



PARASHAT HAAZINU ∞ CHAG HA'SUKKOT

PARASHAT HAAZINU

דברי תורה כגשם

כתוב בפסוק (לב:ב) "יערף כמטר לקחי". דברי התורה הקדושים כגשם, מה הגשם בשעה שהוא יורד עדיין אין רואים את השפעתו על הצמחים, ורק לאחר זמן רואים את תוצאות הגשם, כך גם דברי תורה, אף כי בשעה ששומעים אותם אין מבחינים מיד בהשפעתם, בכל זאת סופם לעשות את פעולתם. (מעינה של תורה)

Revealed and Hidden Manifestations of G-d

The Pasuk in this week's Parashah states (32:39): "See now that I myself (Ani, Ani) am the One (hu), there is no other god with me; I will kill and I will resurrect. I will hit and I will also heal, there is no one to save from My Hand." The commentaries are bothered by the two "Ani"s. Why doesn't the Pasuk simply say the word Ani once? Rav Gedaliah Schorr zt"l explains that the Kaballistic works discuss two ways in which G-d deals with the world — the Revealed Way (Gilui) and the Hidden Way (Hester). The Revealed Way is referred to in this literature as "Ani" — we can see clearly that it is "I – G-d" who is dealing with us. But the Hidden Way is referred to as "Hu" — the third person, which could be mistakenly understood as if it were not G-d acting, but another force, as it were, — "Him" not "I". Using these terms, Rav Schorr offers a beautiful interpretation of the Pasuk: The meaning of "Ani, Ani, Hu" is that the attribute that deals with you as "Ani" is in fact identical to the attribute that deals with you as "Hu". When G-d deals with us in a mysterious way, such that we cannot understand His ways, we must nevertheless believe that it is the same force; the same Ribbono Shel Olam [Master of the World] as the one whose presence is clearly evident to us. (Rabbi Frand)

CHAG HA'SUKKOT

חג הסוכות

ראש השנה שהוא יום של תחנונים ושבירת הלב, נקבע רק ליום אחד [מן התורה]. אותו הדבר יום הכיפורים שהוא יום של תענית וסליחה ומחילה אינו אלא יום אחד. אבל סוכות שהוא "זמן שמחתינו" אמרה תורה לחוג שבעת ימים. הסיבה היא כי רצון ה' שימשיכו ישראל בשמחה, כמו שכתובה בתהילים (פרק ק) "עבדו את ה' בשמחה". (ר' שמשון רפאל הירש זצ"ל)

Sukkot – Completing The Mission

The Maharal offers a beautiful insight to explain the ways in which the Shalosh Regalim - Three Festivals of Pesach, Shavuot and Sukkot, relate with each other, and in doing so he sheds light on what makes Sukkot so unique. He explains with a parable: Imagine that a king wanted to appoint a messenger to go on an important mission on his behalf. There would be three stages that the messenger would have to accomplish before he could complete his mission. First he would have to be formally appointed as the king's messenger. He would have to be given his instructions and officially authorized to act in the name of the king. Having been empowered, he would set off on his assignment. He would be sure to be completely faithful to his ruler, making sure he would take care of everything he would have to do. But even after he had completed his mission there would still be one more task for him to do before he would be dismissed of his duty. To put the king's mind at ease he would have to travel back to the palace to personally report on his achievements and to proclaim his mission a success. Only having done that could he congratulate himself on a job well done. This, the Maharal says is exactly what we are striving to accomplish through the Shalosh regalim. Pesach when we were taken out of Egypt is when HaShem transformed us from slaves into a nation. It is when he equipped us with the ability to fulfill the mission he would set out for us. Shavuot, when we received the Torah is when we began to fulfill our mission of keeping the mitzvot, learning, and living the Torah which is what HaShem has in mind for us in the first place. Then we come to Sukkot. Even after we have left Mitzrayim and we have achieved what we were meant to achieve, our job is still not done. We still have to come back to the palace and declare to the king that through everything, the ups and downs and the challenges of life we have stayed faithful to the task. It is on Sukkot that we finally make our triumphant return and we can proudly declare that we have done our job. In the words of the Maharal "asinu shlichutecha - we have done everything you have asked of us.

Why Celebrate Sukkot in Tishrei?

The Tur asks that since Sukkot remembers the booths used by the Jews upon leaving Mitzrayim in the month of Nissan, why do we not celebrate Sukkos in Nissan – why wait until Tishrei? He answers that in Nissan this Mitzvah would not be recognizable since it is hot and many people go into huts anyways to protect themselves from the heat. Therefore it was postponed until the end of the autumn, at the beginning of the rainy season. The Vilna Gaon offers another explanation. The Sukkot remind us of the Ananei Kovod, Clouds of Glory, that accompanied the Jews when leaving Mitzrayim and living in the desert. However, with the Cheit Ha'Egel – the sin of the golden calf, they disappeared and did not return until the start of the building of the Mishkan. Moshe descended on Yom Kippur, the 10th of Tishrei and on the next day commanded them about the Mishkan. The people then brought donations for two days, making it the 13th. On the 14th the specialists took the materials and on the 15th of Tishrei started building the Mishkan and then the Ananei Kovod, representing the Sukkah, returned. This is why we celebrate Sukkot on the 15th of Tishrei.

The Sukkah – A Temporary Dwelling

The Sukkah is a dirat arai (temporary dwelling). It is an opportunity once a year to go out of our own comfortable homes into a temporary hut in order to remind ourselves that we are only visitors on this world and Hashem is the Landlord, and everything we have is only because He saw fit that it should be that way.

The Sukkah - A Hug From Hashem

On Sukkot we sit in a Sukkah in order to commemorate the Clouds of Glory that protected our ancestors in the Desert, starting from when they left Mitzrayim. By his protecting us, Hashem showed Am Yisroel the tremendous love he has for us, therefore our sitting in the Sukkah demonstrates to Hashem our understanding that Hashem loves us. In fact the Arizal writes that this concept is hinted to in the actual physical makeup of the Sukkah. According to Halachah a Sukkah only needs three walls, one in the middle and another wall on each side, in the form of a hug, a hug of love and re-assurance that Hashem loves us.

Unity

The Talmud in *Sukkah* 27b makes an interesting statement regarding the Chag of Succot: "For seven days ... all who belong to the people of Israel will live in *sukkot* (Vayikrah 23:42). This teaches that it is fitting for all of Am Yisroel to sit in one *sukkah*." Obviously, no *sukkah* is large enough to hold the entire Jewish people. What is the meaning of this statement? As long as we are plagued by pettiness and other character flaws, we cannot attain true unity. But after experiencing the days of Rosh Hashanah, Aseret Yemei Teshuvah, and Yom Kippur, we have all been purified, and our unity grows stronger.

The Four species

The Sefer Hachinuch explains that the four species represent four important organs in the human body. The etrog is compared to the heart, the lulav is likened to the spine, the hadassim are shaped like the eye, and the aravot look like lips. These remind us to use all the parts of our body for the service of Hashem.

Simchat Torah

Somebody once asked the Dubno Maggid a very logical question. Why do we have two holidays for the Torah – Shavuot and Simchat Torah? The Dubno Maggid answered, on Shavuot the Jews said "Na'aseh V'nishmah" readily accepting the Torah sight unseen. But they did not know what to expect. However, after following the Torah for a while seeing how wonderful and fulfilling it was, they wanted to celebrate fully, and that is what Simchat Torah is all about.