



PNIMIYUS OF THE SUCCAH

On Succos in the *Simchas Beis HaShoeivah* they sang, אשׁרי מִי שְׁלֵא חָטָא "Praiseworthy is the one who did not sin..." Yom Kippur is the time of atonement for all *aveiros*, and then comes Succos, which reveals "Praiseworthy is the one who did not sin", the innermost point within our *nefesh* (soul) where there is no possibility of *cheit* (sin). The depth of Succos is to reach this inner place in our *nefesh* where there is no *cheit*, revealing the pure point inside us that never sins.

The *Aron* had a *kapores* on top of it, which served as an atonement (*kaparah*), thus the *kapores* symbolizes Yom Kippur, which atones. The *keruvim* atop the *kapores* had their wings spread in an upwards manner, thus the *keruvim* symbolize Succos, which we hint to in פְּרוּס וּפְרוּס עָלֵינוּ סוּכַת שְׁלוֹמִיךָ, "And spread upon us, the *succah* of Your perfection."

Succos comes after Yom Kippur, so Succos is like "*keruvim*" above the "*kapores*", Yom Kippur. By the *keruvim*, each face was turned to the other. This is a hint that Succos, which is symbolized by the *keruvim*, is about the concept of *giluy panim*, the "revelation of the Countenance of Hashem."

Succos reveals this level the *giluy panim*, revealed Countenance of Hashem, in every angle: Above us (represented by the *s'chach*), on all sides (represented by the walls of the *succah*), in between (the airspace of the *succah*), and below (represented by the ground of the *succah*). This revealed light in all six directions of the *succah* represents the concept that the *he'aras panim* (the radiant countenance) of Hashem can be found everywhere, in every possible angle of every dimension.

Chazal said, "*Ain Od Milvado*" (There is nothing besides Hashem), even in the *chalal*" (empty space) of the world". Thus, even in the *chalal*, even in all of that space that is between the higher and lower worlds, there is *Ain Od Milvado*. This idea is the depth of Succos: When one is in the *succah*, he is in a holy space, where *Ain Od Milvado* permeates the entire space of the *succah*.

Chazal say that "The name of Hashem dwells on the *succah*" - the holiness in the *succah* is that there is *Ain Od Milvado* in all of the space within it. That is the novel concept that the *succah* reveals - **that there is no such thing as *hester panim* (concealment of Hashem's radiance)**. It is like the *keruvim*, which were face-to-face with each other, and this reflects the concept of *giluy panim* (the revelation of "Countenance" of Hashem) everywhere. After we have gone through the atonement of Yom Kippur, there can now be the revelation of *Ain Od Milvado* even where it seems like there is *hester panim* - and that is the revelation on Succos.

In clearer and simpler terms, **when a person sees Hashem in everything, he sees the *giluy panim* of Hashem in everything, whether in light or in darkness**: להגיד בבוקר חסדיך ואמונתך בלילות, "To speak in the morning of your kindnesses, and of your faith at nights". It is to see Hashem in every place, even where there is darkness [difficulty].

Of the last day of Succos, Hashem says, "*Stay with Me one more day*". Succos reveals the idea that when we see nothing else around us in all six directions other than the Presence of Hashem, we are "staying" with Hashem Himself.

Throughout the year, especially on Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur, there is *kabalas ol malchus shomayim*, accepting our

duties to Hashem upon ourselves. On Succos, there is a different level - we are surrounded by the *succah*, which resembles being enveloped by Har Sinai, when the mountain was suspended above us. Succos is an extension of this concept, where the mountain of Har Sinai is suspended above us.

When one reaches a palpable sense of *Ain Od Milvado*, that Hashem is everywhere, even in the "*chalalo shel olam*", even where it seems that He isn't there, one can reveal how the *ohr panim* (the light of the Countenance) of Hashem is everywhere: כִּי בְאוֹר פְּנֵיךָ נָתַתְנוּ לָנוּ, "For in the Countenance of Your Face, You gave to us, Hashem our G-d". That is the revelation of Succos!

Succos is when we return to a semblance of Hashem made the heavens and the earth and combined them. Succos is "*tzeila d'mehemenusa*", similar to the word "Betzalel", who knew the secret of how to combine the letters of the heavens and earth. Building a *succah* is therefore a semblance of building the heavens and earth which Hashem made.

The essence of Succos is that there is *Ain Od Milvado*, the *giluy panim* of Hashem, within every space. The entire world is nothing but a giant amount of concealment (*hester*) that hides Hashem's light. The more we realize the reality of how "*Ain Od Milvado*" fills every space, the special *ohr makif* of Succos will spread outward, enveloping all of the surroundings of the world. In our current times, the *succah* restrains this great light from spreading outward and keeps it strictly within the *succah*. In the future, when "Hashem will remove the sun from its sheath", the light of the *succah*, which is "*Ain Od Milvado* even in the space of the world", will spread everywhere, unrestrained. That

will be the “new light” that will illuminate the entire world. (סוכות_051)

SUCCOS & HOSHANA RABBAH

The *Midrash* states that the 4 Species on Succos is really referring to *HaKadosh Baruch Hu*. (*Vayikra Rabbah*, *Emor* 39). The *sefarim hakedoshim* (*sefer Seder HaYom* and *Sefer Bnei Yissocher*) even say that all plants are given an appointed *malach* (angel) to oversee their growth process, and the *malach* tells it to grow, but the 4 Species of Succos grow entirely from Hashem’s Divine Providence. The depth to this is because a *malach* has a *tzurah*, a certain design or form, and therefore all plants, which have a *tzurah* to them, are governed by means of *tzurah*, whereas the 4 species of Succos are not governed by any *malach*, so there is no *tzurah* that makes them grow. The 4 species of Succos are beyond *tzurah*, growing directly from Hashem.

When one sits in the *succah* - which is called the meeting point between Heaven and earth - it is a point where there is no clearly defined *tzurah*. In the *succah*, we are in a space that is beyond any design, beyond any specific definition. Chazal said that 40 days before a fetus is formed (before it receives its *tzurah*), an announcement goes out and declares who he or she is destined to marry. Before the first 40 days, the fetus has no *tzurah*, it is not yet in formation. In a *succah*, where we leave our permanent dwelling and enter a “temporary dwelling”, we are going into the point where there is no *tzurah* - we leave our regular *tzurah*, and we get used to a place that able to take on many different forms.

[There are 4 elements in Creation (earth, water, air and fire), and water is unique because it can take on any form. This reveals the “fifth element”, the spiritual element known as *ayin*, “nothingness”, which has no physical form. It can take on many forms. In terms of our *nefesh* and *avodas Hashem*, we can use this element of *ayin* when we can go beyond this world and go above our limits.]

The lesson of the *succah*, on a deeper level, is for a person to get used to living a life where he is like *ayin*, like “nothing”, in the sense that he is not bound to any one design, and instead he can take on many different *tzuros*, different forms. By absorbing this perspective, when one eventually takes leave of This World and he enters the Next World, the “world which is entirely good”, it will be easier for him to receive a new *tzurah*. One who didn’t get used to this on This World will have difficulty with forgetting about his old *tzurah* and connecting to a higher, more sublime *tzurah* in the Next World.

An *esrog* needs a lot of water in order to grow, the *aravah* branches are called “willow branches of the stream”, and the *nisuch hamayim*, the water libation, was only on Succos. And on Succos, the world is judged on its waters. Thus, Succos is linked with water. During Succos, we carefully observe the *halachos* pertaining to these 4 Species and we carefully preserve them so that they stay intact and kosher - we preserve their *tzurah*. When we bang the *hoshanos* on *Hoshanah Rabbah*, though, we nullify the *tzurah* of the *aravos*. When we bang them on the ground on *Hoshanah Rabbah*, the *aravos* lose their *tzurah*, and they become like water which has no *tzurah*. Soon after Succos ends, we begin to *daven* for water, and the depth of this is because receiving water is a way to receive a special level from Above, a level where there is no *tzurah* - a level beyond the limitations of this world.

It is said of the Kotzker that he was told of one of the *tzaddikim* who was able to see the *Ushpizin* coming to his *succah*. The Kotzker responded to this: “He sees them, but I believe in them - and *emunah*, believing, is better than seeing.” The depth of his words is that “seeing” depends on some *tzurah*, whereas *emunah* is not dependent on viewing any *tzurah*. *Emunah* is entirely to believe in the intangible. If something is tangible, it is unnecessary to use *emunah* to believe in its existence. If something can

be grasped, it always has a *tzurah*.

The *succah* is called *tzila d’mehemenu-sa*, shade of faith, and it reveals the dimension where there is no *tzurah*. We believe in the reality of the Creator, and this is our *emunah*, our faith in a Reality which no thought can grasp. Therefore it is not possible to equate any sort of *tzurah*/form to this Reality. In contrast, man is created “In our form, and in our likeness.” Man is a *tzelem Elokim*, which is also from the word *tsel* (shadow), as explained in the *Arizal*. In a deeper sense, man is the *tsel*, the shadow, of the Infinite. The Infinite has no *tzurah*, whereas man, who is the ‘shadow’ of the Creator, does have a *tzurah*. Man is the *tsel*, he is the shadow of that *emunah*, of that Reality which cannot be defined or grasped because it is beyond all design.

The *succah*, which is the *tzila d’mehemenu-sa*, the shade of *emunah*, represents the *emunah* that just as no thought can comprehend the Infinite and He has no *tzurah*, so too when a person lives in his *emunah* in Hashem, he is living in the shade of *emunah*, so he is connected to the point that goes beyond all *tzurah*.

When one considers himself to mainly be living on This World, he is bound to *tzurah*, and he will be vulnerable to the attack of the *yetzer hora*, the evil inclination, who opposes him. But when one lives with the understanding of the “*tzila d’mehemenu-sa*” [living in ‘Hashem’s shadow’] represented by the *succah*, where there is no *tzurah*, he goes above *tzurah* and his enemy, the *yetzer hora*, will also lose its *tzurah*.

To the degree that one has *emunah* in the Creator, one goes beyond all *tzurah*, and he is above the *yetzer hora*’s grasp. One will certainly have to wage war against the *yetzer hora*, but the more a person lives in the point that is beyond *tzurah* - the *tzila d’mehemenu-sa* [to live as if he is residing in the Hashem’s shadow], the less vulnerable he will be to the *yetzer hora*.

The *nefesh* (soul) contains 70 fac-

ulties, as explained by *Gra*. There were 70 *korbonos* brought throughout the 7 days of Succos, corresponding to the 70 nations, but on a deeper level, the 70 *korbonos* correspond to the 70 soul faculties, and the burning of the *korbonos* represented nullifying all 70 soul faculties. Thus, nullifying the 70 soul faculties represents a nullification of the entire *tzurah* of the person, revealing the point of *ayin* (nothingness), where there is no *tzurah*. That is the meaning of *tzila d'mehemenusa*, living in the state of *emunah*, living under Hashem's shadow. Thus on Succos when we leave our permanent dwelling and go to a temporary dwelling, it is all a way for a person to leave behind *tzurah*, and enter into the point beyond *tzurah* - the dimension of *emunah*, where one becomes *ayin* (nothing),

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Q&A D'VEYKUS & SIMCHAH

QUESTION Chazal teach that in the future we will sit in the "succah made of the skin of the *Livyasan* (Leviathan)". Will this be in This World or in the Next World? **ANSWER** It will be on This World, in a state that is *me'in Olam HaBa*, a "semblance of the World To Come". **QUESTION** I feel deeply connected to *ruchniyus* whenever I focus on how much I love Hashem or fear Hashem or on my *emunah* in Hashem, in all the different levels. But when I do mitzvos, all I feel is my *kavanah* when doing the *mitzvah* but I don't feel anything about the actual *mitzvah* I'm doing. Just to give an example of how far this goes, I can shake *arba minim* and feel so connected to them, but if someone were to switch my beautiful kosher esrog for an esrog that's not kosher, I wouldn't feel anything has changed! Why am I like this and how can I change this? **ANSWER** You have the *ohr* (the light, the revelation, of *ruchniyus*) but you don't have the *kli* (container) - you aren't building a container to house all of the *ruchniyus* that you are feeling. You should learn *halachah l'maaseh* (the practical *halachah*), and you should be careful to follow every

halachah you learn, with the clear recognition that this is what Hashem wants from you, and you should do this with every detail of *halachah* you learn, even the smallest detail of a *halachah*, that this is all the *ratzon Hashem*. This is how you should connect yourself to the power of *maaseh* (action) in general, and to being careful with every detail of *halachah* specifically, to become deeply connected to each *mitzvah* act with all of your *nefesh*. **QUESTION** What is the gain of going to an *Oneg Shabbos*, going to a *Tisch* or going to a *Simchas Beis HaShoeivah*? When is it called *bittul Torah* and when is it not *bittul Torah*? **ANSWER** As long as a person gets an *aliyah* (he goes higher) in his *ruchniyus* from it, and he feels that he needs it in order to learn better, and it also makes him feel more connected to Hashem, it is not *bittul Torah*. **QUESTION** Is it problem if a person doesn't think good about himself? **ANSWER** Yes, because it is a sign that a person doesn't recognize himself, but even worse is that it will bring a person to sadness and feeling lowly, and this will prevent him from growing in *avodas Hashem*. The *Sefer Tanya* says that if a person thinks of himself as a *rasha*, he will feel low in his eyes and he won't be able serve Hashem. **QUESTION** What should a person do if he feels heavy and weighed down by things on his mind, and because of this he moves slowly and sluggishly? **ANSWER** Briefly, these are some practical points. (1) Train the body to get moving more, such as by walking. (2) Train yourself to walk quickly sometimes. (2) Train yourself to practice jumping. (3) Move your hands quickly sometimes, etc. (4) Also, eat a lighter diet. (5) The above is all applicable when it comes to physical sluggishness, but since there's stress in the soul that's causing it, one needs to figure out what's bothering him and causing him to feel more sluggish. Sometimes it is coming from laziness, and sometimes it is coming from being sad about something. **QUESTION** How can a person become more *bsimchah* (have more joy)? **ANSWER** 1) Move quickly. 2) Eat a light diet. 3) Get excitement from something

holy. 4) Verbalize any *pesukim* in *Tehilim* that describe *simchah*. (Examples are כָּאֵלֹהִים, יִשְׂרָאֵל, טוֹטֵן, זֶה, טוֹטֵן, טוֹטֵן, טוֹטֵן, טוֹטֵן) **QUESTION** What should a person do if he doesn't feel like getting out of bed in the morning? And what should he do if pulling himself out of his rut will require him to act differently than everyone else? **ANSWER** Such a person needs to make a list of all of his qualities. And he should also try as much as possible not to be "into" others' lives and their successes, and instead he should become focused on his own personal development of his own *olam pnimi*, his internal world. Sometimes, lack of self-worth comes from being overly involved with thinking about how others are successful. In order for one to get past this issue, one needs to develop his own rich and expansive "inner world" within. This is actually a degree of *kedushah* (holiness) because it resembles the concept of the those *tzaddikim* who would not look out of their own *daled amos* (their direct space). **QUESTION** From where can we draw forth *simchah* (joy) in such shaky times that we're in? **ANSWER** *Simchah* (joy) has to mainly come from an internal and deep connection that one has to his special part in *ruchniyus* in general, and to being close to Hashem specifically - from the *emunah peshutah* that Hashem is running His world and that it is all for the good. **QUESTION** I want to gain from the paths of *avodas Hashem* of both the *Gra* and also from *Chassidus*. Which is a good sefer from both of the above paths that is recommended to learn? **ANSWER** *Gra* - sefer *Even Shelaimah*. Chassidus: sefer *Shem M'Shmuel*. **QUESTION** What is a good *mussar sefer* to learn? (Question asked by a 15-year old bochur) **ANSWER** Learn *Nefesh HaChaim Shaar 4*. **QUESTION** What should a person think when he's right about to start learning? **ANSWER** To strongly want to connect, both in your mind and your heart, to the true level of Torah.

Q&A - THE CHOSEN NATION

QUESTION How can it be that that the world was created for Klal Yisrael (*Rashi*

Beraishis 1:1), if at the beginning of Creation there was no concept of a Jewish people yet? **ANSWER** Before Creation, the Torah was written as “black fire on white fire”, and all of the letters in the Torah were together without being arranged into words, as the Ramban says in the introduction to his commentary on the Torah. When the Creator “willed” to create the world (as it were), He arranged the Torah with certain formations of the letters to form all of the words and verses, and according to the free will which people were going to use, the arrangement of these words in the Torah became arranged according to the events of history that the Torah records.

QUESTION Why do we make a blessing every day thanking Hashem that He did not make us gentiles? What was the reason that we were chosen over them? **ANSWER** Hashem’s decision to choose the Jewish people as His nation does not have any reason to it – it is above all logic and reasoning. He chose to create the souls of the Jewish people to become the primary part of Creation. This is the meaning of the blessing we make each day that Hashem did not make me a gentile: The fact that He created me as a Jew from the start. **QUESTION** What is the difference between the *ruchniyus* (spirituality) of a *goy* and the *ruchniyus* of a Jew? **ANSWER** By a *goy*, any *ruchniyus* or perception of *Elokus* (G-dliness) can merely surround him and envelope him but it doesn’t go into him or penetrate him, whereas by a Jew, the *ruchniyus* can penetrate into him and even sanctify his physical being. **QUESTION** Was there a difference between Jewish souls and non-Jewish souls already at the beginning of Creation? **ANSWER** Every person has a root, a source, to his soul. The soul of a Jew is rooted in *kedushah* (holiness) whereas the souls of the gentiles are rooted in *tumah* (defilement), specifically in the “three impure *kelipos*” (shells). Hashem made it like this from the start. **QUESTION** What is the difference between a Jew and a gentile? **ANSWER** At first the “three impure *kelipos* were on

the outside of Adam HaRishon’s soul. When he ate from the Eitz HaDaas, the forbidden tree of knowledge which was mixed with good and evil, the evil from the tree entered into him, and the mixture of good and evil became created within his soul. Later, when Hashem chose the Jewish people to be His nation, which began with Avraham Avinu, this was when a separation was made between the good parts and the bad parts of Creation. The good parts became the Jewish people, and the bad parts became the other nations. But already at the beginning of history there was a separation between Jewish souls and non-Jewish souls. Therefore, the souls of the Jewish people which are rooted in holiness are closer to Hashem, and more specifically they are the “head”. As a hint, the word *Yisrael* (יִשְׂרָאֵל) is from the words *li rosh* (לִי רֹאשׁ), “A head unto Me.” This is in contrast with the gentiles, who are called the *guf*, the “body”. **QUESTION** What is the role of the Jewish nation versus the role of the gentiles? **ANSWER** The purpose at the beginning of Creation was that the “head”, the “good”, the souls of the Jewish nation, should become the central point that everything revolves around and which everything will serve, with evil being secondary and nullified to them, to become servants to them. This would have been a benefit for the souls of evil and it would erase their evil [which would have been their *tikkun*/repair]. Eliezer the servant of Avraham was blessed by Hashem - his accursed status of being a slave became changed into blessing, because he served Avraham and surrendered himself to him.

But with the sin of Adam, when Adam ate from the Eitz HaDaas and evil entered within him and it began to have control over him, evil no longer would serve good as its master. This resulted in the nations of the world which would later have control over the Jewish people. In the future, the original state (of evil serving good) will return and evil will be fixed.

QUESTION If a gentile is indeed able to become aware of Hashem, how does a Jew’s awareness of Hashem differ than a gentile’s? **ANSWER** When *Elokus* (G-dliness) becomes illuminated within a Jew’s soul [when a Jew becomes aware of Hashem and contemplates it further], this awareness also becomes illuminated in the *nefesh habehaimis*, in the lowest aspect of his soul, and this enables an illumination to radiate within those souls of gentiles who become “righteous converts” who bear a soul-connection to a part of that particular Jew’s soul. This illumination can further spread to a gentile, whose soul is connected with part of the righteous convert’s soul. The gentile is able to receive an extension of the spiritual illumination that came from the righteous convert’s soul, but it is only a “spark” of spiritual illumination. A Jew’s soul is able to receive a complete spiritual light which comes from the oneness of *havayah* [the completely undifferentiated reality of G-d] of Hashem, whereas a gentile can only receive a partial level of this, a “spark”, which is differentiated awareness that is already separate at its root, and that is why gentiles are not able to attain a complete understanding of the undifferentiated oneness (*achdus peshutah*) of G-d, whereas a Jew can.

QUESTION How can it be that it is precisely this generation, which is called the “heels” (the lowest level) of the soul of Adam HaRishon, is the generation in which Mashiach will come? **ANSWER** The *Maharal* [*Netzach Yisrael 39*] says that the final generation will be completely in a state of *hehdair*, “emptiness”, and there is always a *hedair*, “emptiness” or an “absence”, which precedes the *havayah*, the existence of something [see *Gra to Yeshayahu 11:1*]. Thus, the *hehdair*, the emptiness which precedes the existence of something, is really the beginning of the *havayah* existence. Thus **it is the lowliest generation, which is entirely *hehdair*/empty, which is the generation that will be *zocheh* to Mashiach, quickly.** Amen and may Hashem will it to be.