

Parashas Haazinu Kinder Torah

Yesterday Was Yom Kippur

"You shall rejoice on your festival (Succos)" (Devarim 16:14). "You will be completely joyous" (Devarim 16:15). Rashi explains that Hashem assures us that we will be completely happy on Succos. In our prayers of the day, we refer to Succos as *zman simchaseinu* (the time of our happiness). The Rambam writes (Hilchos Lulav 8:12,14) that we have a mitzvah to be happy on all of the holidays. However, on Succos there is an extra measure of happiness. We see over and over again that Succos is a time of great happiness. Why are we so happy on Succos?

Ever since Rosh Chodesh Elul, we have been intensely working on correcting our sins by doing *teshuvah* (repentance). The culmination was Yom Kippur, a day of tearful fasting and prayer to Hashem to wipe our slates clean and forgive us of all of our sins. How we cried, how we pounded our hearts, how we regretted every wrong thing that we had ever done. And then . . . the shofar blast. We are forgiven. Hashem is so kind. He cleanses our souls and we can begin anew. What a great feeling.

The Sefer Lekach Tov, quotes several drashas from our *Gedolim* (Torah leaders) which center on the same point. Who is truly happy? One who is free of sin. The most intense happiness in the times of the Beis HaMikdash occurred during the Simchas Beis HaShoeva celebrations during the holiday of Succos. The Rabbis used to dance and sing, "Fortunate is the one who does not sin. And one who sins, let him return and be forgiven" (Sukkah 53a).

Kinderlach . . . This is something that we can take with us throughout the year. Keep in mind that intense feeling of happiness that you had after Yom Kippur, knowing that your sins were forgiven. We all want to avoid having so many sins, so that our teshuva process will be easier. Keep one thing in mind, Kinderlach. Yesterday was Yom Kippur. If we treat every day like the day after Yom Kippur, then we will surely be happier and less likely to sin.

Privilege and Responsibility

"Parashas Haazinu is such a beautiful parasha, Abba."
"I agree, Chaim."
"The words are so poetic. The drashas on those words are so inspiring. I have just

one question, Abba. What is the theme of the parasha? What is this beautiful poem all about?"

"Rabeinu Bechaye answers your question in his introduction to the parasha, Chaim. Moshe Rabeinu is condensing all of world history for Klal Yisrael. He begins with creation, 'Remember the days of old...when The Supreme One gave the nations their inheritance (Devarim 32:7-8). For Hashem's portion is His people [From all of them, He chose only Klal Yisrael to be His] (32:9). He found them in a desert land...protected them like the pupil of His eye [He took us through the desert, performing miraculous acts of kindness for forty years] (32:10). Yeshurun became fat and kicked [we got accustomed to the easy life and forgot about Who was providing for us. We rebelled and angered Him] (32:15). They sacrificed to demons without power (32:17).' We left His service and worshipped other gods. Therefore, we were judged more harshly than any other nation. When the son of the King misbehaves, he shames

"As a matter of fact, Chaim, the Ha'amek Davar addresses your point when he explains the verse, 'When I call out the Name of Hashem, ascribe greatness to our G-d' (Devarim 32:3). Hashem rules over Klal Yisrael with *hashgacha pratit* (personal supervision). He will move heaven and earth for our sake, if we merit it. When we call out to Him, He shows His greatness by revealing His *hashgacha pratit* and directing Heaven and earth to shower us with blessing. It all begins with us - calling out His Name." "Amazing, Abba. How do we do that?"

"The Torah Temima lists several *drashas* from the Gemora, which are the basis for practical *halachos* in calling out Hashem's Name. We 'call out His Name' by blessing Him before learning Torah. When we answer, '*Borchu*' in the morning and evening prayers, we bring greatness to Him. When we answer, '*Yehey shmeh rabba mivorach li'olam u'loimei omayal*' in the Kaddish prayer, we bring distinction to the Almighty. Answering, '*baruch Hu u'varuch Shemo*' is another way of bringing Him glory. Of course we all know that merely saying the words is the very minimum. The words need to pierce our hearts and minds with awesome thoughts of Hashem's greatness."

"Wonderful, Abba. I am so inspired! I am going to show the world Hashem's greatness!"
"Fantastic Chaim! I am so proud of you. *Be'hatzlacha rabba* (may you have great success)!"



the Crown and must be punished accordingly. We were sent into *golus* (exile) and forced to serve our enemies.

"Why were we not destroyed completely? In order that the nations would not think that their strength destroyed us. Yet they persecuted us mercilessly. In the end of days they will all be judged and pay for their cruelty, as the verse states, 'Mine is vengeance and retribution...for the day of their catastrophe is near...' (32:35-36). At that time Hashem will recall His Mercy, and He will once again call us His Nation and His Servants."

"What a fascinating explanation, Abba. I now understand that we are a very privileged people. Hashem chose us, Hashem loves us, and Hashem does kind deeds for us every moment of every day. However, this privilege carries with it a responsibility. We must express our appreciation by doing His Will. We must serve Him."

"Chaim, I could not have said it better myself."

"Abba, is there one particular aspect of *Avodas Hashem* (Serving Hashem) that the poem focuses upon?"

Kinderlach . . . Parashas Haazinu teaches us so many yesodos (principles) in Avodas Hashem. We are His Chosen People, and He loves us more than we can ever know. That privilege carries with it the responsibility of being "A kingdom of Kohanim and a holy nation (Shemos 19:6)." A basic and exalted way to serve The Almighty is to bring greatness to His Holy Name. Our prayers contain many opportunities to call out to Him. Therefore, kinderlach, call out to Hashem! Keep Him in your hearts and minds at all times. Demonstrate His Greatness, and the greatness of Klal Yisrael - His Holy Nation.

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