



Likkutei Sichos

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Unadorned Rejoicing

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TWO CAUSES FOR CELEBRATION

Regarding the simchah of the Festival of Sukkos, we find that aside from the obligation to celebrate because it is a Yom Tov¹ (and “the time of our rejoicing”² in particular), there are also two simchas connected with specific actions performed during the Festival:

On this festival, there is the simchah associated with the mitzvah of taking the Four Species as the verse says,³ “You shall take for yourselves on the first day... **and you shall rejoice** before Hashem, your G-d, for seven days” — the simchah of the lulav.⁴ And there is the simchah associated with the water libation. The water (poured on the altar during Sukkos) was drawn on the night before the libation amidst marvelous simchah,⁵ as it says,⁶ “You shall draw water with simchah from the fountains of salvation.”

The chronological order of these two celebrations hinges on a Tannaic dispute⁷ about when the offering of the water libation began: According to one opinion, the first water libation was performed on the second day of Sukkos (in the morning). Thus, the first water drawing was carried out on the second night after taking the Four Species on the first day. But the halachah accords with the second opinion⁸ that “the water libation was performed on all seven days”⁹ (also on the first day). Consequently, the water for the first libation was drawn on the first night of the festival,¹⁰ before the mitzvah of the Four Species was performed on the following day.¹¹

¹ This obligation also pertains to *Chol Hamoed* {the intermediate days of Sukkos and Pesach on which features of both weekday (*chol*) and festival (*moed*) apply. (See Alter Rebbe’s *Shulchan Aruch*, “*Orach Chaim*,” sec. 529, par. 6; see also the references in Alter Rebbe’s *Shulchan Aruch*, “*Orach Chaim*,” sec. 242, par. 1.)

² {*Siddur*, “*Amidah* for festivals.”}

³ *Vayikra* 23:40; Note that Rambam (*Mishneh Torah*, “*Hilchos Lulav*,” ch. 8, par. 12) quotes this verse regarding the “additional simchah” of the Festival of **Sukkos**; see, at length, *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 17, p. 267ff.

⁴ See *Talmud Yerushalmi*, “*Rosh Hashanah*,” ch. 4, halachah 3; *Talmud Yerushalmi*, “*Sukkah*,” ch. 3, halachah 11; Rashi, commenting on *Sukkah* 43b, s.v., “*lulav*”; and note Rambam’s wording in *Sefer Hamitzvos* (positive mitzvah 169) “and to rejoice.”

⁵ *Sukkah* 48b and Rashi’s commentary there, s.v., “*minah hanei milei*” (and 48a, s.v., “*tiku*”); (but see also *Tosafos*, s.v., “*minah hanei milei*,” ad loc., and *Rashba*, ad loc.).

⁶ *Yeshayahu* 12:3.

⁷ {*Tannaim*, the Sages of the Mishnah.} *Taanis* 3a (Rashi, s.v., “*ela Rabbi Yehoshua hi*”), and according to Rabbi Akiva, quoted there, drawing the water began on the sixth day of Sukkos.

⁸ *Rambam*, *Mishneh Torah*, “*Hilchos Temidin Umusafin*,” ch. 10, par. 6.

⁹ *Taanis* 3a.

¹⁰ See *Sukkah* 51b, *Tosafos*, s.v., “*kara*.”

¹¹ *Sukkah*, 43a; *Rambam*, *Mishneh Torah*, “*Hilchos Lulav*,” ch. 7, par. 10.

2.

EVERY DETAIL IN THE TORAH IS PRECISE

The Torah teaches that “these and those are the words of the living G-d.”¹² Consequently, both opinions “have a place” spiritually — including the opinion that the water drawing began on the festival’s second night.

Moreover, even according to the halachah that the water was also drawn on the first night, the (consummate) joy of *Simchas Beis HaShoevah*, the “great simchah,”¹³ which was created by the “flute” (and other musical instruments), only began on the night following the first day of Yom Tov.¹⁴

Seemingly, this delay was due to an unrelated reason, “a lion crouches over it”¹⁵ “because the flute {playing}... does not override Shabbos or Yom Tov.”

— For this reason, we can posit that nowadays, when we do not celebrate *Simchas Beis HaShoevah* with the “flute” (as we have discussed on several occasions), “our loss is to our advantage”¹⁶ — the joy of *Simchas Beis HaShoevah* begins with great enthusiasm already on the first night, in many respects. —

Nevertheless, since every detail in the Torah is precise, the fact that the “great simchah” (in the Temple) began “on the night following the first day of Yom Tov” was, presumably, because this time was more befitting for the nature and significance of the joy. In other words, the great simchah (as celebrated in the Temple) could only be experienced in its truest form “on the night following the first day of Yom Tov” and subsequent nights.

¹² *Eruvin* 13b, and the sources cited there.

¹³ *Sukkah* 50b; *Mishneh Torah*, “*Hilchos Lulav*,” ch. 8, par. 12.

¹⁴ See *Mishneh Torah*, “*Hilchos Lulav*,” *ibid*: We begin to **rejoice** on the night following the first day of Yom Tov.

¹⁵ *Eruvin* 78b. {The phrase “*aryeh hu deravya alei*” (Aramaic for “a lion crouches over it”) is a halachic principle used to describe situations where an object intended for a mitzvah is deemed potentially suitable but cannot be used due to an external factor. This factor, though, does not obviate the object’s inherent suitability. The analogy is that just as a lion crouching on an object does not render the object intrinsically unsuitable but merely prevents its use, a prohibition placed on a usable object does not render it inherently unsuitable but simply prevents its use.}

¹⁶ Similar to the expression used in *Shabbos* 80b (et al).

3.

WATER AND SUKKOS

We will clarify this by first explaining the connection (according to the inner dimensions of the Torah) between the **water** libation (specifically) and the Festival of Sukkos:

One of the differences¹⁷ between the simchah of the wine libation (for “song is said only over wine”)¹⁸ and the simchah of the water libation is as follows:

The simchah of the wine libation is associated with human nature. This is similar to the simchah of ordinary wine because wine naturally brings simchah. Although the wine libation is a holy simchah connected with the service in the Temple, it is still linked with human nature.

[This is similar to the following: The mitzvah of rejoicing on Yom Tov must be connected with wine — “There is no simchah except with wine”¹⁹ — but a Jew does not drink the wine merely for pleasure, G-d forbid. Instead, he imbibes to fulfill a mitzvah. Consequently, the simchah he experiences is not a result of the wine itself (as with a gentile) but of the mitzvah — the simchah of the mitzvah. Moreover, drinking wine is the mitzvah.

The Jewish people are “one nation on earth.”²⁰ Meaning, even from the perspective of the physical (“earthly”) body, they are “one nation,” a “holy nation.”²¹ Thus, understandably, the simchah felt then by the Jewish **body** derives actually from the sanctity and mitzvah quality of the wine.

Nevertheless, simchah is explicitly connected with wine, as it says, “Without wine, there is no simchah”). The reason for this, according to *pschat*, is that wine **naturally** engenders joy in a person.²² Thus, the simchah of the mitzvah has some connection with the nature and reality of the world (the nature of wine).]²³

In contrast, the joy associated with the water libation on the altar — water by nature does not induce joy — shows that the simchah of the water drawing is unrelated to anything

¹⁷ See regarding the following discussion: *Likkutei Torah*, “*Drushim LeSukkos*,” s.v., “*ushavtem*” — the second Maamar of that name (p. 79d, et passim.); *Siddur Im Dach*, s.v., “*ushavtem*” (268a, et passim.); *Hemshech “Vekacha,”* 5637, ch. 97ff.; *Sefer Hamaamorim* 5669, “*Ushavtem*,” and others; see *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 2, p. 420ff.

¹⁸ *Berachos* 35a, and the sources cited there.

¹⁹ *Pesachim* 109a; see Alter Rebbe’s *Shulchan Aruch*, “*Orach Chaim*,” sec. 529, par. 7.

²⁰ {*Shmuel II* 7:23.}

²¹ {*Devarim* 14:21.}

²² See *Sefer HaChinuch*, mitzvah 31 regarding *kiddush* on Shabbos.

²³ *Siddur Im Dach*, 137d; et al.

natural. It springs entirely from the command of the Holy One: “You shall draw water with simchah.”

This is the advantage of the water libation over the wine libation: The simchah of the wine libation is somewhat “contained” by the world’s natural order. Therefore, it is restricted by nature’s limitations. In contrast, regarding water libation, the simchah is entirely a result of the Divine command; Hashem is infinite, and thus, the associated simchah is beyond measure and limitation.

4.

JUST FOR THE SAKE OF IT

As well-explained and commonly acknowledged, every Jew contains a “spiritual altar” within.²⁴ Consequently, the two types of simchah of the wine libation and the water libation on the altar also have counterparts in the spiritual *avodah* of every Jew:

The simchah of the wine libation, in terms of a person’s *avodah*, refers to the simchah of a mitzvah as a by-product of contemplation: When a person ponders the great merit that Hashem has conferred to him with the opportunity to fulfill a mitzvah, and he ponders the tremendous spiritual elevation that he experiences by fulfilling the mitzvos (he becomes connected with, and cleaves to, Hashem), it calls forth tremendous simchah.

However, since it is his intellect that produces the simchah, {when we analyze this experience of simchah}, we discern not only the mitzvah but also the presence of the person fulfilling the mitzvah (similar to how simchah is produced by wine, as mentioned above).

Since simchah is “intertwined with reason,” it is limited and commensurate with a person’s understanding.²⁵

In contrast, the simchah of the water libation is analogous to the simchah of a mitzvah that is beyond intellect: When a Jewish person takes the approach of self-sacrifice, devoting himself entirely to Hashem, he does not need to resort to logical explanations (regarding the tremendous elevation of mitzvos). As soon as he appreciates that a mitzvah is a command from the Almighty (“He has commanded us”), it evokes extraordinary simchah.

This simchah is “true simchah” that is unbounded (because it “reaches the essence of the soul above the revealed powers”).²⁶ Therefore, regarding **this** celebration of (the water

²⁴ See *Likkutei Torah, Drushim LeSukkos*, s.v., “*ushavtem*,” the first *maamar* by that name (p. 78d et passim.); Tzemach Tzedek’s *Sefer HaMitzvos*, “*Mitzvas Binyan HaMikdash*,” sec. 2; et al.

²⁵ See *Hemshech Samach Tesamach* 5657, p. 48-49 (*Sefer HaMaamarim*, 5657, p. 222-223).

²⁶ See *ibid*.

libation), our Sages say:²⁷ “Whoever has not seen celebration *Beis HaShoevah* has never seen simchah in his life.”

5.

SUKKOS FOLLOWS YOM KIPPUR

This is also the general connection between *Simchas Beis HaShoevah* and the Festival of Sukkos:

The simchah of Sukkos, “the time of our rejoicing,” results from our *avodah* and accomplishments on Rosh Hashanah, the Ten Days of Repentance, and especially Yom Kippur. As known²⁸ {in terms of what it symbolizes}, the sukkah’s *schach* (which derives from the Clouds of Glory)²⁹ is drawn from the repentance and the cloud of incense of Yom Kippur.

The person’s *avodah* on Yom Kippur — “once a year”³⁰ — emerges from the level of *yechidah*³¹ in the soul,³² the connection of the soul’s essence with the Essence of Hashem:³³ “your singular one {the soul} to Your singular One {Hashem}.”³⁴ The accomplishment of Sukkos is that **this** connection to Hashem extends downward until it is revealed and encompasses the Jewish person entirely.

This is also manifest in the mitzvah of sukkah in its simple sense: “*You shall dwell in sukkos for seven days*³⁵ — you shall dwell like you live”.³⁶ Everything that a person does in his house (eating, drinking, etc.) is encompassed in the mitzvah of sukkah. [This is the advantage of a sukkah over a tallis: A tallis envelops the individual, his head, and most of his body; a sukkah also encompasses all the person’s affairs without restrictions].

Therefore, the Festival of Sukkos is apropos for the water libation and *Simchas Beis HaShoevah*. As mentioned above, the scope of the celebration is beyond reason and logic because Sukkos evokes simchah beyond measure and limitation.

²⁷ *Sukkah* 51a (mishnah).

²⁸ See *Ateres Rosh*, “*Shaar Yom HaKipurim*,” 36aff.; *Or HaTorah*, “*Sukkos*,” p. 1722,ff.; *Hemshech “VeKacha*,” ch. 84; *Sefer HaMaamarim* 5657, s.v., “*vehu kechassan*,” ch. 11, et passim.; *Sefer HaMaamarim Melukat*, vol. 1, s.v., “*baSukkos teishvu*,” p. 247-248.

²⁹ *Sukkah* 11b; *Shulchan Aruch*, “*Orach Chaim*,” sec. 625; Alter Rebbe’s *Shulchan Aruch*, “*Orach Chaim*,” sec. 625.

³⁰ {*Vayikra* 16:34.}

³¹ {Lit., “the only one,” a reference to the deepest level of the soul, the essence of the soul.}

³² See *Tosfos*, *Menachos* 18a, s.v. “*ad achas*.”

³³ {*Siddur*, *Hoshanos* for the third day of Sukkos.}

³⁴ See *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 4, p. 1151ff.

³⁵ *Vayikra* 23:42.

³⁶ *Sukkah* 28b.

6.

INTERNALIZING THE ENCOMPASSING LIGHT

As known,³⁷ the meaning behind the mitzvah of lulav is not altogether distinct from that of the mitzvah of sukkah: Taking the lulav doesn't just happen to be required during the seven days of Sukkos. Instead, there is a connection between the two, inasmuch as the mitzvah of lulav serves as a continuation to the mitzvah of sukkah [as is also evident from the law that “the optimal way of taking it (the lulav) is in the sukkah”]:³⁸

The sukkah embraces the person and all his affairs by literally encompassing them. In the lexicon of chassidus: *makif*.³⁹ The novel achievement of the mitzvah of the Four Species is that “you shall take **for yourselves**”;⁴⁰ the *makif* of the sukkah, by contrast, is internalized, “for yourself” — it becomes “**yours**.”

[This is the reason why, when taking the Four Species, a person needs to hold them to his heart.⁴¹ This is so that their message should also be drawn into (the feelings contained in) the heart, and “the heart distributes vitality to all the limbs.”⁴² Thus, the message of the Four Species spreads to (all his faculties in) all parts of his body, including the mind housed within the person's head.]

Specifically, in this way, the purpose of **Sukkos** (revealing the *makif*) is complete: True, the *avodah* of a person's inner faculties is limited. For this reason, he must reach for an *avodah* of self-sacrifice beyond the limits of reason. (As mentioned earlier, the advantage of the water libation over the wine libation {alludes to this}). Nevertheless, the ultimate *avodah* of self-sacrifice occurs when self-sacrifice and *bittul* permeate his conscious faculties, intellect, and emotions so that they, too, mandate that the person conducts himself with self-sacrifice. This is because (a) only in this way is the **person** inculcated with the attitude of self-sacrifice, and consequently, it will endure; and (b) this proves that the self-sacrifice and *bittul* are boundless. There is no place in the soul that they have not penetrated and overtaken.

³⁷ See *Siddur Im Dach*, 263c, et passim.; *Hemshech VeKocha*, ch. 84; *Hemshech Samech Vav*, p. 32; and many other sources; for the explanation according to the revealed dimension of Torah, see *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 22, p. 124ff.

³⁸ See “*Dinei HaLulav*” in the Alter Rebbe's *Siddur*, before *Hallel*.

³⁹ {Lit., “surrounding.” The term *makif* in chassidic and kabbalistic literature often refers to G-d's energy that cannot be contained at all, and thus “surrounds.”}

⁴⁰ *Vayikra* 23:40.

⁴¹ Alter Rebbe's *Siddur*, “*Dinei HaLulav*,” loc. cit.

⁴² *Zohar*, vol. 3, 161b; 221b.

7.

BACK TO ANSWERING

Based on all the above, we can appreciate the deeper rationale of the authority who maintains that the water drawing (and *Simchas Beis HaShoevah*) began (on the second night of Sukkos) after the taking of the Four Species:

The *avodah* of self-sacrifice is only complete when self-sacrifice permeates the person's conscious faculties. Certainly, the same is true regarding the **simchah** necessitated by the *avodah*. This is because (a) simchah can only be triggered by a conscious experience; (b) true simchah has no limitations. Something higher than intellect can produce consummate simchah only when the matter is grasped not only as a *makif* but specifically when the person internalizes it.

On this basis, we can appreciate why the simchah of the water drawing (whose nature is the same as that of the sukkah, as mentioned in Section 5) begins (on the second night of Sukkos) after the *avodah* of “you shall take for yourselves on the first day.” After we accomplish the *avodah* of the “first day” — through the Four Species, internalizing the *makif* of the sukkah, “for yourselves” — then (on the second night of Sukkos), we proceed to the next step, “You shall draw water with simchah” (beyond intellect). The *avodah* of self-sacrifice beyond reason permeates all his inner faculties and arouses a true and revealed simchah.

8.

STAGES

But at the end of the day, the halachah is that the water libation was also performed on the first day of Sukkos, and consequently, so was the water drawing, which was performed before the water drawing. Since “you shall draw water with simchah” was necessary, we must presume that **this** drawing was also done amidst celebration (to the extent permitted).

This is because even before fulfilling the mitzvah of the Four Species, from the first moment of the first night of Sukkos, the effect of the covering of the sukkah already begins in the way of *makif*. This is the reason for experiencing Yom Tov simchah on the first night of Sukkos. Therefore, *Simchas Beis HaShoevah* is also relevant at that point, as the covering of the sukkah enables the suprarational simchah of the water drawing.

But since the sukkah is only *makif*, the joy experienced is neither fully perfect nor entirely revealed.

Only after the *avodah* of taking the Four Species — “You shall take for **yourselves**,” internalizing the *makif* — is *Simchas Beis HaShoevah* entirely enthusiastic, accompanied by the “flute” (and other musical instruments).

9.

NOWADAYS

On this basis, we can appreciate why now, during the era of our exile, the custom of Jewish people everywhere is to start the celebration of *Simchas Beis HaShoevah* on the first night of Sukkos:

The primary process of drawing the *makif* inwards occurred during Temple times when G-dliness was revealed openly and experienced consciously. As a result, the *avodah* was (primarily) performed relying on the conscious faculties.

In contrast, during our exile,⁴³ when “we have not seen our signs...,”⁴⁴ the beginning and first step of *avodah* is not (really) by working with the conscious faculties. The primary *avodah*, and its inception, is from a place of self-sacrifice (utilizing the unconscious faculties). This is simply stated:⁴⁵ “Do not be ashamed before those who mock... be strong as a leopard... swift as an eagle... and strong as a lion” (— more than makes sense). Consequently, nowadays, the advantage and superiority of the second night of Sukkos (which follows the process of bringing the *makif* inwards through “You shall take for yourselves...”) is not (as) evident in comparison with the first night.

[However, since all matters of Torah are eternal, the advantage of *Simchas Beis HaShoevah* of the second night is also evident nowadays — in the magnitude of the simchah itself: We increase the simchah of the second night until it is greater than the simchah of the first night to the extent that it is as if *Simchas Beis HaShoevah* begins on the second night.]

But for this very reason, it turns out that there is an advantage to *Simchas Beis HaShoevah* nowadays over *Simchas Beis HaShoevah* in Temple times:

Just as regarding self-sacrifice itself, during the time of exile, when the conscious faculties are not (as much) revealed, the power of self-sacrifice is **more** revealed than in the

⁴³ See *Maamarim* “*Kol Dodi*,” and “*Ani Yeshaina*,” 5709; et al; *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 9, p. 73; et al.

⁴⁴ *Tehillim* 74:9.

⁴⁵ *Shulchan Aruch*, “*Orach Chaim*,” sec. 1, par. 1 — the first instruction of all the parts of *Shulchan Aruch*.

time of the Temple;⁴⁶ the same applies to the simchah of this *avodah*. As mentioned above, during exile, the simchah accompanying the water libation is a loftier simchah emanating from the soul's essence.

— From talks delivered on the second night of Sukkos, after Maariv, 5741 (1980)

⁴⁶ See *maamarim* “Kol Dodi,” and “Ani Yeshaina,” 5709; et al; *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 9, p. 73; the *maamarim* entitled “*Ein HaKadosh Baruch Hu Ba B'trunia*” (*Sefer HaMaamarim Kuntreisim*, vol. 3, pp. 119ff.; beg. of *Sefer HaMaamarim*, Yiddish).