

## A Threatening Mountain...

"וַיִּתְּצֵבּוּ בְּתַחֲתֵית הָהָר" (שמות יט:יז). אָמַר רַב אֲבָדִימִי בַר חָמָא בַר חָסָא: מִלְמַד שְׂכַפָּה הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא עָלֵיהֶם אֶת הָהָר כְּגִיגִית, וְאָמַר לָהֶם: אִם אַתֶּם מְקַבְּלִים הַתּוֹרָה מוֹטֵב, וְאִם לֹא, שָׁם תִּהְיֶה קְבוּרַתְכֶם.

אָמַר רַבִּי אַחָא בַר יַעֲקֹב: מִכָּאן מוֹדָעָא רַבָּה לְאוֹרֵייתָא.

*They stood beneath the mountain* (Exodus 19:17). Said Rabbi Avdimi bar Hama bar Hasa, This teaches that the Blessed Holy One vaulted the mountain over them like a barrel and said to them: If you accept the Torah well and good, and if not, there will be your graves.

Said Rabbi Ahah bar Ya'akov: Here is a strong indictment against Torah!

(Babylonian Talmud Shabbat 88a)

## ...A Loving Shelter

וְאָמַר רַבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן לֵוִי: מַאי דְכָתִיב "לְחִיּוֹ כְּעָרוֹגַת הַבָּשָׂם"? כָּל דְּבוּר וְדְבוּר שֶׁיֵּצֵא מִפִּי הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא נִתְמַלֵּא כָּל הָעוֹלָם כּוּלּוֹ בְּשָׂמִים. וְכִיּוֹן שֶׁמִּדְּבוּר רִאשׁוֹן נִתְמַלֵּא, דְּבוּר שֵׁנִי לְהִיכֹן הֵלֵךְ? הוֹצִיא הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא הָרוּחַ מֵאוֹצְרוֹתָיו וְהָיָה מַעֲבִיר רִאשׁוֹן רִאשׁוֹן שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: שִׁפְתוֹתָיו שׁוֹשְׁנִים נוֹטְפוֹת מֹר עֵבֶר. אֵל תִּקְרִי שׁוֹשְׁנִים אֶלָּא שְׁשׁוֹנִים.

Said Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi: *What is the meaning of His cheeks are like a bed of spices?* (Song of Songs 5:13) Every single commandment that came forth from the mouth of the Blessed Holy One filled the world with spices. But when the world became filled with the fragrance of the first commandment, where did the fragrance of the second commandment go? The Blessed Holy One took the wind from his treasury and made each fragrant commandment that he had spoken pass by one by one. As it says: *His lips are like lilies, they drip myrrh that passes by.* (Song of Songs 5:13)

(Babylonian Talmud Shabbat 88a)