

Sukkos/V'Zos Habracha

The final parsha of Chumash and the holiday of Sukkos are interconnected—the holiday rolls into Simchas Torah, where we restart the cycle of reading the Chumashim. Instead of taking a break, we immediately begin Bereishis.

At the beginning of Parshas V'Zos Habracha, Rashi on “m'Sinai Bah” explains that the meeting at Sinai was like a bride meeting her bridegroom, and on Sukkos, our complete immersion in the Sukkah, which is likened to a Chuppah canopy. Sukkos, therefore, reflects the same ‘marriage’ connection we Jews have with Hashem. This holiday falls so closely after our New Year renewal at Rosh Hashana. Our asking for forgiveness on Yom Kippur, and now, as pure souls, before the rest of the year, so to speak, begins, we are finalizing our contract with Hashem and immersing ourselves in the holiday that He delights in (so much, that at the end because we don't want to leave, there is the add on holiday of Shemini Atzeres).

Then Moshe tells the Jews that Hashem offered the Torah to our ‘cousins’ Yishmael and Esav (which I've written extensively about on the Parsheos in Bereishis, that to Yakov, it wasn't obvious that the Jews would spawn from him, instead that was solidified later after Yakov conquered Esav's angel.) Moshe praises the Jews for their connection to Hashem and for being the carriers and practitioners of the Torah.

An interesting Rashi, on “Af Chovev Amim,” almost indicates Hashem has

favour over the other nations of the world (in some ways, seeing as they ‘rule’ over us- Bava Basra 8a). But looking into other Mepharshim such as Ramban, Ibn Ezra and others, it would seem, firstly, that the explanation is that the Jews are comprised of many ‘nations,’ i.e. each tribe (called nation), and Hashem loves them all. Furthermore, the Mepharshim explains that the context is that Hashem loves us from all nations (because we keep Hashem's Torah).

It says in posuk 5, “Bhisasef Roshei Am” (when they are gathered)- Rashi says when they are collected as a group, and there is peace among them, He (Hashem) is their King, but not when there is a dispute among them...” Another name for Sukkos is Chag HaAsif, the holiday of ingathering (harvest). Now, although the name explicitly reflects the time of year of harvesting, it also connects to the unity needed amongst our nation to best succeed. And success is on a global level, where the kingship of Hashem is realized in a material and revealed spiritual way.

Moshe blessed all the Jews for then and the future, when we will inherit the land and we will usher in the era of Mashiach, which is also reflected in the Haftora of Shabbos Chol Hamoad.

Good Yom Tov and Good Shabbos!