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FROM THE SHIURIM OF

HARAV YISROEL BROG שליט"א

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THE CLOUDS OF GLORY SEPARATED AM YISRAEL FROM THE NATIONS

The mitzvah of Sukkah is to commemorate the fact that Hakadosh Baruch Hu surrounded us with the *ananei hakavod*, the clouds of glory, when He took us out of Mitzrayim. The Ramchal, Rav Moshe Chaim Luzzato, in his sefer *Derech Hashem* (חלק ד פרק ה), writes that in addition to the physical benefit from those clouds that protected the Yidden from the elements, there was also a great spiritual impact from them.¹ *Bedarkei haruchniyus*, they had an extreme effect. He explains that just as those *ananim* separated the Yidden from their surroundings and elevated them from the *aretz*, they also brought them to a higher spiritual level. Through the unique environment of the *ananei hakavod* נמשך להם מציאות הארה - the *ananim* created for them a reality of an *ohr*, an energy, a force, an influence from Hashem, which became part of them and made them מובדל מן העמים. It elevated the Yidden above all the nations of the world and separated them from the nations forever and ever.

The Ramchal explains that the reason this happened when the Yidden went out of Mitzrayim is because Hakadosh Baruch Hu wanted them to reach and maintain a very high level, to prepare them for the history of the Jewish nation. At that time, the *ananei hakavod* was a requirement; it was necessary for the development of Am Yisrael. And he says that this *ohr hakedushah*, this holy light, continues and surrounds every single Jew, for all generations. It sets him apart from all other people. It elevates him above everybody else and enables him to grasp, comprehend, and conduct himself in an elevated fashion. It renews itself every year to all of the Jewish people on the Chag HaSukkos through the Sukkah.

So, when we enter the Sukkah, we have to understand that every moment spent inside prepares us for an injection of *hashpa'ah* from Hakadosh Baruch Hu to elevate us. And this *hashpa'ah* will

¹ ענין הסוכה והלולב הוא כי הנה ענני הכבוד שהקיף הקב"ה את ישראל מלבד תועלתם בגשמיות שהיה לסוך עליהם ולהגן בעדם עוד היתה תולדה גדולה נולדת בהם בדרכי הרוחניות. והוא כמו שעי"י העננים ההם היו נמצאים ישראל מובדלים לבדם ונשואים מן הארץ כך היה נמשך להם מציאות הארה המשכנת אותם לבד נבדלים מכל העמים ומנושאים ומנוטלים מן העה"ז עצמו ועליונים ממש על כל גויי הארץ. ודבר זה נעשה בשעתו לישראל להגיע אל המעלה העליונה הראויה להם ומשכנת תולדות זאת לכל אי מישראל לדור דורים שאמנם אור קדושה נמשך מלפניו יתי ומקיף כל צדיק מישראל ומבדילו מכל שאר בני האדם ומנשאו למעלה מהם ומשימו עלינו על כלם ומתחדש דבר זה בישראל בחג הסוכות על ידי הסוכה.

enable us to comprehend Torah better, to comprehend the reality of Hakadosh Baruch Hu better, to be *misparallel* better, to receive the blessings of Hashem better without impediments. All of this happens because of being in the Sukkah. The Sukkah represents these *ananei hakavod*.

You have to know that the Torah calls Sukkos the *chag ha'asif*. It's the time of harvest. It's the time when you gather in your crops. You're putting away your grain and your crops in the silo for the long winter. A person takes inventory of his assets, and he puts them away. Hakadosh Baruch Hu wants us to remember that whatever we have is from Hakadosh Baruch Hu.

HASHEM IS ME'ASEIF AM YISRAEL

The Sefas Emes says a *davar niflah*: that whatever the holiday is down here, that's what Hashem is doing upstairs. Hashem is also celebrating *chag ha'asif lema'alah*. Hashem is gathering in His assets. Who are Hashem's assets? Klal Yisrael. Hashem is harvesting His assets right now and preparing them for the long winter. When we go into the Sukkah knowing we're going into the hands of Hashem and acknowledging that whatever we have is from Hakadosh Baruch Hu, we're enabling Hakadosh Baruch Hu to be *me'aseif* us, to gather us, to make us part of His *rechush*. When a farmer puts away his crops in the silo, he does so in the most beneficial fashion to make them last as long as possible, so Hakadosh Baruch Hu does the same to us and preserves us for as long a time as possible. It's an unbelievable *hatzlachah* for a Yid. If a Yid would understand what he's being *zocheh* to in this time period, he would stay in the Sukkah and never walk out!

HASHEM DESIRES TO GIVE BROCHO

The *ananim* were called the *ananei hakavod*, clouds of glory, clouds of honor. Why were they called clouds of honor? What does the term "*kavod*" mean? We find a *mishnah* (Avos 6:11) that says: כל מה שברא הקב"ה בעולמו לא ברא אלא לכבודו, everything Hakadosh Baruch Hu created in this world, He created only for His *kavod*. What does it mean that Hakadosh Baruch Hu created everything for His *kavod*? To us, it would sound like perhaps it has a hint of *ga'avah*. Hashem is entitled *הי מלך גאות*. If anybody is entitled to have *ga'avah*, it's Hashem because He is the King of all. He is the owner of everything. He's entitled. But is that the *kavanah* here?

The Ramchal says a *davar niflah* in his *sefer Da'as Tevunos*, another work of Rav Moshe Chaim Luzzato. What is the *kavod* of Hashem? That I should give Him *kavod*? He says, the *kavod* of Hashem is when Hakadosh Baruch Hu is able to be *sameach* with all of His creatures, with everything, when Hakadosh Baruch Hu is

sameach bechol ma'asav. In other words, when Hakadosh Baruch Hu is able to benefit them and give them all the *tov*, all the good, that's *shayach* to give them, that's the greatest *kavod* of Hashem.²

You know when we say this? Every single morning. Before *Ashrei* we say, יהי כבוד ה' לעולם "May the *kavod* of Hashem be forever." How? It says: רצונו של אדם זה הוא כבודו, a person's *ratzon* is his *kavod*. What I would like to do brings me honor. If I want to be the head of a company, that's my honor. If I want to sit quietly and no one should bother me, that's my honor. If I want to teach Torah, that's my honor. If a guy wants to learn Torah, that's his honor. The *ratzon* of Hakadosh Baruch Hu is *kevodo*. And what's the *ratzon* of Hashem? ישמה ה' במעשיו. So when the *mishnah* says, כל מה שברא הקב"ה בעולמו לא ברא אלא לכבודו, our job is to know: how do I give Hakadosh Baruch Hu *kavod*? By preparing myself in such a fashion that Hakadosh Baruch Hu could bestow upon me all of His *brachos*. When Hakadosh Baruch Hu could bestow upon me all of His *brachos* and then ישמה ה' במעשיו, that is the greatest *kavod* of Hashem.

This is an amazing *shtickel*, an amazing insight. Hashem is going to have a *ta'anah* on us: you didn't give Me *kavod*. We're going to say, "What *kavod*?" Hashem is going to say, "All I wanted to do was get *kavod*. My whole *kavod* is not going to be that you say, 'You're great, You're great, You're great.'" The whole *kavod* was preparing yourself in such a fashion that Hashem says, "I can rejoice with you by giving you all of the *brachos* that it's *shayach* to give you."

When a person becomes closer to Hashem, by *davening* to Hashem, by doing *mitzvos* properly, by learning Torah, that's bringing *kavod* to Hashem. Not because he's listening to Hashem. A lot of times, your child listens to you. Your employee listens to you. Give me a little respect. What's the respect you want? The respect you want is that they should listen to you. It's an egotistical thing. I have an ego. I'm the boss. I want that little worker to understand I'm the boss. I want the worker to say, "Yes, Mr. Boss. I'll pick up the papers. Yes, Mr. Boss, I'll come at 9 o'clock." The boss's *kavod* is not to give the guy a raise. That's a benefit. You give me *kavod*, and I'll pay you with a raise.

² ועוד תבין, שאף על פי ועכשיו אנו יודעים שהקב"ה שמח על כל מעשיו, והם לכבוד אלו, כענין שנאמר (תהלים קד, לא), "יהי כבוד ה' לעולם ישמח ה' במעשיו", לא נחשוב מפני זה שבזמן שלא היו נמצאים אלה, אם כי היתה חסרה ממנו ית' שמחה או כבוד ח'ו'. אלא כבר אמרנו, האדון ית'ש במציאותו הפשוט - אין מקום לנבראים עמו כלל, כי אינם שייכים בעיניו. אבל ברצותו בהם, אז מפני החפץ והרצון הזה נמצאים לו לשמחה, כביכול, ולכבוד. כי ודאי החפץ הזה הוא הנותן מציאות הנמצאים האלה, ונקרא שאינו מושלם, אם אין מציאותם נעשה. והרי זה כמקום העומד ליבנות עליו בנינים, שהוא חלל עד שלא נמלא מן הבנינים ההם. ולא הנבראים לבד, אלא אפילו כל דרכי ההנהגה והחוקים, מיני ההשפעה שזכרנו, שהם לפי ערכנו ולא לפי ערכו, אין להם ענין כלל אלא ברצותו במציאות הנמצאים. על כן רק על פי החפץ הזה חידשם כולם, ואינם מוכרחים בו; אבל גם הם בכלל הבנינים הממלאים את המקום הזה, כי אלו ואלו להשלמת החפץ הזה, וזה פשוט. והרי ביארנו מה שדי לנו בענין הזה.

The Ramchal is telling us that here it's *farkert*. The *kavod* of Hashem is *ישמח ה' במעשיו*, that Hakadosh Baruch Hu could give me *brachos*. We all want *brachos*. We go run to *rebbe*s for *brachos*, we run to *rabbanim* for *brachos*. We do *segulos* for *brachos*. We're all looking for *eitzos*. People wrap strings around their wrists. All kinds of funny behavior. People are doing anything in the world to get some *brachos*. Here are the *brachos*. Hashem said, "I want to be *mevarech* you. Make yourself into a *keili*." *ישמח ה' במעשיו*.

GEDULAH IS THE MIDDAH OF CHESSED

It says in the *Haggadah* that Hakadosh Baruch Hu took us out of Mitzrayim *bechvodo uveatzmo*. What does it mean that he took us out, "in all His *kavod*?" The Vilna Gaon says *kavod* is a *lashon* of *gedulah*. What does that mean? When we say Hashem is הגדול והנורא in *Shemoneh Esrei*, what are we referring to when we say Hashem is *Hagadol*? Rashi in *Parshas Vaeschanan* (Devarim 3:24) on the words את גדלך, Rashi explains, את מידת טובך - it refers to the *middah* of *chessed*. When Hashem does *chessed*, that's called Hashem's *gedulah*. When Hashem took us out from Mitzrayim, He took us out *bechvodo uveatzmo* in His *gedulah*. Every morning in *vayevarech Dovid* we say the *brachah* that Dovid said to Hashem: לך ה' הגדולה. So the *gemara* in *Brachos* says, what is that? Where was the *gedulah* of Hashem most apparent? *זה מעשה בראשית*, in the creation of the world. *עולם חסד יבנה*, Hashem's creation of the world was the greatest act of *chessed*. You know why? There were no *zechusim* then. We had no merits. That's why Dovid Hamelech *davens* to Hashem, saying: *עזרי מעם ה'*, Hashem, let my assistance come from You. *עושה שמים וארץ*, Who made *shamayim va'aretz*. Why does Dovid Hamelech describe Hashem here specifically as *עושה שמים וארץ*? Because when Hashem made *shamayim va'aretz* there were no *zechusim*. There were no merits. Hashem did it out of His free will, His *middas hatov*.

We have to understand this is what the *ananei hakavod* are. Why are they called the *ananei hakavod*, clouds of *kavod*? Because they gave *kavod* to Hashem. What was the *kavod*? That Hashem was able to show such *chessed*, and bestow such amazing *brachah* and gifts upon the Jewish nation *lifnei kol haolam*, in front of the whole world. *ונפליו אני ועמך*, Moshe Rabeinu said, "Hashem give us the best. Give us such a *kavod* in a way that it's going to be outstanding, אשר לא נברא, that such a thing was never created before." And that's why they're called *ananei hakavod* because they're the *anim* of *kavod* and *chessed*.

When we sit in the *Sukkah* we're sitting in the *ananei hakavod*. You have to know Hakadosh Baruch Hu is begging us. Please give

Me *kavod*. Give Me a chance to rejoice with you. Give Me a chance to bestow *chessed* upon you in such a manner that everybody in the world will see. Everybody will recognize. Everybody will be blown away over the *chessed* that Hashem is doing *bema'asav*. That's the greatest *kavod* of Hashem. That's what the *Chag HaSukkos* is. That's what the *chag ha'asif* is. Hashem gathers in the harvest. When I gather in my harvest, I want to bring out the most from it. When Hakadosh Baruch Hu brings in His harvest, Klal Yisrael, Hakadosh Baruch Hu wants to bestow upon us the greatest *chessed*.

On Rosh Hashanah in *shemoneh esrei* we say *ובכן תן כבוד ה' לעמך*, "Hakadosh Baruch Hu give *kavod* to Your nation." That's what we say to Hashem. We beg Hashem give *kavod* to Your nation. The *mefarshim* explain that that *tefillah* of *תן כבוד ה' לעמך*, give honor to Your nation, is *keneged* Yaakov Avinu who said *ברוך שם מלכותו שם כבוד מלכותו לעולם ועד*. When we say *Shema* we say *ברוך שם כבוד מלכותו לעולם ועד* after the *Shema*. Why is that? It's not in the *chumash*. Where does it come from?

The *gemara* says in *Pesachim* that when Yaakov Avinu was at the end of his life and ready to depart from this world, he gathered his children around him and wanted to tell them when the Moshiach was going to come. All of a sudden, the information left his mind. He said to his children, "Maybe there is one amongst you who is a *pasul*, who is not up to where he's supposed to be, and Hashem doesn't want me to reveal this to you." You know what they said? They said, "Father, *שמע ישראל ה' אלקינו ה' אחד*." Just like in your heart, there is only *Hashem echad*, *כך בליבנו*, in our heart there's only *Hashem echad*. You know what Yaakov Avinu said? *ברוך שם כבוד מלכותו לעולם ועד*. Blessed, which means let there be an increase of the *shem*. The *shem* means the *hanhagah*, the conduct. What conduct? *Of kavod malchuso*. In order to make the *kavod* of the *malchus* of Hashem be born out.

Now, in the *tefillah* we say *ובכן תן כבוד ה' לעמך*, we ask Hashem to give *kavod* to His nation. How is that *keneged* Yaakov Avinu who said *ברוך שם כבוד מלכותו לעולם ועד*? That refers to the *kavod* of Hashem. So what *shaychus* does one have with the other? But according to what we just explained, it's *gevaldig*. Because the greatest *kavod* of Hashem is to have a *kavod leamecha*. The greatest honor to Hashem is for His nation to be *mechubad*. When Hakadosh Baruch Hu's nation is a *keili* to be *mekabel* all the *brachos* of Hashem, to manifest and represent Hashem's *tov* and *koach hatavah*, that's the greatest *kavod* for Hashem. Since Rosh Hashanah is the *yom hamalchus*, we say, *תן כבוד ה' לעמך* "May Your nation be *zocheh* to all the *kavod* so that in that way You, Hakadosh Baruch Hu, have the *kavod*."

SUKKOS SWEETENS THE DIN OF ROSH HASHANAH

Sukkos is the greatest time of *chessed*. The Arizal and the Gra say a *devar nifla*. Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur are times of *gevuros*. They're both a time of *din*, judgment. Many of us had all kinds of *gezeiros* decreed upon us on Rosh Hashanah. It says רשעים לאלתר למות. Some of us may have been given a chance to wait until Yom Kippur. What happens if you didn't make it? What if you already made it *lechaim*, but you had different *yesurim* decreed upon you? What's then? Are we locked in?

You have to know that the Yom Tov of Sukkos is *mamtik* the *din*. *Mamtik* means it sweetens all the *dinim*. Any *gezeirah* that was decreed upon you *chas veshalom* on this Rosh Hashanah, on this Yom Kippur - whether it was a *gezeirah* of *galus*, a *gezeirah* of losing a job *chas veshalom*, losing a spouse, a child, money, happiness, peace of mind, who knows what it was - you have to realize that Hakadosh Baruch Hu uses *Chag HaSukkos* to be *mamtik* all the *dinim*. In the *tefillah* that is said when leaving the Sukkah at the end of the Yom Tov, it says, "Hashem let my going into the *Sukkah* be considered like my going into *galus*." Many people have decrees of *galus* on them. You have to know that *Chag HaSukkos* is the *chag* that a person could be *zocheh* to *chessed*. It could be *mamtik* all the *dinim* and *gezeiros* he has upon himself. That's why it's called the *ananei hakavod*. That's why it's called this is the *chag hakavod* like no other *chag*. It's the *chag* that Hashem decreed as the time of the year that I want to do *chessed* with My people like nothing else.

You know why? Because it follows Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. Many of us are clean. Many of Klal Yisrael have become *tahor*. Maybe others have become even more *tahor*. There's no better time period of the year when a Yid is clean and Hakadosh Baruch Hu says this is the *chag ha'asif*. This is the *zman*, even if I decreed upon you all kinds of *gezeiros*, you could be *mamtik* all the *dinim* in the *velt* on Sukkos. That's what *chag ha'asif* is about.

That's what this *havdalah*, this elevation, this *ohr* that's *nimshach* from the *zman* of the *midbar*, this *ohr hachessed* is about. Hashem gave all the *brachos* to the Am Yisrael in the *midbar* through the *ananei hakavod*, and now we could all experience this in the Sukkah and be *zocheh* to what's called שלום עלינו ועל כל עמו ישראל. A Sukkah is a *sukkas shalom*. It gives you peace. And we all need *shalom*. We need *shleimus* in every area of our lives. In our בניי חיי ומזוני. When you're sitting in the Sukkah and you're being *mekayem* the *mitzvah* of Sukkah, you should look upwards to the *schach* and say to Hakadosh Baruch Hu, "Please let me be *zocheh*, by my fulfillment of this *mitzvah* of sitting in the Sukkah, to all the *kavod*, and to bring *kavod* to You." How do I bring *kavod* to

Hashem? ישמח ה' במעשיו. By Hashem bestowing *brachos* on me. And Hashem is sitting there waiting. He's saying, "I want to be *me'aseif* you. I want to do it. I want to *mashpia* on you."

Now, how do you make these *brachos* come upon you? We're going to make two suggestions. There is a *gemara* in *Sukkah* (53a). On Sukkos, there was a time of *simchas beis hashoeivah*, a *gevaldige* time of *simchah*. Hillel Hazaken, Hillel the elder, who was famous for his humility and patience, had a famous song he would sing when he was *sameach* in the *simchas beis hashoeivah*. This is what he would sing: אם אני כאן הכל כאן, if I'm here everybody is here. אם אני כאן, and if I'm not here, מי כאן, who is here? It's a strange thing. If I'm here, it's a happening party. You don't need anything else. If I'm not here, you've got nothing else going on. What does he mean?

MAKE SURE HASHEM IS IN YOUR SUKKAH

Rashi says that this was *mussar* that Hillel would be *doresh* to the *rabim*. During the *simchas beis hashoeivah*, when everybody was in an elevated mood and the *matzav* of *simchah* became incredible, Hillel Hazaken would *darshen* to the *rabim* as follows: Don't sin. *Simchah* sometimes brings you to *chataim*. So he would say, אם אני כאן, ani is the name of Hashem, if Hashem is here, then הכל כאן. That means to say, make sure our *simchah* makes Hashem *chafeitz* this *Beis Hamikdash*, where the *simchas beis hashoeivah* took place, so that the *Shechinah* should rest here. Then you know what will happen? יהא כבודו קיים, make sure that Hashem's *kavod* continues. And then you know what the consequence will be? ויבאו הכל כאן, then all the blessings, all the *brachos* will come here. But ואם תחטאו, if you're going to sin, ויאסלק שכינתי, Hashem is going to remove the *Shechinah*, מי יבוא כאן, and who is going to come here?

Now, the question you have to ask yourself is this: Why did Hillel use this name *davka* on Sukkos? Because we use it on Sukkos. We say אני והו' הושיעה נא. There's a *mishnah* in *Sukkah* that says that they used to say אני והו' הושיעה נא in the service. What was that? That was the *avodah* of *aravah*. Rashi says it was one of the names of Hashem. It was one of the seventy-two names of Hashem. אני והו' was part of that name. The *simchas beis hashoeivah* was in the *Beis Hamikdash* on Sukkos, so Hillel said אם אני כאן, if you make sure Hashem is here with us, הכל כאן, it means that our *simchah* is going to be a *simchah* that is not going to bring us to sin, and then the *kavod* of Hashem will continue to be upon us and everything will be here. אם אני כאן הכל כאן. Everything will be here. We will lack for nothing. But אם אין אני כאן, if Hashem is not here and you're going to cause yourself to sin, you're going to diminish the presence of Hashem, you're going to diminish Hashem's *kavod*. Hashem is not going to be able to give you *chessed*.

So the first thing we have to do is to think about the fact that there is a Hashem. We have to make sure that our *simchas hachag* does not, *chas veshalom*, bring us to any sins. That's the first thing. You have to go out of your way and be careful not to forget that you're in the presence of Hashem. When you're in the Sukkah you're in the presence of Hashem. That's what a person has to know. And if a person knows he's in the presence of Hakadosh Baruch Hu, then *hakol tov*. But if you forget that Hakadosh Baruch Hu is here, then what happens is....

ESPECIALLY BEWARE OF SINS FROM SPEECH

But the *emes* is there's a specific sin you have to be especially careful about. And that sin is the *chata'ei halashon*, the *chataim* that come from your tongue. The *chataim* of *dibur* play a bigger role on Sukkos than at any other time.

There's a very famous Vilna Gaon who says that *Chag HaSukkos* has the *koach* to *machnia* the *yetzer hara* of the *chata'ei halashon*. It is known that there are *המשה מוצאות הפה*, five places of articulation in the mouth that produce the sounds of speech. They are the lips, teeth, tongue, palate, and throat. The Vilna Gaon points out that the word *סוכה* only has four of them: the *samach* is from the teeth, the *vav* is from the lips, the *chaf* is from the palate, and the *hei* is from the throat. Which one is not present in the word *סוכה*? The *lashon*, the tongue. He says these four *מוצאות הפה* surround the *lashon*, guarding it from breaking through and sinning with *lashon hara*. And this is alluded to in the *passuk* in *Tehillim* (31:21) *תצפנם בסוכה מריב לשונות*. The *lashon* is concealed and protected within the *סוכה*. To get the *koach* of Sukkah, you have to be *zahir* from the *chataim* of the *lashon*. So *nivul peh*, you have to be careful of. *Lashon hara*, you have to be careful of. Anger you have to be careful of. *Divrei rivos* you have to be careful of. Not to fight during these days. You have to know that's what the Sukkah represents.

Now, you know where you see this? There's a very unique *mitzvah* on *Sukkah* that many of us overlook because we don't have a *Beis Hamikdash* today. There's a special *mitzvah* of *aravah*. In addition to taking the *aravah* in the *daled minim*, they used to have a *mitzvas aravah*, they used to circle the *mizbeach* every single day. They used to line up these huge *aravos* against the *mizbeach*, every single day. As a *zecher*, to commemorate that, we walk around the *bimah* with the *daled minim* once every day when we say *hoshanos*. We're commemorating that *zecher* of the *aravos*. Specifically on Hoshanah Rabbah they go around seven times.

So we see that on *Chag HaSukkos*, the *aravah* stands out more than any other *minim*. What's the *pshat*?

We know the *aravah* is the shape of the lips. The *Sefer Hachinuch* says you know what the *remez* is? *שישים אדם רסן לפיו*, a person should put a muzzle

on his mouth. You have to watch what you say on Sukkos. Sukkos is a *zman* of the *tikun* of *lashon*, and that's why there's specifically a *mitzvah* of *aravos*.

How many times do we bang the *aravos* on the ground on Hoshanah Rabbah? Five times. You know why five? Against each one of the five מוצאות הפה, articulatory components of the mouth.. If I sinned with my tongue, if I sinned with my palate, if I sinned with my throat, if I sinned with my lips, if I sinned with my teeth, Hashem it should alleviate all the *dinim* that comes through this.

Another interesting thing. There's a famous *mishnah* most of us learned in *Sukkah*. The *mishnah* says there's a certain type of *aravah* that's *pasul*. You know what it's called? It's called a *tzaftzefah*. A *tzaftzefah* is *pasul* for *aravos*. What's the *pshat*? What is a *tzaftzefah*? It's something with jagged edges. It's not smooth. Why is that *pasul*? And also what kind of name is *tzaftzefah*? You know what *metztaftzef* means? Chattering. It's nonstop talking. A *metzora* has to bring *tzaporim chayos metztaftzefos* You know why? He became a *metzora* because of *lashon hara*, so he has to bring these birds as a *tikun*. So *tzaftzefah* is *pasul* because the whole *inyan* of the *aravah* is to be *meramez* that you should be *shomer* your *peh*.

This is the whole *mehalech* of Chag HaSukkos. If we do our part, then Hakadosh Baruch Hu is going to be *mantik* all the *dinim*.

In light of this, we can understand a beautiful piece from the Vilna Gaon.³ There's a famous *mishnah*. The *mishnah* gives a *mashal* about rain on the first night of Sukkos. It says it's comparable to someone who comes to be *mozeig* a *kos* for his master and the master spills the pitcher on the servant's face. The Gaon asks why it doesn't simply say that the servant wants to give a cup of wine to his master and the master spills the cup in his face. Why does it talk about spilling the pitcher and being *mozeig* the *kos*?

Do you know what *mezigah* is? In the olden days, they never drank *yayin chai*. *Yayin chai* wasn't good wine; it was too strong. How did they drink it? *Mazug*. They took the water and they mixed the water with the *yayin* and that mixture of the water with the *yayin* mitigated the *yayin*. It made the *yayin* drinkable.

³ בגמרא במס' סוכה (דף כ"ק) ה' גשמים יורדים בחג וכו' הכפר שרי משלו משל לעבד שבא למזון כוס לרבו ושפך לו קיתון של מים על פניו, ויש לדקדק מדוע לא אמר כפשוטו משל לעבד שבא ליתן כוס לרבו ושפך אותו על פניו, אכן יבואר עם מה שנודע בי ראש השנה ויום הכיפורים המה ימי הדין, ואחריהם ימי החג במצות לקיחת הלולב ושיבת הסוכה, והימים האלה המה ימי רחמים להמתיק הדינים ע"י המצות המקיפות אותנו ואשר אנחנו ממלאים ידיתו ברכה בימים ההם, אמנם ברדת גשמים המכריחים אותנו לבטל מצות סוכה הזה עד משיחק גאון כי הוא יתברך אינו חפץ ח' לפשר הדינים כי אם שישארו בתוקפם ובגבורתם כאשר היו, וזאת נודע כי המציגה הוא עירוב מים ביין להמתיק את הרפיות שיהי' ראוי לשתייה, וזהו ענין המשל לעבד שבא למזוג כוס לרבו, היינו לבטל חריפותו, והאדון שפך המים הלאה וזהו ושפך לו קיתון של מים על פניו ר"ל שאינו הסיכה רוצה בהמציגה.

Zugt the Vilna Gaon, you have to know *yayin* represents *din* and *mayim* represents *rachamim*. You take the edge off the sharpness of the wine by bringing *mayim*. *Mayim* is *mamtik* the *yayin*. It sweetens the wine. It takes off the *charifus*, the sharpness. The Gaon explains that when you sit in the Sukkan, you're sweetening the *gezeiros* and the *dinim* that came upon you on Rosh Hashanah. But when Hashem makes it rain on Sukkos, then Hashem is telling you, "I don't want your *mezigas hamayim*. I don't want you to introduce your water to take off the sharpness of the wine. I don't want your Sukkan to diminish your *gezeiros* and *dinim* which I put on you."

So we have to understand that we're only going to get the *brachos* if we're *mesaken* the *lashon*. So that means there has to be *achdus*. There has to be *ahavah*. There has to be *rei'us*. You have to be careful because the *yetzer hara* is definitely going to try to take away from this. It doesn't say anywhere that the *yetzer hara* doesn't operate on Sukkos. The *yetzer hara* makes sure he gets on your *kishkes*, and he may get you to say something sharp. He'll get you to diminish your *tikun* and your *brachah* of Sukkos. He might get you to say something with anger, to say *lashon hara*, to argue. Of course, only *leshem shamayim*. But a person has to know that this can hinder the whole *tikun* of Sukkos and the *birchas haSukkos*. When you take the *aravah* on Hoshanah Rabbah and you bang it on the floor, you should know those *aravos*, if you lived Sukkos properly, those *aravos* are powerful *aravos*.

I read an amazing thing about Rav Meir Simcha Hakohen of Dvinsk. He used to give a piece of the *hoshanos* that he banged to soldiers who were conscripted in the Russian army. He told them, "If you take this, then nothing will happen to you," because the *brachah*, the *haganah*, the protection, the *ananei hakavod* was *chal* in those *aravos*. And anyone who took an *aravah* from him was *taka* saved through great *nissim* and returned home safely.

This person has to know that many *reshaim* died on Hoshanah Rabbah. The Chafetz Chaim writes in *Shemiras Halashon* that the main *yesurim* that people suffer in this world is because of *chataei halashon*. The *aravah* comes to be *mesaken* it. That's how a person is *nitzal* from *yesurim*. Therefore, we should *daven* to Hakadosh Baruch Hu that we should be *zocheh* to be *mechabed* Hashem, to have all the *brachos* of all the *ohr* of the *ananei hakavod* that come down to us in this world. We should be *zocheh* to all the *kavod* so that Hashem could rejoice with us, and if you didn't do *teshuvah* yet, do *teshuvah* now. This is the time to do *teshuvah*, before Hoshanah Rabbah. *Chap arein* and do *teshuvah* so that Hakadosh Baruch Hu will bring upon you all the *brachos*. Hakadosh Baruch Hu will then be *me'aseif* you *bechag ha'asif* for a wonderful, wonderful *shanah tovah!*

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