



All of Israel is Worthy

Sukkos Special

Leilui Neshmas Meira Chaya Nechama Bracha A"H

Bat David Mordechai V'Zelda Shaindel Sheychu

It was the time of the marriage of my dear son-in-law, Rabbi Shmuel Henig. Rabbis attended the Chupa alongside distinguished public figures. The late Prime Minister Ariel Sharon was also present, and my late father, Rabbi Yisroel Grossman, asked to speak with him briefly after the ceremony.

Father had a special message to convey to Sharon. He told him things as he saw them: "I remember the days of the establishment of the state," he began, as Sharon lowered his head to hear. "There was a prevailing euphoria in the country, happiness and joy everywhere, but immediately in those days, another spirit blew from the heads of state, who were drunk with victory."

"In those days," said father, "Prime Minister Ben-Gurion came to the neighborhood where I lived and gave an enthusiastic speech about the new Israeliness, and in his excitement he said a harsh sentence, half with a smile and half seriously: 'In 20 years no ultra-Orthodox Jew will remain in Israel. When those days come, they will be able to know what an ultra-Orthodox Jew looked like in the museum.'"

Father, who was sitting in his house and heard the sermon carried from the powerful speakers, was horrified and kept the thing in his heart for many days.

Now came the moment of reckoning, Father said to Sharon: "According to the Ba'alei Teshuvah movement today, soon no secular person will remain in the country, and not even one will remain in the museum, because there is no such thing as a secular person."

That was father's outlook, that there is no secular and ultra-Orthodox, we are all Jewish sons of G-d, and a good point can be found in the heart of every Jew, because in his inwardness he is good, and only the roughness makes class differences and when the coarseness is removed, all Israel are brothers.

Sukkos symbolizes the unity of the people of Israel. Leaving the permanent home and entering the temporary dwellings, here there is no difference in status between the people of Israel. They are all equal, sitting among the same four walls where the name of G-d is over them and there is no one who can be haughty over his fellow Jew.

We make the Sukkah as a remembrance to the clouds in the desert that protected the Israelites, or in remembrance of the Sukkos that the Israelites built in the desert and the Torah testifies that at the time that they were "as one man with one heart," in wonderful unity and closeness of hearts. This is the condition for the fulfillment of the Sukkah holiday even today.

In addition, our Sages have already hinted that the taking of the Arba'as Haminim, Four Species, signifies all the children of Israel. Each of the four species is characterized by special features, and together they symbolize the people of Israel.

The Esrog - has a taste and smell. Lulav, the palm frond - has taste but no smell. The Hadas, myrtle - it has a smell but no taste. The Arava, willow - has no taste or smell.

This division symbolizes all the types of the people of Israel: taste and smell - these are the people who have both Torah and good deeds. The Odorless

Lulav - these are the Torah scholars, who do not engage in good deeds. The smell without taste - those who have good deeds but have no Torah. Neither taste nor smell - those who have neither Torah nor good deeds in their hands.

You may say: I want only the possessors of the Torah and the possessors of good deeds, I have no desire for one who has no Torah or good deeds, and I certainly do not want any connection with one who has neither Torah nor good deeds.

The Torah teaches us that with an Esrog alone you cannot keep the mitzvah, not even in the combination of the Lulav and the Hadas. You must also take the Arava, which has neither taste nor smell, with you, and attach it to the Lulav and the Hadas and the Esrog. Only when all these types are embraced and united - will you be able to approach the Creator and keep the mitzvah.

There is no Jew who has no place, you just have to find him and attach him to you.

That is why the Sages said, "All Israel deserves to sit in one Sukkah," a teaching they did not say for other holidays, because it is precisely the power of Sukkos and its commandments that enables the acceptance of the other, and only in the Sukkah can all the people of Israel be united under one roof, G-d's roof.

Father was the one who felt the pain of the traditional families living in the peripheries, who wanted to teach each other Torah but had no option to do so, because the state did not establish suitable institutions for them.

For this purpose, Father went to Ben-Gurion and asked for Torah schools. Ben-Gurion appeared naive and asked: "Why do you need a special system in education? There is a state for the secular, a state for the religious and a state for the ultra-Orthodox. Why do you need another system?"

Father explained to him that there were thousands of children in need, but Ben-Gurion did not accept the things, but Father was not one to despair. Every day in the afternoon, after he had finished lecturing his daily lesson to the boys, he set foot in the cities and moshavim of the country and enrolled hundreds of students in Torah education. Thus, arose and the Ultra-Orthodox independent education system.

A few years later, when he saw that the children studying in the independent education system spent their time in the afternoons in dubious places and all the education invested in them was lost, he got up and cried out the cry of the children at the meeting of the Council of Torah Scholars.

For him, no Jew is more equal and less equal, all Israel deserves to sit in one Sukkah.

Happy Sukkos to the whole House of Israel.