

יום כיפור/סוכות Yom Kippur/ Sukkot

Ashreinu | אשרינו

ENHANCING YOUR STUDY OF THE WEEKLY TORAH PORTION



ELISHA HOROWITZ (25')

SHOSHANA WEINSTOCK (24')

LIZI BUGAY (22')

ZEV HIRCSH (23')

DO IT!

ELISHA
HOROWITZ (25')

When you think of Yom Kippur, what comes to mind? What is the mitzvah of the day? As we

all know, on Yom Kippur, the mitzvah of the day is fasting. Why do we fast? For forgiveness, right? Well, in the Haftarah for Yom Kippur, the prophet Yeshayahu explains that just fasting isn't enough to receive forgiveness. He tells us that just bowing our heads in mourning and fasting isn't enough. Yeshayahu rebukes the people who fast and expect to be forgiven, all while thinking about their own personal gain.

If fasting isn't enough, how do we do teshuva and

achieve forgiveness? The Rambam in Hilchot Teshuva (2:4) suggests:

ועושה צדקה כפי כוחו...ומשנה שמו כלומר אני אחר
ואני אותו האיש שעשה אותן המעשיות ומשנה מעשי
כל לטויה ...

"Give as much tzedakah as you can...and change your name as if to say, 'I am someone else, not the person who did those sins,' and change your actions to be entirely good..."

He explains how the first step to teshuva is to do good deeds, specifically tzedakah. Yeshayahu in his rebuke says that *Ma'asim Tovim*, like giving bread to the needy or inviting poor people over as guests, are the key to doing complete teshuva. He says that if you do these good things, then when you cry out to God, He will answer. The Rambam continues to explain that you have to distance yourself from the sins you committed, and even go as far as to "change your name" to show that you are a different

person than the one who committed the sins. Yeshayahu also extends his explanation to not only doing tzedakah, but following Hashem's words and Mitzvot. If you listen and do all these things, then Yeshayahu says that Hashem will redeem and forgive you.

This Yom Kippur, let's all recognize that if we want to do real teshuva, then we have to really care about our actions and follow Hashem's word. Don't fast and call it a successful teshuva, don't daven without meaning, and hopefully you can achieve real and successful teshuva.

MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE

SHOSHANA WEINSTOCK (24')

In Tishrei we celebrate Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and Sukkot. The essence of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur are relatively simple to explain, but when it comes to understanding Sukkot there isn't a simple explanation to what the holiday is really about. Sukkot is the one holiday with an unclear identity. The Gemara (11b) presents a debate between Rabbi Eliezer and Rabbi Akiva that gives us insight into what Sukkot is all about and ultimately helps us have a more meaningful chag. Rabbi Eliezer explains that when the pasuk says that Hashem placed the Jews in the Sukkot, the pasuk is referring to the *Ananei HaKavod*, Clouds of Glory, which protected Bnei Yisrael in the desert for 40 years. According to this opinion, the Sukkah is a symbol of Hashem's protection that He constantly provides for us. The Sukkah teaches us the lesson that as long as we have faith in Hashem we are secure. During the 40 years that we were in the desert we were not wandering alone, but were protected by Hashem.

Rabbi Akiva disagrees and explains that the pasuk is referring to the actual physical huts where Bnei Yisrael lived in the desert. The huts that Bnei Yisrael lived in left them insecure and wandering because they were temporary. The Sukkah therefore reminds us of a time when we were not

as protected by Hashem as we are now.

These explanations aren't exactly satisfying, but that is possibly the point. Sukkot can remind us of our own insecurities, as we step into temporary huts, or it can remind us of the security of Hashem's protection. In highlighting these questions of faith, it will hopefully help us think about Sukkot as more than simply a holiday of huts and remember that it is also a holiday about safety, insecurity, and faith in God.

YOM PURIM

LIZI BUGAY (22')

We know that Yom Kippur is one of the most important days on the Jewish calendar. While we may think of it as a very serious day, the Jewish sages refer to Yom Kippur as a joyous and spiritually uplifting day. Yom Kippur is linked to Purim, the happiest day of the year. The *pur* in Yom Kippur, comes from the word *Kapparah*, meaning atonement, which is a major message of this holiday. The *pur* in Purim means lot, referring to the lots that Haman drew to determine when to destroy the Jewish people. Purim is a physical day of feasting and joy, while Yom Kippur is a spiritual day where we remove ourselves from the physical world. The mourning behavior we feel on Yom Kippur does not associate with the joy we feel on Purim, so how do these two holidays connect?

On Yom Kippur, we refrain from physical pleasures as we embrace our spirituality. Yom Kippur provides us with the unique opportunity to excel, to embrace our truest sense of self. We daven to Hashem one more time, praying for forgiveness and redemption. We become vulnerable as we recognize that our fate is substantially based on God. Similarly, Purim emphasizes the vulnerability of the Persian Jews as their comfortable lives were uprooted. They fasted and prayed for Esther's well being as she prepared to go to the king.

Our Yom Kippur experience lays the path for the

rest of our year. It is a time of teshuva and focus on self improvement. Our goal is to not focus on the physical as we elevate ourselves to be the best we can be.

POWER OF SUKKOT

ZEV HIRCSH (23')

In Parshat Pinchas, the Torah describes the various korbanot brought on Shabbat, weekdays, and various holidays. The majority of holidays have relatively similar korbanot brought, with a few minor exceptions. For example, Rosh Chodesh, Pesach, and Shavuot each have additional bulls added to the sacrificial service; however, they differ on the number of bulls sacrificed. On Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, there is only one bull, and on Shabbat there is none. While there is some variation between these holidays, they are still relatively similar. In addition, Pesach has the exact same korban Musaf for all of its 7 days. The Torah says:

וְהַקְרְבָתֶם אֶשֶּׁה עַלְהָה לִיהְוָה פָּרִים בְּנֵי בָּקָר שְׁנִים וְאַיִל אֶחָד וְשְׁבָעָה כְּבָשִׂים בְּנֵי שָׁנָה תְּמִימִם וְהִיא לְכֶם

“You shall offer up a fire offering, a burnt offering to Hashem: two young bulls, one ram, and seven lambs in the first year they shall be unblemished for you” (Bamidbar 28:19).

The Torah then summarizes the korban Musaf the whole of Pesach:

כְּאֶלְהָה תְּעַשׂ לִיּוֹם שְׁבָעַת יְמִים לְחַטָּאת אֶשֶּׁה רִיחַ נִיחַת לִיהְוָה עַל עֹלָת הַתְּמִיד יְעַשָּׂה וְנוֹסְכָו

“Like these, you shall offer up daily for seven days, food of the fire offering, a spirit of satisfaction to Hashem, you shall offer up this in addition to the continual burnt offering and its libation” (Bamidbar 28:24).

The Torah treats all of the individual days of Pesach as one whole holiday with one daily korban Musaf. One would think that the same principle

would be applied when the Torah discusses the only other multi day holiday from the Torah, Sukkot. However, this is not the case.

When describing the first day of Sukkot, the Torah says:

וְהַקְרְבָתֶם עַלְהָה אֶשֶּׁה רִיחַ נִיחַת לִיהְוָה פָּרִים בְּנֵי בָּקָר שְׁלָשָׁה עַשֶּׂר אַיִלִים שְׁנִים כְּבָשִׂים בְּנֵי שָׁנָה אֶרְבָּעָה עַשֶּׂר תְּמִימִם וְהִיא

“You shall offer up a burnt offering, a fire offering for a spirit of satisfaction to Hashem: thirteen young bulls, two rams, fourteen lambs in the first year; they shall [all] be unblemished” (Bamidbar:29:13).

For each of the 7 days of Sukkot, the amount of bulls being brought decreases by one so that on Hashanah Rabah only 7 bulls are brought. Meanwhile, Shemini Atzeres has only 1 bull in its korban Musaf. The obvious question is what is the meaning behind the large amount and steady decrease in the amounts of bulls being brought? The Gemara in Sukkah 55b quotes the famous teaching of Rabbi Elazar:

אמֵר רַבִּי (אֶלְעָזָר): הַנִּי שְׁבָעִים פָּרִים כְּנֶגֶד מֵי - כְּנֶגֶד שְׁבָעִים אֲוֹמָות. פָּר יְחִידִי לְמַה - כְּנֶגֶד אֲוֹמָה יְחִידָה

The 70 bulls brought during Sukkot correspond to the 70 nations of the world, while one bull brought on Shemini Atzeres corresponds to the Jewish Nation. Rashi on this Gemara explains that the korban is to provide atonement for the other nations in order to be allotted rain for the year, as the Gemara on Rosh Hashanah 16a explains; that on Sukkot humanity is judged for rain.

Similarly, the messianic pasuk in Zechariah (14:16) explains,

וְקַיָּה כָּל הַפּוֹתֵר מִכֶּל הַגּוֹיִם הַבָּאִים עַל יְרוּשָׁלָם וּעַל מִדֵּי שָׁנָה בְּשָׁנָה לְהַשְׁתְּחֹות לְמִלְגֵּה יְהֹוָה צְבָאֹות וְלִחְגֵּג אֶת חֶג הַסּוֹכָנָה

“And it will come to pass that everyone left of the nations who came up against Yerushalayim will go up from year to year to prostrate himself to the King, the Lord of Hosts, and to celebrate the

festival of Tabernacles."

In the ideal messianic world, all the nations will come to the Beit Hamikdash and bring korbanot for their own rainfall. This leads to an interesting question about the fundamentals of Sukkot. Is Sukkot a holiday like the other shalosh regalim that is in commemoration of the great kindness Hashem did for us to provide us homes when we were in the desert, in which case it is a specific to the Jewish people, or is it similar to the Yamim Noraim which are just set dates for the judgement of the entire world? The answer is that in reality both are necessary.

Sukkot is the universal day of judgement for rainfall allotment and thus economic success. However, it is also in commemoration and builds off of the unique relationship between the Jewish people and Hashem. This fits in well with the next line of the Gemara in Sukkah (55b), which explains:

שֶׁל לְמַלְךָ בָּשָׂר וְדָם שֶׁאָמַר לְעַבְדָיו: עֲשֵׂה לֵי סְעִוָּה גָדוֹלָה. לֵיּוּם אַחֲרָיו
אָמַר לְאוֹהֶבְךָ: עֲשֵׂה לֵי סְעִוָּה קָטָנָה כִּדְיַן שָׁאַהֲנָה מִמֶּךָ

The parable is about how the king made a long party, but then made a smaller party for his most beloved friend. Shemini Atzeret, the day after Sukkot, is just the loving relationship between Hashem and the Jewish people. This is also a reason why we have the mitzvah of simcha on Sukkot. Even though we might be worried about the rainfall in the year to come, we need to recognize that Hashem loves us more than any other people and we should be grateful for his kindness instead of being worried about his judgement. After spending most of Tishrei doing teshuva for all of our sins, we have the mitzvah of **ושמחת בחגך** as a chance to truly rejoice out of *Ahavat Hashem*. May we all be worthy to truly use this Sukkot to rejoice with Hashem. Chag Sameach!



Staff

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DEVELOPERS

NAVA SHEKHTER (' 24)

RIVKA REICH (' 24)

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RAVH@YESHIVAH.S.ORG