

The Sukka of Peace , by Rav B. Horovitz

הפורש סוכת שלום עלינו ועל כל ישראל ועל ירושלים

The source for this phrase is:- “ ויהי בשלם סוכו ומעונתו בציון (תהילים ע"ו, 2) His Sukka was in Shalem and His Habitation in Zion”, which our Sages explain:-

From the beginning of Creation, Hashem made a Sukka in Yerushalayim, in which כביכול He prayed: “May I see the building of My House”. After it was destroyed, He prayed: “May My children do Teshuva, so that I can bring the building of my House and Temple soon”.

The Sukka is a temporary symbol (דירת ארעי) of Trust in Hashem’s Providence, which will lead to His ultimate, revealed Kingship with the building of the Beth Hamikdash. This is hinted at in that סכה in the תנ"ך is always spelt without a “vav” = חסר, except in the above verse. The numerical value of סוכה with the “vav”= 91 = מלא, which equals the numerical value of the Ineffable and the Pronounced Names of Hashem. Only when Hashem’s Habitation will be established in Zion, ביום ההוא, on that day will Hashem (as written) and His Name (as pronounced) be Completely One” (Zecharia 14,9) and universally recognized.

Peace is achieved at the **personal, social, national and international** level by separate units joining together, each complementing the other, to produce a harmonious whole. This explains the relationship of שלום to Shalom to Shalem. Various instrumentalists playing their notes need to follow their conductor in order to produce a symphony. The conflicting emotions of the individual, diverse groups and nations, will only achieve harmony by following the One Conductor of the Universe. This is the deeper meaning of למנצח (For the Conductor) as the heading of many chapters of Tehillim.

This is the essence of the Beth Hamikdash, as wonderfully described by King Shlomo, whose name indicates, מלך שהשלום שלו in his Dedication Prayer (I Kings, ch. 8). Most Mitzvos are fulfilled with specific limbs, whilst סוכה is fulfilled with the whole person – like the מצוה of living in ארץ ישראל. This is indicated in the above verse ויהי בשלם סוכו. Sukka is a Mitzva performed with the complete body just like מעונתו בציון dwelling in Tzion.

‘Every citizen (singular) should sit (plural) in Sukkos’. (ויקרא כ"ג 42) The Gemara infers from this that ‘All Israel can fulfil the Mitzvah in one Sukka’, which demonstrates the united harmony of the nation. This was why the דברים ל"א 10 – 13) assembly (קהל) of the men, women and children of the nation, took place on Sukkot.

When mankind “will turn over to a new language, so that they will all call upon the name of Hashem, to serve Him with one shoulder” , (צפניה ג' 9) they will come to celebrate Sukkot, the symbol of Peace and Perfection, in Yerushalayim. (גמ' עבודה זרה ג and זכריה י"ד 16 – 19) . Our Sages teach that the Sukka is the protection from the ravages of the wars of Gog and Magog. פרוש עלינו סוכת שלומך. Today, when individual **persons** lack peace of mind, and there is so much discord in **society** and conflict between **nations**, let us take to heart the message of the harmony, peace and perfection of the Sukka. ויהי בשלם סוכו.

במהרה בימינו - ומעונתו בציון - בית המקדש -