



אור הצפון

Weekly



Parshas Haazinu | 9/17-9/18 | Succos

Issue 11 | י"ב תשרי | תשפ"ב



Candle Lighting 6:42 PM	Mincha/Maariv 6:45 PM	Shacharis 7:45 & 8:45 AM	Zman Shema 9:44 AM	Daf Yomi 5:50 PM	Maariv 7:33 PM	Havdalah 7:39 PM
----------------------------	--------------------------	-----------------------------	-----------------------	---------------------	-------------------	---------------------

The Rabbi's Drasha

Rabbi Lebowitz

The Ramah in Siman 624 writes that we do not say Tachnun on the four days between Yom Kippur and Succos. The Gra explains that the Midrash that teaches us that once Caparah is achieved on Yom Kippur, these four days we are furiously preparing for Succos and there is no time for Averos, which leaves the first day of Succos as our first opportunity to breathe and possibly do some Averos. If I were to ask you, knowing that these four days are sandwiched between Yom Kippur and Succos, and described the Zeh as preparations for lulav and Esrog – which Holiday would you have assumed these days to be an extension of? If the entire time is spent engaged in preparation for Succos, shouldn't it be an extension of Succos rather than an extension of Yom Kippur? Furthermore, ever since the conclusion of Yom Kippur I have been struggling with the notion of Succos as Zman Simchaseinu. After Yom Kippur I was inundated with emails whose tone can best be described as "giddy". People feel a genuine sense of elation after Yom Kippur, and not because it is over, but because of what they just experienced! The definition of happiness for a human being is rarely about eating and drinking – the highest forms of happiness that we reach are of a higher order. I just heard recently that the week with the lowest rate of suicide in the history of record-keeping of the United States, was the week of the Kennedy assassination. The week following 9-11 was the fourth lowest. Terrible things happen and people don't become depressed – the opposite happens. How can we explain this phenomenon?

There is a Midrash quoted by the Tur in Hilchos Yom Kippur Siman 606 that directly compares the Jewish people to angels. It is interesting that in the Midrash that each phrase is an exact parallel, except for the phrase "Ain Lahem Kefitzah – the angels are described as Ain Lahem Kefitzah, whereas we are described as Ain Lahem Kefitzah Ve'Omdom Al Ragleihem. The Derisha on the Tur there explains the virtue of Ain Lahem Kefitzah is when one is standing at the ready to fulfill marching orders, he is said to be Ain Lahem Kefitzah. When one has no direction in life, when one is wandering from one place to another, starting a chore here and giving it up halfway through to start something else, he is being Kofeitz. The joy that we experience on Yom Kippur is profound, but it is not complete on Yom Kippur.

I am constantly reminded of the story Rabbi Rosner told me when he ran into Rabbi Yitzchak Cohen the day after Yom Kippur and he glibly asked Rabbi Cohen, “How was your Yom Kippur?” Rabbi Cohen, filled with fire and passion, was genuinely confused by the question. “How was my Yom Kippur? Ask me in July how my Yom Kippur was!” The joy of Yom Kippur is that we are preparing for a mission. People are happiest when they have direction. As much as our kids complain about school, we all know that deep down they prefer school to a few days off at home with no schedule and no direction. It is freedom, but it is the worst kind of freedom. The reason people weren’t depressed after 9-11 is that we felt a unified sense of purpose. There were terrible people in the world who had done terrible things, and we were unified and focused on our mission to defeat them. Whatever you think of President Bush, and you likely think more highly of him now than you did on the day he left office, he articulated this sense of purpose in the clearest terms. He gave our nation a mission – you are with us or you are against us.

On Yom Kippur we prepare ourselves for a mission and are given marching orders. The joy we feel at the end is being freed from all of the Kefitzos – the distractions in life, and feeling that we have a clear direction. The next step is to then carry out that mission. The Tur describes us as Ain Lahem Kefitzah on Yom Kippur but then immediately notes V’omdim al Ragleihem, we are still standing on our feet at attention, there is still more to do. Our comparison to a Malach is only complete when we embark on our mission – Malach is another word for messenger because it is the marching orders that make a Malach what he is.

Based on this idea we can better understand the notion of the four days between Yom Kippur and Sukkos as an extension of Yom Kippur. The only way for Yom Kippur to be meaningful is for us to do something in its immediate aftermath. Only when we are involved with the preparations for lulav and esrog are we truly becoming the angels we started to become on Yom Kippur.

This is the true meaning of Z’man Simchaseinu. It is not easy to do it right, but if we have the proper perspective, we can better understand that the Simcha of Sukkos exceeds that of Yom Kippur, as Yom Kippur is a sort of Hechsher Mitzvah for the true Simcha of fulfilling our mission on earth as God’s messengers.

Torah From The BKNW Family

Sukkot: Am Yisrael Needs Unity, not Uniformity

By: Sruli Fruchter

With the many sects and labels of Judaism — Modern Orthodox, Reformed, Conservative, or Reconstructionist, to name a few — we can become hyper-focused on what divides us. Whether it’s the variation in religious observance or beliefs about Judaism, our differences can sometimes be our defining characteristics, isolating us from our com-

munities and bubbles. On Sukkot, however, we're reminded of what brings us together: our collective identity as Am Yisrael.

Over the seven days of Sukkot, we collect, bind together, and wave the *arba minim* (four species) — the *esrog*, *hadassim*, *aravot*, and *lulav*. As it says in *Sefer Vayikra*, “On the first day you shall take the product of hadar trees, branches of palm trees, boughs of leafy trees, and willows of the brook, and you shall rejoice before the LORD your God seven days” (23:40). Among the many commentaries on this mitzvah, *Vaykirah Rabbah* attributes a deeply important message to this central mitzvah of Sukkot. The midrash explains that each of the *arba minim* represents a different “type” of Jew in Am Yisrael (30:12). The *etrog* signifies a Jew who has Torah and performs good deeds, the *lulav* is a Jew who has Torah without good deeds, the *hadassim* is a Jew who performs good deeds without Torah, and the *aravot* is a Jew without Torah or the performance of good deeds. After explaining the representational nature of each part of the *arba minim*, the midrash shares something radical and beautiful: “And what does the Holy One, blessed be He, do to them? To destroy them is impossible, but rather the Holy One, blessed be He, said, “bind them all together [into] one grouping and these will atone for those.” And if you will have done that, I will be elevated at that time.” Hashem does not devalue the worth of any Jew, simply dismissing them aside or reshaping them to fit a certain mold. Of course, there's a set of values and mitzvot the Torah guides us to live, but just because a Jew is lacking the ideal lifestyle does not mean their inherent worth is compromised. Moreover, it's only through the collective acceptance of one another, our ability to look beyond where we lack and see where we intersect, that we “elevate” Hashem. We don't need uniformity, but we do need unity.

In *Masechet Shavuot*, the Gemara famously says, “All of the Jewish People are guarantors for one another,” meaning that we are all responsible for our fellow Jews (39a). This embodies the message of the *arba minim*: *Regardless of labels, identity, observance, or anything of the like, all Jews are Jews, and we are always better united than divided. Rav Kook wrote extensively on the love Jews must have for one another, and one piece of advice is particularly applicable to beginning these crucial connections. “One can only explicitly express love to a person who exposes a small spark of goodness,” he writes. “If one attaches one's love to that spark, one can love the good side of another without being damaged by the negative and darker side of that person” (Orot HaKodesh 3, p. 317).*

Sukkot is the perfect time to think about how we can bring about greater love and unity between ourselves and other Jews. When we shake the *arba minim*, we must remember that we are all connected to Hashem, no matter what labels we brand ourselves with.

The Parsha Corner

Rabbi Balsam

1. Who is told to pay attention to the words being spoken at the beginning of the Parsha: a) the heavens, b) the earth, c) the B'nei Yisroel, d) both a & b.
2. Who is referred to as a Tzadik V'yashar: a) Hakadosh Baruch Hu, b) Moshe, c) the B'nei Yisroel, d) the heavens and earth.
3. In order to remember the days of old, we are instructed to: a) ask those who came before us, b) look into the Torah, c) remember the teachings of our fathers, d) both b & c.
4. An eagle awakens its nest by: a) calling out to it, b) landing on it, c) hovering above it, d) shaking it.
5. The Jews (Yeshurun) are described as: a) being grateful for what they have, b) getting fat and rebelling, c) misunderstanding the word of Hashem, d) following their leaders faithfully.
6. Because we are a "Dor Teh'Pochos", Hashem states that he will: a) destroy us, b) send us into Galus, c) bring suffering upon us, d) hide His face from us.
7. When the nations defeat the Jews, they will ask: a) where is their God, b) why did they rebel against Hashem, c) why did their God turn his back on them, d) why didn't they offer proper Korbanos.
8. Using arrows and swords, Hashem will: a) punish the B'nei Yisroel, b) take revenge on behalf of His people, c) show that He is the only power in the world, d) banish all earthly kings.
9. According to the words of the Parsha, the words of the Shirah were spoken by: Hashem Himself, b) Moshe, c) Moshe and Hoshea Ben Nun, d) Moshe and Yehoshua Ben Nun.
10. Moshe is told he must ascend: a) Har Nevo, b) Har Hahar, c) Har Gerizim, d) Har Eival.

Staff

Mara De'Asrah

Rabbi Aryeh Lebowitz

Editors in Chief

Donny Simcha Guttman

Ezra Yarmush

Teen Inspiration Coordinator

Daniel Lebowitz

Printing Head

Tani Sussman

Issue is sponsored for a Refuah Shelayma to Raizel bas Sara, Amalia Frumah bas Etal Fraitel, and Yechezkel Menachem Ben Gittel.

If you would like to sponsor an issue, please email bknwohtweekly@gmail.com

Answers: 1) d, 2) a, 3) a, 4) c, 5) b, 6) d, 7) a, 8) b, 9) c, 10) a.