

### 1. **Zechariah 14:16**

וְהָיָה כָּל־הַנוֹתָר מִכָּל־הַגּוֹיִם הַבָּאִים עַל־יְרוּשָׁלַם וְעָלּוּ מִדֵּי שָׁנָה בְּשָׁנָה לְהִשְׁתַּחֲוֹת לְמֶלֶךְ ה' צָבָאוֹת וְלַחַג אֶת־חַג הַסֻּכּוֹת:

All who survive of all those nations that came up against Jerusalem shall make a pilgrimage year by year to bow low to the King LORD of Hosts and to observe the Feast of Booths.

### 2. **Peninei Halakhah, Succot 1:13. R. Eliezer Melamed**

וכך למדנו בבבלי, שלעתיד לבוא חג הסוכות יהיה אבן בוחן לאומות העולם, שכל מי שיעלה לירושלים להשתחוות לה' ולחגוג עם ישראל את חג הסוכות, יזכה לרוב ברכה.

And so we learned from the prophet [Zechariah], that in the future Sukkot will be a touchstone for the nations of the world, that everyone who goes to Jerusalem to bow down to Hashem and celebrate with Israel the Feast of Sukkot, will receive blessing.<sup>1</sup>

### 3. **Babylonian Talmud Tractate Succah, 55b**

אמר רבי (אלעזר) הני שבועים פרים כנגד מי כנגד שבועים אומות פר יחידי למה כנגד אומה יחידה משל למלך בשור ודם שאמר לעבדיו עשו לי סעודה גדולה ליום אחרון אמר לאוהביו עשה לי סעודה קטנה כדי שאהנה ממך אמר רבי יוחנן אוי להם לגויים שאבדו ואין יודעין מה שאבדו בזמן שבית המקדש קיים מזבח מכפר עליהן ועכשיו מי מכפר עליהן:

Rabbi Elazar said: These seventy bulls that are sacrificed as additional offerings over the course of the seven days of Sukkot, to what do they correspond? They correspond to the seventy nations of the world, and are brought to atone for their sins and to hasten world peace. Why is a single bull sacrificed on the Eighth Day of Assembly? It corresponds to the singular nation, Israel. The Gemara cites a parable about a king of flesh and blood who said to his servants: Prepare me a great feast that will last for several days. When the feast concluded, on the last day, he said to his beloved servant: Prepare me a small feast so that I can derive pleasure from you alone. Rabbi Yohanan said: Woe unto the nations of the world that lost something and do not know what they lost. When the Temple is standing, the seventy bulls sacrificed on the altar during the festival of Sukkot atones for them. And now that the Temple is destroyed, who atones for them?<sup>2</sup>

### 4. **Babylonian Talmud Tractate Avodah Zarah 3b**

אמרו לרבינו רבש"ע תנה לנו מראש ונעשנה אמר להן הקב"ה שוטים שבעולם מי שטרח בערב שבת יאכל בשבת מי שלא טרח בערב שבת מהיכן יאכל בשבת אלא אף על פי כן מצוה קלה יש לי וסוכה שמה לכו ועשו אות... ואמאי קרי ליה מצוה קלה משום דלית ביה חסרון כים

מיד כל אהד [ואהד] נוטל והולך ועושה סוכה בראש גגו ונתקדוש ברוח הוא מקדיר עליהם חמה בתקופת תמוז וכל אהד ואהד מבעט בסוכתו ויוצא שנאמר ננתקה את מוסרותימו ונשליכה ממנו עבותימו מקדיר

<sup>1</sup> My translation

<sup>2</sup> All translations, unless otherwise specified, are from sefaria.org

The gentiles say before Him: Master of the Universe, give us the Torah afresh and we will perform its mitzvot. The Holy One, Blessed be He, says to them in response: Fools of the world! Do you think you can request this? One who takes pains on Shabbat eve will eat on Shabbat, but one who did not take pains on Shabbat eve, from where will he eat on Shabbat? The opportunity for performing mitzvot has already passed, and it is now too late to ask to perform them. But even so, I have an easy mitzva to fulfill, and its name is sukka; go and perform it... And why does God call the mitzva of sukka an easy mitzva to fulfill? Because performing the mitzva involves no monetary loss.

Immediately, each and every gentile will take materials and go and construct a sukka on top of his roof. And the Holy One, Blessed be He, will set upon them the heat [makdir] of the sun in the season of Tammuz, i.e., the summer, and each and every one who is sitting in his sukka will be unable to stand the heat, and he will kick his sukka and leave, as it is stated: "Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us"

### **5. Vayikra Rabbah 30:2**

דָּבָר אַחֵר, שִׁבְעַת שְׂמֵחוֹת, אֵל תְּהִי קוֹרָא בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים שְׂבַע שְׂמֵחוֹת, אֵלֹהִים שְׂבַע מִצְוֹת שְׂבַחָה, וְאֵלֹהִים הוּא, אֶרְבַּעָה מִיָּנִין שְׂבַחָה לְבָב, וְסִפָּה, תְּגִיגָה וְשִׂמְחָה. אִם שְׂמֵחָה לְמַה תְּגִיגָה וְאִם תְּגִיגָה לְמַה שְׂמֵחָה, אָמַר רַבִּי אֲבִינָה מִשָּׁל לְשָׁנִים שְׁנַכְנְסוּ אֶצֶל הַדִּין וְלִית אֲנִי יָדְעִין מָאן הוּא נּוֹצֵחַ, אֱלֹהִים מָאן דְּנָסַב בְּאִינֵי בִידִיהּ, אֲנִי יָדְעִין דְּהוּא נְצוּחֵיָא, כִּד יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאַמּוֹת הָעוֹלָם בְּאִינֵי וּמְקוֹטְרָגִים לְפָנֵי הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא בְּרֵאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה וְלִית אֲנִי יָדְעִין מָאן נְצַח, אֱלֹהִים בְּמָה שְׂיִשְׂרָאֵל יּוֹצֵאִין מִלְּפָנֵי הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא וְלִילְבִיָּהּ וְאַתְרוּגִיָּהּ בִּיָּדוֹ, אֲנִי יוֹדְעִין דְּיִשְׂרָאֵל אֵינּוּ נְצוּחֵיָא, לְפִיכָה מִשָּׁה מְזַהֵיר לְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְאוֹמֵר לְהֵם: וְלִקְהָתֵם לְכֶם בְּיוֹם הָרֵאשׁוֹן.

Another interpretation of "Complete (sova) joy" (Psalms 16:11) - these are the seven (sheva) commandments of the festival, and these are them: The four species that are in the lulav, the sukkah (hut), the festival offering and the offering of joy. If there is an offering of joy, why is there a festival offering; and if there is a festival offering, why is there an offering of joy? Rabbi Avin said, "[There is a relevant] parable about two that went into a judge and we do not know who was victorious. Rather we know that the one that [comes out] carrying a palm branch is the winner. So [too] Israel and the nations of the world come and prosecute [each other] before the Holy One, blessed be He, on Rosh Hashanah and we do not know who won. Rather when we see that Israel is coming out from in front of the Holy One, blessed be He, with their lulavs and citrons in their hands, we know that Israel are the winners (and that creates a need to offer an offering of joy, as well as the holiday offering). Hence, Moshe warns Israel and says to them (Leviticus 23:40), 'And you shall take for yourselves.'"

## **6. “Israel, Diaspora, and Religious Zionist Education in America,” Rabbi Tully Harsztark**

Thus far, we have articulated four possible models of the relationship between Israel and the Diaspora: **1) negation of the exile [all Jews belong in Israel and life outside of Israel is not an authentic Jewish life], 2) a Diasporist model [Jews belong in the Diaspora], 3) the center and periphery model of Ahad Ha’am [Israel is at the center of Jewish existence and the Diaspora is made up of peripheral Jewish communities that draw meaning and energy from the cultural center in Israel] and 4) the dual centers model of Simon Rawidowicz [the life of the Jewish people has flourished in two parallel centers, one in Israel and one in exile.** These parallel centers complement and enrich each other, having developed their own independent and interdependent Jewish cultures]. In recent years, I have become very moved by Rawidowicz and his claim. Zionism need not and should not discount the Diaspora community. There are nationalistic, ethical and pragmatic reasons to openly acknowledge and support Diaspora Judaism. In negating the Diaspora, theorists have manipulated the way that we read our past and narrate our present. Refashioning the Israel-Diaspora relationship can help us better prepare for the future; it can reshape our understanding of Jewish national identity and our ultimate goals as a people.

## **7. “Facing Reality But Not Losing Hope: An Alternative Model for Zionist Education,” R. Avraham Wein<sup>3</sup>**

I believe there is another model that neither demeans those who live outside of Israel or diminishes the significance of their Religious Zionism and observance, nor presents the Diaspora as an equally valid center for the Jewish people: the headquarters and embassy approach. **Medinat Yisrael is the headquarters of the Jewish people, but Diaspora communities are the embassies of the State. The Diaspora communities are critical institutions connected to and extensions of Medinat Yisrael that make valuable contributions, but are only embassies, not another center.** Harsztark alludes to a similar possibility, a “center-periphery model,” but spends a mere two sentences on this option! Furthermore, he attributes it to Ahad Ha’am but does not consider the major Religious Zionist thinkers who promote a similar model.

This approach grants legitimacy to those who live in the Diaspora while not in any way equating our Biblical homeland with other places. It also solves many of the issues Harsztark aptly raises while not necessitating his conclusion. Though there are certainly other views within the Religious Zionist camp—the proponents of this model likely being in the minority—I believe **this is actually the approach presented by my rebbeim: Rabbis Michael Rosensweig and Mosheh Lichtenstein, and was initially developed by their mentors Rabbis Joseph B. Soloveitchik and Aharon Lichtenstein.**

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<sup>3</sup> Shared with permission from the author. The article itself is not-yet published.

#### 8. **“Seventy Bullocks and One Sukkah,” Rabbi Shimon Gershon Rosenberg (Shagar)**

The message is clear: the insecurity of the Diaspora must deeply inform our confidence as the inheritors of the land. Otherwise, confidence will degenerate into hubris, into the sense that all is due to “my power and the might of my hand.” Such a state of mind precludes faithful devotion to God and the sensitivity to the suffering of the strangers in our midst - a quality we were dispersed to the ends of the earth in order to acquire. Thus, **it is precisely the diasporic nature of the sukka - the very sukka in which God commanded us to dwell when we emerged from Egypt, “that your generations may know that I made the Children of Israel dwell in sukkot when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God” - where one surrenders one’s power and puts his trust in God, that can facilitate an all-encompassing divine influx that includes the offering of seventy bullocks for the welfare of the world’s nations.**

Yet there is more to it. Both nationalism and universalism are necessary. Nationalism is rootedness in what one is, in an identity unique to the nation and the individual. However, if it is not to turn rigid and callous, it must be tempered by universalism... Universalism subverts the preference for one national identity over another, as well as the very authentic existence of that identity. That is because universalism is the shared dimension, the common grounds for all of humankind. Put in religious terms, it is where we encounter the image of God. From this point of view, the human is the real, and nationalism merely a later, malleable construct.

Conversely, universalism must be augmented with nationalism. Universalism is an abstraction in that it “makes” all human beings identical, effacing the very real differences between people. Nationalism, for its part, emphasizes the other’s difference and immutability. True, in modern philosophy we encounter a different reading of universalism, one that is based on accepting the other’s difference, on the fact that no two people are comparable - each has his place in the world. But even this view of universalism requires nationalism, for universalism is at bottom a movement that denies identity. That is why it makes it impossible to pinpoint how one person is preferable to another. The individual's place is defined not through the acknowledgement of his specific and coherent identity, but rather by his inaccessible otherness. There is no internalization of his uniqueness, only of his incomparability to any other. Nationalism, meanwhile, marks a resurgence of the specific, immutable identity.

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[Jews] oscillate between universalism and nationalism, between humanity and covenant. It is a fertile opposition, where the loss of one pole immediately damages the other... the festival of Sukkot represents the Jewish dichotomy between Diaspora and homeland: The Land of Israel’s harvest festival, with the sense of stability that it induces, is celebrated in the sukka along with the exile.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> English adaptation from [Faith Shattered and Restored: Judaism in the Postmodern Age](#)

## **9. “Sukkot - Universal Holiday?” Rabbi Yaakov Haber**

Sukka is one of the few mitzvot that encompass the entire body and all life activities. Eating and sleeping as well as learning and prayer all are complementary aspects of this mitzva. Indeed, the poskim (decisors) rule that even regular conversation with acquaintances should take place in the sukka. Thus, all apparently mundane activities can become acts of Divine Service. One who views mitzvot as all-pervasive opportunities for elevating every aspect of life would also perform them with love and enthusiasm. The nations reject this sukka-concept of life revolving around the Divine Command. Hence, they reject the entire message of Torah and are not worthy of special Divine Reward in the End of Days. Indeed, unique korbanot are brought during the first seven days of Sukkot on behalf of the 70 nations of the world as our Torah concerns itself with the benefit of all of mankind and looks toward the day when all the nations of the world will recognize G-d's oneness (see second half of 'Aleinu prayer). However, the inner meaning of Sukkot ultimately remains the special treasure of the Jewish people.

## **10. Making Hasidim Laugh #52, Rabbi Menachem Froman.**

לפעמים כשהיה נכנס לסוכה היה זורק את השיפה מהראש ואמר: אתם מכירים את שיטת בני יוסי שהכיפה היא חציצה בסוכה. היא חוצצת בינך לבין ענני הכבוד. אני חושש לשיטתו... השטריימל - אין מה לדבר שהיא חציצה, אבל אפילו הכיפה הסרוגה מהווה חציצה. ובאמת זה היה עניינו: איך הכיפה לא תהיה דבר שמפריד בינינו לבין השמים, בינינו לבין הקב"ה.

ועוד באותו עניין: ילדיו סיפרו שכשהיו קטנים היה מעמיד אותם בשורה ועורך מעין "טקס השבעה" שבו היו חוזרים שוב ושוב על דברי יהושע לעם ישראל לפני מותו, שגם אם כל עם ישראל יעבדו עבודה זרה - אַנְּכִי וּבֵיתִי נַעֲבֹד אֶת־ה'. וזו הייתה כמו סימנא אצלם. והיו אומרים אחריו: "גם אם כל העולם יהיו דתיים - אַנְּכִי וּבֵיתִי נַעֲבֹד אֶת־ה'."

When Rav Froman would walk into a Sukkah, he would throw off his yarmulke and say: "You all know the view of my son Yose, that a yarmulke creates a barrier between you and the Sukkah. It makes a barrier between you and God's Clouds of Glory. "I'd take this view seriously. A streimel – well, there's no question that is a barrier! But even a little knitted yarmulke can be a barrier." This really was his work and his teaching: how do we make sure our yarmulkes don't become something that separates us from Heaven, separates us from the Holy One.

More on this point: His children tell the story how when they were little kids, he'd stand them up in a line and stage a kind of "swearing-in ceremony", in which they'd repeat over and over again the message of Joshua to the Jewish people before his death, that even if the entire nation was worshiping idolatry, "I and my household shall still serve the Lord!" (Joshua 24:15), to the point that this line became a kind of mantra for them. And then at the end, he'd have them say: "And even if everyone in the world becomes religious (dati'im), I and my household shall still serve the Lord!"<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Translation by Rabbis Ben Greenfield and Levi Morrow