

TORAH IN MOTION

CHANUKA, SUKKOT AND THE RUSSIANS

YISHAI ABRAMS



IMMORTAL REGIMENT





VAYIKRA 23:40

וּלְקַחְתֶּם לָכֶם בַּיּוֹם הָרִאשׁוֹן פְּרֵי עֵץ הָדָר כַּפֹּת תְּמָרִים וְעֵנָף עֵץ-עַבֹּת
וְעַרְבֵי-נַחַל וּשְׂמַחְתֶּם לִפְנֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם שִׁבְעַת יָמִים:

On the first day you shall take the product of hadar trees, branches of palm trees, branches of leafy trees, and willows of the brook, and you shall rejoice before the LORD your God seven days.



VAYIKRA RABBA 30:12

פרי עץ הדר אלו ישראל מה אתרוג זה יש בו טעם ויש בו ריח כך ישראל יש בהם
בני אדם שיש בהם תורה ויש בהם מעשים טובים כפות תמרים אלו ישראל מה
התמרה הזו יש בו טעם ואין בו ריח כך הם ישראל יש בהם שיש בהם תורה ואין
בהם מעשים טובים וענף עץ עבות אלו ישראל מה הדס יש בו ריח ואין בו טעם
כך ישראל יש בהם שיש בהם מעשים טובים ואין בהם תורה וערבי נחל אלו
ישראל מה ערבה זו אין בה טעם ואין בה ריח כך הם ישראל יש בהם בני אדם
שאין בהם לא תורה ולא מעשים טובים ומה הקדוש ברוך הוא עושה להם
לאבדן אי אפשר אלא אמר הקדוש ברוך הוא יוקשרו כולם אגודה אחת והן
מכפרין אלו על אלו

Another matter: “The fruit of a pleasant [hadar] tree” – this is Israel; just as the citron has taste and has fragrance, so Israel has people among them who have Torah and have good deeds. “Branches of date palms” – this is Israel; just as the date palm has taste but has no fragrance, so Israel has people among them who have Torah but do not have good deeds. “A bough of a leafy tree” – this is Israel; just as the myrtle has fragrance but has no taste, so Israel has people among them who have good deeds but do not have Torah. “Willows of the brook” – this is Israel; just as the willow has no taste and has no fragrance, so Israel has people among them who do not have Torah and do not have good deeds. What does the Holy One blessed be He do to them? To eradicate them is not possible. Rather, the Holy One blessed be He said: Let them all be bound together in a single bundle and they will atone for one another.

SEFER CHASHIMONAIM II – CH.10

ויחוגו חג לה' שמונת ימים כימי חג הסוכות, ויזכרו את הימים מקדם
בחגגם את חג הסוכות בהרים ובמערות, ויתעו בישימון כבהמות
שדה. ויקחו ערבי נחל וכפות תמרים ושירו שיר שבח והודיה לה',
אשר נתן להם עוז ותשועה לטהר את בית מקדשו. ויעבירו קול בכל
ערי יהודה לחוג את החג הזה מדי שנה בשנה

And they celebrated a festival to Hashem for eight days like
the festival of Sukkot. And they remembered how they
celebrated sukkot on the mountains and in the caves... and
they took willows of the brook and palm leaves and they
sang a song of praise and thanks to Hashem, Who gave
them strength and salvation to purify the bet hamikdash

BAVLI – SHABBAT 21B

בֵּית שַׁמַּי אֹמְרִים: יוֹם רִאשׁוֹן מִדְּלִיק שְׁמֹנֶה, מִכָּאן וְאֵילָךְ פּוֹחֵת וְהוֹלֵךְ. וּבֵית הֵלֵל אֹמְרִים: יוֹם רִאשׁוֹן מִדְּלִיק אַחַת, מִכָּאן וְאֵילָךְ מוֹסִיף וְהוֹלֵךְ. אָמַר עוּלָא: פְּלִיגִי בֵּה תִּרִי אֲמוּרָאִי בְּמַעֲרָבָא, רַבִּי יוֹסִי בַר אֲבִין וְרַבִּי יוֹסִי בַר זְבִידָא. חַד אָמַר טַעֲמָא דְּבֵית שַׁמַּי כְּנֶגֶד יָמִים הַנִּכְנָסִין, וְטַעֲמָא דְּבֵית הֵלֵל כְּנֶגֶד יָמִים הַיוֹצְאִין. וְחַד אָמַר טַעֲמָא דְּבֵית שַׁמַּי כְּנֶגֶד פְּרִי הַחֵג, וְטַעֲמָא דְּבֵית הֵלֵל דְּמַעֲלִין בְּקֹדֶשׁ וְאִין מוֹרִידִין. אָמַר רַבָּה בַר בַּר חֲנָה אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן: שְׁנֵי זִקְנִים הָיוּ בְּצִידָן. אֶחָד עָשָׂה כְּבֵית שַׁמַּי וְאֶחָד עָשָׂה כְּדִבְרֵי בֵּית הֵלֵל. זֶה נוֹתֵן טַעַם לְדִבְרֵי כְּנֶגֶד פְּרִי הַחֵג, וְזֶה נוֹתֵן טַעַם לְדִבְרֵי דְּמַעֲלִין בְּקֹדֶשׁ וְאִין מוֹרִידִין

. Beit Shammai say: On the first day one kindles eight lights and, from there on, gradually decreases the number of lights until, on the last day of Hanukkah, he kindles one light. And Beit Hillel say: On the first day one kindles one light, and from there on, gradually increases the number of lights until, on the last day, he kindles eight lights. Ulla said: There were two amora'im in the West, Eretz Yisrael, who disagreed with regard to this dispute, Rabbi Yosei bar Avin and Rabbi Yosei bar Zevida. One said that the reason for Beit Shammai's opinion is that the number of lights corresponds to the incoming days, i.e., the future. On the first day, eight days remain in Hanukkah, one kindles eight lights, and on the second day seven days remain, one kindles seven, etc. The reason for Beit Hillel's opinion is that the number of lights corresponds to the outgoing days. Each day, the number of lights corresponds to the number of the days of Hanukkah that were already observed. And one said that the reason for Beit Shammai's opinion is that the number of lights corresponds to the bulls of the festival of Sukkot: Thirteen were sacrificed on the first day and each succeeding day one fewer was sacrificed (Numbers 29:12–31). The reason for Beit Hillel's opinion is that the number of lights is based on the principle: One elevates to a higher level in matters of sanctity and one does not downgrade. Therefore, if the objective is to have the number of lights correspond to the number of days, there is no alternative to increasing their number with the passing of each day. Rabba bar bar Hana said that Rabbi Yohanan said: There were two Elders in Sidon, and one of them acted in accordance with the opinion of Beit Shammai, and one of them acted in accordance with the opinion of Beit Hillel. Each provided a reason for his actions: One gave a reason for his actions: The number of lights corresponds to the bulls of the Festival. And one gave a reason for his actions: The number of lights is based on the principle: One elevates to a higher level in matters of sanctity and one does not downgrade.



מדרש תנחומא פרשת אמר - יח

מַשֵּׁל לָמָּה הַדָּבָר דּוֹמֶה. לְשֵׁנֵי בְּנֵי אָדָם
שֶׁנִּכְנְסוּ לְדִין לִפְנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ, וְלֹא הָיָה
יּוֹדֵעַ אָדָם מֶה בִּינִיהֶם אֵלָּא הַמֶּלֶךְ
בְּלִבָּד. דֵּן הַמֶּלֶךְ אוֹתָן, וְלֹא הָיוּ יוֹדְעִין
הַבְּרִיּוֹת מִי נּוֹצֵחַ לַחֲבֵירוֹ. אָמַר הַמֶּלֶךְ,
כָּל מִי שֶׁהוּא יוֹצֵא וּבִידּוֹ אֶגֶן, הוּא
יּוֹדְעִין שֶׁהוּא נָצַח. כֹּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאַמּוֹת
הָעוֹלָם נִכְנָסִין לְדִין בְּיוֹם הַכְּפוּרִים,
וְאִין הַבְּרִיּוֹת יוֹדְעִין מִי נָצַח. אָמַר
הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא, טָלוּ לִוְלָבֵיכֶם
בְּיָדְכֶם, שִׁידְעוּ הַכֹּל שְׂאֵתָם זְכִיתֶם
בְּדִין. לְפִיכָךְ אָמַר דָּוִד, אֲזִי יִרְנְנוּ כָּל
עֲצֵי יַעַר, לִפְנֵי ה' (תהלים צו, יב-יג).
אֵימָתִי, כִּי בָּא כִּי בָּא לְשֹׁפֵט הָאָרֶץ
(שם), בְּיוֹם הַכְּפוּרִים.

MIDRASH TANCHUMA EMOR - 18

To what is the matter comparable? To two humans who came before the king for a verdict. Now no one except the king himself knew what [the issue] was between them. The king judged them, but the people did not know who had prevailed against his companion. [However], the king said, “You should know that whoever leaves with a lance in his hand has prevailed.” So Israel and the peoples of the world come for a verdict on the Day of Atonement, and the people do not know who is victorious. The Holy One, blessed be He, said, “Take your lulavim in your hand, so that everyone may know that you have won in the judgment.” Therefore David said (in Ps. 96:12–13; // I Chron. 16:33), “Then shall all forest trees shout for joy [before the Lord]” When? (Ibid., cont.:) “When He comes, when He comes to judge the earth,” on the Day of Atonement. What does Israel do? They wait for him five more days in order that everyone may hear that Israel won. It is therefore stated (in Lev. 23:40:) “And you shall take for yourselves on the first day [beautiful tree fruit, branches of palm trees].”

משנה ביכורים א:ו

מעצרת ועד החג, מביא וקורא. מן החג ועד חנכה, מביא ואינו קורא. רבי יהודה בן בתירא אומר, מביא וקורא

MISHNA BIKKURIM 1:6

From Atzeret (Shavuot) until the Festival (of Sukkot) he brings and recites. From the Festival (of Sukkot) and until Hannukah he brings, but does not recite. Rabbi Judah ben Batera says: he brings and recites.

בבלי פסחים נג

תניא רבן שמעון בן גמליאל אומר: סימן להרים — מילין. סימן לעמקים — דקלים. סימן לנחלים — קנים. סימן לשפלה — שקמה. ואף על פי שאין ראיה לדבר, זכר לדבר, שנאמר: "ויתן המלך את הכסף בירושלים כאבנים ואת הארזים נתן כשקמים אשר בשפלה לרוב"

BAVLI PESACHIM - 53

The Gemara continues: It was taught in a baraita that Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel says: A good sign for mountains is that gallnut oaks, used in the preparation of ink, grow there. A good sign for valleys is palm trees. A good sign for streams is reeds. A good sign for the plain is a sycamore tree. And although there is no proof for these indicators, there is an allusion to the matter in the verse, as it is stated: "And the king made silver to be in Jerusalem like stones, and he made cedars to be as the sycamore trees in the plain" (I Kings 10:27).



**RAV JOSEPH B.
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Religion is not, at the outset, a refuge of grace and mercy for the despondent and desperate, an enchanted stream for crushed spirits, but a raging, clamorous torrent of man's consciousness with all its crises, pangs and torments... For the path that eventually will lead to the "green pastures" is not the royal road, but a narrow, twisting footway that threads its course along the steep mountain slope, as the terrible abyss yawns at the traveller's feet."

(Halakhic Man. JPS. Translation-Lawrence Kaplan. Footnote no.4)



THANK YOU
FOR LISTENING!

