

This Land is My Land

A Breslov Perspective on the Holy Land

Essay #26—Sukkot Eve 5762

OSAMA! Osama! Where have you BIN?
 LADEN with regret or rejoicing in sin?
 Despite the recent arousal of *din* (judgments)
 Rest assured—your evil won't win!

Yom Kippur has just passed and we are getting ready for Sukkot (Monday night). It might seem a bit scary to think that in these days of widespread fear we are getting ready to leave the "security" of our homes to sit in a little rickety booth of wood or canvas tent, without even a proper roof over our heads. Yet the prophet Isaiah states, "There shall be a *sukkah* for shade during the day from the heat, and it will serve as a place of refuge and for protection from storm and rain" (4:6). Rashi explains, this refers to the protection of the *sukkah* against the elements of God when He punishes the wicked in the Future.

The upshot is that it is not bricks or stones or solid walls or slate roofs that bring us protection. It is the grace of God alone which protects us. For, "If God does not protect the city, the diligence of the guard is in vain" (*Psalms* 127:1). Witness the security of airports several weeks ago (September 11), the protection afforded to the World Trade Center, the Pentagon and the hundreds of air-travelers who can no longer testify to the measures taken to protect them. Where were the air force jets that scrambled to the air to protect the second of the Twin Towers? (The first one caught the air force unaware, but why weren't they there to protect the second tower?) There are so many, perhaps too many, questions, but not enough answers—except that only God can protect. And He does, when He wants to. These ideas were discussed a bit in [the previous essay](#). The conclusion is that we have to invoke His Providence, by dealing honestly in business and controlling our avarice.

Yet we need to invoke God's protection even though we haven't attained perfection. How will we ever attain God's Providence if He doesn't protect us until we attain His Providence?! What hope do we have? The answer, provided by the prophet Isaiah, is to remember that God's means of protection are very different than the ones we would have thought of enabling. If we engage in the mitzvah of sukah, we arouse the **concept** of the sukah and the protection it affords from the wicked.

This mitzvah is also very closely connected to the Holy Land. There are only three mitzvot a person can perform with his entire body: being in the sukah, dwelling in the Holy Land and immersing in the *mikveh* (ritual pool). Thus, sukah and the Holy Land have a common bond, the whole of the human body. Rebbe Nachman elaborates on their connection. (The following is taken from *Kitzur Likutey Moharan* I, 48).

1) The Hebrew vowel *TZeiRei* [two dots, placed side-by-side] corresponds to the word *vayiyTZeR*, i.e. "and He formed." This "formation" represents a "formation of good, a formation of evil, a formation of compassion a formation of judgment." *TZeirei* also corresponds to Binah/Understanding, associated with Ima/Mother, where the embryo takes form...This concept is manifest in the mitzvah of sukah, as is written, "you sheltered me

(*tiSuKHeini*) in my mother's womb."

Now when a person prays forcefully [*beKoaCH*], putting all his might into the letters of the prayers, as in "All of my bones will declare, God, Who is like You?"—this is the concept of *sukah*, as in "You covered me [*tiSoKhekheini*] with bones and sinews." The letters which a person utters with power [*beKoaCH*] become the *KoaCH*, the 28, letters with which the Creation came into being. In turn, the Ten Utterances by which the Universe was created receive energy from the power of these letters. The words that a person utters in prayer with power and force [i.e. with all of his mental and emotional energy] are the words of the Holy One Himself, as in the verse, "I will place My words in your mouth."

The Ten Utterances are rooted in lovingkindness, as in, "I said the world shall be built by lovingkindness." Lovingkindness is related to the *sukah* which is "the embrace of the right hand" [which is itself identified with lovingkindness]. Thus, by virtue of, "I will place My words in your mouth...with the shade of My hand I will cover you" [referring to the *sukah* and to lovingkindness].

2) Words that are not holy, however, cause the awakening of the *sukah* of the nations, the idolaters' *sukah*, "whose mouths speak vanity and whose right hand is one of falsehood" This *sukah* is identified with "the embrace of the Other Side." When it is awakened "the right hand of falsehood" becomes stronger, as does the Jewish exile. Consequently, the Jewish people grow farther from the holiness of the Land of Israel. As a result, truth and the true spiritual leader are concealed resulting in an increase of conflict and strife, God forbid. Then the Shekhinah quarrels with the Holy One over Her children in exile who are banished from their Father's table and sent from the Land.

3) Accordingly, fulfilling the mitzvah of *sukah* can be beneficial in helping people have children. Praying with all one's might (as above) and living in the Land of Israel can also help. These three—*sukah*, praying forcefully and the Land of Israel—are all one concept and are interdependent. By praying with all one's might one merits reaching the Land of Israel, as is the case with performing the mitzvah of *sukah*. This is because the essence of the Land of Israel is bound up with the concept of, "He informed His People of the koach (power) of His deeds by giving them the inheritance of the nations."

4) *Sukah*, praying with force and energy, and the Land of Israel also rescue from quarrels and strife, as in, "Hide me in a *sukah* from the quarrelling of tongues," so that the tongues, i.e. languages, of the gentiles will not dominate. This leads to fulfillment of the verse, "Then I will change over all the nations to a clear language so that they will all declare God's Name and serve Him unanimously." At that time there will be only one tongue and all people will serve God in unison. Falsehood will be eliminated; truth will prevail and be revealed in the world. Everyone will know about the true spiritual leader of the generation, who will be widely known and revealed, and through this everyone will return to God, even the gentile nations, to serve Him unanimously. May it take place speedily in our times. Amen.

Briefly, the Rebbe is teaching that there is a "mother" in a state of pregnancy. Her "child" could develop into either lovingkindness or judgments. Performing the mitzvah of *sukah*, an "all-embracing" mitzvah, invokes lovingkindness (for the *sukah* envelopes the person as a "mother envelopes the child").

Furthermore, sukah arouses the power of prayer which recalls the power of God's *koach*, the power of Creation. This, in turn, invokes the sanctity of the Holy Land. If we blemish our speech and do not pray properly, then we arouse the sukah of the nations and the "protection" they offer us, which really amounts to arguments and strife, war and terrorism. It is our obligation to invoke compassion, to make a formation of good, despite being surrounded by the quarrelsome tongues of the nations, including the media, who wish to swallow us up alive. If we persist in our prayers and strive to reveal God's *koach* in the world, then we will find refuge in our sukah, our prayers and our Land, the Holy Land.

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In times like these, when the entire world is reeling from the aftershock of the demonic Arabian atrocities, an aftershock which rivals many an earthquake with its seemingly non-ending repercussions in the realms of security and financial losses, we must find the means to restore our faith, our trust and our will to continue, despite all that the barbarians would cast in our way. The lesson of the sukah is the lesson of prayer, which we have seen earlier ([essay #4](#)) is intricately bound together with faith. The lesson of the sukah is the lesson of the protection of God from the nations, "with the shade of My hand I will cover you...." The lesson of the sukah is to rely on God; that despite our precarious situation, He is there for us—as He always was and always will be. And the lesson of the sukah is that we can arouse God's Lovingkindness and Compassion so that He will deliver us from our enemies and plant us firmly in our Land, the Holy Land.

Wishing all a very happy, healthy and successful year, and a happy, healthy, great and joyous Sukkot.

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