

דברי מנחם

Diarei Menachem

mpersoff@ouisrael.org

Sukkot is upon us! The mixed feelings associated with Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur are behind us - yes, that mixture of fear and exaltation, judgment and majesty, uncertainty and hope. But now we enter Z'MAN SIMCHATEINU - The Period of Rejoicing - the holiday of Sukkot, concerning which we are invoked to be especially joyous.

And why so when there are so many other occasions in our calendar to rejoice supremely? Is it because the year's harvests have been reaped and now we gather the fruits? Is it because the trepidation that accompanied the Days of Awe has dissipated and now, with renewed faith, we look forward to a year of tranquility?

Or perhaps, drawing on the Netivot Shalom, we understand that the Sukka represents Hashem's intimate home, as it were, in the sense of "Hashem's desire to establish an abode in the lower realms". The Sukka is then analogous to the holiest of all places, the Kodosh Kodoshim in the Temple - that quintessential symbol of Hashem's love for His people. For there were housed the Luchot HaBrit that evoked the covenantal relationship between G-d and us. And there, when we pleased Hashem, the Cherubim faced each other as in loving embrace.

If Shavuot symbolizes Hashem's "marriage" to Am Yisrael, then Sukkot represents bringing the bride into the home with all the Chatan's ecstatic expression of love and devotion. No wonder then that the aristocracy, intelligentsia and nobles alike were all at the forefront of the colorful and exuberant Sukkot celebrations in Temple times. May we have that merit too!

Chag Same'ach!

