ה ביד-משה:

21-23. When the cloud abided from evening to morning, and the cloud was raised in the morning, then they journeyed. Whether by day or night, when the cloud was raised, they journeyed. Whether two days, a month or a year that the cloud tarried on the *Mishkan*, the Children of Israel camped and did not journey, but when it was raised, they journeyed. At the word of YHVH they camped, and at the word of YHVH they journeyed; they kept charge of YHVH by the word of YHVH at the hand of Moshe.

V'shamru

interpreting?

metamorphize

PARDES		COMMENTS	QUESTIONS
<u>P</u>	Pshat (פשוט)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redundancy, repetitiveness... Cloud, but *appearance* of fire The people saw directly —> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> So why does Moshe need to interpret? What is “keep” watch/charge?
<u>R</u>	Remez (רמז)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A signal – but do we all agree? However long it took 	
<u>D</u>	Drash (דרש)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Direct and indirect communication? Doubt, apprehension —> FIX IT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What was the “word” of God? What is “at the hand of Moshe”?
<u>S</u>	Sod (סוד)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transcending self / boundaries Transcending limits / reactions Shekhinah *as* the Mishkan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moshe —> Netzah / Resilience? Surrender, slavery??

TRUST
Bitahon
בטחון

CHOICE TO MOVE “TOGETHER” – BUT HERE THEY ALL DID.

Exodus 25:10-15

וַעֲשֵׂן אֲרוֹן עֲצֵי שִׁטִּים אֲמָתִים וְחָצִי אַרְבֹּ וְאַמָּה וְחָצִי רֹחַבֹּ וְאַמָּה וְחָצִי קִמְתּוֹ: וְצִפִּיתָ אֹתוֹ זָהָב טָהוֹר מִבֵּית וּמִחוּץ תִּצְפְּנֵהוּ וְעָשִׂיתָ עָלָיו זֶרֶם זָהָב סָבִיב: וְיָצַקְתָּ לוֹ אַרְבַּע טְבַעֲתֵי זָהָב וְנִתְּתָהּ עַל אַרְבַּע פְּעֻמֹתָיו וּשְׁתֵּי טְבַעֲתֵי עַל-צִלְעוֹ הָאֶחָת וּשְׁתֵּי טְבַעֲתֵי עַל-צִלְעוֹ הַשְּׁנִייתָ: וְעָשִׂיתָ בְדֵי עֲצֵי שִׁטִּים וְצִפִּיתָ אֹתָם זָהָב: וְהִבַּאתָ אֶת-הַבָּדִים בְּטְבַעֲתֵי עַל צִלְעוֹת הָאֲרוֹן לְשֵׂאת אֶת-הָאֲרוֹן בָּהֶם: בְּטְבַעֲתֵי הָאֲרוֹן יִהְיוּ הַבָּדִים לֹא יִסְרוּ מִמֶּנּוּ:

Make an ark of *shittim* wood two and a half cubits in length, a cubit and a half in breadth, and a cubit and a half in height. Overlay it with pure gold inside and out, and make on it a rim of gold all around. Cast four rings of gold for it, and put them in its four corners – two rings on one side, and two rings on the other side. Make poles of *shittim* wood, and overlay them with gold. **Put the poles into the rings by the sides of the ark, so that the ark may be carried with them. The poles will be in the rings of the ark: do not remove them from it.**

Ramban, Num. 9:19

ובהאריך הענן לומר כי אם יאריך הענן על המשכן ימים רבים והמקום ההוא איננו טוב בעיניהם והיו חפצים ומתאווים מאד לנסוע מן המקום אעפ"כ לא יעברו על רצון השם וזה טעם ושמרו בני ישראל את משמרת ה' ולא יסעו כי מיראת השם ומשמרם משמרת מצותו לא יסעו וכן אם יהיה הענן ימים מספר כשנים או שלשה ימים והיו העם יגיעים מאד וענה בדרך כחם יעשו רצון השם ללכת אחרי הענן....

When the cloud tarried – Meaning that if the cloud tarried on the *Mishkan* for many days, and the place was not good in their eyes such that they very much yearned to journey away from there, but nonetheless they would not transgress God's will.... The Children of Israel kept charge of YHVH, and did not journey. It was for **awe of God** that they kept charge of YHVH's command and did not journey. Similarly, if the cloud was there just a few days – for instance, two or three – and the nation was exhausted for suffering the heat of the journey, nonetheless they would do God's will walk after the cloud.

Fear - punish
Awe - respect

Rabbeinu Bahya, Num. 9:19

ובהאריך הענן. ובאר לך הכתוב מעלתן של ישראל בהנהגתם על פי הענן, כי היו במדבר מקומות חלוקין נוחין ושאינן נוחין... ומיד בהעלות הענן היו נוסעים ויש שאינן נוחין וירצו לנסוע משם אבל בהאריך הענן יצטרכו להתעכב ולא יסעו, סוף דבר לא היו הולכין אחר רצון עצמן אלא אחר רצון השם יתעלה וכפי הנהגת הענן. ועוד יבאר לך הכתוב חסד הש"י עמהם שכל נסיעותם וחנייתם במדבר...

When the cloud tarried – Torah's repetition [of these words] clarifies complimenting Israel for conducting themselves by the cloud. In the desert there were pleasant parts... yet they traveled immediately when the cloud lifted; and there were unpleasant parts where they wanted to travel away but the cloud tarried so they had to restrain themselves and not travel. **The point is that they didn't journey by their own desires but by God's desire represented by the cloud. And this too, however, underscores that the Holy Blessed One's loving kindness was with them whenever they journeyed or camped in the desert....**

Character development • Community • LOVE IN RELATIONSHIP

Ba'al Shem Tov, Num. 9:23

לפי ה' יחנו ועל פי ה' יסעו, כי הוא בחינת קטנות וגדלות.

On the word of God they camped, and on the word of God they journeyed – These are for the qualities of *katnut* and *gadlut*.

Katnut (קטנות) – smallness / constrictive

katan (קטן) – small

Yearning for more

Gadlut (גדלות) – bigness / expansive

gadol (גדול) – big

Be'er Mayim Hayim Num. 9:22

(R. Hayim Tyrer of Czernowitz, d.1813)

באהבה ובחיבה קיבלו את דבריו ולא מרו אף בלבבם. ובהעלותו יסעו כלומר לא היה בלבבם רצון הנסיעה כי אם בהעלותו התחיל בלבם חפיצת הנסיעה. וזה אין צריך הכתוב להגיד אשר בהארץ הענן בנסיעה נסעו בני ישראל כי זה ודאי עשו בשמחה שטובה להם מכל וכל.

In **love and intimacy**, they received God's instruction and did not embitter their hearts about it. When the cloud lifted and they did not want to journey, or when the cloud tarried and they did want to journey, **either way Torah is telling us that the cloud's journey was the journey**. Thus the Children of Israel journeyed when and as they did, **in joy** knowing it was all for **the good whatever the travails**.

Mei Hashiloah, Num. 9:23

(R. Mordekhai Leiner of Ishbitze, d.1854)

על פי ה' יחנו ועל פי ה' יסעו את משמרת ה' שמרו על פי ה' ביד משה. הסתלקות הענן ושכינתו לא נראה רק למשה רבינו ע"ה, וכן בכל דור ודור מי שהוא צדיק הדור רואה רצון השי"ת כמו שכתוב (משל י, ל"ב) שפתי צדיק ידעון רצון.

At the word of YHVH they camped, and at the word of YHVH they journeyed; they kept charge of YHVH by the word of YHVH at the hand of Moshe. The withdrawal of the cloud and *Shekhinah* are visible not only to Moshe. Rather, in each and every generation, the generation's **tzaddikim** see God's will, as in (Prov. 10:32), "The lips of the *tzaddik* know [God's] will."

Exodus 40:33b-38

וַיְכַל מֹשֶׁה אֶת-הַמִּלְאָכָה: וַיִּכַס הָעֲנָן אֶת-אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד וַיִּכְבֹּד יְהוָה מִלְּאֵ אֶת-הַמִּשְׁכָּן: וְלֹא-יָכַל מֹשֶׁה לָּבוֹא אֶל-אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד כִּי-שָׁכַן עָלָיו הָעֲנָן וַיִּכְבֹּד יְהוָה מִלְּאֵ אֶת-הַמִּשְׁכָּן:

33-35. When Moshe finished [setting up the *Mishkan*], a cloud covered the Tent of Witnessing, and the glory of YHVH filled the *Mishkan*. Moshe could not enter the Tent of Witnessing, for the cloud was on it and the glory of YHVH filled the *Mishkan*.

וּבְהַעֲלוֹת הָעֲנָן מֵעַל הַמִּשְׁכָּן יִסְעוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּכֹל מַסְעֵיהֶם: וְאִם-לֹא יַעֲלֶה הָעֲנָן וְלֹא יִסְעוּ עַד-יוֹם הָעֲלֹתוֹ: כִּי עֲנֵן יְהוָה עַל-הַמִּשְׁכָּן יוֹמָם וְאִשׁ תִּהְיֶה לַיְלָה בּוֹ לְעֵינֵי כָל-בֵּית-יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּכֹל-מַסְעֵיהֶם:

36-38. When the cloud lifted from the *Mishkan*, the Children of Israel set out on all their journeys. But if the cloud did not lift, they would not set out until it did lift. **For over the *Mishkan* a cloud of YHVH was by day, and fire was on it by night, in the sight of all the House of Israel in all their journeys.**

R. Noa Kushner on Beha'alotekha

The cloud does not blanket and obscure, as we expect clouds to do. Instead, it is contained in a pillar and provides direction for the Israelites. Similarly, the fire does not spread and destroy whatever is in its path, as we expect fire to do. Like the cloud, the fire is contained, a giant torch. In both of these manifestations, the Israelites begin to see, just as Moses saw in the [burning] bush, the possibility of natural things, things of-this-earth, being bent and shaped in unnatural, divine ways....

= *Shekhinah*

So it is for us: We need not be wary of looking for visual evidence of **God's presence** in the world around us. Seeking God's presence with our eyes is not idolatrous. It is only idolatry when we "know" in advance what we will see, when our expectations restrain us. Unfortunately, we may have been so afraid of making idols that we have limited ourselves to develop a relationship with God without using our eyes. What would happen if we started looking for God's presence in fire and clouds once more? How much do our relationships with God stand to gain from our actually seeing what may have been there all along? At the very least, we'll benefit from the search alone, from our looking day and night. And at best, it is possible that if we look, we will see.

Guess Who, Num. 9:19

בְּהֶאֱרִיךְ הָעֶנָן עַל-הַמִּשְׁכָּן יָמִים רַבִּים
וְשָׁמְרוּ בְנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת-מִשְׁמֶרֶת
יְהוָה וְלֹא יִסְעוּ - הָאֲרִיךְ הָעֶנָן בְּנוֹחוֹ
עַל הַמִּשְׁכָּן, לֹמַר שְׂכִינָה הַשּׁוֹרָה
בְּתוֹכָם דּוּקָא. הָעֶנָן שֶׁמִּטְשֵׁשׁ אֶת
הַמּוֹדְעוֹת הָאִינְטִימִית לַעַם לְנוֹכְחוֹת
הָאֵל הוּא שֶׁעֶצַר אֶת הָעַם מִבְּסַעַם
אֶל אֶרֶץ הַהַבְטָחָה, וְעִי"ז וְשָׁמְרוּ בְנֵי
יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת מִשְׁמֶרֶת יְהוָה לְהוֹרֹת
שֶׁשָׁה חָשׂוּ כִּי־צַד חָשׂוּ אֶת הַקּוֹדֵשׁ,
וְגַם שֶׁטְשׁוּשׁ שְׂכִינָה, הָעֲרִכִיּוֹת
הָאֱלוֹהִית שֶׁל הַקְּרֵבָה, כִּי־וֹנְנָה אוֹתָם
לְהִשְׁתַּוְּקֵק וְלִכְן לְצַפּוֹת לִיהוָה,
הָעֲרִכִיּוֹת הָאֱלוֹהִית שֶׁל הַכּוֹחַ. רַק
עִי"ז יִהְיֶה הָעַם לַעַם אֱלֹהִים בְּאַמְתּוֹ.

As long as the cloud tarried on the Mishkan, for how-ever many days, the Children of Israel kept watch of the watch of YHVH and did not journey –
The cloud lengthened its stay on the *Mishkan*, that is, on *Shekhinah* (the Indwelling Presence) precisely. The cloud obscuring the people's intimate awareness of God's presence is what halted the people in their journey toward the Land of Promise, causing them to "keep watch of the watch of YHVH." Torah shows that they sensed *how* they sensed the holy, and also that the obscuring of *Shekhinah* (the divine valence of proximity) attuned the people to yearn and therefore watch for YHVH (the divine valence of becoming). Only then could the people truly evolve into a people of God.