

Shabbos: Ta'am HaChaim Haazinu-Sukkos 5773

(From the archives)

Shabbos in the Parasha

Following Shabbos is the festival of Sukkos, when we commemorate the fact that HaShem enveloped the Jewish People in the Wilderness with the Clouds of Glory. The Ksav Sofer raises a profound question. Why do we commemorate the miracle of the Clouds of Glory, whereas there is no apparent commemoration for the other miracles that HaShem performed for the Jewish People in the Wilderness? We do not commemorate the daily manna that HaShem proffered to the Jewish People and we do not commemorate the miracle of the well of Miriam that journeyed with the Jewish People for forty years. What is unique about the Clouds of Glory that we commemorate their protection of the Jewish People? To answer this question, we must understand the various miracles that HaShem performs for the Jewish People. There are certain miracles that HaShem performs for us that save us from danger. One example of such a miracle is when the Amorites hid in the caves of the mountains with the intent of ambushing the Jewish People. Hashem performed a miracle and the mountains joined together, thus crushing and killing the Amorites. A different type of miracle that HaShem performed for the Jewish People was the ten plagues in Egypt which served as a punishment for the

Egyptians and simultaneously demonstrated that HaShem loves the Jewish People. The miracles of the daily manna and the well of Miriam demonstrated HaShem's love for the Jewish People. The Clouds of Glory were a reflection of HaShem's love for the Jewish People, but they also served as a protection for the Jewish People. Furthermore, the Baal HaTurim (Bamidbar 22:5) writes that while the Jewish People were able to see him, he was not able to see the Jewish People, as they were surrounded by the Clouds of Glory. It is noteworthy that the Medrash (Sifri) states that there were seven Clouds of Glory. We are biblically required to dwell in the Sukkah for seven days. Shabbos is the seventh day of the week. The Medrash states that all sevens are cherished and holy. Commemorating the miracle of the clouds of Glory is not merely a commemoration of a miracle. Rather, the Sukkah, which is symbolic of the Clouds of Glory, demonstrates how HaShem loves the Jewish People, and how we are distinct from the rest of the world. The Yaavetz writes in his Siddur that the greatest miracle of all time is that the Jewish People have survived all the exiles and all the persecutions. What better way is there to commemorate this miracle than by celebrating the festival of Sukkos? The word Sukkah is normally translated as covering.

Alternatively, the word Sukkah is derived from the word *sach*, which means to look (See Rashi Bereishis 11:29). This interpretation reflects on the dual functionality of Sukkos. One aspect of the Sukkah is that we conceal ourselves in the Sukkah, as the Sukkah reflects HaShem's protection of us from the outside world. On the other hand, however, the Sukkah demonstrates how after Yom Kippur HaShem grants us a new perspective on life, where we can actually "see" the Clouds of Glory. Similarly, Shabbos is a day when HaShem shows His love for the Jewish People. Additionally, as we recite in the Shabbos Shacharis prayers, HaShem did not prefer the Shabbos to the nations of the world. Rather, Hashem gave it with love to the Jewish People, whom He has chosen. Sukkos and Shabbos both reflect on HaShem's love for the Jewish People, and that are distinct from the nations of the world. Let us use this Divine opportunity to study HaShem's Torah, perform the unique mitzvos of dwelling in the Sukkah and taking the Four Species, and then HaShem will allow us to merit what is said (Amos 9: 11) *bayom hahu akim es Sukkas Dovid hanofeles*, on that day I will establish the booth of Dovid that is fallen, with the arrival of Moshiach Tzidkeinu, speedily in our days.

Shabbos in the Zemiros

Askinu Seudasa

Composed by the Arizal, Rabbi Yitzchak Luria

Kirivu shushvinin avidu sikunin liapasha zinin vinunin im rachashin, draw near, beloved scholars, make preparations. To multiply delicacies, fish and fowl. Fish are deemed to be the prototype of species that multiply. The Medrash (Shochar Tov 92:1) states that on Shabbos everything is double. Thus, we are declaring that like the fish who multiply, so too on Shabbos all of our blessings are increased.

Shabbos in Tefillah

Shevach nosnim lo kol tziva marom, all the host above bestows praise on Him. We have explained in the past that the word *shevach*, meaning praise, is similar to the word *sheva*, literally translated as seven, but which also is similar to the word *shefa*, meaning abundance (the letters *ayin* and *ches* are interchangeable). The word *tziva*, literally translated as host, can also mean the gathering of the multitudes (See Ramban Bamidbar 1:3). Thus, here we are declaring that on Shabbos, there is a unique requirement that everyone gather to praise HaShem, and these multitudes consist of all the heavenly hosts and the Jewish People on earth.

Shabbos Stories

One year on Sukkos a German Jew ran into the Sukkah of Reb Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev, crying, “gevalt, Rebbe, my seven good friends have left me.” The gabbai of the Rebbe was disturbed by this strange behavior. Who was this person who was carrying on to the Rebbe about having been forsaken by his seven good friends? Although the gabbai attempted to chase the man away, the Rebbe intervened and whispered something in the man’s ear. The stranger was placated and he left in a joyous state. Sometime after the Rebbe passed away, the Rebbe’s son Reb Eliezer became the new Rebbe. One year, due to health reasons, Reb Eliezer was required to be in Vienna for Sukkos. When the Rebbe entered the Sukkah of his host on the first night of Sukkos, he was amazed to see the seven holy Ushpizin sitting in the Sukkah. When the Rebbe queried his host regarding this phenomenon, the man smiled and said, “Rebbe, do you not recognize me?” I am the German Jew who burst into your father’s Sukkah one year, lamenting the fact that my seven friends had deserted me. Reb Eliezer now recalled the incident. The host then explained the entire story. “I was a diamond merchant and I dealt with precious and rare stones. It was my custom that every year in honor of Sukkos I would display my most exquisite jewel that I possessed in my Sukkah. If I were to come across a nicer jewel during the year, I would set aside the jewel that I had used the previous year and use the new jewel in my

Sukkah. In the merit of this mitzvah I would merit having the Ushpizin grace my Sukkah every year. One year I designated a very special stone for my Sukkah. Subsequently, a powerful king in Arabia desired this particular stone for his crown. Initially I resisted all offers for the stone, but when they offered me ten times the value of the stone, I succumbed and sold the stone. That year when I entered the Sukkah, I nearly fainted when I did not see the Holy Ushpizin. I understood that I was being punished for having sold the precious jewel. I was very depressed that Sukkos, until a friend of mine suggested that I ask the advice of the holy Berditchev. The Rebbe calmed me down and told me that if I were to accept on myself to adhere to my custom and not sell the stone I set aside for any price, the Ushpizin would return. And, the host said with a smile, “you see with your own eyes that the blessing of the Rebbe came true.” The host then invited the new Rebbe to recite Kiddush in the presence of the seven distinguished guests.

Shabbos in Navi

Shmuel I Chapter 7

In this chapter we learn that following the return of the Aron, the Holy Ark, to Kiryas Yearim, the Jewish People were drawn after HaShem for twenty years. Shmuel then exhorted the people to forsake the idols that they had worshipped and to direct their hearts to HaShem alone. In this way they would

be saved from the hands of the Plishtim. Shmuel then gathered the people together at Mitzpah and he prayed for them there, and the Jewish People drew water there and poured it out before HaShem, symbolic of their pouring out their hearts to HaShem. They fasted and confessed their sins to HaShem. The Plishtim heard that the Jewish People had gathered at Mitzpah and the Plishtim came to fight with the Jewish People. The Jewish People were afraid and requested that Shmuel pray to HaShem on their behalf. Shmuel offered a sacrifice and cried out to HaShem and HaShem answered him. Hashem thundered with a great noise and this confounded the Plishtim, and the Jewish People chased the Plishtim and struck them down. The Plishtim were defeated and all the days of Shmuel they no longer entered the borders of Israel. We see from this chapter how important it is to rely on HaShem to save us from our enemies. The Jewish People in the times of Shmuel had an army, but they were still afraid of the Plishtim. We must employ the special tool of prayer that is unique to the Jewish People to win over our enemies. Shabbos is a time when our enemies cannot penetrate our aura of holiness. The Zohar states that a Torah scholar is in the category of Shabbos. Shabbos and our Torah leaders serve as our protection from all evil.

Shabbos in Agadah

Shabbos and Milah, circumcision, are both referred to as an *os*, a sign. What is the association between Shabbos and

milah? The Baal HaTurim in the beginning of Bereishis writes that the word *Bereishis* forms the words *bris aish*, a covenant of fire. Why is milah associated with fire? The Medrash (Bereishis Rabbah 48:8) states that Avraham Avinu stands by the gates of Gehinnom and does not allow anyone who has been circumcised to enter into Gehinnom. Similarly, the Gemara (Sanhedrin 65b and see Rashi Ibid) states that although all week the wicked are punished with the fires of Gehinnom, on Shabbos the fires of Gehinnom rest. Furthermore, the Pirkei D'Rabbi Eliezer (18) states that in the merit of Shabbos one is saved from the fires of Gehinnom. We can also suggest that the Gemara (Yoma 28b) states that Avraham Avinu fulfilled the entire Torah, even the mitzvah of *eruvei tavshilin*. The word *eruv* can also be interpreted to mean mixture (see Daas Zekanim MiBaalei HaTosafos Bereishis 18:8). Thus, the Gemara is stating that one who in this world observes Shabbos by cooking a mixture of hot food and eating it hot on Shabbos, will merit that he will be saved by Avraham from the fires of Gehinnom. (see Baal HaMaor to Rif Shabbos 16b and Rema Orach Chaim 257:8.)

Shabbos in Halacha

One can only return a fully cooked item that is removed from the blech on Shabbos while the food is warm. This means that it can still be enjoyed as a warm food or drink. Once cooled, however, the fully cooked item cannot be returned to the blech, as this would be

deemed a new initial warming procedure. [Regarding liquids, once they are cooled, the prohibition of cooking also applies.]

Shabbos in Numbers and Words

It is said regarding Shabbos (Shemos 31:16) *vishamru vinei Yisroel es haShabbos laasos es haShabbos ledorosam bris olam*, the Children of Israel shall observe the Shabbos, to make the Shabbos an eternal covenant for their generations. It is fascinating to note that the word *ledorosam* forms an acrostic for the words *dal rosam*, remove the hot fiery coals, an allusion to the Gemara (Sanhedrin 65b) that states that on Shabbos the fires of Gehinnom rest and the wicked are granted respite from their punishment.

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