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מסוכות לחנוכה – ומחנוכה לסוכות

**I**mmediately after the Torah discusses the *mitzvos* of the *yom tov* of *Succos*, the *mitzvah* of lighting the *Menorah* in the *Beis HaMikdash* appears. The רוקח על התורה, one of the בעלי התוספות, comments that the juxtaposition of the *mitzvos* of *Succos* and the *mitzvah* of lighting the *Menorah* indicates a connection between *Succos* and *Chanukah*, one which *Chazal* noticed as well and made clear through the *halachos* of *Chanukah*. Just as *Succos* is eight days long (including *Shemini Atzeres*), *Chanukah* is eight days long. Just as on *Succos* we say the full *Hallel* every day during davening, on *Chanukah* we say the full *Hallel* every day during davening. Just as on *Succos*, a *succah* more than twenty *amos* high is invalid, a *ner Chanukah* more than twenty *amos* above the ground is invalid.

This leads us to our first question: There is clearly a connection between *Succos* and *Chanukah* on a *halachic* level. This *halachic* connection certainly indicates a קשר פנימי, a deeper internal connection, between the two *chagim*. What exactly is the קשר הפנימי between *Succos* and *Chanukah*?

Moreover, the *gemara* on *Shabbos* 21b teaches that מעיקר הדין, according to the letter of the law, it is sufficient to light one candle for the entire household each day of *Chanukah*. The *mehadrin* of the *mitzvah* is to light one candle for each member of the household each day of *Chanukah*. The *mehadrin min hamehadrin* light one more candle each day than the day before for each member of the household. The *minhag* of all *Klal Yisroel* is to fulfill this *mitzvah* of *hadlokas ner Chanukah lamehadrin min hamehadrin*. Our second question is: Why is it that this specific *mitzvah* is fulfilled by all of *Klal Yisroel lamehadrin min hamehadrin*?

The *gemara* on *Shabbos* 21b brings a *machlokes* between *Beis Shammai* and *Beis Hillel* regarding the *neros Chanukah* – do we start with eight *neros* on the first night and subtract one every subsequent night or do we start with one *ner* on the first night and add one every subsequent night? This raises our third and final question: *Hillel* and *Sham-mai* lived 100 years after the *Chashmonaim* entered the *Beis HaMikdash*! What happened during these 100 years between the *Chashmonai* victory and the

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*machlokes* between *Hillel* and *Shammai*? We have no “*Chazals*” about this 100-year period – how did they perform the *mitzvah* of *hadlokas ner Chanukah* during these 100 years?

In order to answer these three questions, we must begin with the words of the *Maharal* in פרק מז of *Gevuros Hashem*. The *Maharal* writes: The word “אמונה” appears in relation to *Am Yisroel* three times in the Torah. The first time it appears is when *Moshe Rabbeinu* comes to tell the Jews about the imminent *geulah* – “ויאמן העם וישמעו כי פקד די' את בני ישראל וגוי, And the people believed; and when they heard that Hashem had remembered *B'nei Yisroel...*” (*Shemos* 4:31). The second time it appears is at *k'rias yam suf* – “ויאמינו בדי ובמשה עבדו, And they believed in Hashem and in His servant, Moshe” (*Shemos* 14:31). The third time it appears is at *Har Sinai, erev kabbalas haTorah*, when Hashem tells Moshe, “וגם בך יאמינו לעולם, And they will also believe in you forever” (*Shemos* 19:9).

The *Maharal* explains that these three *emunos* constitute the foundation of Judaism. The first *emunah* is *emunah* in *hashgochah pratis*. The second *emunah* is *emunah* that אין עוד מלבדו, there is none other than Hashem, Who is all-capable and all-powerful. The third *emunah* is *emunah* that תורה מן השמים. These three *emunos* are manifested in the *yomim tovim* of *Pesach*, *Shavuos*, and *Succos*. On *Pesach*, the *chag* of *yetzias Mitzrayim* and *k'rias yam suf*, the *emunah* of אין עוד מלבדו—Hashem is all-capable and all-powerful—is manifested; on *Shavuos*, the *emunah* of תורה מן השמים is manifested; and on *Succos*, when millions of people make *aliyah laregel* and participate in the *Simchas Beis HaSho'eivah*, the *emunah* in *hashgochah pratis* is manifested. It is therefore appropriate that we dwell in the *Succah*, which commemorates the עניי הכבוד, representing the *hashgochah pratis* Hashem showered upon every Jew during their travel through the desert. Because of the fundamental *emunos* manifested in *Pesach*, *Shavuos*, and *Succos*, these three *chagim* are called “רגלים” since they contain the רגלי הדת, the legs on which Judaism stands.

There are two *chagim* instituted by the *Chachamim* that parallel the שלש רגלים—*Chanukah* and *Purim*. *Purim* contains two *emunos*: the *emunah* of תורה מן השמים through “קימו וקבלו,” *Am Yisroel's* reacceptance of the Torah, and the *emunah* of אין עוד מלבדו through the great last-minute miracle that saved us from *Haman*. In other

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words, *Purim* parallels the רגלים of *Pesach* and *Shavuos*. *Chanukah* contains the *emunah* of *hashgochah pratis*—“מסרת גבורים ביד חלשים וכו'”. This parallels the רגל of *Succos*.

From the *Maharal* it is clear that what connects *Chanukah* and *Succos* is the *emunah* in Hashem's *hashgochah pratis*. If so, we can develop the connection between *Chanukah* and *Succos* even further. Josephus Flavius tells us that when Herod came into power he killed off the entire *Chashmonai* family (including his own brother-in-law, Aristobulus the *Kohen Gadol*) and cancelled the *Chanukah* celebrations in *Yerushalayim* and in the *Beis HaMikdash*, announcing that there would never again be *Chanukah* celebrations in *Yerushalayim* and the *Beis HaMikdash*. At that time *Hillel haZaken* declared that the *Chanukah* celebrations would be relocated to the private home, a מקדש מעט, and *Chanukah* candles would be lit in the home just like they were lit in the *Beis HaMikdash* on *Chanukah*, adding one candle every day of *Chanukah*. On *Succos*, when *Am Yisroel* would celebrate for eight days, said *Hillel*, *Chanukah* would also be celebrated in the *Beis HaMikdash* through the festivities of the *Simchas Beis HaSho'eivah*. It is פלאי פלאים (absolutely amazing), then, that at the *Simchas Beis HaSho'eivah*, the נשיא of *Am Yisroel*, *Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel*, would juggle eight lit torches in the air (*Succah* 53a), in order to remind the nation of the *simcha* of *Chanukah* and of the appreciation for the miracles of *Chanukah* as well, in spite of Herod's decrees. *Hillel's* perplexing statement at the *Simchas Beis HaSho'eivah*, “אם אני כאן הכול כאן”, If I am here, all are here,” is also clarified. These words are not words of *ga'avah*, ח, rather they are words of *chizuk* for the nation, reminding them that each person is unique, the bearer of unique abilities that no one else has. Every single person must discover his uniqueness and share it with the rest of *Klal Yisroel*.

As a result of *Hillel's* declaration, *Chanukah* became the *chag* of the בית היהודי, the Jewish home and the Jewish family. This is the source of the *minhag* of all *Klal Yisroel* to fulfill the *mitzvah* of *hadlokas ner Chanukah lamehadrin min hamehadrin*. Every person in the family lights *neros Chanukah* in order to show each person's uniqueness and individuality, for the future lies in the strength of the בית היהודי. The whole *chag* of *Chanukah* revolves around the בית היהודי—for this reason, if the wife of the family will not be home at sunset, when the *mitzvah* of *hadlokas ner Chanukah* is performed *l'chatchilah*, and she wants her husband to wait to light the *neros Chanukah* until she gets home, he

must wait for her, because she is the עיקר הבית, the pillar of the home. It is for this reason as well that the *Shulchan Aruch* begins *Hilchos Chanukah* with the *minhag* of the women to refrain from *melachah* for as long as the candles are lit.

Now we understand why in those 100 years between the *Chashmonai* victory and *Hillel* and *Shammai* we don't find any “*Chazals*” about *Chanukah* in the *Beis HaMikdash*. The first 100 years, the *Chanukah* celebrations were held in *Yerushalayim* and in the *Beis HaMikdash*. After 100 years, when Herod stopped the celebrations in the *Beis HaMikdash*, *Hillel haZaken* moved the celebrations to the foundation of the *Beis HaMikdash*, the בית היהודי. This no one can take away from us.

The same thing happens here in *gulus*, when, during *Chanukah*, the אומות העולם completely cover the streets with electric lights. In one window a solitary candle shines, looking so miserable in comparison. But when there is a blackout—and Hashem shows us blackouts every once in a while—their lights flicker out, and only the light of the solitary *ner Chanukah*, the light of the בית היהודי, shines on. This no one can put out. This is what Herod did not understand when he tried to cancel the *Chanukah* celebrations in *Yerushalayim* and the *Beis HaMikdash*. He mistakenly thought he could put out the light of the *neros Chanukah*, extinguish the flame of the בית היהודי. Instead of snuffing out the *neros Chanukah*, Herod only made the flame shine stronger under the protective roof of the בית היהודי.

The בית היהודי rests upon a foundation of Torah, *yiras shamayim*, and *midos tovos*. The time to build this foundation is our years in *yeshiva*, by sitting in the *Beis Midrash* and developing our unique personalities with *ameilus*, through a perspective of Torah and *yiras shamayim*. In this way we bring more כבוד שמים to the world and intensify the light of the בית היהודי, broadening the פרסומי ניסא of *Chanukah*. The light we develop during our years as *b'nei yeshiva* later affects our homes and our work, our insides and our outsides. This is why the *neros Chanukah* are placed in the front door, because their light illuminates both the inside of the בית היהודי and the outside. In our lives we must combine everything we do with Torah, *yiras shamayim*, and *midos tovos*. The more we pay attention to this and the more we emphasize this in our *avodas Hashem*, the more we will bring the light of the בית היהודי back to the *Beis HaMikdash*, meriting אור חדש על ציון תאיר, במהרה, בימינו.

Compiled by Tal Kerem

Part of a *shiur* given by Rav Goldwicht before *Chanukah*