

Sukkos 2014

1.

What is the deeper idea behind the Suka? What should we think about when we enter the Suka? The Chinuch (mitzvah 325) explains that **the deeper reason behind the mitzvah of Suka is a commemoration of the great miracles that Hashem performed for us such as the clouds of glory which protected us from the hot rays of the sun and the cold nights. Once we remember the miraculous miracles that Hashem performed, we will be careful with keeping the mitzvos.** The will of Hashem is to do good to us. שם, שם, שם. מה שמפורש בכתוב [שם, שם, שם] מ"ג, למען נזכור הניסים הגדולים שעשה האל ברוך הוא לאבותינו במדבר בצאתם ממצרים, שסיככם בענני כבוד שלא יזיק להם השמש ביום וקרה בלילה. ויש שפירשו שסוכות ממש עשו בני ישראל במדבר. ומתוך זכירת נפלאותיו שעשה עמנו ועם אבותינו נזהר במצוותיו ברוך הוא, ונהיה ראויים לקבלת הטובה מאתו, וזהו חפצו ברוך הוא שחפץ להיטיב.

Meaning, when we enter the Suka we must remember the clouds of glory. This will hopefully trigger us to remember the other mitzvos. This is the deeper idea behind the mitzvah of Suka.

2.

Meiyan Hamoad page 338

The Rabbeinu B'chaya (Kad Hakemach) explains that **just as we burden ourselves throughout the process of building a Suka and afterwards we enjoy the shelter and shade, so too, regarding other mitzvos. We burden and toil with other mitzvos and then we will sit in the shades of all shades, heaven.** This heavenly shade will protect us from gehenom. The Gemara in Berachos (57a) relates that the heat of fire in this world is one sixtieth of the heat of fire in the world to come.

3.

Ela Hem Moadi page 561

“You shall take for yourselves on the first day the fruit of a citron tree, the branches of date palms, twigs of a plaited tree, and brook willows; and you shall rejoice before Hashem, your God, for a seven day period.” (23, 40)

"ולקחתם לכם ביום הראשון פרי עץ הדור כפת תמרים וענף עץ עבת וערבי נהל ושמחתם לפני יקוק אלהיכם שבעת ימים." The Medrash Tanchuma (parshas Emor siman 23) asks the following question; do we take the daled minim on the first of the month? We take the daled minim on the fifteenth. Why then does the pasuk say the first? The simple answer to the Medrashes question is that the Torah is referring to the first day of Succos. (See also Pesachim (5a)) The Medrash answers that Succos is the first day that sins are accounted for. ("וכי ראשון הוא, והלא יום חמשה עשר הוא?") (אלא מאי ראשון? ראשון לחשבון עונות.)

What is the explanation of this Medrash? Why is the first day of Succos specifically the first day that sins are accounted for? Our sins from before Yom Kippur were atoned and forgiven. During the four days in between Yom Kippur and Succos people don't sin because everyone is involved with so many mitzvos such as preparing the Suka and daled minim. Therefore, Succos is the first time that sins get accounted for.

Why is the holiday of Succos just a few days after Yom Kippur? The Yalkut Shemoni (parshas Emor os 653) answers that on **Rosh Hashana Hashem judges everyone and on Yom Kippur he sets and seals the verdict. Perhaps we were decreed to be exiled. We therefore build and spend time in the Suka. This is considered like an exile.**

This being so, that being in the Suka is considered an exile, the question arises; why are we commanded to rejoice on Succos? What is the explanation of the aforementioned Yalkut Shemoni that implied that Succos is a time of exile and sadness as opposed to happiness? Rabbi Yosef Shalom Eliyashiv answers that the main joy from Succos results from Yom Kippur. The Gemara in Suka (53b) discusses the Simchas Beis Hashoava. At that special event, they would commonly say 'praiseworthy is the youth that don't embarrass the older people. Also, praiseworthy are the older people who atone for the younger people. Praiseworthy are those who didn't sin. One who sinned should repent.' We see that a main focus of the Simchas Beis Hashoava is not sinning and repenting. They knew how bad sinning is and how it distances us from Hashem. The Mishna in Avos (perek daled) states one sin leads to another sin. (עבירה גוררת עבירה) One of the reasons why we are commanded to rejoice and are naturally joyful is because our sins were atoned for. The exiling to the Suka atones for are the sins that weren't atoned for. Therefore, **even though exile is typically unwanted and sad, nevertheless, this type of exile that atones for our sins is desired and happy.**

4.

Nesivos Shalom meketzvat kodesh chalek beis pages 32-33

The Beur Hativ (siman 639 sif katan alef) quotes the Maharsu who says that **one who fulfills the mitzvah of Suka is as if he became a partner with Hashem in creating the world.** (המקום) (מצות סכה כאלו נעשה שתף להקב"ה במעשה בראשית.)

There is an obvious question that arises; **how does building a mere hut and sitting in it consider and categorize one as being a partner with Hashem in creating the world?**

The Vayikra Raba (30, 14) relates that the esrog is similar to a heart. The lulav is similar to a spin. The hadasim are similar to eyes. Lastly, the aravos are similar to lips. (רבי מני פתח (תהלים לה) כל עצמותי תאמרנה ה' מי כמוך לא נאמר פסוק זה אלא בשביל לולב, השדרה של לולב דומה לשדרה של אדם וההדס דומה לעין (וערבה דומה לפה והאתרוג דומה ללב אמר דוד אין בכל האיברים גדול מאלו שהן שקולין כנגד כל הגוף הוי כל עצמותי תאמרנה.)

The Arizal explains that during the beginning of the year everything returns to how it was during the beginning of creation. Though the spiritual accomplishments that we perform during these days, we will receive heavenly assistance and a certain strength which will help everything renew itself. Everything was created so it can be used for spiritual purposes. After Yom Kippur when we are forgiven for our sins, Hashem wants us to start our year in a positive manner. Therefore, Hashem gave us the mitzvos of Suka and the daled minim. These correspond to external and internal distractions that could cause us to forget Hashem. Many times external factors such as wealth/overabundance can cause us to forget serving Hashem properly. The internal factor that causes us to forget Hashem is the yeitzer hara. The mitzvah of Suka, explains the Beis Avraham, protects us from the external distractions. **The mitzvah of lulav elevates and purifies our internal limbs. Thus, this mitzvah protects us from our yeitzer hara. This is why we become partners with Hashem in the creation of the world, because everything was created in order that it could be used for Godly purposes.**

With this we can easily understand a fundamental Gemara in Shabbos (119b). The Gemara states that one who says ויכולו becomes a partner with Hashem in the creation of the world. When we keep Shabbos and say ויכולו we are testifying that the entire creation is for Hashem.

This is precisely why we are commanded to rejoice on Succos more than other Chagim; because Succos is a time when we are removing ourselves from physicality's, both internally and externally, more than any other holiday. One who is overly absorbed and sunken into the physicality's of this world isn't able to attain true happiness. Someone who has one hundred dollars will want two hundred dollars.

With this we can easily understand a fundamental Gemara in Avoda Zara (3a). Hashem tested the goyim with the mitzvah of Suka. They failed and kicked the Suka upon exiting. The mitzvah of Suka is unlike every single other mitzvah. Regarding all mitzvos we apply the fundamental Mishna in Avos (end of fifth perek) that states according to the exertion will be the reward. (לפרם) (צערה אגרא) Suka differs in this regard. Regarding Suka, the Halacha is that one who is in pain must leave the Suka. The Yerushalmi states that one who is in pain must leave the Suka, and if he doesn't he is called a commoner. The reason why Suka differs is as follows; one who doesn't feel the spiritual pleasure of being in the Suka, even if it is because of an external and uncontrollable factor such as rain, doesn't properly fulfill the mitzvah of Suka. One who realizes that physicality's are temporary and insignificant will not feel any pain and are able to remain in the Suka. This is the difference between the Jews and the goyim. They aren't able to realize the spiritual enjoyment, therefore, they not only leave the Suka, but they also kicked it. Any slight inconvenience will serve as an excuse to leave the Suka.

After Succos we are ready for Simchas Torah. Only after we separate from the physicality's of this world, are we able to properly rejoice with the Torah.

Rabbi Yosef Lewy (Minhag Yisroel Torah (siman 639 os gimal) offers a fascinating insight.

Why is it that many tzaddikim are stringent and sit in the Suka even when it rains? The Halacha of one who is in pain must leave the Suka, depends on the person and case. These tzaddikim served Hashem almost above the level of nature. **They were so happy to perform the mitzvah of Suka that they almost didn't even realize that it was raining. Even though it was actually raining, they didn't feel any pain or discomfort.**

Let's elaborate on this by means of an analogy. If it began raining or snowing everyone would most likely enter indoors. Conversely, **if it was raining and simultaneously diamonds were falling from the sky, people wouldn't go indoors. They would remain outside in order to collect the diamonds. Even though they were in a state of discomfort, nevertheless, the permanent gain that will result from the expensive diamonds collected overrides, supersedes and causes one to forget about the temporary and almost unbothersome rain. These tzaddikim realize the priceless value of Torah and mitzvos. Torah and mitzvos are much more valuable than regular diamonds.**

Let's offer another explanation as to how these tzaddikim remain in the Suka. The Maharshag (Shut Maharshag chalek alef siman 35) **explains that** one who is in pain isn't always exempt from the Suka. For instance, if one will be in more pain by eating outside the Suka than eating inside the Suka, then he should eat inside the Suka. Meaning, **these tzaddikim would be so upset that they weren't able to perform the mitzvah of Suka, to the extent that that pain would be greater than the pain and discomfort caused by the rainy Suka that they were sitting in.** Therefore it is better for them to sit in a Suka that is wet, rather than outside of the Suka. However, they must be careful not to falsely trick themselves. Meaning, if they are

in more pain by sitting in the Suka, then they shouldn't pretend that they are in more pain by sitting outside of the Suka, and incorrectly end up sitting in the Suka.

5.

Berchas Yabetz (chalek beis pages 137-138) quotes the Bechuray Yaakov (siman 644).

The Tor (siman 644) says that we get up early to attend Shul on Succos. The Bach explains that even though during other holidays we go to Shul later, nevertheless, on Succos we get up earlier than usual because of the concept of being quick to perform mitzvos as stated in mesechas Pesachim (4a) (זריזין מקדימין למצות). On Succos we must go to Shul earlier than usual in order to fulfill the mitzvah of the daled minim. Therefore the custom of shaking the daled minim in the Suka before going to Shul is a good custom. This is a nice custom for kabalistic reasons and in order to being quick to perform mitzvos. The Magen Avraham (siman 651) relates this custom as well.

The Arizal says to recite berchas hatorah before taking the daled minim. The question arises; why does one need to recite berchas hatorah prior to taking the daled minim? We aren't obligated to recite berchas hatorah prior to performing mitzvos as stated by the Rama (siman 47). According to the Ramban there is a Torah obligation to recite berchas hatorah. The Gemara in Berachos (53b) states something that is common and something that is uncommon, the common precedes (תדיר ושאינו תדיר תדיר קודם). Therefore, **since berchas hatorah is more common than daled minim, berchas hatorah must be recited first.**

6.

Otzros Hatorah pages 20-22

The Tor (siman 417) quotes his brother Rebbi Yehuda who says that the holidays correspond to the Avos. Pesach corresponds to Avraham. We know this from the episode when Avraham told his wife to knead dough. That dough was actually used to bake matzah. The pasuk (Berashis (18, 6)) says "לושי ועשי עוגות". Shevuos corresponds to Yitzchok. The shofer that was blown at Har Sinai was from the same ram they sacrificed after the akadas Yitzchok. Succos corresponds to Yaakov. Yaakov built huts for his animals as stated in the pasuk (33, 17) "ולמקנהו עשו סוכות". The twelve months correspond to the twelve tribes. (שמעתי מאחי הר"י טעם לדבר לפי שהמועדים נתקנו כנגד אבות) פסח כנגד אברהם דכתיב (בראשית יח) "לושי ועשי עוגות" ופסח היה. שבועות כנגד יצחק שתקיעת שופר של מתן תורה היה בשופר מאילו של יצחק. סוכות כנגד יעקב דכתיב (בראשית לד) "ולמקנהו עשה סוכות." ו"ב ראשי חדשי השנה שגם הם נקראים (מועדים כנגד י"ב שבטים).

It's easily understandable how Pesach corresponds to Avraham; it's because of the matzah. It's also easily understandable how Shevuos corresponds to Yitzchok; it's because the ram was instead of Yitzchok. How does Succos correspond to Yaakov? Just because he made huts for his cattle, therefore the holiday corresponds to him. Furthermore, the pasuk by Yaakov says he named a place Succos. Who cares about the place he named? Lastly, why did Yaakov build temporary huts as opposed to set structures? Targum Yonason Ben Uziel explains that Yaakov delayed at the place he called Succos for a duration of twelve months. He actually built a Yeshiva there and made huts for his cattle. The true house of Yaakov was the Yeshiva he built. The Yeshiva was set, while everything else was temporary. **Yaakov realized and properly demonstrated the difference between set and temporary. Yaakov knew that all of his money, animals and stuff were only fleeting and temporary. This is precisely the essence of**

Succos; to leave our set dwelling and settle in a temporary dwelling as stated in mesechas Suka (2a) (צא מדירת קבע ושב בדירת עראי). It should be rooted within us the concept that this world is temporary and fleeting. We must realize that we are not immortal and that there are consequences for our actions. This is why Succos corresponds to Yaakov; because Yaakov exemplifies the fundamental concept of Succos that this world is just temporary. There is a story about one of the talmidim of Rabbi Yecheskel Levenstein who came to visit Israel. He went to visit his Rebbi. Rabbi Levenstein asked him when he got to Israel. The talmid responded three days ago. Rabbi Levenstein asked what took him so long. He said that he went to daven by the graves of tzaddikim. There were several moments of silence. Rabbi Levenstein said now you realize that the end is that everyone will die.