



פרשת בהר בחקתי
אייר תשפ"ג
שנת הקהל



HAKHEL IN THE PARSHA

In this week's double Parsha of Behar-Bechukosai there are a number of connections to Hakhel.

The Parsha begins by mentioning Har Sinai. The Rambam writes that at Hakhel, the people would listen to the words of the Torah with awe... like on the day the Torah was given at Har Sinai. Hakhel was a reexperiencing of the covenant at Sinai.

Some commentaries suggest that the elevated wooden Bimah at Hakhel was a representation of Har Sinai from where the word of Hashem issued forth.

The first Mitzvah in the Parsha is the Mitzvah of Shemittah. The Torah teaches that Hakhel took place "at the end of seven years at the time of Shemittah", immediately after the Shemittah year. (Some Meforshim learn that Hakhel took place at the beginning of the seventh year i.e. at the start of Shemittah!)

In Parshas Bechukosai we read the Tochecha - the curses and punishments that would befall the Jewish people if they fail to keep the Torah.

One of the passages read by the king at Hakhel were the blessings and curses (in Parshas Ki Savo). Reminding the people of the reward for keeping the Mitzvos and the punishments for failing to do so, was fundamental to the objective of Hakhel.

A collection of Torah thoughts produced by Kollel Menachem

אין בית המדרש בלא **חידוש** Chiddush



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Gardens and Springs

This past week we celebrated Lag Baomer, the Hilulah (day of passing) of Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai. Even though the Hilulah is on the 18th of Iyar, we refer to the day by the count of the Omer - day 33. The Chassidic masters find different hints and allusions in the Torah to the day of Lag Baomer.

One allusion is found in Shir Hashirim (4:12) in the Pasuk גן נעול אחותי כלה גל נעול מעיין חתום - "A locked-up garden is my sister, the bride, a spring locked up, a fountain sealed". The word גל (spring) are the same letters as לג (33).

Shir Hashirim uses the metaphor of a man and woman to describe the loving and passionate relationship between Hashem and the Jewish people. The lock in this verse represents the spiritual chastity of the Jewish people - our exclusive dedication to Hashem.

Jewish marriage has two stages. The first stage is Eirusin or Kiddushin, often translated as betrothal. Whilst Kiddushin establishes an exclusive relationship, it is still a more superficial connection. Nisuin forges a deep, inner and consummated relationship. Nisuin is when husband and wife move into their shared home and join together in a state of absolute oneness.

These two stages also apply in our relationship with Hashem and are alluded to in the two metaphors in the verse; a locked-up garden and a locked-up spring.

A garden sits above ground and its beauty is openly manifest and revealed. This alludes to the initial stage of relationship forged through Kiddushin. The hidden spring, whose waters run deep below the surface, represents the deeper, inner relationship established through Nisuin.

The Giving of the Torah at Har Sinai is described as the day of Hashem's marriage to the Jewish people. This is alluded to in the verse תורה צוה לנו משה - מורשה קהלת יעקב - "the Torah that Moshe commanded us is an inheritance for the congregation of Yaakov". Our sages teach that the word מורשה (inheritance), should be read as מאורסה, a betrothed woman.

Matan Torah was only the initial stage of the relationship. After the Eirusin we become Hashem's מאורסה. Hashem gave us the revealed teachings of the Torah. This is alluded to by the revealed beauty of the garden - גן נעול.

On the verse ישקני מנשיקות פיהו, "May He kiss me with the kisses of His mouth", Rashi teaches that after having given us His Torah, when we experienced a love which is greater than all pleasures, we are assured by Him that He will appear to us once more to teach us the secret reasons (of Torah) and its hidden mysteries.

This will be the full consummation of our relationship, the deep oneness of Nisuin that will take place when Moshiach comes and Hashem reveals to us the deepest, most hidden dimensions of Torah. These are the hidden waters of the spring - גל נעול.

Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai began to reveal these deep secrets of Torah, the mystical teachings of Kabbalah that unite us with Hashem on the deepest of levels. On the day of his passing he revealed deeper secrets of Torah than he had ever shared before. On Lag Baomer, we began our journey to our Nisuin with Hakadosh Baruch Hu, when the locked-up spring of hidden wisdom, will burst open and flow forth.

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| 1. Megillah 20b כל ד"ה | 9. Rambam Hilchos Temidim Umusafim 7:2, Raaviya 526. | 15. 489:11 | 36:5 |
| 2. End of Siman 489 | 10. Tosfos Menachos 86a, Rosh Pesachim 10:40, Ra"n. | 16. 489:11 | 23. 489:5 |
| 3. 489:11 | 11. See Shulchan Aruch Harav 489:2, Beis Yosef 489. | 17. 489:10 | 24. 489:2 |
| 4. In Chutz Laaretz it includes the 17th of Nissan | 12. Shulchan Aruch Harav 489:11, Mishna Berura Shaar Hatziyun 15, Levush | 18. Maaseh Rav Siman 70 | 25. 489:10 |
| 5. Mishbetzos Zahav 489:3 | 13. ibid | 19. Derush Pesach Derush 11, quoted by Ben Ish Chai in Rav Pealim | 26. Shulchan Aruch HARav 489:11 |
| 6. 489:15 | 14. Pesachim 123: | 20. Vayikra p279 | 27. Maamar Inyan Sefiras Haomer Derush 11 |
| 7. Yesod Veshoresh HaAvodah 9:8 | | 21. Acharon Shel Pesach 5751 | 28. Kabolos Shabbos, Bedtime Krias Shema and Sefiras Haomer |
| 8. Shaar Hatziyun ibid | | 22. See also Mishmeres Shalom OC | |

