



Entering the embrace of G-d, the Sukkos Perspective 2021

The Sukkos Perspective is dedicated in memory of Shlomo Ben Edward. May his soul be uplifted and his memory a blessing.

The Sukkos Perspective is in honor of Sasson Betzalel ben Batya and Sapir Bas Ariela. May they have a quick and speedy recovery.

We are about to celebrate the Chag of Sukkos. It is a period of immense joy and happiness, as we say many times over Sukkos, **“Zman Simchaseinu- the time of our happiness.”** For we are commemorating the clouds of glory that accompanied the Jewish people throughout their journey in the desert.

We observe the Chag by eating, drinking, and spending as much time as possible in the Sukkah. We also bind together the Arba minim (four types of fruit), an Esrog (citron), a Lulav (palm branch), three Hadassim (myrtle twigs), and two Arovos (willow twigs). On each day except Shabbos, we make a brocha over them and shake them in each direction.

One of the beautiful concepts behind the Mitzvah of Sukkah should give us a perspective on this unique time. There is a famous question regarding Sukkah. The Torah provides us with the reason for the Mitzvah of Sukkah (*Vayikra 23: 42-43*) *“You shall live in Sukkah for seven days, all the Jewish people shall live in Sukkah. So that the future generations may know that I placed the Jewish nation in a Sukkah when I brought them out of the land of Egypt, I am your G-d.”*

So why don't we celebrate Sukkos after Pesach when the miracle of the clouds of glory begins?!

One of the many answers is that if we celebrated Sukkos after Pesach, it might be misunderstood that we are doing so for ourselves. For Pesach begins the summer months for much of the world.

So when we would be in the Sukkah, it would seem like we are just trying to hide the glaring sun and the summer heat. Instead, Hashem commanded that we observe the Chag of Sukkos during colder months to make the Mitzvah tougher but a lot more meaningful.

However, the Lubavitcher Rebbe gives a deeper and more profound explanation. He explains that Sukkos commemorates the original clouds of glory and the clouds return after the sin of the Golden Calf.

When Moshe came back to the Jewish people after pleading with G-d for the third time, it was on Yom Kippur. He returned with a powerful statement that we say on Yom Kippur during Kol Nidrei (*Bamidbar 14:20*) “*and G-d said, I have forgiven as you asked.*” The next day the clouds of glory returned to protect the Jewish nation from the desert elements.

The Rebbe continues that the return of the clouds of glory does not just indicate G-d’s acceptance of Moshe’s prayers for forgiveness. But also a full, complete, and total embrace of the Jewish nation, as the Sukkah is one of two full-body experiences in Judaism.

The Chag of Sukkos comes after Yom Kippur because the Sukkah represents Hashem’s fondness and passion towards the Jewish people. That although we have just sinned against Him, G-d, in His great mercy, still loves and cherishes us. The Mitzvah of Sukkah allows us to enter the embrace of G-d and vividly feel His holiness, kindness, and warmth. When we build a Sukkah, we create the ultimate vessel for catching G-d's blessings and will continue to shower upon us for the coming year.

May we merit to celebrate this Sukkos in a physical embrace of Hashem with the ultimate redemption and the third Beis Hamikdash!

Have a joyous and meaningful Sukkos!
Rabbi Sholom Yemini