

Sukkoth-The Joy of Consummation
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Gilyahna-Revelation 21

And I saw a renewed shamayim and a renewed olam: for the first shamayim and the first olam had passed away; and there was no more sea.

2 And I Yochanan saw the kadosh city, the renewed Yahrushalayim, coming down from ירוה out of the shamayim, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

3 And I heard a great voice out of the shamayim saying, See, the Sukkah of ירוה is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people and ירוה Himself shall be with them, and be their אלהא.

4 And ירוה shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things have passed away.

5 And He that sat upon the kesay said, *See Kala, I make all things renewed.* And He said to me, *Write: for these words are emet and faithful.*

6 And He said to me, *Kala. I am Aleph and Taf, the Beginning and the End. I will give to him that is thirsty of the fountain of the mayim chayim freely.*

7 *He that overcomes shall inherit all things; and I will be his אלהא, and he shall be My son.*

9 And there came to me one of the seven heavenly malachim who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues and talked with me, saying, Come here, I will show you the bride, Yisrael, the Lamb's wife.

10 And he carried me away in the Ruach to a great high mountain, and showed me that great city, the kadosh Yahrushalayim, descending out of the shamayim from ירוה,

The bride is both the body of TORAH GUARDING believers, as well as it being the name for the New Jerusalem. In other words, the bride will live with/in the bride.

The holiday of Sukkoth is referred to as "*the time of our joy.*" The Torah, when describing this holiday, enjoins us particularly:

"And you should be happy before the YHWH your ELOHIM for seven days." (Leviticus 23:40)

Every holiday has a special spiritual energy that best encapsulates the day -- Passover is "the time of freedom" and Shavuot is "the time of the giving of the Torah."

What is so special about Sukkoth that makes joy it's spiritual force more than any other holiday? Surely it is more than just the sense of relief we feel after the seriousness of the fasting on Yom Kippur.

The Torah gives the following reason for building and dwelling in the Sukkah: (Leviticus 23:43)

On the surface, it seems that this is another holiday commemorating the Exodus from Egypt and the particular mode of accommodation or protection we received. Some commentaries say it was not just actual huts but rather clouds of glory which protected Israel from the elements, and that is what we are reenacting and experiencing each year during the week of Sukkoth.

In that case, shouldn't the holiday be celebrated in the spring, along with Passover -- the time we actually left Egypt? Why celebrate this Exodus-related miracle in the 7th month, and why does this specific element of YHWH's relationship with His people -- the huts and/or clouds of glory -- induce such happiness?

THE SOURCE OF HAPPINESS-Echadness

"Happiness comes from a feeling of completion. The opposite is also true -- if one loses someone with whom he had a relationship, and he feels a lack, that something is missing, then he becomes unhappy and mourns." When we sense we are lacking something, we are unhappy. Perhaps Sukkoth is the time of joy because it is then that we feel complete:

"When you harvest your crops from your granary and your vineyard, you should be happy on your holiday, you and your children..." (Deuteronomy 16:13)

Does our joy come from the feeling that we have so much grain and fruit and we have accomplished so much in the past year, that we are lacking nothing? It seems an odd way to celebrate our wealth by leaving all sense of material stability behind, and stepping into a temporary huts made of wood covered by a roof of branches that doesn't even protect us from the elements. Where's all the wealth that should be making us happy?

This is exactly the point: "No one leaves this world with half his desires fulfilled." "A person who has one hundred wants two hundred." (Kohelet Rabbah 1:13) We never feel we have enough material goods. The more "stuff" we have, the more we need. Physical pleasures for their own sake, leave us yearning, feeling empty and lacking. Even your most favorite food will quickly turn on you and become detestable if you eat too much of it.

When we try and fill our lives with money, food, clothing, fleeting physical pleasures -- all as an end unto themselves -- our soul remains unfulfilled, yearning for the real pleasures she remembers: spirituality, meaning and a connection to YHWH.

On Sukkot, we are commanded to leave our permanent dwellings and transfer our daily mode of living to the Sukkah. The mundane, neutral acts of eating, drinking and sleeping thereby become sanctified and elevated because they are done in the midst of cultivating a marital relationship with YHWH. When we leave our stable houses and solid roofs over our heads and go out into shaky huts under the stars, we are essentially placing ourselves under the protection of YHWH's glory, or as the Zohar puts it: "He who sits in the Sukkah, is in the shade of *Emunah* (belief) and no one can harm him because YHWH is spreading His wings over him like a mother protects her children." The belief that shields us is the trust in YHWH's eternal direct supervision for each and every one of us and His continuous, constant love and care for His people. Everything we have, all the blessings in our lives, are from Him and He knows what we need and provides it for us. When we feel that, we can't be lacking. This gives us a hint as to the root cause of the special joy on this holiday. It is a time when we re-experience that special protection we were given when we left Egypt. It might be a good idea to sit in the Sukkah with our families and friends and verbally recount our blessings, tell stories of YHWH's supervision and help in times of difficulty, talk of the numerous gifts YHWH has showered upon us during our lives. This is one method to come in contact with the spiritual energy that is the essence of the holiday: our trust in YHWH's care. This is the real happiness for which we are all yearning.

THE WEDDING CANOPY

But why do we celebrate Sukkoth now, after the High Holidays? An understanding of the timing of this particular spiritual joy can be gained from the realization that, the Sukkah symbolizes the wedding canopy -- the "chuppah" that hovers over the bride and groom as they enter into a covenant of mutual commitment and exclusivity. It is the time the Song of Songs refers to when it says: *"The King has brought me into His chambers, we will be joyful and happy together."* (Song of Songs)

After Teruah when Yahshua returns and Yom Kippur when all Israel is saved, after we resolved theoretically to commit to YHWH and enter into His covenant, with all its entailing responsibilities, now comes action -- the joyous celebration of intimacy and communion -- the wedding. Joy can also be a barometer by which we gauge how much love and care exist in a relationship between two people.

When we engage in the mitzvah of Sukkoth, busily decorating and shopping, happily searching for the finest "Four Species," we show YHWH and ourselves that we have returned to Him out of love, that we truly desire a relationship with Him and we won't leave again. Sukkoth is a time when we solidify through action all the theoretical commitments and resolutions we took upon ourselves. We shake the Four Species, symbolizing the main sources of desire and action:

- *Etrog* -- which resembles the human heart.
- *Lulav* (Palm Branch) -- the spine, which connects the brain's messages to the rest of the body.
- *Hadassim* (Myrtle Leaves) -- which look like eyes, symbolizing visual desires: "*The eye sees and then the heart covets.*"
- *Aravot* (Willows) -- which resemble lips, connoting activities connected with speech and eating.

ALL KEY ELEMENTS USED IN INTIMACY BETWEEN YAHSHUA AND US AND BETWEEN A BRIDE AND HER BRIDEGROOM. THE BETROTHAL OF SINAI IS CONSUMATED DURING SUKKOTH, A GREAT TIME FOR BOTH MARRIAGE AND SEXUAL CONSUMATION.

On Sukkoth, we sanctify and use these powers and desires to grow and become closer to our Creator. We bask in His love and protection, trust that He takes care of all our needs and show Him how happy we are to be home in His bridal chamber.

The historical cycle of holidays begins with Passover, which was an experience of getting to know HaShem and then "going out" together in early courtship. The relationship proceeded over the ensuing weeks to get quite a bit more serious, with formal commitment to one another (engagement) on Shavuot. The episode of the Golden Calf may display our early insecurity in the relationship and our first "big fight," a consequence of flirtation with infidelity. It is well past time to think seriously about this upcoming wedding, and that may be the explanation for the timing of the celebration of Sukkoth. Perhaps our Torah places Sukkoth months later, near the High Holy Days, to give it the proper context and mindset. After months of engagement, we spend the days before the "wedding" in clear-headed contemplation of both the gravity and overwhelming joy of being in a dynamic, vibrant and deeply committed relationship. We even fast on Yom Kippur, just as many brides and grooms do before their big day.

And now for the wedding day of Sukkoth. It's an outdoor chuppah, bedecked with greenery, flowers, decorations, and a view of the stars. Seven days of feasting and rejoicing.

At the mystical level, during Sukkoth the "ingathering" facilitates an internal process that is meant to lead to the experience of unity consciousness, where the boundaries of duality—of self and other, of transcendent and immanent—those "permanent walls" of the ego dissolve into Oneness. It is not coincidental that the word *simcha* (joy) cited in the mitzvah of rejoicing is a euphemism for a wedding. Metaphors liken the sukkah itself to the wedding canopy and the seven days of the holiday to the seven circles the bride makes around the bridegroom, in the marriage ceremony and blissful union that takes place on the eighth day of *Shemini Atzereth*, where we live forever more with our brides.

When we first met, we thought we "knew this was the one." Then we got engaged, all the more confident. But we never truly know why we would want to spend our lives with someone so quickly, until we do so, and so the holiday of full joy is the one of finally being together. *Teruah* and Yom Kippur are very heavy events, but they are also a prelude to eternal joy.

The Canopy: The wedding canopy [*chupah*] is the Sukkah of Peace which descends upon a bride and groom at their wedding day. So too, the Sukkah is the canopy of the marriage of Israel and YHWH. The Holiday of Sukkoth is the wedding which follows the cleansing and preparation period of Yom Kippur.

Let the wedding commence!