

Vechol Maaminim

A Weekly Leaflet From "Bnei Emunim"



300

SUCCOS

תש"פ

OTZROS EMUNIM

Pearls of Tefillah and Amen on Succos

"Zeman Simchaseinu" – Specifically on Succos

Although we were commanded to rejoice on all the festivals, it is only Succos that is called "Zman Simchaseinu." Why is that?

There are a few reasons:

1. **Harav Yosef Bechor Shor** explained: During the Yamim Noraim, a person merits to have his sins forgiven, and through that he comes to Succos with joy in his heart, as it says (*Koheles* 9:7): "Lech echol besimchah lachmecha – go and eat your bread with joy and drink with a good heart your wine, because Hashem has desired your deeds."

2. Additionally, **Harav Shmuel Brach**, the Rav of Kashau, explained: The nations of the world sought to imitate all of the Jewish Yamim Tovim, and established for themselves holidays that appear similar. But we do not find anything at all like Succos in non-Jewish religions, and therefore, we are proud that this is "Zman Simchaseinu," – alone – as no foreign entities tried to intervene.

3. **Harav Chaim Friedlander** further explained: On Succos, when we leave our permanent homes in this world, and with *bitachon* in Hashem, we enter a temporary dwelling – *betzila demeheimnusa*, the joy envelops us on its own, as it says (*Tehillim* 33:21): "Ki bo yismach libeinu ki beShem kadsho batachnu."

4. Similarly, the **Nesivos Shalom** explained: During the year, when we are busy with material and physical matters, and our hearts are worried about our possessions as it says (*Avos* 2:7) "marbeh nechashim marbeh da'agah" – he who has many possessions has more worries, it's hard for us to be happy. But on Succos, we disconnect from our physical and material possessions, leaving our homes for a temporary dwelling, and because we are no longer engaged in worrying, we can be enveloped in joy.

Peirush Rav Y. Bechos Shor Vayikra 23:39; Shaul Bechir Hashem, p. 72; Sifsei Chaim, Moadim Vol. 1 p. 349; Nesivos Shalom – Succos, Maamar Rishon

Razei Emunim

Allusions to Amen
In the Context of
Succos

The Mitzvah of Succah is Easy Like Amen

Chazal (*Avodah Zarah* 3a) consider the mitzvah of sukkah to be an "easy one." Why?

Harav Tzvi Hirsh Horowitz, the Rav of Frankfurt, explains:

The *Gemara* (*Brachos* 53b) says: "The one who answers amen is greater than the one who makes the *brachah*." Isn't the one who makes the *brachah* doing the principle part of the deed, and without him there is no amen and no *brachah*? Why then is the one who answers greater than him? We can explain this according to what we know, that amen is numerically equivalent to 91, as well as the Names of Havayah and Adnus, which together weaken the *mekatregim*. Because the one who makes the *brachah* only mentions the Name Havayah, we find that "amen" is one what protects the *brachah* from *mekatregim*, and therefore, the one who answers is greater.

Base on this we can understand why the succah is called a "mitzvah kallah, an easy mitzvah." Succah is also numerically equivalent to 91, and thus, in contrast to the rest of the *mitzvos*, which are disrupted by the *mekatregim*, the mitzvah of succah annuls these *mekatregim*, and therefore it is easy to fulfill it.

Lachamei Todah p. 210b

Shaarei Tzedek Are Opened in the Merit of Succah and Amen

Harav Shlomo Kluger offers a beautiful explanation for the connection between mitzvah of sukkah and amen:

"The singer [*Dovid Hamelech*] said (*Tehillim* 118:19): 'Pischu li shaarei tzedek avo vam odeh K-ah.' This appears to be alluding to succah: succah is numerically equivalent to 91, as is amen. *Chazal* said (*Shabbos* 119b) that "anyone who answers amen with all his might, the gates of Gan Eden are opened to him." Similarly, one who fulfills the mitzvah of succah with all his might is like someone who answers amen and the gates of Gan Eden are open to him..."

Koheles Yaakov, Succos Drush 58

"Hashem" and "Succah" Are Not Whole Until Amalek's Descendants Are Excised

The *sefer Pri Eitz Chaim* (*Chag HaSuccos* 4) says that the word "succah" is numerically equivalent to 91, the same as the Names of Havayah and Adnus, which is also the equivalence of amen. **Harav Shlomo Hakohen of Vilna** notes that this *gematria* is correct only if the word is written *malei*, סוכה, while in actuality throughout *Tanach* it is written, 'chaser' – סוכה.

Rav Shlomo writes:

I toiled and found just one *passuk* where it is written *malei* (*Tehillim* 76:3) "ויהי בשלום" [and he adds: Although in many editions, "succo" is written without the *vav*, I see that in *Sefer Tehillim* written on parchment in Vilna, and reviewed by the Gra, the word is written "סוכו" with a *vav*.]

From the words of the *passuk* we can understand why in all of *Tanach*, "succah" was not written *malei*. "Vayehi beshalem succo" – when is the "succah" whose entire essence alludes to Holy Names written in its entirety? When "um'onsaso beTzion" – His dwelling place will be in Yerushalayim, when Hashem will return to Tzion. As *Chazal* say (*Tanchuma Seitzei* 11): "As long as the descendants of Amalek are in the world, Hashem is not complete and His Throne is not complete."

Hagahos Cheshek Shlomo beginning of Maseches Succah

Succah Exempts One from Trouble

Harav Shlomo of Radomsk said: In the merit of the mitzvah of succah, a person is spared from troubles and suffering, as we ask when we leave the succah: "Umitzvas succah ya'amod lanu...and we should merit two tables without pain and suffering..." We can derive an allusion to this from the *halachah* established in *Chazal* (*Succah* 25b): "mitzta'er [one who is suffering] patur min hasuccah," one who is mired in suffering can exempt himself from those troubles "min hasuccah" in the merit of the mitzvah of succah.

Tiferes Shlomo, Succos

Amen V'amen

Succah is numerically equivalent to "amen"

On Succos, when we bask "in the shadow of *emunah*" by sitting in the succah, we are even more careful to complete every *brachah* with "amen."

Birchos Hashachar Aloud With kavanah *Bechavrusa*



The Virtue of Tefillah on Hoshana Rabbah

The Decree Is Sealed on Hoshana Rabbah

The day of Hoshana Rabbah has been known throughout the generations as a very lofty day that atones for sins the way Yom Kippur does (*Mateh Moshe* 957). That is because this is the day that the judgement written on Rosh Hashanah and signed on Yom Kippur is sealed. As the holy *Zohar* writes (*Vayikra* 32:1, according to the *Sulam*): The *aravah* is like lips, because the day of the *aravah*, as it is known, is dependent on the lips. On this day, the King commands to send the verdicts to the one in charge of carrying them out; the judgement comes to an end and the *kitrug* in the world stops. Rosh Hashanah is the beginning of the *din*, and the conclusion is on this day.

The *Zohar* writes that the atonement of Hoshana Rabbah is dependent on the lips. Harav Chaim Vital writes (*Shaar Hakavanos, Succos* 6) after he explains the *Zohar* regarding the delivery of the notes on Hoshana Rabbah night: "One must be careful to have a lot of *kavanah* on the day of Hoshana Rabbah, and all his action on that day, because he still has a *takanah* then, and afterwards he has no *takanah*."

What is this compared to? A person who sinned against the king, and was then brought to trial. At the end, his punishment was a death sentence. Throughout the hearings in the court, witnesses were brought by both sides. Then the judges sat to write the ruling. As long as they have not completed their writing and given over the ruling to those who have to execute the punishment, the man can plead and cry for his life. But after the notes are given over, he has no more hope. So, too, Hoshana Rabbah is the day those notes are handed over to those who execute it. As long as the notes are not written, a person can plead for his life and *daven* that his decree should be torn up. (*Be'er Hachaim, Yerach Ha'eisanim* p. 324)

The Day of the Request of "Hosha Na!"

In light of this, Am Yisrael – especially *chassidim* and *anshei maaseh* – has an ancient custom, of being very scrupulous about the *tefillos* on Hoshana Rabbah, which is a special day for *tefillah*, as indicated by its name, "*Hosha na!*" Lengthy *Hoshanos* are recited, and many *tefillos* are added. The *Tur* rules (664) that more passages are added to *Pesukei Dezimrah* – like Yom Tov – on this day, because on this holiday, the water is judged, and all of human life is dependent on water, and we know that "*hakol holech achar hachitum*, everything follows the end."

Atonement for Those Who are Like a Willow Branch

The *Sfas Emes* says (*Succos* 5640, 5657) that the day of Hoshana Rabbah, also called Yom Aravah, is very lofty and an auspicious time for *tefillah*. Even someone who does not contain Torah and good deeds, like an *aravah*

that doesn't have smell or taste, can have his *tefillah* accepted from the storehouse of *matnos chinam*, free gifts. That is the largest of all the treasure houses. This is especially relevant in recent generations, when all we have is the power of *tefillah*. On this day, the gates of *tefillah* are opened before Yisrael.

Harav Yoel of Satmar told his *chassidim* on Hoshana Rabbah:

Know that even someone who does not feel an illumination on this day should not neglect to *daven* and plead for his soul.

He offered a parable to a king who was used to passing by a certain place on a certain day at a certain time. Once, a strict decree was cast on some of his subjects, and they gathered in that place and at that time in order to meet the king and ask that he acquit them. When the time came and the king's carriage did not arrive, they began to cry about their missed opportunity. But one wise man stopped them and said: Our king certainly cannot be suspected of not adhering to his practice. There is no doubt that he is here now. It is possible that he disguised himself as a regular citizen and that's why you don't see him. Cry to him to save you wherever he is.

Said the Rebbe: Last year, people who were with us are sadly not with us this year. Because we know that *tefillos* are answered with greater intensity on this day, it is possible that if they would have *davened* harder on Hoshana Rabbah last year, they would have remained alive. If so, even if we do not feel a special inspiration, let us not miss this opportunity. Let us cry from the depths of our hearts: "*Hosha na vehoshiah na Avinu Atah!*" (*Be'er Hachaim Yerach Ha'eisanim*, p. 326)

Revelation in the Fifth Millennium

Harav Yaakov Kaminetzky pondered: If the power of Hoshana Rabbah is so great, why was it not revealed in the words of *Chazal* as a day of judgement? All *Chazal* spoke about was it being a day when we strike the *aravah*. Why? He explained: If this would have been explained in *Shas* and the *Midrashim*, then the masses of Am Yisrael would cry on Succos like they did during Aseres Yemei Teshuvah and the joy of the holiday would be marred. Therefore, only a select few were told about this matter – special *chassidim* and *anshei ma'aseh* – who had the fortitude to rejoice on the Yom Tov without being afraid of the judgement. Thus, this continued until the fifth millennium, when *Chazal* saw that in light of the decline in the generations, the fear of the judgement has diminished. Because the sages realized that the joy of the Yom Tov would no longer be marred by fear of the *din*, they revealed it to all. (*Emes L'Yaakov Emor*, and similarly Harav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach in *Shalmei Moed*, 40).

The Ushpizin's Shidduch

One of the prominent *chassidim* entered the room of Harav Mordechai of Chernobyl. He was a *yarei Shamayim* and had a prestigious lineage, and now he had come to ask the Rebbe to suggest a *shidduch* for his only daughter, a girl with many positive virtues and talents. To his surprise, the *tzaddik* pushed him off and said: "Don't hurry, there is time..."

At first, the *chassid* was satisfied. He realized from the Rebbe's response that there was no reason to worry. But shortly after, he went into the Rebbe again for the same thing and received an identical response. In fact, this scene repeated itself many times of the next few years. Finally, the *chassid* could not control himself and asked the Rebbe why his daughter's *shidduch* was thus being delayed.

In response, the Rebbe smiled and said: "I know for a long time who the intended *chassan* is for your daughter, and already now, you can be proud of him, because he is one of the 36 hidden *tzaddikim* in the generation. But what can I do that for now, he has chosen to seclude himself from the affairs of this world? However, do not worry because very soon, you will merit to see the *shidduch* come to fruition."

The *chassid's* firm *emunah* in his Rebbe shone through now as well; he bowed his head and patiently continued to wait.

A few months later, the *chassid* entered the Rebbe's room on Erev Rosh Hashanah to receive a *brachah* for a new year, and the Rebbe said to him: "Get ready. Take your daughter, travel to this certain town, and wait there until after Succos. Rent an apartment and build a succah next to it. On Succos, you will host Reb Yossele. He is the man who is destined to be your son-in-law. Now is an *eis ratzon*, an auspicious time when he might be persuaded to finish the *shidduch*."

The *chassid* complied with the Rebbe's instructions and traveled to the town. Being a man of means, he rented a spacious apartment, as was suitable for his status. The town was small, and news of the arrival of the *chassid* and his daughter spread rapidly among the *shadchanim*. They hastened to knock at the door and suggest the best *bachurim*.

They were very disappointed when the man turned down all their suggestions. Instead, he asked them to direct him to the home of Reb Yossele, who was destined to become his son-in-law.

The *chassid's* request took them all by surprise. They mentally reviewed in their minds all the Yosseles who lived in the town, but none of them could be suited as a son-in-law for this *chassid*. Only in the end did they remember Yossel, an older *bachur*, a simpleton who was the helper of the local *shammash*.

"Yes, yes," they remembered. "We have in town a *bachur* named Yossel, but surely that is not the one the Rebbe meant, because he is a simple person who hardly knows how to read and write."

Upon hearing this, the *chassid* sighed deeply. In his heart he realized that this was exactly the *bachur* the Rebbe had in mind, and he accepted the fact with *emunah*, but the realization was not easy for him. He quickly recovered and went to the *bais medrash* to find that Yossele. Through the window he noticed a *bachur* wearing faded work clothes sweeping the floor of the shul calmly. He observed the younger man until he finished his work and disappeared from view.

He continued making inquiries about Yossele among the locals, and discovered

that people knew very little about him. Some were able to tell him that the *bachur* slept at night near the oven in the *bais medrash*, and that they had never heard his voice. From time to time they saw him swaying over a *sefer* in a corner, but when they approached they realized that the *sefer* was upside-down.

Upon hearing this, the *chassid* was enveloped by deep sadness. He almost considered returning to the Rebbe to tell him the sorrowful facts, but when he remembered that the Rebbe had instructed him to build a succah and to invite Yossele to be his guest, he decided to remain until after Yom Tov to see how things would play out.

On Succos night, the *chassid* sought Yossele in shul, but the latter had disappeared, seemingly into thin air. He decided to return home, begin the *seudah* and then return to the *bais medrash* to find Yossele.

Some time after the *seudah* began, the *chassid* remembered Yossele, and he returned to the shul. The building was already dark at that hour – all the candles had gone out, except for the *ner tamid* that burned over the *amud*. The *chassid* looked through the window and he was surprised to see Yossele standing in a corner, engrossed in silent *tefillah*. When he drew a bit closer he noticed Yossele's face glowing with an ethereal light. It was a different Yossele to what he had seen previously. He waited until Yossele finished *davening* and left the shul. The *chassid* followed him until they reached a forest on the outskirts of the town and followed Yossele into the forest. Suddenly they came upon a small succah, lit with candles. Yossele entered, and immediately began to invite the *Ushpizin* with a sweet song.

When the *chassid* drew closer and peeked through a crack in the walls he almost fainted; seated around the table were a group of elderly men with holy countenances, singing the Yom Tov songs with Yossele.

The *chassid* was not able to continue watching the scene and hastened to his home, deeply thoughtful. Indeed, it was not for naught that the Rebbe had sent him here. The next morning, he purchased the *aliyah* of *Maftir*, and when the time came, he invited Yossele to come to the Torah. At first Yossele tried to decline, saying he did not know how to say the *brachos*. But then the *chassid* approached him and whispered in his ear what the Rebbe had told him the time had come to reveal. Yossele heard and quickly went up for the *aliyah*, saying the *brachos* fluently and with fervent emotion – to the shock of the community.

After *davening*, the *chassid* invited Yossele to eat in his succah, as the Rebbe had instructed. He was thrilled when Reb Yossele accepted.

After they had eaten, the *chassid* asked Reb Yossele if he would agree to become his son-in-law, and Reb Yossele answered immediately: "If the holy Rebbe decided that this is my *shidduch*, then how can I object?"

The *Tenaim* were celebrated joyously on Chol Hamoed, with the residents of the town stunned at the greatness of the *tzaddik* who was dwelling among them, carrying out his holy work without them knowing of his existence.

Admorei Chernobyl p. 124