

Parsha Plug: Parshat Pekudei

Shemot 40:34-38	שמות מ:לד-לה
<p>34 And the cloud covered the Tent of Meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the Mishkan. 35 Moses could not enter the Tent of Meeting because the cloud rested upon it and the glory of the Lord filled the Mishkan. 36 When the cloud rose up from over the Mishkan, the children of Israel set out in all their journeys. 37 But if the cloud did not rise up, they did not set out until the day that it rose. 38 For the cloud of the Lord was upon the Mishkan by day, and there was fire within it at night, before the eyes of the entire house of Israel in all their journeys.</p>	<p>לד וַיִּכַס הָעֲנָן, אֶת-אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד; וּכְבוֹד ה', מָלֵא אֶת-הַמִּשְׁכָּן. לֵה וְלֹא-יָכֹל מֹשֶׁה, לָבוֹא אֶל-אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד--כִּי-שָׁכַן עָלָיו, הָעֲנָן; וּכְבוֹד ה', מָלֵא אֶת-הַמִּשְׁכָּן. לו וּבִהְעֹלֹת הָעֲנָן מֵעַל הַמִּשְׁכָּן, יִסְעוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, בְּכֹל מְסֻעֵיהֶם. לז וְאִם-לֹא יֵעָלֶה, הָעֲנָן--וְלֹא יִסְעוּ, עַד-יוֹם הִעָלָתוֹ. לח כִּי יֵעָן ה' עַל-הַמִּשְׁכָּן, יוֹמָם, וְאִשׁ תִּהְיֶה לַיְלָה בּוֹ--לְעֵינֵי כָל-בֵּית-יִשְׂרָאֵל, בְּכָל-מְסֻעֵיהֶם.</p>

Rashi on Shemot 40:38	רש"י על שמות מ:לח
<p>Before the eyes of the entire house of Israel in all their journeys: On every journey (מִסְעָה) that they were traveling, the cloud would rest in that place where they encamped. The place of their encampment is also called a journey (מִסְעָה).</p>	<p>לעני כל בית ישראל בכל מסעיהם: בכל מסע שהיו נוסעים היה הענן שוכן במקום אשר יחנו שם. מקום חנייתן אף הוא קרוי מסע.</p>

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, <i>Don't Sit: Walk</i>
<p>The point is linguistic, but the message is remarkable. In a few brief words, Rashi has summarized an existential truth about Jewish identity. <i>To be a Jew is to travel.</i> Judaism is a journey, not a destination. Even a place of rest, an encampment, is still called a journey. The patriarchs lived, not in houses but in tents...One might have thought that all this applied only to the time before the Israelites crossed the Jordan and entered the Promised Land. Yet the Torah tells us otherwise: “The land shall not be sold in perpetuity because the land is Mine: you are <i>strangers and temporary residents</i> as far as I am concerned” (Leviticus 25:23). If we live as if the land is permanently ours, our stay there will be temporary. If we live as if it is only temporarily so, we will live there permanently. In this world of time and change, growth and decay, only God and His word are permanent. One of the most poignant lines in the book of Psalms – a verse cherished by the French-Jewish philosopher Emmanuel Levinas – says, “I am a stranger on earth. Do not hide your commands from me” (Psalm 119:19). To be a Jew is to stay light on your feet, ready to begin the next stage of the journey, literally or metaphorically. An Englishman’s home is his castle, they used to say. But a Jew’s home is a tent, a tabernacle, a sukkah. We know that life on earth is a temporary dwelling. That is why we value each moment and its newness.</p>

<p>Keli Yakar on Shemot 40:34</p>	<p>כלי יקר על שמות מ:לד</p>
<p>And the cloud covered the Tent of Meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the Mishkan: It seems from this that the glory of God was not the cloud itself, but the fire and the light since the glory of God appeared <i>from within</i> the cloud. This is because without the cloud, it would not have been possible to look, as a man cannot look directly at the light of the sun so all the more so for the beautiful light of God's blessed Presence. Therefore, the holy light always appeared within the cloud. When the Mishkan was established, [the cloud] was separated [from the light], for the light of God entered the Mishkan as that was the place of His holiness, may He be blessed, and the cloud remained outside...</p>	<p>ויכס הענן את אהל מועד וכבוד ה' מלא את המשכן: נראה מזה שכבוד ה' אינו הענן, אלא שהאש והאור דהיינו כבוד ה' היה נראה מתוך הענן, כי זולת הענן לא היה אפשרי להסתכל בו כי באור השמש לא יוכל האדם להסתכל קל וחומר באור זוהר שכינתו יתברך, על כן היה האור הקדוש ההוא תמיד נראה מתוך הענן, וכשהוקם המשכן נבדלו זה מזה כי האור האלקים היה נכנס לתוך המשכן כי שם מקום קדושתו יתברך והענן נשאר מבחוץ...</p>
<p>Likutei Moharan 1:115</p>	<p>לקוטי מוהר"ן א:קטו</p>
<p>God hides Himself, so to say, in the obstacles [in life]. A person who is wise will look into the obstacles and find God there...A person who is not wise, when he/she sees the obstacle, he/she will turn back immediately. The obstacle is described in the language of the cloud and the thick fog, for they represent holding back.</p>	<p>...מסתיר את עצמו כביכול בהמניעה הזאת. ומי שהוא בר דעת, הוא מסתכל בהמניעה ומוצא שם הבורא ברוך הוא...ומי שאינו בר דעת כשרואה המניעה חוזר תכף לאחוריו. ומניעה הוא בחינת ענן וערפל...</p>