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HOSHANA RABBA

SHIUR OF RABBI J.B. SOLOVEITCHIK

BOSTON, 1969

Transcribed and summarized by Rabbi Dr. Nisson E. Shulman

I. The Torah commanded that within the precincts of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem the lulav and esrog should be taken on each of the 7 days of Sukkos. Beyond the Temple precincts it was taken in hand only on the first day. The source is Vayikra 23:40, "Ulekachtem lachem bayom harishon pri etz hadar... usemakhtem lifney hashem elokechem shivas yamim." While the lulav commandment seems to apply to the first day alone, our sages interpreted the command of simcha to mean by means of the lulav and esrog. Hence, that commandment was applied to each of the seven days. In the same way, the arava was taken in hand within the Holy Temple on each of the holiday's seven days, but outside its precincts it was taken only on the seventh day. The source of the arava commandment is the oral tradition (that does not diminish from its authority as a Torah commandment).

In the Beis HaMikdash there was special significance to taking the lulav on the first day and the arava on the seventh day, for only on those days did these respective mitzvot take precedence over the Shabbos. Thus, if Shabbos coincided with the first day, the lulav would be taken in hand. If it coincided with the seventh day, the mitzvah of arava applied. On the other days of the holiday, Shabbos took precedence over both of these mitzvot. The reasoning regarding lulav is obvious, for only on that day were both commands operative, "ulekachtem" and "usemachtem." Thereafter, only the "usemachtem" commandment remained. We do not know why the arava took precedence over the Shabbos on the seventh day (See Sukkah 42b).

In the Temple, the commandment of arava was fulfilled in two ways. They would decorate the altar with long aravos, which were so tall that their tops waved over it. At that time they would blow "hatzotzros," the trumpets. They would also, on each day of Sukkos, after fulfilling the mitzvah of the lulav and esrog, put them away and take the arava. We will later discuss what they did with the arava.

II. When the Holy Temple was destroyed, Rabbi Yohanan ben Zakkai decreed that these commandments should remain operative in remembrance, but with this difference, the lulav was maintained for each day of Sukkos except for Shabbos, and the arava applied only on Hoshana Rabba. On Hoshana Rabba, besides decorating the altar, might they also have taken the arava in hand while marching around it seven times? Otherwise, how can we consider the arava a remembrance of the Temple? What possible commemoration can there be for the decoration of the altar? However, if in the Beis HaMikdash we had marched around the altar with the arava as well, then by our marching around the Sefer Torah on the bima today, we do, indeed, reflect the practice in the Temple. [It appears that arava on Hoshana Rabba was considered an

even more important performance than the commandment of blowing the shofar on Rosh Hashanah, for the Talmud discusses organizing the calendar in such a way that Hoshana Rabba does not fall on Shabbos (See Sukkah 43b). It has no such discussion in connection with the shofar, which is not blown when Shabbos comes out on Rosh Hashanah. We do not know why Hoshana Rabba has so much prominence.]

Rav Yoseph (Sukkah 43b) questions the premise that today arava on Hoshana Rabba is in commemoration of the practice in the Beis HaMikdash, for that could only be true if arava in the Mikdash was taken in hand (netilah), and with it we marched around the altar. Rav Yoseph holds, however, that all they did in the Mikdash was beautify the altar by means of arava but did not march around the altar with it. Thus our custom of arava on the seventh day has nothing to do with the Beis HaMikdash since there is no longer any altar. As Rashi says; Vehashta deleka mizbeach, heicha nizkefa?" Abaye questions Rav Yoseph's statement by quoting the Mishnah that they would walk around the altar once every day and seven times on Hoshana Rabba. "Was it not with the arava (in hand)?" This is refuted: "No, the marching around the altar was with the lulav in hand."

The Talmud quotes a controversy on this issue, and concludes that they walked around the altar holding the arava. The Talmud cites an incident that took place in the Holy Temple. Dissident followers of Baitus who objected in principle to the oral tradition, tried to sabotage a Shabbos Hoshana Rabba service by burying the aravos which had been prepared from erev Shabbos under stones which on Shabbos are "muktzeh." Ordinary Jews came the next day, disregarded the prohibition of muktzeh, drew the aravos out from under the stones, and practiced "hibut arava." If the practice of arava was limited to decorating the altar (zekefa) alone, the beraita would not have used the term "hibut arava" which means either shaking or banging. (According to Rashi, the arava was waved in precisely the same fashion as the lulav. It is the Rambam who interprets "hibut" as "banging").

So the opinion of those who claimed that the hakafot were with the lulav in hand and without the arava is rejected. Arava remains with a dual aspect, "zekifa," decorating the altar, and "netila," taking the arava in hand and with it marching around the altar.

III. Rambam, Ch. VII Hilchot Lulav, Halakhah 20-22, has a slightly different view than that described above. He cites the Oral Tradition that in the Mikdash they brought an additional arava besides the one bound with the lulav, and describes how the mitzvah was accomplished. Each of the seven days they would bring branches of arava and stand them up around the altar with their tops bending over it. And while they brought these willow branches, they would blow tekiah, teruah, tekiah (with "hatzotzros," trumpets).

Blowing the trumpets in this fashion made it clear that arava was a fulfillment of a mitzvah (a "kiyum") rooted in the Mikdash itself. In effect, it was a mitzvah that the altar be decorated with aravos, for they blew the "hatzotzros" for those procedures dependent on the Mikdash, such as when they opened and shut the Mikdash gates. Whenever the fulfillment of the mitzvah is related to the sanctuary itself, it required the "hatzotzros." That is why, when they removed the aravos, they would say, "Yofi lecha mizbeach," How beautiful (this practice is for) the altar. If arava were a mitzvah incumbent upon the persona (kiyum gavra), then each person would have to approach the altar and erect an arava. But that was not the way it took place. The priests used to do it on behalf of everyone, for the Halakhah was that the altar had to be decorated with aravos.

When the Rambam describes the practice on those occasions when Shabbos coincided with Hoshana Rabba, however, he mentions two procedures: the erection of the arava decoration around the mizbeach, and the taking of the arava in hand; "ubaim haam venotim mimenu kederech sheosim bechol yom." So apparently the Rambam agrees that there are two "kiyumim" to arava, one relating to the altar, that it be

decorated with arava, the other relating to each person requiring him to hold an arava. Yet, when describing the daily practice, he indicates that they marched around the altar with their lulavim rather than with the arava (ibid. 23). Moreover, the Rambam assumes the hakafah must be part of Hallel, since they recited "ana hashem hoshiah na;" this could only apply to lulav. How do you explain this apparent contradiction to the Gemara above? The discussion in the Gemara seems to have rejected this view, holding that every day there was "hakafa" with the arava, not only on Hoshana Rabba. How does the Rambam explain this?

Apparently the Rambam held that even though there is a personal requirement (kiyum gavra) of "netilat arava," taking it in hand, this is not fulfilled by "hakafah," making a circuit around the altar. It consists rather of moving the arava, or smiting it ("nanuim" or "hibut") (See 22). Our practice on Hoshana Rabba of striking the arava on the floor (bench) or wall is, according to the Rambam, exactly what they did in the Beis HaMikdash. Just as we smite the arava on the wall or floor without a bracha on Hoshana Rabba, in the Beis HaMikdash they used to do this every day of the holiday. Thus, while according to Rashi, arava in the Temple was waved and held as we marched around the altar, and this is an extension of "netila," according to Rambam "hibut," smiting the arava, is the extension of "netilah." He derives this from the beraita's use of the word "hibut" "She'eyn baytusim modim shehibut haarava doche Shabbat." So, according to Rambam, the circuit of the altar was done only with the lulav, and never with the arava.

IV. Why is the Rambam so insistent about this? If you take the "hakafah" and relegate it to the arava, as Rashi does, then it turns out that arava has two communal "kiyumim" deriving from the altar: 1) that the altar be decorated with arava; 2) that the altar has a procession around it by means of the arava. The lulav is left with only one "kiyum gavra," the personal obligation of "netila," that of taking the lulav (4 minim) in hand, reciting a bracha and moving or waving it. The Rambam agrees that there is a dual aspect of the commandment of arava: one is a "kiyum mizbeach," a communal requirement dependent on the altar, the second is a personal responsibility, a "kiyum gavra." The "kiyum mizbeach" is that it be decorated by means of arava; the second is the personal responsibility of "hibut," that every person take an arava and strike it two or three times on the floor or on the wall.

According to the Rambam there were two aspects of the mitzvah of lulav as well: 1) the individual's requirement to hold the lulav in his hand for each of the seven days (and outside the Temple for the first day), and 2) the communal requirement, the "kiyum mizbeach" that on all seven days the altar be decorated with lulav, not by standing the lulavim up around the altar (as in the case of arava), but by means of a parade around the altar holding the lulav. For the arava, the medium of beautification of the altar is to erect them around it; for the lulav the medium is to make a circuit of the altar, holding the lulav in hand. This is not our individual duty, but a requirement of the altar and could therefore be performed by the priests on our behalf. It would seem, according to this then, that the mitzvah of "usemachtem" branches out, becoming - after the first day of Sukkos - a communal duty expressed by the lulav parade around the altar.

V. Today, we practice hakafah every day of Sukkos by walking around the bima upon which a Sefer Torah is held, making one circuit daily and seven on Hoshana Rabba. The Rambam stresses the custom today of circling the "tevah" and thereby means the Sefer Torah which it contained, so that the "tevah" represents the altar (ibid. 23).

According to Rashi, the whole institution of hakafot on days other than Hoshana Rabba makes no sense, because, according to his view, in Temple times there were no hakafot with the lulav, but only with the arava! Furthermore, the mitzvah of the arava is limited to the seventh day, so why should there be any hakafot altogether on the other days?

According to Rambam, however, it is logical. Circling makes sense on every day of Sukkos since it is not related to the arava but to the lulav with which - in the Temple - they would circle the altar on each day of the holiday. Thus, according to the Rambam, circling with the arava is not done on any other day of Sukkos. The lulav parade each day of Sukkos today is in remembrance of the Temple. On Hoshana Rabba the situation changes, for there is then zecher leMikdash, not only by means of lulav, but by means of arava as well; lulav all the seven days, the arava on Hoshana Rabba, its exclusive day.

VI. On Hoshana Rabba we seek to accommodate both views, that of Rambam and that of Rashi. We circle with the lulav, for according to Rambam, besides the personal obligation of "netilah," taking the lulav, there is a communal obligation that the altar have a parade around it just like on every other day of Sukkos. As far as the mitzvah of arava is concerned, that is fulfilled with "hibut," striking the arava. Rashi, who holds that the circuit on every other day of Sukkos is with the arava, applies that to Hoshana Rabba as well, as a communal responsibility deriving from the altar. He also holds that the arava on Hoshana Rabba is also a personal obligation, fulfilled with "netila." Both Rashi and Rambam agree that on Hoshana Rabba there are seven circuits of the altar.

Rabbi Moses Isserles (Rama) therefore says that on Hoshana Rabba you pick up the arava together with the lulav. The Ari HaKadosh, however, maintains that for reasons rooted in Kabbalah one should not take the lulav and the arava at the same time. That is why on Hoshana Rabba we don't pick up the arava until we have put away the lulav. The four items of the mitzvah, lulav, arava, esrog, hadas, represent the complete name of Hashem of four letters, the Yod, He, Vav and He. This is expressed in the Yehi Ratzon, "Bring nigh each to the other and they should be as One in my hand." This name of G-d represents mercy, loving-kindness, "Hashem Hashem, Kel rachum vechanun." The arava is "din." That is why the arava should not be held together with the four varieties. (Rav Moshe Soloveitchik and Rav Chaim did, indeed, hold the lulav together with the arava).

VII. There are a number of rulings in the Mikdash that are reflected in current practice. For instance, a mourner does not participate in the hakafot. Some achronim question why a mourner should not participate since he is required to fulfill all commandments. The Gaon explains that it is because hakafah is a mitzvah mizbeach, a communal obligation regarding the mizbeach, and an avel does not send karbanot, and has no access to the mizbeach.

The Mishnah clearly indicates that in the Beis HaMikdash, Hoshana Rabba was the most outstanding day of Sukkos, particularly in relation to the arava. We do not know why this is so, although the Zohar elaborates about Hoshana Rabba in Parshat Noach and Parshat Pinhas. The Ramban, too, in Bamidbar (Shelach), in connection with the spies, on the passage "His protection was removed from them," indicates that the night of Hoshana Rabba is the last chance to influence our "gezar din," the final decree issued on Yom Kippur. Ramban therefore calls the night of erev Hoshana Rabba "leil hahatima;" no change in our "gezar din" can be made thereafter.

We do not know why the Talmud is silent about this element of Hoshana Rabba. But we do see that on Hoshana Rabba the ceremonial procedure changed in the Beis HaMikdash, and intensified seven-fold.

From: Rabbi Riskin's Shabbat Shalom List parsha@ohrtorahstone.org.il
To: Shabbat_Shalom@ohrtorahstone.org.il Subject:
Shabbat Shalom Erev Sukkot
BY RABBI SHLOMO RISKIN

Efrat -- We approach the Festival of Sukkot this New Year 5762 amidst the winds of war: as I write these lines I have barely recuperated

from the devastation of the Twin Towers in New York, and today in Efrat I have just returned from the tragic funeral of the 25 year old mother Sarit Amrani from Nokdim, who was murdered in a terrorist attack this morning.

For significant insight, it would be instructive, and even prophetic, to study the context of the very first time that the name Sukkot appears in the Bible, the name Jacob gives to the city he inhabits after parting ways with Esau (Genesis 33:17).

Jacob has returned to his ancestral homeland after twenty-two years with his Uncle Laban in the Syrian exile - not very different from Israel's return to our Jewish State after about 2,000 years of wanderings. His brother Esau is lying-in-wait for him with four hundred armed men - obviously not a mere welcoming committee for a family reunion. Rashi explains that Jacob decides to attempt three strategies: he will pray to G-d, he will give a substantial gift to Esau - and if Esau is not appeased, he will set out to wage war. The textual language regarding the gift resonates symbolic significance: I shall seek atonement from him (akhapra panav) with the gift perhaps he will forgive me Please accept my blessing (Genesis 32:21, 33:11).

Apparently, Jacob feels a semblance of guilt vis a vis Esau. Despite the fact that Esau was willing to relinquish his first-born blessing for a mess of pottage, despite the fact that Esau was a hedonistic hunter who was interested only in immediate gratification, and despite the fact that a Divine prophecy had foretold to Mother Rebecca that the elder would serve the younger. Jacob still suffers conscience pangs for his having deceived his father to obtain the blessing. And so now, twenty-two years later, Jacob has no difficulty in seeking atonement and returning the gift-blessing.

This Biblical incident seems to parallel the Israeli gift to the Palestinians since 1994 of some 95% of the lands on which Arabs live. They gave up most of Hebron, Bethlehem, Shekhem etc. first and foremost for the sacred delusion of peace; at the same time, however, there were certainly a significant number of Israelis who, - although cognizant of the fact that Judea and Samaria were the most essential part of Israel during both Israel Commonwealths, that at the conclusion of the First World War the Treaty of Versailles promised Israel the West Bank, and that the Arabs lost these areas as the result of a war of aggression waged in order to push Israel into the Mediterranean Sea - were nevertheless anxious to cease any semblance of "occupation" and grant the Palestinians their own State.

Jacob prepares his gift and is almost ready to confront Esau. But he understands that he must first confront himself. Whether this particular confrontation with Esau will conclude in peace or war, Jacob must clearly understand who he is and what he stands for. If not, he will either be assimilated by Esau in the event of peace, or he will lack the necessary resolve to defend his rights in the event of war. Hence, the very next Biblical chapter records that "Jacob remained alone, and an anonymous being wrestled with him." Rav Samson Raphael Hirsh suggests that Jacob wrestled with himself, with the aspect of Esau which resides in each and every one of us, with the natural desire to free ourselves from the "yoke of commandments" which are our Sinaitic heritage and to live as every other nation, without moral constraints or responsibility for universal morality. Jacob ultimately re-discovers his identity, is re-named Yisra-El the one who emerged victorious against external enemies as well as against internal forces - and so is ready to meet Esau.

The nation Israel likewise went through a similar period of soul-searching, after the frustration and disillusionment in the wake of Arafat's intransigence at Camp David II and Arafat's belligerence with Intifida El Aksa we had to exorcise the false messianism of Shimon Peres's New Middle East, throw out the misguided text-books and commentaries spawned by a spurious Post-Zionism, and return to the original ideals of the modern Zionist movement.

Esau accepts Jacob's gift - and seemingly desires rapprochement with his brother: "Let us journey and let us go (together); I shall walk alongside of you." Jacob refuses; he uses the necessity of his grazing the cattle and the slowness of the children as an excuse for his desire to lag behind. "I will come together with my master to Seir," (Genesis 33:14) he says. The Midrash interprets this comment as referring to the prophecy of Ovadia, that - at the end of the days - the saviors shall come up to Mount Zion to judge the Mount of Esau, when the sovereignty will belong to G-d (Ovadia 1). Jacob understands that he can only live together with Esau or Yishmael when they are willing to accept ethical monotheism, the rule of the G-d who demands justice and compassion, freedom for all, reverence for life. Judaism can never join forces with the Inquisition - fanatic Christianity of the Crusades or the suicide bombers of Islamic fundamentalism. Jacob must separate from Esau as long as Esau suggests a partnership without accepting the seven Noahide laws of morality. Jacob lives in Israel alone, managing to separate from Esau and at the same time avoiding war with him. "And on that day, Esau went his way to Seir. Jacob traveled to Sukkot; he built for himself a house and erected booths for his cattle. Therefore he called (the place's) name Sukkot" (Genesis 33:17). Sukkot was the first city established peacefully by Jacob in the Land of Israel after he separated from his gentile relative who refused to accept ethical monotheism. May we learn from Jacob's courage and wisdom, and may we merit a parallel "happy ending" during our Festival of Sukkot.

Shabbat Shalom and Chag Sameach

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From: torahweb@zeus.host4u.net Sent: September 28, 2001

RABBI MICHAEL ROSENSWEIG

The Link Between Yom Kippur and Sukkot

The period of teshuvah ushered in by Rosh Hashanah appears to end dramatically with the blowing of the shofar at the culmination of Yom Kippur. The holiday of Sukkot that follows appears to be independent of the days that precede it. Indeed, Sukkot presents quite a sharp contrast to Yom Kippur. Rambam characterizes Yom Kippur as a day lacking in "simchah yeteirah" (hil. Hanukah 3:6), while he depicts Sukkot precisely as a time of "simachah yeteirah" (hil. Sukkah 8: 12). However, the fact is that according to many halachic sources, the final "gemar" with respect to man's status is not until Hoshanah Rabah, the conclusion of Sukkot. Moreover, compelling parallels bind Yom Kippur and Sukkot and there are strong indications that the intervening period is not merely a bridge between them, but constitutes a significant period by virtue of the link between them.

In Sefer Devarim, Tehilim, and elsewhere we find references to avodat Hashem be-yirah, particularly accented by Yom Kippur, as well as to avodah be-simchah, projected by Sukkot. The midrash in Tehilim, commenting on these distinctive approaches reflected in Tehilim chapters 2, 100 questions the relationship between them: "im be-simchah eich be-yirah, ve-im be-yirah eich be-simchah?" One view in the midrash perceives the "yirah" as a method employed in this world to achieve the ultimate reward of "simchah" in the World to Come. Others argue that "yirah" and "simchah" are simply distinctive approaches to man's relationship with Hashem. However, Tana De-bei Eliyahu (no. 3) projects a mutually enhancing impact: "amar David ha-Melech yirati mitoch simchati, ve-simchati mitoch yirati". It is possible that this approach also characterizes the relationship between Yom Kippur, the holiday of yirah, and Sukkot, the festival of simchah.

A careful reading of Parshat Emor reveals several parallels between these two moadim. The term "ach" (Vayikra 23:27, 39), connoting

something different or exclusive is used only regarding these two holidays. The term "mikra kodesh" which is the common theme of all the holidays delineated in the parshah is treated in an unusual manner with respect to Yom Kippur, as it does not connect to the general prohibition to do work on a festival, as with other moadim, but to the specific expression of fasting on this day. Sukkot's treatment in Emor is also unique. The Torah records a second account of this holiday which includes reference to the lulav but omits the term "mikra kodesh". In both Yom Kippur (23:28-"ki yom kipurim hu le-chaper aleichem") and Sukkot (23:43-"lemaan yeidu doroteichem ki be-sukkot hoshavti et benei yisrael behozii otam me-eretz mizrayim"), the Torah feels the need to justify the holiday. The term "lifnei Hashem Elokeichem"(24:28, 40) appears in connection with each of these events. Ibn Ezra and Seforno allude to the apparent link between Yom Kippur and Sukkot rooted in some aspects of their unusual treatments.

It is possible that the Torah conveys by means of some of these parallels that the themes of "yirah" and "simchah" are each critical components of a comprehensive avodat Hashem, and that each enhances the other when implemented properly. The role of yirah as preceding wisdom and Torah knowledge is well documented. Simchah, too, is critical for the study of Torah ("pikudei Hashem mesamhei lev..."), for the attainment of prophecy (Shabbat 30b), and plays a role in many other halachic norms, as well.

Yom Kippur and Sukkot contrast in ways that accent the parallels between them. The exemption of miztaer, the expanded role of halel, the motif of "teshvu ke-ein taduru", for example, reflect an extreme manifestation of simachah. The motif of inui, a full complement of issur melachah, and a rejection of halel accentuate the yirah of Yom Kippur. Each extreme plays an important role in the overall balance represented by the different moadim, reflecting the broad spiritual ambition of halachic life itself.

The Rishonim questioned why Sukkot is not celebrated in context of yeziat mizrayim which it celebrates? The Ramban (Emor, ad loc) and Tur (beg. of hil. Sukkah) address this question. They posit that weather conditions during the period of Nissan would not have properly accented the normative aspect of Sukkah. However, the Zeror Hamor and Aruch Hashulchan suggest that the Torah deliberately linked Sukkot with Yom Kippur for thematic reasons!

The Shulchan Aruch rules that tachanun is not to be recited in the period between Yom Kippur and Sukkot. The Beit Yosef (no. 131) explains that this is the period in which the Beit Hamikdash will be completed. The Aruch Hashulchan (524:7), however, posits that this ruling is connected to the period of simchah that follows the aftermath of Yom Kippur, and characterizes the entire intervening period until Sukkot as "yemei simchah". One may speculate that the appropriate time to complete the mikdash is in this period precisely because of this status, particularly if this period symbolizes the integration of simchah-yirah which is especially indispensable to the proper functioning of the Beit Hamikdash. The obligation to begin the process of building the Sukkah immediately after Yom Kippur is formulated twice in the Shulchan Aruch: in the last halachah of hil. Yom Kippur and, again, in the first halachah of hil. Sukkah. While the commentators struggle to explain the differences between the two contiguous formulations, it remains difficult to fathom why this law (or laws) could not be articulated in one place. In light of our brief analysis of the complementary relationship between the two extreme manifestations of yirah and simchah, we can perhaps further appreciate the precision of these formulations. Yom Kippur is significantly enhanced by anticipating the upcoming festival of "u-semahtem lifnei Hashem Elokeichem shivat yamim". Immediate involvement with the Sukkah is, indeed, a most fitting culmination to hil. Yom Kippur. At the same time, the themes of Sukkot take on greater meaning against the framework of "ki Yom Kippurim hu le-chaper aleichem lifnei Hashem Elokeichem". Thus, hil. Sukkah, itself, demands that the process of building the

Sukkah be initiated in the immediate afterglow of teshuvah, selichah, kapparah and yirah.

<http://www.torahweb.org/torah/2000/>

Torahweb [From last year]

RABBI ZVI SOBOLOFSKY

The Song of Life

In Massechet Erchin 10b we are taught that we are obligated to say hallel on all yomim tovim, but on Succos, there is an additional unique requirement to say hallel; the recitation of hallel on Succos has a dual role in halacha.

There is a definite link between between the mitzvah of daled minim and kerias hallel. The incorporation of shaking the lulav within the context of hallel clearly demonstrates that there is a connection between these two mitzvos.

Chazal teach us that there is another mitzvah which is performed together with the recitation of hallel. The mishna in Massechet Pesachim teaches us that in the time of the Beis HaMikdash the korban pesach was offered simultaneously with the singing of hallel. Why are the mitzvos of daled minim and korban pesach singled out as mitzvos to be performed in conjunction with hallel?

The Gemara, in Massechet Megillah, relates that at the time of the miracle of Purim, Chazal were unsure as to how to commemorate the event appropriately. They wanted to institute the reading of the megillah as an eternal commemoration of the miraculous events that had transpired, but were concerned with this being considered an "addition to the Torah." Ultimately, they delved into the Torah itself to find a source obligating the commemoration of a miracle. Chazal concluded that just as the Jewish people celebrated the culmination of Yetzias Mitzrayim by praising Hashem at Keri'at Yam Suf with the singing of "Az Yashir", so too the events of Purim should be celebrated by praising Hashem, the Megillah acting as the vehicle of praise. It is this requirement of praising Hashem following deliverance from slavery that obligates us to recite hallel as we offer the korban pesach- the korban that transformed us from being slaves to being free men.

Chazal noted that there is a greater cause for celebration following the miracle of Purim: At Keri'at Yam Suf it was freedom that was at stake, at Purim it was life itself that was threatened. They concluded that the occurrence of a miracle requires us to respond by praising Hashem. A miracle that ensures our freedom warrants celebration, how much more so for one that saves our very lives. The obligation to celebrate our being saved from death is the root of our hallel as we take the lulav on succos. On Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur we did not say hallel. Chazal explain that as we are being judged and our lives are hanging in the balance it is inappropriate to sing the words of hallel. Following Yom Kippur, when we believe that we have been sealed in the sefer hashaim, we have in been delivered from the brink of death. The medrash compares the Jew who shakes a lulav on Succos to the warrior returning home victorious waving his spear to indicate that he has returned safely. As we lift our lulav in celebration of the gift of life we were granted on Yom Kippur; our entire being bursts forth in song, praising Hashem who has delivered us from death to life.

Subj: Hemdat Yamim - Sukkot From: erezthem@netvision.net.il (Eretz Hemdah) To: Hemdatya@erezthemdah.org

The entire Eretz Hemdah family offers its deepest condolences to Mr. Isaac Moinester, chairman of the Greater NY chapter of American Friends of Eretz Hemdah, on the loss of his beloved wife, Doris, in the tragic terrorist attack in NY. May he be comforted amongst the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.

The Joy of Internal Unity

HARAV MOSHE EHRENREICH

Sukkot is the holiday during which joy is most stressed (Devarim 16:14). However, the Torah tries to put this joy in the proper perspective, as it says: "and you shall rejoice before Hashem for seven days" (Vayikra 23:41). Is the qualification that the joy be before Hashem a geographic or a qualitative one, and what does it come to teach us? Kli Yakar (ad loc.) brings a statement of Chazal on the pasuk: "Ki v'simcha teitzei'u u-v'shalom tuvalun, he-harim v'hag'vaot yiftzichu lifneichem rina v'chol atzei hasadeh yimcha-u chaf"- "For in joy you shall leave and in peace shall you be brought; the mountains and the hills will break forth before you in song and all of the trees of the field shall clap hands" (Yeshaya 55:12). Chazal explain that if you spend your holidays in a joy which is devoid of spiritual intention and content, you will leave the Land and go to exile. On the other hand, if the happiness is accompanied by peace, then you will brought back to the Land. Thus "joy before Hashem", the proper type of joy, is parallel to the peace described by Yeshaya. What is meant by peace, in this context, and in what way is it parallel to "before Hashem?"

The physical side of our existence yearns for physical pleasure and joy. Our spiritual side seeks spiritual fulfillment. Through much of life, the two sides struggle one against the other, with one or the other gaining the upper hand at any given moment. Yom Kippur is certainly a day when we need to separate the physical from the spiritual and allow our spiritual side to dominate. But there are holy days which have the power to unite our physical and spiritual sides, and then the happiness of enjoying physical bounty can be done before and for Hashem. This is the power of Sukkot. When we are able, on these days, to bring peace between the struggling elements of our persona and unite them, we are fit for redemption, as Chazal hinted.

Indeed, Chazal in another place relate Yeshaya's words, "v'chol atzei hasadeh yimcha-u chaf")and all of the trees of the field shall clap hands) to the mitzva of lulav and etrog, which is described in our pasuk of joy before Hashem (Vayikra 23:41). Sukkot is also the time of nisuch hamayim (water libations). During the festivities of Simchat Beit Hashoeiva, the levi'im descended the 15 steps from the Ezrat Nashim to the Ezrat Yisrael, while singing the 15 psalms of Shir Hama'alot. The Maharal points out that the number 15 has a very special significance here. 15 is the sum of the numerical values of the letters "Yud" and "Heh". Not only do these letters form one of the names of Hashem, but they are the letters with which He created this world and the world-to-come. Indeed, when the physical gifts of this world are celebrated in the Beit Hamikdash, in a way in which their spiritual content and potential are uncovered, the "Yud" and the "Heh" (and the worlds they represent) can be united.

Moreshet Shaul (from the works of HAGAON HARAV SHAUL YISRAELI zt"l)

"And You Shall Rejoice on Your Festival" (Sukkot 5724 - courtesy of R. Yisrael Sharir)

The joy of the days of the Sukkot festival serves as a test of the level of purity which we attained during the Days of Judgment and Mercy. The goal of these days, which open the Jewish new year, is to shake people from the complacency which grips most people throughout the year. Complacency is, in effect, "shutting of the eyes," in which one purposely ignores thinking about where he came from and where he will eventually end up. Man acts in this way out of fear that such serious and morbid thoughts will not allow him to enjoy the pleasures of life.

During the days of transition from year to year, the complacency is shaken to a certain degree. We learn to recognize in a very real way that the great gift of life, a "bundle" we receive at birth and carry along with us throughout our lives, is slowly but surely dwindling. Another year slips away and turns into the past. From time to time, a decade's passing is noticed, and what's left from it all is a faint memory

However, the point of the Days of Judgment is not to leave us in a depressed state of mind, but to teach us to build our world in a way that our toil leaves everlasting fruits. "What is the value for man with all of the toil which he toils under the sun'- there is no value from that which is under the sun, but from that which is above the sun (the spiritual), there is value" (Kohelet Rabba 1). If we succeed in filling our lives with the true content of mitzvot, then our achievements are eternal, and they enrich us yearly.

This is where the mitzva of the sukka comes in. We leave our permanent structure, the dwelling which we considered permanent, which we tried to beautify and perfect and thought was the center of our life's content, and enter a temporary dwelling. The idea is to recognize and remember the real situation and beautify and adorn the temporary dwelling by fulfilling: "live in it as you do in your regular home." Use the temporary dwelling as a preparation for the eternal life [of the world-to-come].

Along with the mitzva of sukka comes the mitzva of rejoicing. This is to teach us that the Torah is not coming to deprive us of anything (like living in our house), but to give us something. The joy of the festival is not one which comes from ignoring the realities of life, but one which comes from knowledge and memory. It is not light-headed happiness, but the joy of removing doubts, of seriousness, of holiness - the simcha of doing mitzvot.

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From: RABBI YISROEL CINER ciner@torah.org
Subject: Parsha-Insights - Yom Kippur/Succos

We are presently in the midst of the month of Tishray, the seventh month. We find that six mundane units are followed by a holy seventh. The six days of the week are followed by Shabbos. Each six-year cycle is followed by the Shmittah year (no work is performed on the fields). And the first six months are followed by Tishray, the month that is illuminated by so many holidays.

In order to understand the connection and transition from Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, to Succos, the holiday of the Clouds of Glory, we must have an historical perspective.

On the fifteenth day of Nissan, Bnei Yisroel {the Children of Israel} had their exodus from the oppressive slavery of Mitzrayim {Egypt}. The travel through the wilderness was accompanied by the 'Annanei Hakavodthe Clouds of Glory' that led the way while also casting their protective shield over the nation.

Forty-nine days later, on the sixth day of Sivan, Bnei Yisroel stood by the foot of Har {Mount} Sinai as the heavens opened up and all heard the word of Hashem. Moshe then ascended the mountain to remain there for forty days in order to be taught the entire Torah and to then bring down the Luchos {Tablets upon which the Ten Commandments were written}.

Bnei Yisroel miscalculated, thought that Moshe was dead, and sinned by making the Golden Calf. Moshe descended on the seventeenth day of Tammuz, saw the Golden Calf, and broke the Luchos. As a result of that, the 'Annanei Hakavod' were withdrawn.

Moshe ascended the mountain again to plead forgiveness on behalf of Bnei Yisroel. On Yom Kippur, the tenth of Tishray, Moshe descended carrying Hashem's message of "Salachti--I have forgiven." On the next day Moshe gathered Bnei Yisroel to command them to bring sacrifices, which were then brought on the twelfth and thirteenth of Tishray. On the fourteenth, the materials that Moshe had collected were brought to the

artisans who would be constructing the Mishkan {Tabernacle} and on the fifteenth the actual construction began.

On that day, the Annanei Hakavod returned and served as a Succah--the loving protection that Hashem gave to His children. We reenact that display of love and intimacy by moving out of our houses into the Succah each year on the fifteenth day of Tishray.

Closeness, distance and then an even greater closeness. We don't commemorate those first Annanei Hakavod--they didn't last. It is the Annanei Hakavod that followed the repentance that are commemorated yearly. Closeness, distance and then an even greater closeness. This is a pattern that is repeated not only on a national level but also on an individual one.

One of the most moving stories I've ever heard is told in Hasidic Tales of the Holocaust about a young girl named Ida. In 1944, she, her family and the rest of her Czechoslovakian town were sent to Auschwitz. The arrival platform was the last time she saw her family as only she and a sister passed the selection. She was given the job of sorting the clothes of the gassed according to size and quality to ready them for usage by German civilians.

One night, a strange noise was heard under the three-tiered bunk bed where Ida slept along with thirty-five other girls. The other eleven had to turn in order to enable Ida to get out and see what was causing this noise. Under the bed, curled up into a frightened ball, she found a little girl who had escaped the children's Aktion by hiding in the latrine and had later hid herself in the barracks.

The girl's name was Estherke and she had big blue frightened eyes and beautiful blond curls. Ida immediately fell in love with Estherke as her life took on renewed purpose and meaning--saving the life of Estherke. Her meager bread rations were split in half and somehow managed to sustain them both.

When her camp was going to be evacuated Ida knew that Estherke would never pass the selection. She worked out a plan where Estherke, bundled in a blanket, was thrown over the electrified fence into the waiting arms of a male inmate in the adjacent men's camp. Later that afternoon the package was sent again into the awaiting arms of Ida now in her new camp.

In January 1945, when the camp was again evacuated, Ida had Estherke on her back in a knapsack as she began the infamous death march. Through winds and snow Ida marched on with her precious cargo until they arrived in Bergen Belsen.

After months of horror, in April 1945, Ida, her sister, Estherke and the rest of those who had somehow managed to survive were liberated by the British. All wanted to return to their hometowns to see who might still be alive. For the first time since that fateful night in Auschwitz, Ida had to part from Estherke. They agreed to meet back in Prague in two weeks time no matter what the outcome of their searches would be and each went their way.

The two weeks passed, Ida returned to Prague but Estherke failed to return. Months of intensive search yielded nothing. Estherke seemed to have vanished.

Ida met and married a survivor and moved to America. Her sister outmaneuvered the British blockade and made her life in Israel.

In the early 1950's, Ida went to Israel to visit her sister. On a very hot day she fainted in the street and was brought to a hospital by two young soldiers. A friendship developed and they visited her each day.

As Ida was being discharged, she asked them how she could repay their kindness. One of them told her that he was getting married the next day and he'd want her to be at the wedding.

And so, with a gentle breeze blowing off the mountains of Jerusalem, Ida found herself among other guests trying to find a familiar face. "The bride is coming," someone near her said. Ida moved forward to get a glimpse of the girl that had been described so lovingly. The door opened and she watched in amazement as her beloved Estherke walked in. And

so, under the bright stars shining over the Holy City, Ida stepped forward and escorted her Estherke to the chupah {bridal canopy}

Closeness, distance and then an even greater closeness. The odyssey of Ida and Estherke. The odyssey of the Annanei Hakavod returning after the forgiveness of Yom Kippur. The odyssey that every soul takes as it departs from the heavenly sphere to enter the earthly realm, only to later return bearing the fruits of its earthly journey.

There is another group of ordinary six that is followed by a holy seventh. The world will exist for six thousand years and then, after the transformation that the Moshiach will have brought toward the end of those six thousand, it will be rebuilt for the holy seventh.

May this be a year of blessing and redemption, where the world will leave its present state of distance and confusion to begin the era of ultimate closeness.

Wishing you all a g'Emar chasima tova, a meaningful Yom Kippur and a joyous Succos,

Yisroel Ciner

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From: National Council of Young Israel YI_Torah@lb.bcentral.com
First Days of Sukkot 15-16 Tishrei 576 October 2-3, 2001 Daf
Yomi: Baba Kama 67-68

Guest Rabbi

RABBI YITZCHOK WINNER

Associate Member, YICR

"Until My Entire Soul Shall Proclaim..."

On the holiday of Sukkot we have the Mitzvah of shaking the Lulav and the Esrog, as it is written in the Torah, "You shall take for yourself a beautiful fruit, a palm branch, a willow, and a myrtle and bind them together on the first day of Sukkot."

On this verse King David commented, "All of my being shall say: "Oh, G-d, who is at all likened to You!"

Through the performance of the Mitzvah of this four kinds, our entire being becomes involved in the service of HaShem. How is this done? The Daas Zekenim U'baalei HaTosafos explains that each of the four kinds is likened to a different organ of the human body. The Lulav, straight and tall, resembles the spine; the esrog, round and coming to a point, the heart; the Hadas, oval and small, the eyes; and finally, the Arava, elongated and narrow, the lips. Together they represent the major organs of the body, and through them one can bring his whole being to the service of HaShem.

However, after some reflection and self evaluation one may ask: "Can the eye that has looked at forbidden things hope to gaze upon the face of the righteous? Can lips that have gossiped and prattled foolishness move in prayer and Torah study? How can the spine that bowed to serve idols, and influence others to do so, now bow and sway in prayer to the true living G-d? Can a heart that beat to the tune of sin now burn with love of G-d?"

A parable is told of a man who took sick. He had no specific symptoms, so the doctors could not diagnose his illness, yet day to day his condition worsened. Many doctors came to see him and prescribed various medicines, yet nothing helped. His family had all but given up hope when a world renowned professor was found. He entered the patient's room, examined him, and then began speaking with him. Day after day the doctor returned; he prescribed no medication or treatment. He merely spent time with him, discussing various topics, reading to

him, singing, or praying with him. After a few days the professor told the distraught family, "I have good news for you. Your father will live." "But Doctor-we see no improvement at all!" they said. "True," said the doctor. "You see no change, but the change is great. Before, he wished to die, and now he yearns to live. The rest will follow".

In the course of the year our souls are blemished with sins. The purpose of the holiday of Sukkot, and indeed the entire month of Tishrei, is a process of healing and purification. On Rosh HaShana and Yom Kippur, the days of awe, we acknowledge our past transgressions, and through prayer and fasting we cleanse ourselves from our impurities. The holiday of Sukkot, the Days of Joy, are the turning point in the life of the Jew when we rededicate ourselves to the joyous service of HaShem, with a renewed desire to live as a Jew. Thus the process of healing has begun. We build a Sukkah. We gather and bind the "four kinds"; we shake them, symbolizing the involvement of our entire being to the service of our Creator. Just as these sprout from the earth, fresh and clean, so they tell of a new year with new beginnings. The shaking of the "four kinds" in different directions initiates the healing process, with proper choices and a new direction we choose in our lives. As we prepare to shake the Lulav and Esrog, we think: "Just as the leaves of this Lulav rattle, so let the vertebrae of my spine be reborn to stand upright as a proud Jew, bowing to now one, and boldly proclaiming my Jewish identity. May the Esrog that I hold close to my heart cleanse the blood that courses through my veins, and infuse it with a fiery love of HaShem. Let the Hadas, my eyes, see only what is allowed, and may I see only the good in every Jew. May I judge every Jew favorably. The Arava, my lips, should speak only when necessary, and only good of another."

Thus, we have achieved a new beginning within ourselves for the new year. It is by virtue of this newfound joy and yearning to live our lives in accordance with G-d's teaching, that the healing of our body and soul can now begin, and go from strength to strength throughout the year to follow. The repentance and awe of the High Holy Days are not sufficient. It must culminate in the joy of the holidays of Sukkot, Simchat Torah, and Shmini Atzeret, which breathe new life and enthusiasm into our service of the Creator. And this will bring us to proclaim, in the words of King David: "With all my being, to its very core, I proclaim there is none other like You, oh G-d!"

We all pray for a sweet and healthy year both materially and spiritually, for true peace in Eretz Yisrael, with the speedy coming of Moshiach, the re-building of our Holy Temple and the ingathering of the Jews to our Holy Land.

Subj: OS-Special - Sukkot 5762 From: ohr@ohr.edu (Ohr Somayach) To: os-special@ohr.edu
SUKKOT - THE SEASON OF OUR SIMCHA
BY RABBI MENDEL WEINBACH

Each one of the three Chagim (Festivals) has its own special character which finds expression in our prayers. Two of them are identified with the historical event they invite us to relive: Pesach is the "Season of our Freedom" because that is the time of the year when Hashem liberated us from Egyptian bondage. Shavuot is the "Season of the Giving of the Torah" because that is the point on the calendar when we stood at Sinai and became Hashem's chosen people by being the only ones to accept this Torah sight unseen.

Sukkot, however, is the "Season of our Simcha" for a reason not related to history but rather to the commandments and services connected with this Chag. While there is certainly an obligation for a Jew to be joyous on every Chag (in the time of the Beit Hamikdash through the eating of sacrificial meat and afterwards through meat, wine and fine clothing), there is a special stress on the simcha of Sukkot.

"You shall rejoice before Hashem your G-d for seven days" commands the Torah (Vayikra 23:40) in regard to the mitzvah of taking

the four species on Sukkot in the Beit Hamikdash. Rabbi Aharon Halevi in his classic "Sefer Hachinuch" offers a penetrating insight into the connection between simcha, the four species and this particular time of the year.

This time of the year, he notes, is called the Festival of Ingathering. It is a time of great joy for Jews, for it is the time for gathering grain and fruits from their fields into their homes, a cause for great rejoicing. Hashem therefore commanded His people to celebrate a festival at that time in order to elevate them by channeling that simcha to His service.

Aside from channeling the inherent simcha of the climax of the agricultural year into a positive service of Hashem, the mitzvah of the four species, adds the Sefer Hachinuch, also acts as a brake on the excesses which inevitably accompany human celebrations. Hashem commanded us to take four species from the world of agriculture, species which bring joy to the hearts of their holders and beholders in order to remind us that our festival celebration should be Heavenly directed and disciplined.

An interesting parallel to this observation may be drawn by recalling a study of alcoholism made almost half a century ago in New York State. By analyzing the backgrounds of a large number of people admitted to hospitals in the state because of alcoholism, the researchers aimed to determine which ethnic groups had the greatest tendency to drinking too much. It did not come as much of a surprise that the Irish made up such a high percentage of the patients. What did shock them was that in a state with such a large population of Jews, their representation amongst hospitalized drunks was so tiny.

This startling discovery impelled the researchers to make a study as to why Jews don't get drunk (Purim withstanding!). A couple of theories were proposed by a sociologist they consulted. One was that if you ever saw a Jewish mother stuffing her child with food you would realize that the outlet other ethnic groups find in drinking, Jews find in eating. This theory was dismissed as an unconvincing explanation, just as was the one based on the premise that since Jews are so self-conscious about their minority status they are extra careful in avoiding the embarrassment of drinking their way into the gutter.

What they finally decided upon as the only reasonable explanation sounds like an echo of the Sefer Hachinuch's comments on simcha. From the earliest moments in his life the Jew associates spirits with the spirit. The wine at the brit of a baby boy or the kiddush celebrating the birth of a baby girl continues to serve as the way a Jew ushers in his Sabbaths and festivals and adds a special dimension to his wedding ceremony and the feasts which accompany and follow it. When one uses drinking for reaching greater heights in his service of Hashem, one does not "become high" in the vulgar sense.

Simcha is truly a wonderful thing, especially on Sukkot. In the time of the Beit Hamikdash this expressed itself as well in the music, dancing and singing which accompanied the "Simchat Beit Hashoeva" drawing of water for the libations on the altar which took place only on Sukkot. Today we can only experience an echo of that simcha. Even though the Torah commanded the taking of the four species outside the Beit Hamikdash only on the first day of Sukkot, a decree was issued by Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakkai after the destruction of the Beit Hamikdash to take them for all seven days wherever Jews find themselves. This provides us with an opportunity to recall the simcha which accompanied this mitzvah in the Beit Hamikdash, as do the music, dancing and singing in the "Simchat Beit Hashoeva" celebrations in Eretz Yisrael offer us a taste of the simcha which accompanied the real thing in the Beit Hamikdash.

Even though our simcha without a Beit Hamikdash is far from complete, we still have, in our mitzvot and our customs, an opportunity to link the simcha inherent in our festival, especially one which is the "Season of our Simcha," to our service of Hashem. The lesson we can draw from this festival is how to consecrate all of the occasions of simcha in our lives - birth, marriage and happy events - by channeling

them into opportunities for recognizing the Divine source of our prosperity. Not only do we thus learn to discipline our celebrations, but also to elevate them from ordinary "fun" into sacred "simcha."

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From: office@etzion.org.il To: yhe-holiday@vbm-torah.org
Yeshivat Har Etzion Israel Koschitzky Virtual Beit Midrash (Vbm)
Yhe-holiday: Sukkot 5762 In loving memory of Esther Okon z"l
from the Okon Family. Dedicated in memory of my sister Chana
Ben-Chaim, who passed away chof Tishrei 1985 by Nechi
Shudofsky and family. This shiur is dedicated in loving memory of
Jay (Yaakov Benzion ben Mordechai) Taller, whose yahrzeit falls on
the first day of Sukkot. Connie and Gerald Steinberg, and family.

THE EXPERIENCE OF HAKHEL

Based on a sicha by HARAV AHARON LICHTENSTEIN
Summarized by Asher Y. Altshul

Were the Temple standing, we would have observed the
septennial Hakhel assembly this Sukkot. The Torah describes
Hakhel as follows (Devarim 31:10-13):

"And Moshe commanded them, saying: At the end of every
seven years, after the sabbatical year, on the festival of Sukkot, when all
Israel comes to see the presence of the Lord your G-d in the place
that I will choose, read this Torah before all of Israel to their ears.
Assemble the entire nation: men, women, and children, and the
strangers who dwell within your gates, in order that they hear, and in
order that they learn to fear the Lord their G-d and keep the words of
this Torah. And their children, who do not know, will listen and will
learn to fear the Lord your G-d, all the days that you live upon the
land which you are crossing the Jordan to inherit."

According to this description, the mitzva of Hakhel of three aspects.

First, we have the formal commandment to assemble. Second, there
is actual reading, listening, and learning that is done at this assembly.
The third aspect is the fulfillment of Hakhel's purpose, as the Torah
writes: "In order that they hear, and in order that they learn to fear the
G-d your Lord."

II. The Gemara (Chagiga 3a) recounts Rabbi Elazar ben Azarya's
understanding of the Hakhel assembly:

"Assemble the entire nation: men, women, and children' -
men, to learn; women, to hear; and children, to give reward to those
who brought them [to the assembly]."

R. Elazar believes that the Torah designates a specific
purpose for each group's obligation to attend Hakhel. Men are obligated
to assemble in order to fulfill their mitzva of learning Torah. Women,
who are not commanded to perform that mitzva, are required to hear
the words of the Torah, and thus internalize its teachings. Lastly,
children, who are too young to do either, have no essential purpose in
being there. Rather, those who are inconvenienced by taking them to
Jerusalem are rewarded.

The Ramban (Devarim 31:12) has a very different approach.
He explains that both men and women are obligated to listen and
learn. The children referred to in the verse are not too young to
understand, as R. Eliezer taught. Rather, they are already old enough
to comprehend their surroundings, and therefore the Hakhel experience
can and should instill in them fear of G-d.

Although Rabbi Elazar seems to indicate that the "learning"
aspect of Hakhel is limited to men, if we look carefully, we see that this
is not necessarily so. The verse cited by R. Elazar states that all three
groups must be present, and each group had its own focus. However,
words "in order that they hear and in order that they learn" do not refer
to the objective of any single group. Rather, they describe the general
objective of Hakhel.

Hakhel is held once every seven years. The experience is
intended to be an extraordinary one. The entire nation assembles in
Jerusalem - men, women, and children silently await the reading of

G-d's Torah. The King of Israel, G-d's representative, sits above the
nation and in a booming voice reads the Book of Devarim. The nation
"listens and learns," as if the words were being given on Har Sinai.

Hakhel's purpose is not only to teach the content of G-d's Torah,
but to cause Bnei Yisrael to internalize the words of the Torah. The
experience of standing in awe as the king recites the words of the
Almighty, of trembling in fear as the holy words reach one's ears,
will ultimately bring the participant to fear G-d - a feeling which is
meant to last for the next seven years.

We find a similar concept within the laws of ma'aser sheini. Most
years, one is required to take one-tenth of his crop and to travel to
Jerusalem. Only in Jerusalem, the city of G-d, is one permitted to eat this
portion of his crop: only before the Temple, and only before G-d.
Eating before G-d elevates what seems to be a solely gastronomic
event into the realms of the sacred and divine. The Torah
(Devarim 14:23) explains that fulfilling this mitzva, according to its
laws, will teach one "to fear the Lord your G-d all of his days." The
experience of feasting in Jerusalem will remain with the person
throughout the year. Similarly, the events of Hakhel transform a
simple reading of the Torah into a mass renewal of our faith, an
experience meant to transform our lives for the future.

III.

We explained previously that, independent of the requirement
to learn what the Torah says, there is a need to "hear" and to "listen" to
the words of the Torah. Hearing is normally understood as the
physical, mechanical method of recording information. This concept of
physical hearing is relevant to the recital of the Shema. One must say
the Shema loud enough to hear the words he is reciting. This, however,
is not the concept of "hearing" referred to in Hakhel.

What is the nature of this "hearing?" What is its purpose? And
how is it attained?

When listing the laws of Hakhel, the Rambam (Hilchot Chagiga
3:6) explains how a ger (stranger or convert) participates:

"The gerim who are not familiar with the Torah must prepare their
hearts, and listen with their ears in order to hear, in fear, and in awe, in
joy, and in trepidation, as on the day the Torah was given at Sinai.
Even great scholars, who know the entire Torah, must listen with
great intensity."

It is quite clear that hearing is required not only in order to
learn. Even Gedolei Torah, who have read through Devarim numerous
times, must listen with the same level of intensity required of a young
lad or a convert, who are only beginning to learn. The "hearing"
required is of an internal nature. The word of G-d must be
internalized. Once one reaches this level of "hearing," it will affect
his inner emotional and spiritual dimensions. Our fear and awe of the
Almighty will thus be increased and intensified.

This aspect of Hakhel is present in our daily lives. In our
day-to-day learning, we must strive to achieve this aspect of
"hearing." How do we approach our learning? Is it just the dry
accumulation of facts and information? Is it merely the analysis of
texts, the understanding of laws and their underlying principles? Is this
the extent of our learning?

I pray not. An approach of this nature might lead to deep
conceptual understanding, but it will not lead to the fear of G-d. It will
not create the groundwork for "ve-lamdu le-yir'a" - "they will learn to
fear."

Our learning must be accompanied by two kinds of emotion:
passion and joy on the one hand, and fear, trepidation, and awe on
the other. The concepts and principles which we learn must not only
be understood, but also internalized. They must form our spiritual
personality. The Torah we learn must also remain within us, just as the
experiences of hearing the king read the Torah at Hakhel and of feasting
in Jerusalem before must be remembered in the years to come.

IV.

The years that one spends in Yeshiva are, in a way, years of Hakhel. Learning has two aspects. One aspect is the learning itself. King David requested from G-d that he die a day earlier, enabling him to receive a proper funeral. G-d answered David that one day of his learning is more beloved to Him than a thousand sacrifices Shlomo offers. Learning itself, swimming in the waves of G-d's divine ocean, reading a Rashi, explaining a Tosafot, are beloved before the Almighty.

The other aspect of learning is demonstrated by Hakhel. Learning leaves an imprint on one's soul; it forms and develops one's personality. It remains with a person day to day, year to year, and shemitta to shemitta.

This second aspect of learning is paramount for the years you spend in Yeshiva. You sit in the Beit Medrash, not as King David did on his last day, but rather as the young and impressionable did at the Hakhel. You must take full advantage of these years, for they will determine the type of household that you will build, and the type of education your children will receive.

Learning the words of Torah alone will not suffice. You must internalize what you learn. You must "hear" them, "listen" to them, as if they were being read by the king at Hakhel or by the mouth of G-d at Har Sinai. Only if your learning is accompanied by this type of "hearing" will it bring you to the ultimate goal of fearing G-d. Only then will it endure.

"How?" you ask. Is it indeed possible to hear in this way? How can we prepare ourselves to "hear" properly?

There are three things you must understand and always remember.

First, you must open yourself up emotionally. You must be sensitive to the feelings involved in Torah learning: love, fear, joy, passion, trepidation. Without first opening your heart, nothing can find its way in.

Second, you must constantly understand and visualize that you are standing in front of the Almighty. You must accept "ol malkhut Shamayim" - the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven. You must see yourselves as if you are standing in Jerusalem at the Hakhel assembly, standing in G-d's presence at Har Sinai, standing in G-d's court.

Third, you must learn with the recognition and understanding that the words you are reading are the words of G-d. These words are "devar Hashem!" They were written by G-d's own Hand, so to speak.

If you learn with these three ideas before your eyes, then you will "hear" the words of the Torah. If your learning is of this nature, these years in Yeshiva will be a "Hakhel." The effects of learning will bring you to fear G-d, and will also remain with you in the years following your time in the Yeshiva. Then you will be able to fulfill the goal as stated in the verse: "You will learn to fear the Lord your G-d all your days."

(This sicha was delivered at seuda shelishit, Shabbat Parashat Vayelekh 5755 [1995].)

Subj: InnerNet - Etrog & Beauty From: heritage@netvision.net.il (Heritage House) INNERNET MAGAZINE <http://innernet.org.il> OCTOBER 2001

"THE ETROG & JEWISH BEAUTY"

BY RABBI JOSHUA SHMIDMAN

Every civilization and every philosophical system searches for the meaning of beauty. In classical Western thought, "pursuit of the Beautiful" is deemed to be as basic as the quest for the Good and the True. Contemporary culture has been profoundly influenced by this perspective. To this day, the striving for beauty is a dominant and desirable component of an accomplished individual -- an ideal to be devoutly pursued.

At first glance, it would seem that the enshrinement of beauty as a value in and of itself is not a major Jewish priority. The oft-quoted phrase, taken in isolation, "beauty is vanity" (Proverbs 31:30), seems, on a cursory level, to cast beauty in a negative light.

It seems to me, however, that a compelling argument ought to be made for the vital and central role that beauty occupies in the Jewish worldview. In order to do

so, we must show that, for Judaism, beauty is something unique, and means something entirely different than in all other thought systems.

What, then, is distinct and singular about the Jewish concept of beauty? To answer this, one looks to the Torah to find the sources of the Jewish idea of beauty. Like all abstract theories in Judaism which ultimately find their expression in concrete mitzvot, the idea of beauty, as well, finds a tangible realization in the central mitzvot of the holiday of Sukkot. The Torah requires: "And you shall take unto yourselves on the first day [of Sukkot] a fruit of a beautiful tree (pri etz hadar)."

The Talmud (Sukkot 35a) wishes to define what constitutes a "beautiful tree" by analyzing the Hebrew word for beautiful, "hadar." The sages conclude that it is the etrog tree, because the word "hadar" is interpreted to be a fruit which "dwells continuously all year on the tree" (ha-dar, literally, "that which dwells"). Thus, they understand the word "dar" to mean the opposite of temporary or intermittent residence; rather, it implies permanence, a continuous process through time (similar to the French "duree" or the English "endure").

The etrog tree fulfills this requirement of constant dwelling, for most other fruits are seasonal, but the etrog grows, blossoms and produces fruit throughout all the seasons: in the heat and the cold, in the wind and in storm -- it stubbornly persists! It endures! And in the Jewish view, that is why it is beautiful.

Beauty, then, in classical Jewish sources, means the indomitable power of life, the determination to live on despite all difficulties, the affirmation of the victory of life over death, the drive for eternity.

ETERNAL BEAUTY

In this light, we can understand another striking mitzvah in the Torah. Concerning the obligation to honor the elderly, the Torah states: "veHADAR'ta p'nei zakein," which is usually translated "and honor the face of the old person." The word hadar, however, literally means "beauty", so what the verse is actually telling us is to ascribe beauty to the old face.

What is beautiful about an old face? This very idea contradicts the basic attitude of Western civilization which, since the time of the ancient Greeks, has always associated beauty with youth. In the contemporary Western world, the entire cosmetic industry is predicated on making people appear young, if they wish to look beautiful. The attempt is precisely to make the old face seem younger. Yet the Torah ascribes beauty to the old face, precisely because it expresses the ongoing triumph of a life which endured and persisted throughout the arduous passage of time.

How much determination, courage and will to live do we see in an old face! In this regard, the Talmud (Kiddushin 33a) tells us: Rabbi Yochanan used to stand up even before aged Aramean heathens saying, "How many troubles have passed over these." The Torah, thus, requires us to see in aging persons, not that they are fading away into oblivion, but to recognize in them the unremitting surge to live, and of the yearning of the immortal soul deep within each individual for eternity.

Therefore, Beauty in the Jewish worldview is not a value to be understood in isolation. It is not an attempt, as in other aesthetic systems, to merely "capture the moment," with its concomitant glorification of youth and the attempt to preserve it for all time. In Judaism, beauty inheres in the basic Jewish historical sensibility: the palpable experience of apprehending the eternal in the flow of passing time.

BEAUTIFUL OLIVES

In a similar vein, the Menorah, which is central in the service of the Holy Temple, and which has become a symbol of the Jewish people itself, is described in the Torah as "ner tamid," an eternal light. The source in the Torah reads: "And you (Moses) shall command the children of Israel that they bring unto you pure olive oil beaten for lighting to make a light shine out continuously." (Exodus 27:20)

The Sages of the Midrash point out that the olive -- the beaten olive -- whose oil burns continuously, is the true symbol of Israel. The Midrash quotes the verse in Jeremiah (11:16): "The Lord called thy name (Israel) a leafy olive tree, beautiful with goodly fruit," and the Midrash asks, why is it the olive tree with which Israel is identified?

The answer given is that Israel is uniquely similar in many of its essential characteristics to the fruit of the olive tree. The olive is beaten, pressed, ground down, and then it produces its oil which gives rise to glowing light. So, too, the people of Israel: Despite all the oppression, cruelty and exile visited upon them, they are not destroyed. Rather, they continue to shine on magnificently, ever brighter.

It is significant that in the passage quoted, Jeremiah declares not only the dauntless character of Israel's persistence in the face of every hardship, but defines this quality as being the very source of Israel's beauty -- "leafy olive tree, beautiful with goodly fruit..."

PERSISTENCE & COMPLETION

When we complete the study of a tractate of the Talmud, we recite "HADRAN alach -- we shall return to you." We proclaim that our studies and the knowledge

gained will not simply slip into the past, but that we shall continuously go back, revive, rejuvenate and find new meanings in our past learning. The very word hadran, from the root hadar, thus has basically the same meaning as the word hadar, as we now understand it. To continually persist and to be beautiful are identical!

The holiday of Sukkot dramatizes the paradoxical idea that while on the one hand, we are to recognize the temporary and transient nature of human existence on earth by residing in temporary sukkah booths, at the same time, we are to affirm the immortality of life and the eternity of Israel by taking hold of the ever-enduring etrog. The dialectic tension in these contradictory elements establishes the framework of our comprehension and experience of the beautiful. Discovering, affirming and struggling in the face of implacable difficulties, in the face of mutability and death itself, for the realization of the eternal, creates the Jewish sense of beauty...

The ultimate beauty of Israel itself lies in the triumph of its eternity.

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From: Jeffrey Gross jgross@torah.org neustadt@torah.org Subject: Weekly Halacha - Succos WEEKLY-HALACHA FOR 5762 SELECTED HALACHOS RELATING TO SUCCOS

BY RABBI DONIEL NEUSTADT Rav of Young Israel of Cleveland Heights
A discussion of Halachic topics. For final rulings, consult your Rav.
PERSONAL GROOMING ON CHOL HA-MOED

While it is generally forbidden(1) to perform nearly all of the thirty-nine prohibited Shabbos and Yom Tov Labors on Chol ha-Moed,(2) the Sages did allow almost all Labors which are needed to satisfy a person's physical needs (tzorech ha-guf) or festival needs (tzorech ha-Moed (3)) such as cooking, driving a car,(4) repairing eyeglasses,(5) washing a dirty floor(6) and vacuuming a rug.(7)

A notable exception to this general rule are two Labors related to one's personal grooming: doing laundry and shaving/ haircutting. These were specifically prohibited by a Rabbinical edict even though they clearly fall under the category of personal or festival needs and ought to be permitted. The Talmud(8) explains that these restrictions were enacted in order to force people to be properly groomed in honor of Yom Tov. Were it permitted to do laundry or to get a haircut on Chol ha-Moed, many people would wait for the less hectic days of Chol ha-Moed to attend to these matters, and enter the Yom Tov without being as well dressed and groomed as they ought to be. In order to prevent this from happening, the Rabbis prohibited both doing laundry and getting a haircut on Chol ha-Moed.(9)

Rabbinical edict notwithstanding, already in Talmudic times the Sages allowed for certain exceptions in cases of duress. The Mishnah permits one who arrives from overseas or is released from captivity right before Yom Tov to wash his clothing and cut his hair on Chol ha-Moed. A special allowance was also made for certain hardship cases, such as washing small children's clothes. But the exceptions to the rule are few and specific; indeed, even a good "excuse" for not attending to these matters before Yom Tov, such as a last-minute emergency, is not considered sufficient grounds for an exception.(10) So it behooves us to clearly identify the few legitimate exceptions, and not automatically assume that our case is one of them.

Cutting hair on Chol ha-Moed is PROHIBITED...

1. For both men and women.(11) 2. By a Jewish or non-Jewish barber.(12) 3. Whether one got a haircut right before the festival began (and now wishes to trim it further) or not.(13) 4. Whether one normally shaves every day or not.(14) 5. Even if one fell ill, was detained at his place of work or had any other unforeseen emergency on erev Yom Tov.(15)

Cutting hair on Chol ha-Moed is PERMITTED...

1. For children under bar/bas mitzvah, if the long hair causes them distress or discomfort.(16) 2. For an upsheren of a three-year old.(17) 3. On any part of the body except the head and beard. Thus it is permitted to trim a mustache(18) and tweeze eyebrows.(19) 4. For medical reasons.(20)

Doing laundry on Chol ha-Moed is PROHIBITED...

1. Whether done by hand, machine(21) or dry-cleaning. 2. Whether done by Jew or non-Jew. 3. Even if one did not have a chance to do his laundry because of illness or any other unforeseen emergency. 4. Even if one did laundry on erev Yom Tov and does not have enough clothes (e.g., shirts, pants, suits and other garments) for the remainder of the festival. The following rules apply: Enough clothing to last for the entire festival should be prepared in advance.

If enough garments were cleaned but proved to be insufficient, one should purchase additional clothes on Chol ha-Moed if it does not entail undue expense.(22)

If one ran out of clean clothes and cannot, for any reason, purchase others, and he is embarrassed to be seen in public wearing dirty clothes, he should consult a rabbi.(23)

Doing laundry on Chol ha-Moed is PERMITTED... 1. For all clothing that may be required(24) by infants, babies or small children(25) who constantly get their clothes dirty.(26) There is no requirement to buy additional clothing for a child in order to avoid washing his clothes. When traveling, one is not required to pack all of the children's clothes in order to avoid doing laundry, if doing so will be very bothersome.(27) 2. Some contemporary poskim suggest that undergarments, socks, and other items which are changed daily may be washed once the supply that was prepared on erev Yom Tov has run out. In their opinion, these clothes are similar to children's clothing, since these, too, need to be changed frequently.(28) Many other poskim reject this comparison and prohibit washing such items.(29) 3. When only spot-cleaning.(30) 4. For health reasons, e.g., lice removal, disinfecting, or to clean a rug that got soiled in the bathroom, etc. 5. If otherwise the garment will get ruined.(31)

Additional notes:

1. Creased clothes which are needed for the festival may be ironed.(32) Professional pressing, however, is prohibited.(33) 2. Brushing clothes is permitted. Most poskim allow shoes to be polished, while others are stringent. Shining shoes without polish is permitted. All feminine grooming is permitted. Thus it is permitted for a woman to apply all types of cosmetics and professionally set and perm [but not cut] her hair.(34) One should not cut or file(35) his nails unless he previously cut them on erev Yom Tov [and would now like to cut them again].(36) According to most opinions, it is forbidden for a woman to have her wig professionally set and styled.(37)

FOOTNOTES: 1 The Rishonim debate whether the prohibition is Biblical or Rabbinical; see Beir Halachah 530:1. 2 "Carrying" and "making a fire" are two Labors which are completely permitted on Chol ha-Moed, since even on Yom Tov they are permitted whenever the need arises. Muktzeh, too, does not apply on Chol ha-Moed. 3 As a general rule, needs which are tzorech ha-Moed but not tzorech ha-guf may be done only as a ma'aseh hedyot, in a non-professional manner, not as a ma'aseh uman, in a skilled, professional manner. 4 Harav M. Feinstein (Zichron Shelomo, pg. 33). 5 Igros Moshe O.C. 3:78. 6 Minchas Yom Tov 104:2. Polishing and waxing a floor, however, are prohibited. 7 Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchusah 66:47. 8 Moed Katan 14a. 9 See Hagahos Chasam Sofer to O.C. 531, who explains why the Rabbis were not concerned about being properly groomed before the onset of the last days of Yom Tov. 10 The Sages feared that were they to lift the prohibition for any valid excuse or emergency, people would falsely assume that laundry and haircutting were permitted without restriction on Chol ha-Moed. 11 Mishnah Berurah 546:16. 12 Beir Halachah 531:1. 13 O.C. 531:2. 14 Teshuvos Chasam Sofer O.C. 154, followed by most of the later authorities; see Sdei Chemed (Chol ha-Moed 1). Igros Moshe O.C. 1:163, however, relies on the Noda b'Yehudah's lenient ruling for someone who shaves daily and has a "great need" to do so on Chol ha-Moed [or will suffer "much distress" if he does not shave]. A rabbi must be consulted. 15 O.C. 531:3. 16 Mishnah Berurah 531:15. If possible, it should be done discreetly. 17 See Be'er Heitev O.C. 531:8 and Sha'arei Teshuvah 2. 18 O.C. 531:8. 19 See Sha'ar ha-Tziyun 531:15. 20 Beir Halachah 531:8. 21 It is also prohibited to add an adult's laundry to a wash load of children's laundry; Harav M. Feinstein (Zichron Shelomo, pg. 34). 22 Harav S.Z. Auerbach (Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchusah 66, note 240, and Tikunim u'Miluim). 23 In such a situation, a case for allowing one to do laundry could be made on grounds of kavod ha-beriyos and davar ha-aveid. In addition, clothing made out of linen (Mishnah Berurah 534:9) or synthetic fibers (Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchusah 66:66) may be washed when there are no other clean clothes available.

24 L'chatchilah, all of the baby's available clothing should be cleaned and available before Yom Tov arrives. 25 Generally, children until the age of seven are not responsible enough to keep their clothes clean. Obviously, though, this will depend on each child. 26 Rama O.C. 534:1. [Even though the Rama allows small children's clothing to be washed only one by one, contemporary poskim agree that this does not apply when doing laundry in a washing machine.] 27 Harav M. Feinstein (Zichron Shelomo, pg. 34). 28 Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchusah 66:66; Sheraga ha-Meir 7:43 (quoted in Piskei Teshuvos 534:3). 29 Debreciner Rav (Zichron Shelomo, pg. 49); Harav Y.S. Elyashiv (quoted in Mevakshei Torah, Chol ha-Moed, pg. 754); Harav Y.Y. Fisher (quoted in Pischei Moed, pg. 206); The same debate applies to changing linen when a house guest comes unexpectedly. 30 Harav M. Feinstein (Zichron Shelomo, pg. 34); Harav Y.S. Elyashiv (Pischei Moed, pg. 199). 31 Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchusah 66:72. This leniency only applies when spot-cleaning will not be sufficient. 32 Mishnah Berurah 541:9. 33 Harav M. Feinstein (Zichron Shelomo, pg. 34). 34 O.C. 546:5 and Mishnah

Berurah 16. 35 Biting nails, however, is permitted. 36 Mishnah Berurah 532:2. See Aruch ha-Shulchan 532:2, who allows cutting nails on Chol ha-Moed even if they were cut a few days before erev Yom Tov. 37 Harav M. Feinstein (Zichron Shelomo, pg. 14); Harav Y.S. Elyashiv (quoted in Mevakshei Torah, Chol ha-Moed, pg. 755). Weekly-Halacha, Copyright 1 2001 by Rabbi Neustadt, Dr. Jeffrey Gross and Torah.org. The author, Rabbi Neustadt, is the principal of Yavne Teachers' College in Cleveland, Ohio. He is also the Magid Shiur of a daily Mishna Berurah class at Congregation Shomre Shabbos. The Weekly-Halacha Series is distributed L'zchus Doniel Meir ben Hinda. Weekly sponsorships are available - please mail to jgross@torah.org. This list is part of Torah.org: The Judaism Site (Project Genesis) Torah.org depends upon your support. Please visit <http://torah.org/support/> 17 Warren Road, Suite 2B Baltimore, MD 21208

From: RABBI MORDECHAI KORNFELD Kollel Iyun Hadaf
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Bava Kama 55

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE FIRST SET OF "LUCHOS" AND THE SECOND QUESTION: Rabbi Chanina ben Agil asked Rabbi Chiya bar Aba why, in the first set of Luchos, there is no mention of "Tov," while in the second set of Luchos, "Tov" is mentioned (in the commandment to honor one's parents, "I'Ma'an Yitav Lach"). Rabbi Chiya bar Aba responded that instead of asking why it mentions "Tov," one should ask whether it says "Tov" altogether, and he sent Rabbi Chanina ben Agil to Rabbi Tanchum bar Chanilai.

Rabbi Chanina ben Agil said that he heard from Shmuel bar Nachum that the reason why it does not say "Tov" in the first Luchos is because they were destined to be broken, and Hashem did not want the "Tov," the good in store for the Jewish people, to be "broken" with the Luchos.

This Gemara seems perplexing. How could the Amora, Rabbi Chiya bar Aba, say that he did not know whether or not the Torah says "Tov" in the second set of Luchos? An Amora certainly knows the verses in the Torah, and even if, for some reason, he does not know the verse, he could simply look it up! What does the Gemara mean? (See TOSFOS in Bava Basra 113a, DH Tarvaih.)

Furthermore, the Gemara answers that it does not say "Tov" in the first Luchos since those Luchos would eventually be broken, and if "Tov" would be written in them, then the Jewish people would, Chas v'Shalom, lose that Tov. This implies that the verses in Parshas Yisro and in Parshas Va'eschanan are discussing two separate sets of Luchos. The verses in Parshas Yisro are describing what was written on the set of Luchos that Moshe Rabeinu received on Shavuot, which were broken on the seventeenth of Tamuz, when Moshe Rabeinu descended the mountain only to find the people worshipping the Egel ha'Zahav. The verses in Parshas Va'eschanan are describing what was written in the second set of Luchos, which Moshe Rabeinu brought down to the Jewish people on the following Yom Kippur. The same conclusion may be drawn from the Pesikta Rabasi (beginning of Parshah 23), which implies that the description in Parshas Yisro is that of the first Luchos, while the description in Parshas Va'eschanan is that of the second Luchos. The Pesikta Rabasi addresses the fact that in the first account of the Aseres ha'Dibros it says, "*Remember* (Zachor) the Sabbath day," while in the second account it says, "*Keep* (Shamor) the Sabbath day." The Pesikta explains that the word "keep" was used to teach that the Jewish people were being instructed that only through "keep" the Shabbos would they succeed in "keeping" the second Luchos from being lost as the first ones were. Here, too, the implication is that the account of the Aseres ha'Dibros in Va'eschanan records the text of the *second* Luchos, while the account in Yisro describes the text of the *first* Luchos.

However, it seems clear from the verses themselves that both are describing the same set of Luchos -- those that Moshe Rabeinu received on Shavuot. The Aseres ha'Dibros of Va'eschanan are introduced with the words, "Hashem spoke to you face to face on the mountain, from the midst of the fire. I stood between Hashem and you... to tell you the word of Hashem" (Devarim 5:4-5). This clearly seems to be a description of the oral delivery of the *first* Luchos, amidst the spectacle of thunder and lightning and loud blast of the Shofar, in the presence of the entire congregation of Israel (as described in Shemos 20:14-17). We do not find such details accompanying the delivery of the second Luchos, which Moshe himself brought down for the Jewish people upon his return from Har Sinai (as described in Shemos 34:28-29 and Devarim 10:4-5).

Regarding the differences between the two accounts, the common approach among the Rishonim is that when Moshe reviewed the Aseres ha'Dibros for the people, he added several explanatory comments of his own to the original wording. The Va'eschanan version is Moshe's rewording of the Aseres ha'Dibros (IBN EZRA to Shemos 20:1, RAMBAN to Shemos 20:8, and others). This seems to be the approach of the Gemara in Shevu'os (20b) as well.

How, then, are we to understand our Gemara, and the statement of the Pesikta Rabasi, which imply that the Aseres ha'Dibros quoted in Va'eschanan is a description of the giving of the *second* Luchos?

ANSWERS: (a) The VILNA GA'ON (in Chidushei Agados) explains that Rabbi Chanina ben Agil understood that "I'Ma'an Yitav Lach" refers to reward in this world, since the phrase "I'Ma'an Ya'arichun Yamecha" in the same verse (Devarim 5:16) already includes reward in the World to Come. Rabbi Chanina was wondering why the first version of the Aseres ha'Dibros did not include this promise of reward in this world.

Rabbi Chiya bar Aba replied that he is not sure whether "I'Ma'an Yitav Lach" is indeed referring to reward in this world. Perhaps these words, too, are referring to reward in the World to Come, like Rabbi Yakov says in Kidushin (39b). He therefore sent Rabbi Chanina to Rabbi Tanchum in order to clarify this point. Rabbi Tanchum agreed that the verse indeed promises reward in this world, but it was not written in the Luchos in order for it not to be shattered along with the Luchos, symbolizing the loss of all good in this world.

In the second version of the Aseres ha'Dibros this promise of reward does appear, in order to show that Hashem intended to reward the performance of the Mitzvah of Kibud Av va'Em with a promise of good in this world as well, even though it was not written explicitly in the Luchos because of the reason that Rabbi Tanchum gave.

(b) The PNEI YEHOSHUA explains that the fact that the words "I'Ma'an Yitav Lach" were not written in Parshas Yisro, but were included in Parshas Va'eschanan, teaches us one of two things: it either teaches us that although they were not written on the Luchos, Hashem did say those words, or it teaches that they were not written on the Luchos and Hashem did not say them either, but Moshe Rabeinu added those words in explanation of the Aseres ha'Dibros (as the Ibn Ezra explains). Rabbi Chiya bar Aba was saying that he did not know which of these two options is correct -- did Hashem actually say "I'Ma'an Yitav" or was it an explanation added by Moshe Rabeinu? Rabbi Chiya bar Aba, therefore, could not answer the question of Rabbi Chanina, because the answer would differ depending on whether Hashem spoke these words of "I'Ma'an Yitav Lach," and Rabbi Chiya bar Aba was uncertain about this. He therefore sent Rabbi Chanina to Rabbi Tanchum, who answered that the words "I'Ma'an Yitav Lach" were not written on the Luchos, in order to prevent their loss with the breaking of the Luchos (and that is why they do not appear in Parshas Yisro). However, the words *were* spoken by Hashem even though they were not written on the Luchos.

(A similar answer can be found in HAMIKRA V'HAMESORAH of RAV REUVEN MARGOLIOS, and in EMES LYAKOV, Parshas Va'eschanan 5:12, of RAV YAKOV KAMINETSKY, who calls the words that Hashem spoke but did not write in the Luchos, "Kri v'Lo Kesiv.")

According to the Pnei Yehoshua, our Gemara does not mean that the second version of the Aseres ha'Dibros is referring to the second set of Luchos, but rather both are referring to the first set that Moshe Rabeinu brought down on Shavuot.

(c) We can expand upon the approach of the Pnei Yehoshua and suggest that even according to Rabbi Tanchum, Hashem did not say the words "I'Ma'an Yitav Lach." Rabbi Tanchum is explaining both why Hashem did not promise "I'Ma'an Yitav Lach" verbally or include it in the Luchos in written form, when the Luchos were given.

It remains to be explained in what manner the Jewish people would have lost "all good" had "I'Ma'an Yitav Lach" been shattered together with the Luchos. Perhaps according to what we have explained, we may understand this Agadah as follows.

Why did Moshe feel the need to add explanatory remarks in the second account of the Aseres ha'Dibros? If the people understood the Aseres ha'Dibros the first time, why should they now require further explanation, forty years later? Moreover, what explanation is actually added by the numerous changes that Moshe made?

The Torah tells us that, upon witnessing the Jewish people's awe-filled reaction to His revelation, Hashem said to Moshe, "Who would make it possible that the Jewish people would fear Me like this and keep all of My commandments all the days? Then they and their children would have good forever!" (Devarim 5:26). The Gemara in Avodah Zarah (5a) tells us that at that moment, the Jewish people should have immediately responded to Hashem's remark by exclaiming, "*You* make it possible for us!" Hashem had given them a cue to declare their desire for Him to draw them closer, but they did not understand the hint.

Why did Moshe see fit to mention this comment of Hashem's at this point, seeing that it is not recorded in Shemos in the context of the original story of the

revelation on Har Sinai? The Gemara explains that it was only at this time, forty years after the revelation, that Moshe realized that Hashem gave this opportunity to the Jewish people. As the Gemara puts it, "A student does not fully understand the intent of his master's words until forty years after he has heard them."

Perhaps such an explanation may answer our questions as well.

Let us begin with a Mashal. Once there was a father who was sending his son off to school in a distant city. They had a relative in that city who was involved in all sorts of illegal schemes. The father suspected that the relative would try to lure his son away from earning an honest livelihood by enticing him with seductive, illegal offers. Naturally, the father wanted his son to avoid this relative at all costs. However, he knew that it would be counterproductive for him to give explicit instructions to his son to refrain from meeting this man, as this would only arouse the boy's curiosity concerning the relative. The young man, suspecting some secret family feud, might even acquaint himself with the villain rather than shun him. Furthermore, the son might feel insulted that his father showed such lack of confidence in his own judgment, making him unreceptive to the father's sound advice. Instead, the father offered his son several general, indirect suggestions: Do not keep company with a person whose integrity is in doubt; do not be eager to accept monetary offers from strangers; do not become taken in with seemingly easy schemes for making large amounts of money, etc. Hopefully, through this kind of indirect counsel, the son would realize when the time of temptation would arrive that he should keep his distance from the offensive relative.

This parable applies to the circumstances of the Jewish people at the time of the giving of the Torah. Hashem knew that His children would soon be facing challenging situations, and that their loyalty to Him would be put to the test. In fact, only forty days after the Torah was given, the incident of the Egel haZahav took place right at the foot of Har Sinai. It was this incident that caused the loss of the first Luchos, and that was destined to cause the Jews so much future suffering and misfortune (see Rashi to Shemos 35:34; Parashah Page, Balak and Tishah b'Av 5755). As the Mishnah says, "Everything is foreseen [by Hashem]" (Avos 3:15) -- the past present and future are one to the Creator.

Perhaps we may suggest that Hashem wanted to at least give His people veiled warnings of the trial that awaited them. This way, when the pitfall of the Egel haZahav would present itself, perhaps the Jews would reconsider before sinning, realizing that Hashem had cautioned them to beware of falling into just such a trap. The Giver of the Law therefore implanted several tacit hints into the wording and nuances of the Aseres ha'Dibros. However, the intent of these hidden messages was lost on the people. Even Moshe himself did not grasp these subtle allusions until forty years later -- in hindsight, after the people's sin at Sinai was already history.

It took Moshe forty years to understand that the people had forever lost their opportunity to declare "You make it possible for us not to ever sin!" At the same time, Moshe realized that Hashem had been trying to give them the advice they would need to avoid sinning. Now, while he was delivering his farewell address of admonishment and warning to the Jewish people, he pointed out to them the several gentle warnings that Hashem Himself had provided in the Aseres ha'Dibros.

Let us examine some of the differences in the wording of the two versions of the Aseres ha'Dibros and see how they can be explained according to this theory.

A reference to the Egel haZahav can be found in the fourth commandment. In the Shemos version, the fourth commandment enjoins us to refrain from all Melachah on Shabbos -- "you, your servant, your maidservant and your animals." In Devarim this is rephrased as "you, your servant, your maidservant, your ox, your donkey, and all your animals" (Devarim 5:14). Why are several examples of particular animals added?

The reason that Hashem told the people to extend the Shabbos rest to their animals, Moshe now realized, was because there might have been an inclination among the people to accord a revered status -- or perhaps some element of divinity -- to some animals, thus exempting them from participating in Hashem's ordained day of rest. For this reason Hashem stressed that animals, too, must rest. In order to bring out this point, Moshe now rephrased this sentence to explicitly equate the ox with all other animals, as far as the day of rest was concerned. As Moshe explained, Hashem was hinting to us that we should not bestow any form of veneration on any animal, particularly the ox which he knew would shortly become a snare for the people.

The phrase "as Hashem had commanded you" is found twice in the second version of Aseres ha'Dibros -- in the fourth and fifth commandments, concerning the Shabbos (verse 12) and honoring one's parents (verse 16) -- and not at all in the first version. Since Moshe was paraphrasing the words of Hashem that were said at the time of the giving of the Torah, the words, "as Hashem had commanded you," must mean that Hashem had commanded these two laws some time prior to the revelation at Har Sinai. As the Torah relates (Shemos 16:25), the Jewish people were indeed given a series of laws at Marah several weeks before they arrived at Sinai, and the Sages tell us that the Shabbos and honoring one's parents were

among these laws (Rashi, ad loc.). But why did Moshe see fit to remind the people of the episode at Marah?

Moshe realized now that the reason Hashem chose to prelude the giving of the Torah with these two Mitzvos, out of all the hundreds of choices, was because He wanted the people to become accustomed to them even before they arrived at Har Sinai. These two precepts would, more than any others, enable them to better withstand the test that would face them there. How is this?

The Mitzvah of keeping Shabbos, we are told, is considered as important as the keeping of all the other Mitzvos combined. The same is said for the Mitzvah of refraining from idolatry (Eruvin 69b). The reason for this important emphasis on the Mitzvah of Shabbos is that the observance of Shabbos constitutes a declaration that one believes in Hashem as the Creator of the universe.

Similarly, the Gemara (Yevamos 5a) tells us that honoring one's parents is tantamount to honoring Hashem Himself. (Recognizing one's indebtedness to his parents for having brought him into the world will bring a person to a recognition of Hashem.) In fact, the Gemara (Berachos 35b) tells us that "father" and "mother" may sometimes be taken to mean "Hashem" and "the Congregation of Israel," respectively. Thus the commandment to honor one's father, if expanded to its broadest scope, will bring one to show honor to Hashem as well.

These two Mitzvos -- Shabbos and honoring one's parents -- had it in their power to strengthen the Jews' trust in Hashem. According to Rashbam, this is why these are the only two positive Mitzvos that were included in the Aseres ha'Dibros. The only positive Mitzvos included were those that involved accepting upon ourselves the yoke of the service of Hashem. That must have been the purpose of the Mitzvos of observing the Shabbos and honoring one's parents also (Rashbam, Shemos 20:7).

Moshe now realized that these two Mitzvos were given to the people before their time, so to speak, because of the important lesson they were supposed to impart concerning the honor we must give to Hashem. In fact, our Sages tell us that were the Jews to have kept their first Shabbos properly, they would never have been exiled from their land (that is, they would not have sinned with the Egel haZahav, causing their eventual exile). The Gemara adds that even the worst idol-worshippers are absolved if keep the Shabbos day (Shabbos 118b). Moshe now understood that the early start the Jews were given in these two Mitzvos was for the same reason that specifically these two positive commandments were chosen to be included in the Aseres ha'Dibros. This is why he mentioned the fact that the people had been forewarned of these Mitzvos in the second version of the Aseres ha'Dibros.

Now we can understand our Gemara. The Gemara says that the reason the words "I'Ma'an Yitav Lach" (in the fifth commandment, honoring one's parents) did not appear on the first Luchos was so that this promise for goodness to be bestowed by Hashem would not be broken along with the Luchos. The lessons of "I'Ma'an Yitav Lach" -- "so that it will be good for you" (that is, this Mitzvah will help you merit the eternal good of Olam haBa -- and not just Olam haZeh -- since this Mitzvah will help you avoid the terrible sin that was threatening them) were implicit in the text of the Aseres ha'Dibros, as Moshe himself pointed out in the Va'eschanan version of the Aseres ha'Dibros. They were not stated explicitly in the Luchos, for if they had been -- and the people would have sinned in spite of the explicit warning -- they would never again have any "goodness." Their sin would then have been so grave that they would have lost any chance of ever attaining the ultimate good.

The Pesikta quoted earlier says that the word used for Shabbos observance in Va'eschanan is "Keep* (or be careful of) the Shabbos day," to imply that the Jewish people should keep* these Luchos and not lose them as they did the first ones. Perhaps this may be explained in a similar fashion. It is not that the second Luchos actually said the words "Keep* the Shabbos day." Rather, Moshe -- when he recounted what was written on the first Luchos, pointed out to the people why the commandment of observing the Shabbos day was included in the Luchos. "Keeping" (i.e. observing) the Shabbos was the key to "keeping" the Torah permanently. Moshe used the word "keep" when he retold the events of the first Luchos in order to emphasize this message to the Jewish people. Observe the Shabbos properly, he said, and you will never again come into a situation where the Torah will become lost to you!

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