

סוכות חג ראשון

Sukkot I

LEVITICUS 22:26-23:44

HAFTARAH: ZECHARIAH 14:1-21

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ט"ו בתשרי תשפ"ז

Sukkot I

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IN THIS ISSUE

Sukkot this year brings a wide arc of Torah, moving from the Torah portion and Rashi through the laws of the festivals as the Torah lays them out: Shabbat as the model for every sacred time, Pesach and the omer, Shavuot and its gifts to the poor, Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, and then Sukkot itself — the sukkah, the four species, the abundant Musaf offerings that mark its joy. The haftarah carries this forward to the vision of a day when the Lord is King over all the earth and every nation ascends to Yerushalayim (Jerusalem) to keep Sukkot.

The midrash section explores how reward, judgment, and mercy work in the world — righteous and wicked compared to mountains and depths, Adam's judgment as the template for Rosh Hashanah, and the four species as a picture of Yisrael's unity despite differences in Torah and deeds. The sukkah itself, per the Sifra, stands as a living memory of the Exodus, whether understood as literal booths or as clouds of glory.

From the Chassidic courts and Breslov comes a deeper layer: the sukkah as a place of humility and closeness to Hashem, the lulav's hidden Names, and Rebbe Nachman's teachings connecting fasting, joy, honor, and teshuvah (repentance) to the inner meaning of these festival days.

The overview and the section summaries in this booklet were written by AI from the texts printed here.

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ABOUT TORAHFORM

The Arizal taught that sparks of holiness fell into all of creation, and our task is to find them and raise them up by using the world for holy purposes. Torahform is an experiment in raising the holy sparks hidden within AI, using it to make Torah and Jewish teachings more accessible to English speakers through a free weekly booklet on the week's parsha. Hebrew texts and published translations come from Sefaria; works with no available English translation are translated by AI and marked on the page, as are AI-written summaries. Every issue ends with its sources and their licenses. Print it, use it, and share it however you would like.

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ראשון FIRST ALIYAH

An animal offering must remain with its mother for seven days before it may be brought as a korban (sacrifice), and a mother and its young may not be slaughtered on the same day, teaching sensitivity toward living creatures; a thanksgiving offering must be eaten on the day it is brought, and Yisra'el is commanded to observe the mitzvot (commandments) faithfully so as not to desecrate but rather sanctify Hashem's name, in gratitude for the redemption from Mitzrayim (Egypt). AI SUMMARY

²⁶ And the Lord spoke to Moshe, saying,

²⁷ When a bullock, or a sheep, or a goat, is brought forth, then it shall be seven days under its dam; and from the eighth day and thenceforth it shall be accepted for an offering made by fire to the Lord.

²⁸ And whether it be cow or ewe, you shall not kill it and its young both in one day.

²⁹ And when you will offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving to the Lord, offer it that it may be accepted.

בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר:

כִּשְׁנֵי אֶחָד אוֹ־כֶשֶׂב אוֹ־עֵז כִּי יוֹלֵד וְהָיָה שְׁבַעַת יָמִים תַּחַת אִמּוֹ וּמִמָּוָה הַשְּׁמִינִי וְהִלָּאָה יִרְצָה לְקַרְבַּן אֲשֶׁה לַיהוָה:

כֹּה וְשֹׁר אוֹ־שֶׁה אֶתְּוֹ וְאֶת־בָּנוֹ לֹא תִשְׁחָטוּ בְּיוֹם אֶחָד:

כִּשְׁנֵי יָמִים תִּזְבְּחוּ זֶבַח־תּוֹדָה לַיהוָה לְרִצְוֹנְכֶם תִּזְבְּחוּ:

RASHI

22:27 WHEN [ANY OX etc.] IS BORN... [FROM THE EIGHTH DAY, AND THENCEFORTH, IT SHALL BE FAVOURABLY ACCEPTED AS A FIRE OFFERING...] — The expression יולד “that is born” excludes the case of an animal delivered through the abdominal wall (i. e. by Caesarian section) (Chullin 38b).

22:28 [AND WHETHER IT BE AN OX OR A SHEEP YE SHALL NOT SLAUGHTER] IT AND ITS YOUNG [BOTH IN ONE DAY] — This law applies only to the female parent, although Scripture uses the masculine term אֶתוֹ — that it is forbidden to slaughter the dam and its male or female young in one day, but it does not apply to the male parent, and it is permissible to slaughter the father animal and its young whether male or female in one day (Chullin 78b; cf. also Onkelos).

22:28 IT AND ITS YOUNG — The prohibition of slaughtering the young first and then it (the dam) in one day is also implied (Chullin 82a).

22:29 לְרִצְוֹנְכֶם תִּזְבְּחוּ [AND WHEN YE WILL SLAUGHTER A SACRIFICE OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT UNTO THE LORD], SLAUGHTER IT SO THAT IT MAY EFFECT PROPITIATION FOR YOU — i. e. take care from the very outset of your slaughtering that it should effect acceptance for you; and wherein consists the assurance of its acceptance?

22:29 בְּיוֹם הַהוּא יֵאָכֵל in the intention that IT SHALL BE EATEN ON THE SAME DAY — Scripture intends by these words only to express the warning that the slaughtering shall be made with this intention: — do not slaughter it with the intention of eating it on the morrow, because if you then harbour any intention which will lead to its disqualification it shall not be favourably accepted for you. Another explanation of לְרִצְוֹנְכֶם is: sacrifice it wittingly (with full knowledge of what you are doing); hence we may derive that if one is “handling” the sacrifices when slaughtering them (i. e. when he does the act of שחיטה without the intention of doing this) they become invalid (Chullin 13a). And (referring again to the first explanation) though Scripture has already specifically stated this (the fact that the slaughtering must be made with the clear intention not to eat the flesh beyond the prescribed time) with regard to such offerings that may be eaten during two successive days (cf. Leviticus 7:18), it specifically states here again of those sacrifices which are permitted to be eaten on one day only that their slaughtering must take place with the clear intention to eat them within the time prescribed for them.

³⁰ On the same day it shall be eaten up; you shall leave none of it until the morrow: I am the Lord.

ל בָּלֶם הָהוּא יֹאכַל לֹא-תוֹתִירוּ מִמֶּנּוּ עַד-בֹּקֶר
אֲנִי יְהוָה:

³¹ And you shall keep my commandments, and do them: I am the Lord.

לֹא וּשְׁמִרְתֶּם מִצְוֹתַי וַעֲשִׂיתֶם אֹתָם אֲנִי יְהוָה:

³² Neither shall you profane my holy name; but I will be hallowed among the children of Yisra'el: I am the Lord who make you holy,

לִבְלֹא תַחַל לוֹ אֶת-שֵׁם קִדְשִׁי וְנִקְדַּשְׁתִּי בְּתוֹךְ
בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲנִי יְהוָה מְקַדְּשְׁכֶם:

³³ who brought you out of the land of Mizrayim, to be your God: I am the Lord.

לִגְהוֹצִיא אֶתְכֶם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לִהְיוֹת לָכֶם
לֵאלֹהִים אֲנִי יְהוָה:

שני SECOND ALIYAH

Shabbat is listed among the moadim (appointed festivals) of the Lord, teaching that the weekly day of rest holds the same sanctity as a holy gathering, observed through cessation of work in every dwelling place. By placing Shabbat at the head of the festival calendar, the Torah establishes it as the foundation and paradigm for all the holy times that follow. AI SUMMARY

¹ And the Lord spoke to Moshe, saying,

אֵלֶיךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר:

RASHI

22:30 IT SHALL BE EATEN ON THE SAME DAY — Scripture only intends by these words to express the warning that the slaughtering shall be done with this in mind (Sifra, Emor, Chapter 9 2), for if it intended to fix the time for eating it they would be redundant, since it is already stated (Leviticus 7:15) “And the flesh of the sacrifice of his feast offerings for acknowledgment [shall be eaten the same day that it is offered]”.

22:30 I AM THE LORD — Know Who it is that has decreed this matter, and let it, therefore, not be a light thing in your eyes!

22:31 ושמרתם — This implies the study of the commandments,

22:31 ועשיתם the doing of them (Sifra, Emor, Chapter 9 3).

22:32 YE SHALL NOT PROFANE [MY HOLY NAME], by transgressing My commands willfully. Having regard to what is implied in the statement: You shall not profane [My holy name] (viz., that it must be hallowed), what is the meaning of ונקדשתי? But, this implies a positive act of sanctification: Abandon yourself to martyrdom and hallow My name! I might think that this command applies even to the Israelite when he is alone (i. e., when no other Israelites are present when the heathen bids him

transgress a Divine command)! Scripture, however, states: בְּתוֹךְ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל [AND I SHALL BE SANCTIFIED] AMIDST THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL. — And when offering oneself to martyrdom, one should offer himself with the firm determination (lit., under the condition) to die if necessary, for he who abandons himself on condition (i. e. cherishing the hope) that God will not exact the sacrifice and that a miracle will happen to save him will have no miracle wrought for him; for thus we find in the case of Chananyah, Mishael and Azariah that they did not offer themselves for martyrdom expecting a miracle, as it is said (Daniel 3:17, 18) “[And God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace and He will deliver us out of thy hand, O king]. But if not, be it known unto thee that we will not serve thy gods etc. — Whether He saves us or whether he does not save, “be it known unto thee etc.” (Sifra, Emor, Chapter 9 5)

22:33 THAT HATH BROUGHT YOU OUT [OF THE LAND OF EGYPT] — for the sake of this (that you should hallow His name).

22:33 אני ה' I AM THE LORD — Who is faithful in paying you your reward (Sifra, Emor, Chapter 9 6).

² Speak to the children of Yisra'el, and say to them, The feasts of the Lord, which you shall proclaim to be holy gatherings, these are my feasts.

³ Six days shall work be done: but the seventh day is the sabbath of solemn rest, a holy gathering; you shall do no work: it is a sabbath to the Lord in all your dwellings.

בְּדִבַּר אֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם מוֹעֲדֵי יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר-תִּקְרְאוּ אֹתָם מִקְרָאֵי קֹדֶשׁ אֵלֶּה הֵם מוֹעֲדֵי:

וְשֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים תַּעֲשֶׂה מְלָאכָה וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי שַׁבַּת שַׁבְתוֹן מִקְרָא-לְקֹדֶשׁ כָּל-מְלָאכָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ שַׁבַּת הוּא לַיהוָה בְּכָל מוֹשְׁבֹתֵיכֶם:

שלישי THIRD ALIYAH

Pesach (Passover) is established as one of the Lord's appointed mo'adim (festivals), beginning on the fourteenth day of the first month with the paschal offering, followed by the seven-day Chag HaMatzot (Feast of Unleavened Bread) during which chametz (leaven) is forbidden. Both the first and seventh days of this festival are designated as mikra kodesh (holy gatherings) marked by rest from melacha (servile work) and the bringing of an offering made by fire to the Lord. AI SUMMARY

⁴ These are the feasts of the Lord, holy gatherings, which you shall proclaim in their seasons.

⁵ On the fourteenth day of the first month towards evening is the Lord's passover.

⁶ And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread to the Lord: seven days you must eat unleavened bread.

וְאֵלֶּה מוֹעֲדֵי יְהוָה מִקְרָאֵי קֹדֶשׁ אֲשֶׁר-תִּקְרְאוּ אֹתָם בְּמוֹעֲדָם:

הַבַּחֲדָשׁ הָרִאשׁוֹן בְּאַרְבַּעָה עָשָׂר לַחֹדֶשׁ בֵּין הָעֲרֵבִים פֶּסַח לַיהוָה:

וּבַחֲמִשָּׁה עָשָׂר יוֹם לַחֹדֶשׁ הַזֶּה חַג הַמַּצּוֹת לַיהוָה שִׁבְעַת יָמִים מִצַּת תֹּאכְלוּ:

RASHI

23:2 דִּבַּר אֶל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, מוֹעֲדֵי ה' SPEAK UNTO THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL [AND DECLARE UNTO THEM] THE APPOINTED FESTIVALS OF THE LORD — This means, Regulate the festive seasons in such a manner that all Israel should become practised in them (their observance). Hence we derive the law that they (the Sanhedrin) proclaim a leap-year (i. e. intercalate a second Adar) for the sake of those living in the diaspora who have already left their homes in order to go up for the festival but have not yet arrived in Jerusalem (Sifra, Emor, Section 9 1; cf. Sanhedrin 11a).

23:3 SIX DAYS [MAY WORK BE DONE BUT THE SEVENTH DAY IS THE SABBATH OF STRICT REST] — What relation is there between the Sabbath (the day that is invariably fixed by God as the holy day) and the festive seasons (the times of which are variable, being dependent upon the proclamation of the Sanhedrin)? But by putting both into juxtaposition Scripture

intends to teach you that he who desecrates the festivals is regarded as though he had desecrated the Sabbath, and that he who keeps the festivals is regarded as though he had kept the Sabbath (Sifra, Emor, Section 9 7).

23:4 THESE ARE THE APPOINTED FESTIVALS OF THE LORD [EVEN CONVOCATIONS OF HOLINESS WHICH YE SHALL PROCLAIM] — Above (v. 2), where similar words are used, Scripture is speaking of proclaiming the year to be a leap-year, here it is speaking of the קדוּשַׁת הַחֹדֶשׁ, sanctification of the month (a technical expression denoting proclaiming when is the New Moon — the beginning of a month) (Sifra, Emor, Chapter 10 1).

23:5 AT EVENTIDE — i. e. the period from six hours onwards (reckoning from six o'clock in the morning) (Sifra, Emor, Chapter 11 1; cf. Rashi on Exodus 12:6).

23:5 [AT EVENTIDE] IS THE פֶּסַח OF THE LORD — i. e. the offering of the sacrifice which bears the name פֶּסַח.

⁷ On the first day you shall have a holy gathering: you shall do no servile work.

זִבְיוֹם הָרִאשׁוֹן מִקְרֵא-קֹדֶשׁ יִהְיֶה לָכֶם כָּל-
מְלָאכֶת עֲבָדָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ:

⁸ But you shall offer an offering made by fire to the Lord for seven days: on the seventh day is a holy gathering: you shall do no servile work.

וְהִקְרַבְתֶּם אֶשֶׁה לַיהוָה שִׁבְעַת יָמִים בָּלֶם
הַשִּׁבְעִי מִקְרֵא-קֹדֶשׁ כָּל-מְלָאכֶת עֲבָדָה לֹא
תַעֲשׂוּ:

רביעי FOURTH ALIYAH

Bringing the omer (sheaf offering) of the new barley harvest to the kohen (priest), who waves it before the Lord on the day after the Shabbat, accompanied by a lamb for an olah (burnt offering), a minchah (meal offering) of fine flour with oil, and a nesech (drink offering) of wine, permits the new grain to be eaten; before this offering is brought, none of the new harvest—bread, roasted kernels, or fresh ears—may be consumed, and this statute is binding for all generations wherever the people dwell. AI SUMMARY

⁹ And the Lord spoke to Moshe, saying,

טוֹיִדְבָּר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר:

¹⁰ Speak to the children of Yisra'el, and say to them, When you are come to the land which I give to you, and shall reap its harvest, then you shall bring an 'omer of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest:

יִדְבָּר אֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם כִּי-תָבֹאוּ
אֶל-הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי נֹתֵן לָכֶם וּקְצַרְתֶּם אֶת-
קְצִירָהּ וְהִבֵּאתֶם אֶת-עֹמֶר רִאשִׁית קְצִירְכֶם
אֶל-הַכֹּהֵן:

RASHI

23:8 וְהִקְרַבְתֶּם אֶשֶׁה וּגו' BUT YE SHALL OFFER A FIRE-OFFERING etc. — This is identical with the additional offerings due on the first day of Passover which are mentioned in the section of פִּנְחָס (Numbers 28:19). But why are these referred to here? In order to intimate that the additional offerings do not impede one another (i. e. that if a particular animal of these מוספים cannot be sacrificed, it is still lawful to bring the others) (Menachot 49a), because it states: —

23:8 וְהִקְרַבְתֶּם אֶשֶׁה לַיהוָה YE SHALL BRING THE FIRE-OFFERING OF THE LORD — bring it under any circumstances — if there are no bullocks available as prescribed, offer the prescribed rams; and if there are neither bullocks nor rams, offer the lambs (Sifra, Emor, Chapter 11 5).

23:8 SEVEN DAYS — Wherever the term שִׁבְעַת is used it is a noun (not a cardinal numeral), so that the words here mean a septaine of days (a period of seven days), in old French Similar is the meaning of all the expressions שלשת, חמשת, שש, שמנת.

23:8 [YOU SHALL DO NO] SERVILE WORK — Not even such labors as are regarded by you as an obligation and a necessity, the neglect of which involves loss of money, as, for instance, a matter that may become lost (that cannot be postponed without

irretrievable loss). I understand this (that the above is the meaning of מְלָאכֶת עֲבָדָה) from Torat Cohanim (on v. 36 of this chapter), since it states there: I might think from what Scripture states (vv. 36, 37) מִנְחָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ אֵלֶּה מוֹעֲדֵי that כל מְלָאכֶת עֲבָדָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ אֵלֶּה מוֹעֲדֵי is forbidden also on the intermediate days of Passover and Tabernacles (lit., the week-days of the festivals). Scripture, however, states, "it (the eighth day) is a festival and ye shall do no מְלָאכֶת עֲבָדָה" thus intimating that on a day which is not a festival such work is permitted. The intermediate days are not regarded as a festival and the rule is that דבר האבד may be attended to. Hence the very question: "may מְלָאכֶת עֲבָדָה be done on the intermediate days?", implies that the term denotes דבר האבד.

23:10 THE FIRST FRUITS OF YOUR HARVEST — This means that it (the Omer) shall be the first thing to be harvested (cf. Sifra, Emor, Section 10 3).

23:10 עֹמֶר — The tenth part of an Epha; this was its name (i. e. עֹמֶר has not the meaning of a sheaf here as is the meaning of the word e. g., in Deuteronomy 24:19: וְשִׂכַּחַת עֹמֶר — but it denotes a certain measure), as we find (Exodus 12:18) "And they did measure it with the Omer".

¹¹ and he shall wave the 'omer before the Lord, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it.

¹² And you shall offer that day when you wave the 'omer a he lamb without blemish of the first year for a burnt offering to the Lord.

¹³ And the meal offering thereof shall be two tenth measures of fine flour mingled with oil, an offering made by fire to the Lord for a sweet savour: and its drink offering shall be of wine, the fourth part of a hin.

¹⁴ And you shall eat neither bread, nor parched corn, nor green ears, until that very day, until you have brought an offering to your God: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.

יִאָוְהֵנִיף אֶת־הָעֹמֶר לִפְנֵי יְהוָה לְרִצְוֹנְכֶם
מִמָּחָרֵת הַשַּׁבָּת יִנִּיפְנוּ הַכֹּהֲנִים:

יִבְרָאֲשִׂיתֶם בַּיּוֹם הַנִּיפְכֶם אֶת־הָעֹמֶר כֶּבֶשׂ
תְּמִים בֶּן־שָׁנָתוֹ לְעֹלָה לַיהוָה:

יִגְמְנָחְתוּ שְׁנֵי עֶשְׂרֹנִים סֵלֶת בְּלוּלָה בַשֶּׁמֶן
אֲשֶׁה לַיהוָה רֵיחַ נִיחָח וְנִסְכָּה יֵין רְבִיעֵת
הַהֵין:

יִדְוֹלְחֶם וְקָלִי וְכֶרֶמֶל לֹא תֹאכְלוּ עַד־עֶצְמָם
הַזֶּם הַזֶּה עַד הַבִּיאְכֶם אֶת־קֶרְבֶּן אֱלֹהֵיכֶם
חֻקַּת עוֹלָם לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם בְּכָל מִשְׁבְּתֵיכֶם:

RASHI

23:11 AND HE SHALL WAVE [THE OMER] — Every form of the root נוף used in connection with sacrifices signifies that one moves the latter about both horizontally (מוליך ומביא) and upwards and downwards (מעלה ומוריד); he moves it about horizontally to prevent (i. e. the act was symbolical of preventing) destructive winds, he moves it about upwards and downwards to keep away injurious dews (cf. Rashi on Exodus 29:24) (Menachot 62a).

23:11 TO BE ACCEPTED FOR YOU — If you offer it according to this precept it shall effect favourable acceptance for you.

23:11 ON THE MORROW AFTER THE DAY OF REST [THE PRIEST SHALL WAVE IT] — This must mean on the morrow of the first day of the Passover festival (on the 16th of Nisan); for if you say that it means on the morrow of the weekly Sabbath (i. e. on a Sunday) you do not know which particular Sabbath Scripture is referring to (Menachot 66a).

23:12 AND YE SHALL OFFER... A LAMB — This came (was brought) as an obligatory sacrifice in connection with the Omer.

23:13 AND THE MEAL OFFERING THEREOF — i. e. the usual meal-offering that was brought together with its drink-offering,

23:13 TWO TENTHS DEALS OF FLOUR — It was double as much as was usually required with a lamb (cf. Numbers ch. 28).

23:13 AND THE DRINK OFFERING THEREOF OF WINE SHALL BE THE FOURTH PART OF HIN — Although its meal-offering was twice as much as usual its drink-offering was not double (Menachot 89b).

23:14 וקלי means flour made out of tender ears (כרמל); this is called קלי because they dry them in the oven and so become scorched.

23:14 וכרמל — these are ears themselves which are called grenaillies in old French (Menachot 66a, b).

23:14 IN ALL YOUR HABITATIONS — The Sages differ in their opinions regarding this (the meaning of these words). Some learn from here (taking the words בכל משבתיכם in the sense "wherever you may live") that the law concerning the new crop applies also outside the Land of Israel; others, hold that it (the phrase) denotes "in all your settlements" and is only intended to teach that they did not become subject to the command concerning the new crop until after the land had become their inheritance and place of settlement (ישיבה) i. e. after they had subjugated the land and had parcelled it out amongst the tribes (Kiddushin 37a).

חמישי FIFTH ALIYAH

Counting forty-nine days from the 'omer (sheaf offering) culminates in Shavuot on the fiftieth day, marked by bringing two leavened loaves and accompanying burnt, sin, and peace offerings as firstfruits to the Lord, along with a holy convocation on which no servile work is done. This festival of harvest is joined to the mitzvah (commandment) of leaving the corners of the field and gleanings for the poor and the stranger, teaching that gratitude for abundance must be paired with generosity toward those in need. AI SUMMARY

¹⁵ And you shall count for yourselves from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that you brought the 'omer of the wave offering; seven complete sabbaths shall there be:

¹⁶ to the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall you number fifty days and you shall offer a new meal offering to the Lord.

¹⁷ You shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two tenth measures: they shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven; they are the firstfruits to the Lord.

טוֹסַפְרֹתֶם לָכֶם מִמָּחֳרַת הַשַּׁבָּת מִיּוֹם
הַבִּיאָכֶם אֶת־עֹמֶר הַתְּנוּפָה שִׁבְעַת שַׁבָּתוֹת
תְּמִימַת תְּהִינָה:

אֶדְ מִמָּחֳרַת הַשַּׁבָּת הַשְּׁבִיעִת תִּסְפְּרוּ
חֲמִשִּׁים יָמִים יוֹם וְהִקְרַבְתֶּם מִנְחָה חֲדָשָׁה לַיהוָה:

יִמּוֹשְׁבֵיכֶם תְּבִיאוּ | לֶחֶם תְּנוּפָה שְׁתֵּי
שָׁנִי עֲשָׂרִים סֵלֹת תְּהִינָה חֶמֶץ תֹּאפִינָה
בְּכוֹרִים לַיהוָה:

RASHI

23:15 FROM THE MORROW AFTER THE DAY OF REST — i. e. from the morrow after the first day of the Passover festival (Menachot 65b).

23:15 [SEVEN WEEKS] SHALL BE COMPLETE — This teaches that one has to begin counting in the evening, for otherwise they would not be complete (Menachot 66a).

23:16 השבת השביעית — Translate this as the Targum does שְׁבִיעִיתָא THE SEVENTH WEEK.

23:16 EVEN UNTIL THE MORROW AFTER THE SEVENTH WEEK SHALL YE NUMBER — until, but not including the day until which you count: thus there are 49 days (the seven complete weeks spoken of in the preceding verse).

23:16 חמשים יום והקרבתם מנחה חדשה לה ... FIFTY DAYS — AND YE SHALL OFFER A NEW OBLATION UNTO THE LORD — i. e. on the fiftieth day ye shall offer it. This, I say, is a Midrashic explanation, but the literal sense is: “Even unto the morrow of the seventh week which is the fiftieth day shall ye number”: the text has its phrases inverted.

23:16 A NEW MEAL OFFERING — It was the first meal-offering that was offered from the new crop. And if you ask, “But surely the meal-offering of the Omer has already been offered on the 16th of Nisan”?! Then I reply: It (the Omer) was not like all the other meal-offerings — which, with one exception (cf. Numbers 5:15), were all brought of wheat — since it was brought of barley and therefore it is not taken into account (cf. Menachot 84b).

23:17 [YE SHALL BRING] OUT OF YOUR HABITATIONS [TWO WAVE LOAVES] — but not from outside the Land of Canaan (Sifra, Emor, Chapter 13 1; Menachot 83b).

23:17 WAVE LOAVES — i. e. heave loaves that have been heaved in honour of the Lord. It is these which constitute the “new meal-offering” mentioned above (v. 16).

23:17 [THEY ARE] THE FIRSTLINGS — the first of all meal-offerings offered, the first even in relation to the “meal-offering of jealousy” (cf. Numbers 5:15) which was brought of barley; even that must not be offered of the new crop previous to the two loaves, although a barley offering had already been brought, viz., the Omer which was offered on Passover (Menachot 84b).

¹⁸ And you shall offer with the bread seven lambs without blemish of the first year, and one young bullock, and two rams: they shall be for a burnt offering to the Lord, with their meal offering, and their drink offerings, an offering made by fire, of sweet savour to the Lord.

¹⁹ Then you shall sacrifice one kid of the goats for a sin offering, and two lambs of the first year for a sacrifice of peace offerings.

²⁰ And the priest shall wave them with the bread of the firstfruits for a wave offering before the Lord, with the two lambs: they shall be holy to the Lord for the priest.

²¹ And you shall proclaim on this very same day, that it may be a holy gathering to you: you shall do no servile work: it shall be a statute for ever in all your dwellings throughout your generations.

יְהוָה קִרְבָּתָם עַל־הַלֶּחֶם שֶׁבַע־לְבָנִים
תְּמִימִם בְּנֵי שָׁנָה וּפָר בֶּן־בָּקָר אֶחָד וְאֵילָם
שְׁנָיִם יִהְיוּ עָלָה לַיהוָה וּמִנְחָתָם וְנִסְכֵּיהֶם
אֲשֶׁה רִיחַ־נִיחֹחַ לַיהוָה:

יִטְעֲשִׂיתֶם שְׁעִיר־עִזִּים אֶחָד לַחֲטָאת וּשְׁנֵי
כִבְשִׂים בְּנֵי שָׁנָה לְזִבַּח שְׁלָמִים:

וַיַּהֲנִיף הַכֹּהֵן | אֹתָם עַל לֶחֶם הַבִּכּוּרִים
תְּנוּפָה לִפְנֵי יְהוָה עַל־שְׁנֵי כִבְשִׂים קֹדֶשׁ יִהְיוּ
לַיהוָה לִכְהֵן:

כֹּא וּקְרֹאתֶם בְּעֶצְם | הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה מְקַרְא־קֹדֶשׁ
יִהְיֶה לָכֶם כָּל־מִלְאכָת עֲבָדָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ חֻקַּת
עוֹלָם בְּכָל־מוֹשְׁבֵיתְכֶם לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם:

RASHI

23:18 על הלהם means, on account of the bread — as an obligation connected with the bread (Sifra, Emor, Chapter 13 4; Menachot 45b).

23:18 WITH THEIR MEAL OFFERINGS AND THEIR DRINK OFFERINGS — according to the law of the meal offerings and the drink offerings which are distinctly set forth with reference to all animal sacrifices in the chapter dealing with drink offerings: (Numbers 28:12—14) “three tenth deals of flour for one bullock, two tenth deals of flour for one ram, and one tenth deal of flour for one lamb”: — this is the meal-offering. The drink-offerings were: “half a hin of wine for a bullock, the third part of a hin of wine for a ram, and the fourth part of a hin of wine for a lamb”.

23:19 THEN YE SHALL SACRIFICE ONE KID OF THE GOATS — I might think that the seven lambs (cf. v. 18) and the goat mentioned here are identical with the seven lambs and one goat mentioned in the Book of Numbers (28:27—30). — This is, however, not the case, for when you come to the bullocks and the rams you will find that they are not identical (here, v. 18. we

have one bullock and two rams, whilst there you have two bullocks and one ram). Consequently you must admit that these (the lambs and the goats mentioned here) form a group for themselves and the others form a group for themselves: these were offered on account of the loaves and the others as additional offerings for the day (Sifra, Emor, Chapter 13 6; Menachot 45b).

23:20 AND THE PRIEST SHALL WAVE THEM [WITH THE BREAD OF THE FIRSTLINGS] FOR A WAVE OFFERING — This teaches us that they (the offerings) require the waving whilst they are still living. One might think that all of them (the seven lambs mentioned in v. 18) have to be waved! It, however, states “[and the priests shall wave them... upon the two lambs]” (cf. Menachot 62a).

23:20 THEY SHALL BE HOLY [TO THE LORD FOR THE PRIEST] — Because festival-offerings offered by a private person are holy only in a minor degree, Scripture was compelled to state of the festival-offerings of the community that they are holy in the highest degree.

²² And when you reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not altogether remove the corners of thy field when thou reapest, nor shalt thou gather any gleanings of thy harvest: thou shalt leave them to the poor, and to the stranger: I am the Lord your God.

כַּבּוֹבְקֶצֶרְכֶם אֶת־קִצִּיר אֶרְצְכֶם לֹא־תִכְלֶה
פֶּאֶת שְׂדֵךְ בְּקֶצֶרְךָ וּלְקַט קִצִּירְךָ לֹא תִלְקֹט
לְעֹנִי וּלְגֵר תַּעֲזֹב אֹתָם אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם:

שישי SIXTH ALIYAH

Rosh Hashanah, the first day of the seventh month, is marked as a sabbath of horn-blowing and holy gathering, while Yom Kippur, the tenth day, is set apart as a day of atonement requiring affliction of soul and complete cessation from work, on pain of being cut off from the people. This solemn fast is to be kept from the evening of the ninth day through the following evening, as an everlasting statute throughout the generations. AI SUMMARY

²³ And the Lord spoke to Moshe, saying,

כַּנִּידְבַּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר:

²⁴ Speak to the children of Yisra'el, saying, In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, shall you have a sabbath, a memorial of blowing of horns, a holy gathering.

כַּדִּבַּר אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר בַּחֹדֶשׁ הַשִּׁבְעִי
בְּאַחַד לַחֹדֶשׁ יְהִי לָכֶם שַׁבָּתוֹן זִכְרוֹן תְּרוּעָה
מִקְרֵא־קֹדֶשׁ:

²⁵ You shall do no servile work: but you shall offer an offering made by fire to the Lord.

כֹּה כָל־מְלָאכָת עֲבֹדָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ וְהִקְרַבְתֶּם
אֶשָּׁה לַיהוָה:

²⁶ And the Lord spoke to Moshe, saying,

כַּנִּידְבַּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר:

RASHI

23:22 AND WHEN YE REAP [THE HARVEST OF YOUR LAND, THOU SHALT NOT MAKE CLEAR RIDDANCE OF THE CORNER OF THE FIELD] — Scripture repeats the prohibition here (although it has already been mentioned above, 19:9) in order to make one who transgresses this law infringe two negative commands. R. Abdima the son of R. Joseph said: What reason had Scripture to place it (the law concerning the corner of the field) amidst those regarding the festival-sacrifices — those of Passover and Pentecost on this side of it, and those of the New Year, Day of Atonement and “the Feast” (Tabernacles) following on that side of it? To teach you that he who leaves the gleanings, the forgotten sheaf and the corner of the field to the poor as it ought to be, is regarded as though he had built the Temple and offered his sacrifices therein (cf. Sifra, Emor, Chapter 13 11).

23:22 THOU SHALT LEAVE [THEM UNTO THE POOR] — leave these in front of them and they shall gather: you are not allowed to assist one of them to the injury of another poor man (Sifra, Kedoshim, Chapter 3 5; Mishnah Peah 5:6).

23:22 I AM THE LORD YOUR GOD, Who am faithful to pay you your reward.

23:24 [THERE SHALL BE UNTO YOU] A זִכְרוֹן OF SOUNDING THE CORNET — a mention (זִכְרוֹן) of Biblical verses which speak of the Divine remembrance and Biblical verses which have reference to the blowing of the Shofar (a ram's horn) on the occasion of important historical events (Sifra; Rosh Hashanah 32a) that I may recall to memory (זִכְרוֹן) for you the offering (lit., the “Binding”) of Isaac in whose stead a ram was offered (cf. Rosh Hashanah 16a) having been caught by its horn (שׁוּפָר).

23:25 אֶשָּׁה AND YE SHALL OFFER A FIRE OFFERING — i. e. the additional offerings prescribed in the Book of Numbers (29:2 ff.).

²⁷ Also on the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement: it shall be a holy gathering to you; and you shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire to the Lord.

²⁸ And you shall do no work on that very same day: for it is a day of atonement, to make atonement for you before the Lord your God.

²⁹ For whatever person shall not be afflicted on that same day, he shall be cut off from his people.

³⁰ And whatever person does any work on that same day, the same person will I destroy from among his people.

³¹ You shall do no manner of work: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.

³² It shall be to you a sabbath of solemn rest, and you shall afflict your souls: on the ninth day of the month at evening, from evening to evening shall you celebrate your sabbath.

כֹּאֲךָ בַּעֲשׂוֹר לַחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי הַזֶּה יוֹם
הַכִּפּוּרִים הוּא מְקַרְא־קֹדֶשׁ יְהִיָּה לָכֶם וְעֲנִיתֶם
אֶת־נַפְשֵׁיכֶם וְהִקְרַבְתֶּם אֶשָּׁה לַיהוָה:

כֹּחַ וְכָל־מְלָאכָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ בַּעֲצֵם הַיּוֹם כִּי
יוֹם כִּפּוּרִים הוּא לְכַפֵּר עֲלֵיכֶם לִפְנֵי יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֵיכֶם:

כט כִּי כָל־הַנֶּפֶשׁ אֲשֶׁר לֹא־תַעֲנֶה בַּעֲצֵם הַיּוֹם
הַזֶּה וְנִכְרְתָה מֵעַמִּיהָ:

י וְכָל־הַנֶּפֶשׁ אֲשֶׁר תַּעֲשֶׂה כָל־מְלָאכָה בַּעֲצֵם
הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה וְהָאֲבֹדְתִי אֶת־הַנֶּפֶשׁ הַהוּא מִקֶּרֶב
עֲמָהּ:

לא כָּל־מְלָאכָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ חֻקַּת עוֹלָם לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם
בְּכָל מִשְׁבְּתֵיכֶם:

לב שַׁבַּת שַׁבְּתוֹן הוּא לָכֶם וְעֲנִיתֶם אֶת־
נַפְשֵׁיכֶם בַּתְּשׁוּעָה לַחֹדֶשׁ בְּעָרֵב מִעָרֵב עַד־
עָרֵב תִּשְׁבְּתוּ שַׁבְּתֻכֶּם:

RASHI

23:27 אֶךְ — The words אֶךְ and וְכִי wherever they occur in Scripture have a limitative force; here the word implies: it (Yom Kippur) makes expiation for those who repent, but it does not make expiation for those who do not repent (יום הכפורים הוא) — אֶךְ ... יום הכפורים הוא — in a limitative sense it is Yom Kippur (Shevuot 13a; cf. Rashi on Exodus 34:7).

23:30 I WILL DESTROY — This expression “destroying” is employed here because Scripture uses everywhere in similar cases the term כָּרַת, “cutting off” without clearly defining it, so that I

do not know exactly what it implies; but when it states here וְהָאֲבֹדְתִי, it teaches in respect of the term כָּרַת that it implies nothing else than becoming lost” (Sifra, Emor, Chapter 14 4).

23:31 [YE SHALL NOT DO] ANY WORK — This is repeated (cf v. 30) in order to make one who does work on Yom Kippur transgress several negative commands. Or, it is repeated, in order to prohibit working in the night of Yom Kippur, just as well as working during the day itself (Yoma 81a).

שביעי SEVENTH ALIYAH

Sukkot (the feast of booths) is established for seven days beginning the fifteenth of the seventh month, marked by holy gatherings, offerings made by fire, the taking of the four species—hadar fruit (citron), palm branches, thick-leaved boughs, and willows—and rejoicing before the Lord, followed by an eighth day of solemn assembly. Dwelling in booths for seven days serves as a perpetual statute so future generations will remember that the Lord housed the children of Yisra'el in booths after bringing them out of Mizrayim (Egypt). **AI SUMMARY**

³³ And the Lord spoke to Moshe, saying,

³⁴ Speak to the children of Yisra'el, saying, The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the feast of booths for seven days to the Lord.

³⁵ On the first day shall be a holy gathering: you shall do no servile work.

³⁶ Seven days you shall offer an offering made by fire to the Lord: on the eighth day shall be a holy gathering to you; and you shall offer an offering made by fire to the Lord; it is a solemn assembly; and you shall do no servile work.

לג' וידבר יהוה אל-מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר:

וידבר אל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר בַּחֲמִשָּׁה עָשָׂר יוֹם לַחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי הַזֶּה חַג הַסֻּכּוֹת שִׁבְעַת יָמִים לַיהוָה:

וּבַיּוֹם הָרִאשׁוֹן מִקְרָא־קֹדֶשׁ כָּל־מְלָאכָת עֲבֹדָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ:

וּשְׁבַעַת יָמִים תִּקְרְיֻבוּ אֲשֶׁה לַיהוָה בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁמִינִי מִקְרָא־קֹדֶשׁ יִהְיֶה לָכֶם וְהִקְרַבְתֶּם אֲשֶׁה לַיהוָה עֲצֻרַת הוּא כָּל־מְלָאכָת עֲבֹדָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ:

RASHI

23:35 מקרא קדש — This means: Hallow it (make it different from other days) by wearing fine clothes, and through appropriate prayer. In the case of other Festivals of which the same words are used, the expression מקרא קדש implies: Hallow them (distinguish them from other days) by your food and drink, by your fine clothes and appropriate prayers (cf. Sifra, Emor, Section 12 4).

23:36 עֲצֻרַת הוּא — The word is derived from the root עצר “to hold back” and suggests: I keep you back with Me one day more. It is similar to the case of a king who invited his children to a banquet for a certain number of days. When the time arrived for

them to take their departure he said, “Children, I beg of you, stay one day more with me; it is so hard for me to part with you!” (cf. Rashi on Numbers 29:36 and Sukkah 55b).

23:36 ANY WORK THAT IS AN עבודה — i. e. even such work which rests as an obligation (עבודה) upon you because if it is left undone it involves monetary loss (cf. Rashi v. 8),

23:36 YE SHALL NOT DO: — One might think that it is forbidden to do such urgent work (מלאכת עבודה) also on the intermediate days of Passover and Tabernacles (which are Half-festivals)! Scripture, however, states: הוא [עצרת], “it (i. e. the eighth day) forms a restriction: [ye shall do no urgent work]” — but on the intermediate days such work is not forbidden (Sifra, Emor, Section 12 6).

³⁷ These are the feasts of the Lord, which you shall proclaim to be holy gatherings, to offer an offering made by fire to the Lord, a burnt offering, and a meal offering, a sacrifice, and drink offerings, every thing upon its day:

³⁸ beside the sabbaths of the Lord, and beside your gifts, and beside all your vows, and beside all your freewill offerings, which you give to the Lord.

³⁹ Also on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the fruit of the land, you shall keep a feast to the Lord seven days: on the first day shall be a sabbath, and on the eighth day shall be a sabbath.

⁴⁰ And you shall take for yourselves on the first day the fruit of the tree hadar, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick leaved trees, and willows of the brook; and you shall rejoice before the Lord your God seven days.

RASHI

23:37 A BURNT OFFERING AND A MEAL OFFERING — This means the מנחת נסכים (the meal-offering due with the drink-offering) that is brought together with the עולה (Menachot 44b).

23:37 EVERYTHING UPON ITS DAY (lit., the thing of the day, on its day) — the quantity definitely assigned to each day in the Book of Numbers (cf. Rashi on Exodus 16:4).

23:37 EVERYTHING UPON ITS DAY (which may mean the matter of the day shall be on its day) — consequently if its day (the day on which some particular one of these sacrifices is due) be past, it's (the day's) offering is past (cf. Sifra, Emor, Section 12 9).

23:39 BUT ON THE FIFTEENTH DAY... YE SHALL OFFER A חג — i. e., a sacrifice of peace-offerings as a חגיגה (the pilgrims' sacrifice on the Festivals) (Chagigah 9a). Since it states that this has to be brought on the fifteenth day of the month, one might think that it (the offering of חגיגה) shall set aside the Sabbath (supersede the Sabbath law, if that day be the fifteenth of the month)! Scripture, however, uses the word אך (the particle that implies a limitation; cf. Rashi on v. 27): suggesting that it must not be offered on Sabbath because it has a supplementary period consisting of all the seven days of the Festival.

23:39 [ON THE FIFTEENTH DAY OF THE SEVENTH MONTH] WHEN YE GATHER IN THE INCREASE OF THE LAND — This tells us that this seventh month (in which סוכות occurs) must be at the time of the ingathering. Hence we learn that they are enjoined to intercalate the years if necessary (Sifra, Emor, Chapter

לאֱלֹהִים מוֹעֲדֵי יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר־תִּקְרְאוּ אֹתָם מִקְרָאֵי קֹדֶשׁ לְהַקְרִיב אֲשֶׁה לַיהוָה עֹלָה וּמִנְחָה זֶבַח וְנִסְכִּים דְּבַר־יוֹם בְּיוֹמוֹ:

וּמִלֶּבֶד שַׁבָּתַת יְהוָה וּמִלֶּבֶד מִתְּנוּתֵיכֶם וּמִלֶּבֶד כָּל־נִדְרֵיכֶם וּמִלֶּבֶד כָּל־נִדְבַתֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר תִּתְּנוּ לַיהוָה:

וּשְׁמַחְתֶּם לָכֶם בַּחֲמִשָּׁה עָשָׂר יוֹם לַחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי בְּאֶסְפְּכֶם אֶת־תְּבוּאַת הָאָרֶץ תַּחֲנוּ אֶת־חַג־יְהוָה שִׁבְעַת יָמִים בָּזֶם הָרִאשׁוֹן שַׁבָּתוֹן וּבָזֶם הַשְּׁמִינִי שַׁבָּתוֹן:

וּלְקַחְתֶּם לָכֶם בָּזֶם הָרִאשׁוֹן פְּרִי עֵץ הָדָר כַּפֹּת תְּמָרִים וְעֵנָף עֵץ־עֵבֶת וְעַרְבֵי־נַחַל וּשְׂמַחְתֶּם לִפְנֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם שִׁבְעַת יָמִים:

15 6), because if there be no such intercalation it (the seventh month) would sometimes fall in the middle of the summer or of the winter.

23:39 YE SHALL CELEBRATE (OFFER) the peace-offerings of the חגיגה.

23:39 SEVEN DAYS (during seven days), meaning that if one has not brought them on one he may bring them on another of the seven days. But I might think that the meaning is that one has to offer them on each of the seven days! Scripture, however, states (v. 41): וַחֲגַתְּמוּ אֹתוֹ, “and ye shall make it the day of the חגיגה” — this implies one day and no more. Why, then, does Scripture say “seven”? In reference to the supplementary period (Chagigah 9a).

23:40 THE FRUIT OF THE TREE HADAR — a tree the wood of which (עץ) has the same taste as its fruit (פרי) (Sifra, Emor, Chapter 16 4; Sukkah 35a).

23:40 הָדָר — It is called הָדָר because it is the tree whose fruit remains (הָדָר) on the tree from one year to another (several years) — and this is the “Ethrog”.

23:40 A BRANCH OF PALM TREES — The word כַּפֹּת is written defective (without ו, not כפות) to intimate that only one branch is intended (Sukkah 32a).

23:40 AND BOUGHS OF THE TREE עֵבֶת — i. e. of a tree whose boughs are, as it were, plaited (intertwined one with another) like ropes (עבותות) and cords; this is the myrtle plant which is indeed formed as a plait (three leaves issuing from one point of the branch and covering it) (Sukkah 32b).

⁴¹ And you shall keep it a feast to the Lord seven days in the year. It shall be a statute for ever in your generations: you shall celebrate it in the seventh month.

⁴² You shall dwell in booths seven days; all that are home born in Yisra'el shall dwell in booths:

⁴³ that your generations may know that I made the children of Yisra'el to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Mizrayim: I am the Lord your God.

⁴⁴ And Moshe declared to the children of Yisra'el the appointed seasons of the Lord.

מֵאַחֲזַנְתֶּם אֹתוֹ חַג לַיהוָה שִׁבְעַת יָמִים בַּשָּׁנָה
חֻקַּת עוֹלָם לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם בַּחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי תַחֲנֹגוּ
אֹתוֹ:

מִבְּסֻכֹּת תִּשְׁבּוּ שִׁבְעַת יָמִים כָּל־הָאֶזְרָח
בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל יֵשְׁבוּ בְּסֻכֹּת:

מִגִּ' לְמַעַן יֵדְעוּ דֹרֹתֵיכֶם כִּי בְּסֻכֹּת הוֹשַׁבְתִּי
אֶת־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּהוֹצִיאִי אוֹתָם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם
אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם:

מִדֹּוֹיִדְבָר מֹשֶׁה אֶת־מַעֲדֵי יְהוָה אֶל־בְּנֵי
יִשְׂרָאֵל:

מפטיר MAFTIR

This passage describes the Musaf (additional) offerings brought on the first day of Sukkot, the festival beginning on the fifteenth day of the seventh month. Thirteen bullocks, two rams, and fourteen lambs are offered as burnt offerings, along with their accompanying meal and drink offerings, plus a goat as a sin offering, all in addition to the daily continual offering. The elaborate scale of these korbanot (sacrifices) reflects the joy and holiness of the festival, as the Torah commands a seven-day celebration marked by cessation from servile work and abundant offerings to the Lord. AI SUMMARY

¹² And on the fifteenth day of the seventh month you shall have a holy gathering; you shall do no servile work, and you shall keep a feast to the Lord seven days:

¹³ and you shall offer a burnt offering, a sacrifice made by fire, of a sweet savour to the Lord; thirteen young bullocks, two rams, and fourteen lambs of the first year: they shall be without blemish:

וּבַחֲמִשָּׁה עָשָׂר יוֹם לַחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי מִקְרָא־
קֹדֶשׁ יִהְיֶה לָכֶם כָּל־מְלָאכָת עֲבֹדָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ
וּחֻגֹתֶם חַג לַיהוָה שִׁבְעַת יָמִים:

יָבִיִּהוּ קִרְבָּנָם עֹלָה אֲשֶׁה רִיחַ נִיחֹחַ לַיהוָה
פָּרִים בְּנֵי־בָקָר שְׁלֹשָׁה עָשָׂר אֵילִם שְׁנָיִם
כִּבְשִׂים בְּנֵי־שָׁנָה אַרְבָּעָה עָשָׂר תְּמִימִם יִהְיוּ:

RASHI

23:42 THE NATIVE — Since this word means native-born, the word בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל, ANYONE IN ISRAEL, serves to include the proselytes (cf. Sifra, Emor, Chapter 17 9).

23:43 THAT I MADE [THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL] ABIDE IN BOOTHES — This does not mean literally “booths” but, “the clouds of Glory” by which they were sheltered (cf. Onkelos; Sifra, Emor, Chapter 17 11; Mekhilta; Sukkah 11b).

¹⁴ and their meal offering shall be of flour mingled with oil, three tenth measures to every bullock of the thirteen bullocks, two tenth measures to each ram of the two rams,

¹⁵ and a tenth measure to each lamb of the fourteen lambs:

¹⁶ and one kid of the goats for a sin offering; beside the continual burnt offering, its meal offering, and its drink offering.

יִזְמְנֶהֶם סֵלֶת בָּלוּלָה בִּשְׁמֶן שְׁלֹשָׁה
עֲשָׂרָנִים לַפָּר הָאֶחָד לְשְׁלֹשָׁה עֲשָׂרִי פָּרִים שְׁנֵי
עֲשָׂרָנִים לְאֵיל הָאֶחָד לְשְׁנֵי הָאֵילִם:

טֹעֵשׂ רוֹן עֵשׂ רוֹן לַכֶּבֶשׂ הָאֶחָד לְאַרְבָּעָה עֲשָׂר
כֶּבֶשִׁים:

טֹזֵשׁ עִיר־עִזִּים אֶחָד חֲטָאת מִלֶּבֶד עֹלֶת
הַתִּמְּיֵד מִנְחָתָהּ וְנִסְכָּהּ:

הפטרה Haftarah

הפטרה ZECHARIAH 14:1-21

In the great day of the Lord, God will wage war against the nations besieging Yerushalayim (Jerusalem), splitting the Mount of Olives and delivering the city, after which the Lord shall be King over all the earth and His Name One, with all surviving nations ascending yearly to worship Him and observe the festival of Sukkot. On that day all things, even the bells of horses and every pot in Yerushalayim and Yehuda, shall be rendered holy to the Lord, with no more merchants in the House of the Lord of hosts. AI SUMMARY

¹ Behold, the day of the Lord comes, when thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee.

² For I will gather all the nations against Yerushalayim to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go into exile, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city.

³ Then shall the Lord go out, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle.

⁴ And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Yerushalayim on the east, and the mount of Olives shall be split along the middle of it by a very great valley from east to west; and half of the mountain shall be removed towards the north, and half of it, towards the south.

אֵינְהָהּ יוֹם-בָּא לַיהוָה וְחָלַק שְׁלָלָךְ בְּקִרְבְּךָ:

בְּיוֹמִי אֶסְפְּתִי אֶת-כָּל-הַגּוֹיִם | אֶל-יְרוּשָׁלַם
לְמִלְחָמָהּ וְנִלְכְּדָה הָעִיר וְנִשְׁסוּ הַבָּתִּים
וְהַנָּשִׁים (תִּשְׁגֹּלְנָה) [תִּשְׁכַּבְנָה] וַיֵּצֵא חֲצִי
הָעִיר בְּגוֹלָה וַיֵּתֶר הָעָם לֹא יִכְרֹת מִן-הָעִיר:

וַיֵּצֵא יְהוָה וְנִלָּחַם בַּגּוֹיִם הָהֵם כִּיּוֹם הָלָחֶמּוּ
בְּיוֹם קָרֵב:

וַיַּעֲמֵדוּ רַגְלָיו בְּיוֹם-הַהוּא עַל-הָר הַזֵּיתִים
אֲשֶׁר עַל-פְּנֵי יְרוּשָׁלַם מִקֵּדָם וְנִבְקַע הָר
הַזֵּיתִים מִחֲצָיו מִזְרָחָה וְלִמָּה גֵּיא גְדוֹלָה מֵאֵד
וּמִשׁ חֲצִי הָהָר צָפוֹנָה וְחֲצִי-נִגְבָּה:

RASHI

14:1 Behold! A day of the Lord is coming A day dear to the Lord.

14:1 and your plunder shall be shared within you Those dwelling within you shall share the plunder that you shall plunder [from] the enemies. And so does Jonathan render: And the house of Israel shall share the wealth of the peoples in your midst, O Jerusalem.

14:2 and the rest of the people Not all of them will be exiled. Now, why will He permit them [i.e., the gentile nations] to exile half of them and to plunder the houses? So that they should not have an excuse, saying, "We have not come for war, but we have come to prostrate ourselves."

14:3 like the day he waged war on the day of battle Like the day He waged war on the Red Sea.

14:4 in the midst thereof lit., from its half

14:4 toward the east and toward the west From east to west, as he goes on and concludes.

14:4 and half the mountain shall move to the north, etc. The northern half shall move from its place and draw toward the north, and so... and half of it to the south Toward the south; and the valley between them will have its beginning to the east and its end to the west.

⁵ And you shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach to Azel: and you shall flee, just as you fled from before the earthquake in the days of 'Uzziyya king of Yehuda: and the Lord my God shall come, and all the holy ones with thee.

⁶ And it shall come to pass on that day, that there shall neither be bright light nor thick darkness;

⁷ but it shall be one particular day which shall be known as the Lord's, neither day, nor night: but it shall come to pass that at evening time, there will be light.

⁸ And on that day, living waters shall go out from Yerushalayim; half of them towards the eastern sea, and half of them toward the western sea: in summer and in winter shall it be.

הַנִּסְתָּם גִּיא־הָרִי כִּי־יָגִיעַ גִּי־הָרִים אֶל־אֶזֶל
וְנִסְתָּם כְּאֲשֶׁר נִסְתָּם מִפְּנֵי הָרָעַשׁ בְּיָמֵי עֲזִיָּה
מֶלֶךְ־יְהוּדָה וּבֹא יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי כָל־קְדוּשִׁים
עִמָּךְ:

וְהָיָה בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא לֹא־יְהִיָּה אֹר וְקִרּוֹת
[וְקִפְאוֹן]:

וְהָיָה יוֹם־אֶחָד הוּא יוֹדֵעַ לִיהְיוֹה לֹא־יִנּוֹם
וְלֹא־לֵילָה וְהָיָה לְעֵת־עֶרֶב יְהִי־הָאֹר:

וְהָיָה | בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא יֵצְאוּ מִיַּם־חַיִּים
מִירוּשָׁלַם חֲצִים אֶל־הַיָּם הַקְּדֻמוֹנִי וְחֲצִים
אֶל־הַיָּם הָאַחֲרוֹן בְּקִיץ וּבַחֲרֹף יְהִיָּה:

RASHI

14:5 And you shall flee to the valley of the mountains Jonathan renders. And the valley of the mountains shall be stopped up. Since Jerusalem is surrounded by mountains, and there is a valley between the mountains in the north and the Mount of Olives, and [this is also] so in the south, when half of the Mount of Olives draws toward the mountain in the north, the valley between them will be stopped up. [This will also be] so in the south.

14:5 shall reach The height of the valley that will be between the mountains.

14:5 to Azal To the height of the mountaintops that are from either side. So did Menahem classify this (Machbereth p. 32), with (Isa. 41:9) "and from its nobles I called you." Its meaning is an expression of height.

14:5 and you shall flee when you see this great wonder.

14:5 as you fled because of the earthquake [Isa. 6:4] "And the doorposts quaked" on the day that Uzziah was stricken with zaraath.

14:5 all holy ones Angels.

14:6 there shall be no light, only disappearing light and thick darkness Jonathan renders. There shall not be light, only light that passes away, and thickness, i.e., there shall not be splendrous light, only קִרּוֹת and קִפְאוֹן shall [there] be. קִרּוֹת: An expression similar to (Ps. 37:20), "like the disappearing light over the plains." Like a sort of light that appears in the morning over the mountains and disappears little by little.

14:6 Congealed and dark and thick, like ice that is congealed and frozen, as in (Job 10: 10), "And like cheese You curdled me."

14:7 And it shall be one day And this thing shall be one day of the day of the Holy One, blessed be He. That day shall be known, that it is for the preparation of the salvation by the Holy One, blessed be He.

14:7 neither day Neither [will it be] a light of splendor, like the light of the world to come, as it is stated (Isa. 30:26): "The light of the sun shall be sevenfold as the light of the seven days."

14:7 nor night Nor a time of trouble, like the trouble of the preceding subjugation by the kingdoms, shall [these days] be, for they will be the days of the Messiah, and there shall be no subjugation during these days.

14:7 and it shall come to pass that at eventide Before the thousand years are up there shall be a splendrous light, and all the good promised to Israel [will come]. And so did Jonathan translate: Not like the light of day and not like the darkness of night.

14:8 And it shall come to pass on that day when the Mount of Olives will split from east to west.

14:8 spring water shall come forth from Jerusalem and flow to the east by way of the crevice to... the eastern sea which is to the east of the world; and half of it will turn to the west, to the western sea. This is the spring concerning which Joel (4:18) prophesied: "And a spring shall emanate from the house of the Lord." That is the spring concerning which Ezekiel (47:3) prophesied: "And he measured a thousand cubits and he made me pass through the water."

⁹ And the Lord shall be king over all the earth: on that day the Lord shall be one, and his name One.

¹⁰ All the land shall be changed like the 'Arava from Geva to Rimmon south of Yerushalayim; whilst she shall be lifted up, and shall remain in her place, from the gate of Binyamin to the place of the first gate, to the corner gate, and from the tower of Hanan'el to the king's winepresses.

¹¹ And men shall dwell in it, and there shall be no more utter destruction; but Yerushalayim shall dwell secure.

¹² And this shall be the plague with which the Lord will smite all the peoples that have fought against Yerushalayim; their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their sockets, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth.

ט וְהָיָה יְהוָה לְמֶלֶךְ עַל-כָּל-הָאָרֶץ בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא
יְהִיָּה יְהוָה אֶחָד וּשְׁמוֹ אֶחָד:

י יִסּוּב כָּל-הָאָרֶץ כְּעֶרְבָה מִגִּבְע לְרִמּוֹן נֶגֶב
יְרוּשָׁלַם וּרְאֵמָהּ וַיִּשְׁבָּה תַּחְתֶּיהָ לְמִשְׁעָר
בְּנִימִן עַד-מִקְוֶם שַׁעַר הָרֵאשׁוֹן עַד-שַׁעַר
הַפְּנִיִּים וּמִגִּדֵּל חֲנַנְאֵל עַד יִקְבֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ:

יא וַיֵּשְׁבוּ בָּהּ וְחָרָם לֹא יִהְיֶה-עוֹד וַיֵּשְׁבָה
יְרוּשָׁלַם לְבֵטָח:

יב וְזָאת | תִּהְיֶה הַמַּגֵּפָה אֲשֶׁר יִגַּף יְהוָה אֶת-
כָּל-הָעַמִּים אֲשֶׁר צָבְאוּ עַל-יְרוּשָׁלַם הַמָּקָם |
בְּשָׂרוֹ וְהוּא עֹמֵד עַל-רִגְלָיו וְעֵינָיו תִּמְקַנָּה
בְּחִרְיָהּ וּלְשׁוֹנוֹ תִּמְקַן בִּפְיָהֶם:

RASHI

14:9 shall the Lord be one For all the nations shall abandon their vanities and acknowledge Him, that He is one, and [that] no strange deity is with Him.

14:9 and His name one That His name shall be mentioned by everyone.

14:10 The whole earth shall be changed The whole earth shall be changed to be like a plain. The mountains will be lowered, and the whole world will be a plain; and Jerusalem will be a mountain, so that it should appear higher than everything [else in the world].

14:10 from the hill of Rimmon We learned in Tosefta of Sotah (11:14): South of Jerusalem is a plain, and the hill of Rimmon is rocks and clods. Rather, so is [the] interpretation [of this phrase]: From the hill of Rimmon, which is a mountainous place from there [the mountains of the world] will begin to be changed, to [be] a plain; and they will be like the south of Jerusalem, which is a plain.

14:10 but it will be elevated high Since its entire environs are a plain, it will appear high.

14:10 and remain in its old place in its place

14:10 until the corner gate, and from the tower of Hananel which will also be in its place; and from there shall extend the length of the city until the king's wine-cellar. Jonathan renders: the pits off the king, fosec in Old French. [This is] like [a word in] Baba Kamma 50b, "trenches and caves." And so, all wine cellars in Scripture are expressions of trenches, referring to the pit that is before the wine press, into which the wine flows. And the Midrash Aggadah (Pesikta d'Rav Kahana p. 143a; Song Rabbah 7:4, cf. Mattenoth Kehunnah, Radal) [identifies] the pits of the king with the ocean: that Jerusalem will reach the end of the whole world, the pits dug out by the supreme King of kings.

14:11 and there shall be no more destruction The city shall no longer be in ruins.

14:12 his flesh will waste away while he still stands This denotes the falling off of the limbs.

¹³ And it shall come to pass on that day, that a great panic from the Lord shall be among them; and they shall lay hold every one on the hand of his neighbour, and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbour.

¹⁴ And Yehuda also shall fight at Yerushalayim; and the wealth of all the nations round about shall be gathered together, gold, and silver, and clothing, in great abundance.

¹⁵ And such shall be the plague of the horse, of the mule, of the camel, and of the ass, and of all the beasts that shall be in these camps, as this plague.

¹⁶ And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations who came against Yerushalayim, shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of booths.

¹⁷ And whoever does not come up of all the families of the earth to Yerushalayim to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, upon them shall be no rain.

יג וְהָיָה בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא תִּהְיֶה מְהוּמַת־יְהוָה רַבָּה בָּהֶם וְהִחְזִיקוּ אִישׁ יָד רֵעֵהוּ וְעָלְתָה יָדוֹ עַל־יָד רֵעֵהוּ:

יד וְגַם־יְהוּדָה תִּלָּחֶם בִּירוּשָׁלַם וְאַסָּף חֵיל כָּל־הַגּוֹלִים סָבִיב זֶהָב וְכֶסֶף וּבִגְדִים לָרֹב מְאֹד:

טו וְכֵן תִּהְיֶה מִגַּפַּת הַסּוֹס הַפָּרָד הַגָּמֶל וְהַחֲמֹר וְכָל־הַבְּהֵמָה אֲשֶׁר יִהְיֶה בַּמַּחֲנֹת הַהֵמָּה כַּמִּגַּפָּה הַזֹּאת:

טז וְהָיָה כָּל־הַנוֹתָר מִכָּל־הַגּוֹלִים הַבָּאִים עַל־ירוּשָׁלַם וְעָלוּ מִדֵּי שָׁנָה בְּשָׁנָה לְהִשְׁתַּחֲוֹת לַמֶּלֶךְ־יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת וְלַחֹג אֶת־חֹג הַסֻּכּוֹת:

יז וְהָיָה אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יַעֲלֶה מֵאֵת מִשְׁפָּחוֹת הָאָרֶץ אֶל־ירוּשָׁלַם לְהִשְׁתַּחֲוֹת לַמֶּלֶךְ יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת וְלֹא עֲלֵיהֶם יִהְיֶה הַגֶּשֶׁם:

RASHI

14:13 there will be great consternation, sent by the Lord upon them to confuse their wisdom, to bring them about to madness.

14:13 each one will seize the hand of the other He will seize him to slay him.

14:13 and his hand shall rise up Whoever is stronger is victorious.

14:14 Yea, even Judah against their will shall fight against Jerusalem.

14:15 similar to this plague which is delineated above, that his flesh shall waste away.

14:16 the festival of Tabernacle As our Sages explained in tractate Avodah Zarah (3a): I have an easy commandment named Sukkah, as is stated in the first halachic discussion.

14:17 rain Actual rain to cause the produce of their land to grow. Now, what reason did He have for decreeing upon them the withholding of rain? That the commandments of the festival are based on the rains: the four species of the lulav and the water libation are to appease God for water. Since the festival of Tabernacles is the time of the rains of the year, no rain will fall on those who entertain doubts concerning the festival of Tabernacles. This is learned in the Tosefta of Sukkah (4:7).

¹⁸ And if the family of Mizrayim does not go up, and does not come, then they shall have no overflow. This shall be the plague, with which the Lord will smite the nations that shall not come up to keep the feast of booths.

¹⁹ This shall be the punishment of Mizrayim, and the punishment of all nations that do not come up to keep the feast of booths.

²⁰ On that day shall there be (inscribed) upon the bells of the horses, Holiness to the Lord; and the pots in the Lord's house shall be like the basins before the altar.

²¹ And every pot in Yerushalayim and in Yehuda shall be sacred to the Lord of hosts: and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them, and cook in them: and on that day there shall be no more merchants in the house of the Lord of hosts.

יְהוָה וְאִם־מִשְׁפַּחַת מִצְרַיִם לֹא־תַעֲלֶה וְלֹא בֹאָה
וְלֹא עֲלֵיהֶם תִּהְיֶה הַמִּגַּפָּה אֲשֶׁר יִגַּף יְהוָה
אֶת־הַגּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר לֹא יַעֲלוּ לְחַג אֶת־חַג
הַסֻּכּוֹת:

יִשְׁזָאת תִּהְיֶה חֲטָאת מִצְרַיִם וְחֲטָאת כָּל־
הַגּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר לֹא יַעֲלוּ לְחַג אֶת־חַג הַסֻּכּוֹת:

כַּ בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא יִהְיֶה עַל־מַצְלוֹת הַסּוֹס קֹדֶשׁ
לִיהוָה וְהָיָה הַסִּירוֹת בְּבֵית יְהוָה כַּמְזֻרְקִים
לִפְנֵי הַמִּזְבֵּחַ:

כֹּא וְהָיָה כָּל־סִיר בִּירוּשָׁלַם וּבִיהוּדָה קֹדֶשׁ
לִיהוָה צְבָאוֹת וּבָאוּ כָל־הַזִּבְחִים וּלְקַחוּ מֵהֶם
וּבִשּׁ לֹ בָהֶם וְלֹא־יִהְיֶה כֹנַעַנִי עוֹד בְּבֵית־יְהוָה
צְבָאוֹת בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא:

RASHI

14:18 And if the family of Egypt does not go up and they do not require rain, for the Nile comes up and waters it [i.e., the land of Egypt].

14:18 it shall not [rain] upon them Their rain shall not be upon them; i.e., the Nile will not water them, and so did Jonathan render: The Nile shall not ascend upon them.

14:18 the plague will be The plague of famine.

14:18 with which the Lord will plague This will be the punishment of Egypt and the punishment of all the nations, as He states. "upon them there shall be no rain."

14:20 there will be upon the bells of the horses On the bells that are hung on the horse for beauty between its eyes (Pesachim 50a). Those, too, will be consecrated to make service vessels: sprinkling basins for the blood and pots to cook the flesh of the many sacrifices.

14:20 Yea, every pot...will be All those that are used to remove the ashes, they too will be of gold and of silver, like the sprinkling basins that are before the altar.

14:20 the bells of the horses tintinnoc in Old French.

14:21 and there will no longer be a trafficker They will not require trafficking, as in (Isa. 23:8): "whose traffickers were the honored of the earth." Another explanation: There is no poor man here.

מדרשים Midrash

Vayikra Rabbah 27:1 on Leviticus 22:27

Righteousness and judgment are portrayed through the imagery of mighty mountains and vast depths: the tzaddikim (righteous), like fruitful mountains, produce merit for themselves and others and receive boundless reward, while the wicked, like the unfruitful depths, harm themselves and others and face unbounded punishment; yet tzedakah (charity/righteousness) can suppress harsh judgment as mountains suppress the deep. The midrash further illustrates through varied stories and expositions (Rabbi Yishmael, Rabbi Akiva, Alexander of Macedonia's encounters, etc.) that God's ways of reward and retribution, though sometimes puzzling, are ultimately just and often intertwined—even the survival of humanity is bound up with the merit of animals, as symbolized by the parallel eighth-day laws of circumcision for man and acceptance as an offering for animal, both stated in this week's verse. AI SUMMARY

“A bull, or a sheep, or a goat, when it is born, shall be seven days under its mother and from the eighth day on, it shall be accepted as a fire offering to the Lord” (Leviticus 22:27). “A bull, or a sheep, or a goat” – that is what is written: “Your righteousness is like mighty mountains” (Psalms 36:7). The mountains produce herbs and the righteous have good deeds. Alternatively, “Your righteousness is like mighty mountains” – just as mountains are fit to be sown and produce fruit, so, the righteous produce fruits for themselves and for others. To what is the matter comparable? To a golden bell whose clapper is of pearls; so, the righteous benefit themselves and benefit others, as it is stated: “Tell the righteous that it is good, as they will eat the fruit of their actions” (Isaiah 3:10).

“Your judgments are vast depths” (Psalms 36:7), these are the wicked. Just as the depths cannot be sown and do not produce fruits, so, the wicked do not have good deeds and they do not produce fruits. Rather, they distress themselves and others, as it is stated: “Woe to the wicked, that he is evil” (Isaiah 3:11), evil for himself and evil for others.

“Your righteousness [tzidkatekha] is like mighty mountains; [Your judgments are vast depths].” Transpose the verse and expound it: Your righteousness over your judgments is like mighty mountains over vast depths. Just as these mountains suppress the depths so they do not inundate the world, so too, charity [tzedaka] suppresses punishment so it will not come to the world.

“Your righteousness is like mighty mountains” – just as these mountains are endless, so too, there is no end to the reward given to the righteous. “Your judgments are vast depths” – just as the depths are unquantifiable, so the punishment of the wicked in the future is unquantifiable.

Another matter, “Your righteousness is like mighty mountains.” Rabbi Yishmael says: The righteous, who fulfill the Torah that was given from the mighty mountains, the Holy One blessed be He performs with them charity like the mighty mountains. But the wicked, who do not fulfill the Torah that was given from the mighty mountains, the Holy One blessed be He is exacting with them to the vast depths.

Rabbi Akiva says: He is exacting with these and those. From the righteous He collects payment in this world for the small number of wicked deeds that they performed in this world in order to give them a good reward in the future, and He bestows peace upon the wicked and repays them for the small number of good deeds that they performed in this world in order to exact retribution from them in the future.

Rabbi Meir says: The righteous were likened to their abode, as it is stated: “In good grazing land I will herd them, and on the mountains of the height of Israel will be their pasture” (Ezekiel 34:14). The wicked were likened to their abode, as it is stated: “So said the Lord God: On the day that he descended to the netherworld I caused mourning; I covered the depths for him” (Ezekiel 31:15).

Rabbi Yehuda ben Rabbi said: This is analogous to the fact that one crafts a cover for an earthenware vat neither of silver, nor of gold, nor of other metals, but rather, of earthenware, because it is of the same kind. So, the Holy One blessed be He said: Gehenna is darkness, as it is written: “Let their way be dark and slippery” (Psalms 35:6); the depths are darkness, as it is stated: “Darkness was upon the surface of the depths” (Genesis 1:2); and the wicked are darkness, as it is stated: “Their actions are in the darkness” (Isaiah 29:15). Let darkness come and cover darkness, as it is stated: “For he came in futility, and departs in darkness, and his name is covered in darkness” (Ecclesiastes 6:4).

Another matter, “Your righteousness is like mighty mountains.” Rabbi Yehuda ben Rabbi Simon said: The righteousness that you performed on behalf of Noah in the ark “is like the mighty mountains,” as it is stated: “The ark rested on the mountains of Ararat” (Genesis 8:4). Your judgments that You performed with his generation, You were exacting with them to “the vast depths,” as it is stated: “On that day all the wellsprings of the vast depths were breached” (Genesis 7:11). When You remembered him, you did not remember him alone, but rather, “God remembered Noah and every beast” (Genesis 8:1).

When Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi went to Rome, he saw there marble pillars covered with tapestries so they would not crack in the heat or contract in the cold. He saw a certain poor man there with a reed mat beneath him and a reed mat on his back. Regarding the pillars he read: “Your righteousness is like mighty mountains.” Where You bestow, You bestow benevolently. Regarding the poor man he read: “Your judgments are vast depths.” Where You strike, You are very exacting.

Alexander of Macedonia went to the king at the end of the earth, beyond the mountains of darkness. He went to a certain province named Carthage in which there were only women. They went out before him and said to him: ‘If you engage in battle with us and overcome us, your reputation will emerge to the world as one who destroyed a district of women. If we engage in battle with you and overcome you, your reputation will emerge to the world as one who was overcome by women, and you will no longer stand before kings.’ When he went out, he wrote on the gate of the city wall: ‘I, Alexander of Macedonia, was a fool until I came to the province of Carthage and learned counsel from women.’

He went to another province named Africa and they emerged before him with golden apples, golden pomegranates, and golden bread. He said: ‘What is this, is gold eaten in your land?’ They said to him: ‘Did you not have it in your land?’ He said to them: ‘I did not come to see your products, I came to see your judicial system.’

While they were sitting, two men came for judgment before the king. One said: ‘My master the king: I purchased a ruin from this man, and I dug, and I found buried treasure in it. I said to him: Take your treasure, as I purchased a ruin, I did not purchase treasure.’ The other said: ‘Just as you fear the punishment for robbery, so do I fear it. When I sold it to you, I sold you the ruin and everything in it.’ The king addressed

one of them and said to him: 'Do you have a son?' He said to him: 'Yes.' He addressed the other, he said to him: 'Do you have a daughter?' He said to him: 'Yes.' He said to them: 'Go and marry one to the other, and both of them can partake of the treasure.'

Alexander of Macedonia became astonished. The king said to him: 'Why are you astonished? Did I not judge well?' He said to him: 'Yes.' He said to him: 'If this case had been in your land, what would you have done?' He said to him: 'Beheaded this one and beheaded that one and the treasure would have gone to the king's palace.'

[The king] said: 'Does the sun shine in your land?' He said to him: 'Yes.' 'Does rain fall in your land?' He said to him: 'Yes.' He said to him: 'Are there, perhaps, small domesticated animals in your land?' [He said: 'Yes.'] He said to him: 'May that man despair, it is only thanks to the small domesticated animals that the sun shines upon you and the rain falls upon you. Due to the small domesticated animals you survive.'

That is what is written: "The Lord will save man and animal" (Psalms 36:7); man, thanks to animal, the Lord will save. Israel said: 'Master of the universe, we are like man, save us like an animal, because we are drawn after You like an animal.' That is what is written: "Draw me after you, we will run" (Song of Songs 1:4). To where are we drawn after you? To the Garden of Eden; that is what is written: "They are sated by the rich fare of Your House; You give them to drink from the stream of Your delights [adanekha]" (Psalms 36:9).

Rabbi Elazar ben Rabbi Menahem said: Your Eden [ednekha] is not written here, but rather, Your Edens [adanekha]. This teaches that each and every righteous person has an Eden of his own. "The Lord will save man and animal." Rabbi Yitzhak said: The law of man and the law of animal are equal. The law of man: "On the eighth day, the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised" (Leviticus 12:3). The law of animal: "From the eighth day on, it shall be accepted [as a fire offering to the Lord]."

Vayikra Rabbah 28:1 on Leviticus 23:10

This midrash contrasts human toil "under the sun" (Ecclesiastes 1:3) with divine assistance, noting that a debate over Ecclesiastes' seemingly heretical implications was resolved once its true point emerged: mundane striving alone yields no lasting advantage, but the toil of Torah and mitzvot (good deeds/commandments) does. The Rabbis illustrate this with Rabbi Yanai's example that God does virtually all the work in producing food through nature, yet asks only the modest wage of the omer offering, teaching that human effort is minor compared to Divine provision, and gratitude is expressed through the simple act of bringing the first sheaf to the kohen (priest). AI SUMMARY

"Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: When you come to the land that I am giving to you, and you reap its harvest, you shall bring a sheaf of the first of your harvest to the priest" (Leviticus 23:10). "Speak to the children of Israel...you shall bring a sheaf of the first of your harvest to the priest" – that is what is written: "What advantage is there for man in all his toil that he toils under the sun?" (Ecclesiastes 1:3).

Rabbi Binyamin ben Levi said: They sought to suppress the book of Ecclesiastes because they found in it matters that tend toward heresy. They said: Was it appropriate for Solomon to say this: "Rejoice, young man, in your youth. Let your heart cheer you in the days of your youth"? (Ecclesiastes 11:9). Moses said: "You shall not stray after your heart and after your eyes" (Numbers 15:39), and Solomon said: "Follow the ways of your heart and the sight of your eyes" (Ecclesiastes 11:9). Is restraint to be slackened; is there no judgment and no Judge? When he said: "But know that for all of these, God will bring you to judgment" (Ecclesiastes 11:9), they said: Solomon spoke well.

Rabbi Shmuel bar Nahmani said: They sought to suppress the book of Ecclesiastes because they found in it matters that tend toward heresy. They said: Was it appropriate for Solomon to say this: “What advantage is there for man [in all his toil that he toils under the sun?].” Is the implication [that this is so] even regarding toil in Torah? They then said: Had he said: “In all toil,” and was silent, we would have said that the implication is even regarding the toil of Torah. But he says only “in all his toil.” It is his own toil that is ineffective, but the toil of Torah is effective.

Rabbi Yudan says: Under the sun he does not have [advantage], but above the sun he does have. Rabbi Levi and the Rabbis, Rabbi Levi says: For all that people do to proliferate mitzvot and good deeds in this world, it is sufficient for them that the Holy One blessed be He shines the sun for them, as it is stated: “The sun rises and the sun sets” (Ecclesiastes 1:5). The Rabbis say: For all that the righteous do to proliferate mitzvot and good deeds in this world, it is sufficient for them that the Holy One blessed be He renews their faces like the sun, as it is stated: “May all those who love Him be like the sun emerging in its might” (Judges 5:31).

Rabbi Yanai said: The way of the world is that when a person purchases a litra of meat from the marketplace, how much exertion must he expend, and how much trouble must he experience until he has cooked it! But the people sleep in their beds and the Holy One blessed be He causes the winds to blow, causes the clouds to ascend, causes plants to grow, and the fruits to fatten, and they give Him only the wage of the omer. That is what is written: “You shall bring a sheaf of the first of your harvest to the priest.”

Vayikra Rabbah 29:1 on Leviticus 23:24

This passage teaches that Rosh HaShana, the first day of the seventh month, corresponds to the anniversary of the creation and judgment of Adam, whose own trial and pardon on that day become a paradigm for all future generations. Just as Adam sinned yet emerged with a pardon on that very day, so too his descendants stand in judgment before God each Rosh HaShana with the assurance of divine mercy and forgiveness. The midrash thus frames Rosh HaShana as a day of universal judgment for all nations, but one rooted in the model of compassion shown to Adam at the world's very beginning. AI SUMMARY

“Speak to the children of Israel, saying: In the seventh month, on the first of the month, shall be a rest for you, a remembrance by means of a blast, a holy convocation” (Leviticus 23:24). “In the seventh month, on the first of the month” – that is what is written: “Forever, Lord, Your word stands in the heavens” (Psalms 119:89).

It is taught in the name of Rabbi Eliezer: On the twenty-fifth of Elul, the world was created. Rav's statement is in accordance with what Rabbi Eliezer taught, as we learned in the tekiata of Rav: This day is the beginning of Your works, a commemoration of the first day.

“For it is a statute for Israel, [a law of the God of Jacob]” (Psalms 81:5). Regarding the countries, it will be said: Which is for the sword and which is for peace, which is for famine and which is for plenty. The people will be remembered on it, to be ascribed for life or for death.

In conclusion, you say: On the day of Rosh HaShana, in the first hour it entered His thoughts, in the second [hour] He consulted with the ministering angels, in the third He gathered his dust, in the fourth He kneaded it, in the fifth He shaped it, in the sixth He made it into a lifeless body, in the seventh He breathed a soul into him, in the eighth He brought him into the Garden, in the ninth he was commanded, in the tenth he transgressed, in the eleventh he was sentenced, in the twelfth he emerged with a pardon.

The Holy One blessed be He said to Adam: ‘This is a portent for your descendants. Just as you stood trial before Me this day and emerged with a pardon, so your descendants are destined to stand trial before Me on this day and emerge before Me with a pardon.’

When? It is “in the seventh month, on the first of the month.”

Vayikra Rabbah 30:12 on Leviticus 23:40

The four species (esrog, lulav, hadassim, aravos) represent the different types within Israel—those with both Torah and good deeds, those with only one, and those with neither. Since none can be eliminated, the Holy One commands that they be bound together as one, so that all Israel atone for and complement one another, and it is precisely through this unity that God's greatness is elevated on earth. AI SUMMARY

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. If you do so, at that moment, I will be ascendant [mitaleh].

That is what is written: “Who built His upper chamber [maalotav] in the heavens” (Amos 9:6). When is He ascendant? When they are made into a single group, as it is stated: “And established His group upon earth” (Amos 9:6). Therefore, Moses exhorts Israel and says to them: “You shall take for you on the first day.”

Sifra, Emor, Chapter 17 11 on Leviticus 23:43

The Sifra links the mitzvah (commandment) of dwelling in the succah (booth) during Sukkot to the verse in Nechemiah describing Ezra's instructions for building succoth from various tree branches, connecting this practice to Vayikra 23:43. It records a dispute between R. Eliezer, who holds that the succoth in which the Israelites dwelt in the desert were actual physical booths, and R. Akiva, who maintains they were clouds of glory (Divine protective clouds). The passage concludes that, regardless of this dispute, the succah itself serves as a reminder of the exodus from Egypt. AI SUMMARY

11) And thus does Ezra say (Nechemiah 8:15) "and that they must announce and proclaim throughout all their cities and Jerusalem, saying: Go out to the mountains and bring olive leaves, and olive-tree leaves and hadas leaves, and date-palm leaves, and plaited-tree leaves to make succoth, as it is written" (Vayikra 23:43) "So that your generations know that I caused the children of Israel to dwell in succoth when I took them out of the land of Egypt." R. Eliezer says that they were booths, literally; R. Akiva says that they were clouds of glory. "when I took them out of the land of Egypt." We are hereby taught that even the succah is a reminder of the exodus from Egypt.

חסידות

From the Chassidic Courts

Ohev Yisrael

APTA · OHEV YISRAEL, FOR SUKKOT

The lulav's four species reflect the Name Havayah with a kamatz, representing a chesed (loving-kindness) that is still constricted; through the hakafot (circuits) and rejoicing of Shemini Atzeret and Simchat Torah, that same Name is revocalized with a patach, causing the chesed to spread forth into all worlds and powers, ultimately meriting Israel access to the Tree of Life. AI SUMMARY

The four species of the lulav correspond to the four letters of the Name Havayah (YHVH), vocalized with a kamatz — and this Name is a Name of chesed (loving-kindness). However, this chesed lacks hispashtus (expansion/spreading forth), and this is the secret of "ויקח הכהן" ("and the kohen shall take a handful").

But the festival of Shemini Atzeret corresponds to the four letters of the holy Name Havayah vocalized with a patach. That is to say, on this festival the chesed attains hispashtus into all the supernal lights, and into all the supernal worlds, and into all the powers, both supernal and lower. And all this comes about through our making hakafot (circuits) and rejoicing in the joy of Simchat Torah.

The four-letter Name in the vocalization of kamatz has a gematria (numerical value) of ninety. This is the secret of the "nine yudin" contained

within the Havayot (permutations of the Name). This is why we say every day, "Poteach et yadecha" ("You open Your hand") — that is, we request of the glorious and awesome Creator to "open the yudin," so that the chesed may attain hispashtus into all the supernal lights, and into all the supernal worlds, and into all the powers, supernal and lower. And all of this Israel must bring about through hakafot that are in the vocalization of patach, as stated above.

Ten instances of Havayah in the vocalization of patach total, by gematria, five hundred. That is to say, through our doing all this by means of hakafot, the Creator, Who Lives Forever, will grant us merit to reach the Tree of Life, a journey of five hundred years.

Therefore I remember this.

Translation: translated by AI (anthropic/claude-sonnet-5)

Zera Kodesh

ROPSHITZ · SUKKOT, ZERA KODESH

Dwelling in the sukkah induces profound hachna'ah (self-abasement/humility), reminding a person that his existence is fleeting like a passing shadow and reducing him to a sense of ayin (nothingness) — the very state from which Creation itself emerged; through this humility, following the model of Avraham who leaned on the "tree of the sukkah," one draws down chassadim (acts of lovingkindness) that sweeten the dinim (judgments) inherent in all the middot (attributes), transforming severity into overflowing kindness for Israel throughout all four worlds while directing judgment instead toward Israel's enemies. AI SUMMARY

In the midrash: "And Hashem afflicted Pharaoh, etc., concerning the matter of Sarai, the wife of Avram, etc." This is the meaning of "The tzaddik (righteous one) flourishes like the tamar (date palm)" — just as the shade of the date palm is far off, so is the giving of reward to tzaddikim (righteous ones), etc. Just as with the date palm, anyone who climbs to its top without guarding himself falls and dies, so too one who comes to join with Israel [in harming them], etc.

Now, the matter of the sukkah, which He, may His Name be blessed, commanded us to dwell in — through this we come to tremendous hachna'ah (self-abasement/humility), for thereby a person remembers that he is only like a stranger in the land and like a wayfarer who turns aside to lodge, and that his dwelling in this world is a temporary dwelling, like in a sukkah, and he is only like a passing shadow, like a sukkah in its lodging-place, and this whole world is a passing world, and everything is ayin va'efes (nothingness and naught).

Through this one comes to great hachna'ah and becomes, in his own eyes, on the level of ayin (nothingness), which was the beginning of Creation, for the whole of Creation was yesh me'ayin (something from nothing). And when one draws down from there through hachna'ah, then it is said, "From where (me'ayin) shall my help come" — for one draws down from there to sweeten all the dinim (judgments/severities) that are in all the middot (attributes/qualities), all the way to the level of acharit (the end/final stage). Therefore, through the sukkah — through which one comes to hachna'ah and ayin as above — one draws down the chassadim (acts of lovingkindness).

And therefore Avraham, the ish hachessed (man of lovingkindness), whose attribute is to draw down chesed, as it is written, "chesed to Avraham," also drew down rachamim (mercy), for Avraham in gematria (numerical value) equals rechem (womb/mercy) — he drew down rachamim and chassadim through the mitzvah of sukkah, as our Sages, of blessed memory, expounded on the verse "and lean upon the tree" — that it was the tree of the sukkah, as the paytan (liturgical poet) established: "Elim, like Av [Avraham] leaning under the tree of the sukkah" — for the sukkah alludes to the drawing down from the level of ayin, the beginning of all, through anavah (humility), as it says, "and I am but dust and ashes."

Through this he sweetened all the dinim in all ten middot, for he drew down from the beginning [reishit], which is indicated by the Name Ehyeh, of which He, may His Name be blessed, said, "I will create creatures and I will be (ehyeh) a God to them." And the Name Ehyeh is complete rachamim; from that Name He drew down to make the Names Havayah and Adnut, and He drew down the yichud (unification) of these three Names within all ten middot, and all the dinim in all the middot were sweetened.

Therefore Avraham, in the full spelling — alef, beit, reish, hei, mem — has, according to the verse's gematria, the numerical value of Ehyeh Havayah Adnut ten times over. And all this he accomplished through his drawing down from ayin, which the mitzvah of sukkah indicates, as above. Therefore sukkah, in its full spelling — samech, vav, kaf, hei, yud — equals Avraham in gematria, to indicate that through the mitzvah of sukkah one draws down the chassadim from beginning to end, just as Avraham

did, as above — for this is hinted in his name in full spelling, whose gematria is ten times yavak (יב"ק), as above.

Therefore on Sukkot we take the lulav, which is called in the Torah kapot tamarim (fronds of date palms), for tamar equals in gematria ten times din (judgment), and we make from them chassadim through hamtakah (sweetening) as above, and we draw down the chassadim into all four worlds. And this is what is said in the aforementioned midrash: "The tzaddik flourishes like the tamar" — referring to Avraham, who did as above, sweetening in the ten middot every din within them, for ten times din equals in gematria tamar, and he sweetened them and drew down the chassadim to all four worlds.

And four times chesed equals in gematria 288 (reflection: rafach). And this is the meaning of "the tzaddik flourishes like the tamar" — that from the din, which is hinted in the word tamar, he made 288, five times chesed, for [the four worlds] Atzilut, Beriah, Yetzirah, Asiyah, until the end of all

generations and worlds. And this is what the midrash says: "Just as the tamar has its shade far off, so the tzaddikim draw down the chassadim to the end of all levels" — [to] the Name Shakai, of which He said to His world, "Enough (dai)," and "far off" equals in gematria Shakai — until that Name they draw down chassadim.

And this is what it means that the tzaddik has "shade from afar" — the gevurot (severities) that are sweetened cast upon us the goodnesses and chassadim that come from the hamtakah, and it becomes "for His chesed has overwhelmed us," and the chassadim intensify, and He, may His Name be blessed, executes din upon the enemies of Israel. And this is the meaning of "and just as the tamar, etc., so one who attaches himself to Israel [in enmity] receives his own" — for they are cast the din of the tamar, which equals ten times din, through the intensification of chassadim upon Israel, as above.

Translation: translated by AI (anthropic/claude-sonnet-5)

Peri Tzadik

LUBLIN · PERI TZADIK, SUKKOT

The sukkah's purpose is not merely a remembrance but a vehicle for da'at (inner knowledge/awareness) to enter the heart permanently, granting Yisrael, like Yaakov, protection from the yetzer hara (evil inclination) and yishrut lev (uprightness of heart), which alone brings true simchah (joy). This mutual joy—the Holy One rejoicing with Yisrael through yirah (fear/awe) and Yisrael rejoicing with Him through an upright heart at rest from inner battle—is why Sukkot is called z'man simchateinu (the season of our rejoicing). AI SUMMARY

This festival is called z'man simchateinu (the season of our rejoicing), for it is written, "In sukkot (booths) shall you dwell... in order that your generations may know that I made the Children of Israel dwell in sukkot..." And they asked: why did they not make a remembrance for the manna and the well, but only for the clouds of glory? But in truth one must examine this: if the reason for the sukkah is a remembrance of the clouds of glory, it should have said "in order that you remember that in sukkot..." as with tzitzit, "in order that you remember...", and likewise "in order that you remember the day of your leaving Egypt." Yet here it is written "in order that

they may know" — meaning that the da'at (knowledge/awareness) should enter the heart for all generations.

This is like what we find with Yaakov, when his name was called Yisrael, as it says, "for you have striven with a Divine being and with men, and have prevailed." For beforehand he had fear of Esav and his prince, who is the Sama'el, the yetzer hara (evil inclination), who appeared to him as a Torah scholar (as stated in Chullin 91a). And afterward, "and have prevailed" — yet even so, his hip socket was touched, for he still had another claim afterward. Then it is

written, "and Esav went on his way..." meaning that no accusation remained upon him. Then it is written, "and Yaakov journeyed to Sukkot."

"And he built himself a house" — for Yaakov Avinu (our forefather) was truly perfected in every respect, and the kedushah (holiness) remained with him permanently, like a house, as it says, "You give truth to Yaakov" — "the lip of truth shall be established forever" — "and to his livestock" — meaning to his sons and his descendants, who are called "holy flocks," as we find in the midrash (Bereishit Rabbah 73) that Yaakov Avinu had 600,000 (samech-resch, 260, is stated but the intent is the number corresponding to) flocks, and the number 260 corresponds to the number of the root-souls of Yisrael, which were aligned opposite them, and therefore he is called "his livestock."

He made sukkot so that they would in any case merit protection in the tzeila d'meheimnuta (shadow of faith), meaning complete faithfulness. This is the protection from the yetzer hara, as it is written, "and a sukkah shall be for shade by day..." And it is stated (Ra'aya Mehemna, Pinchas 255b): "not in the shade of an ordinary sukkah that protects the body from the sun, but a shade to protect the soul." And so it is written, "from storm and from rain" — this refers to the kelipot (husks/shells of impurity), as it is written, "He shall rain upon the wicked burning coals." So too on Yom Kippur, it is stated (Vayikra Rabbah 21) "and my goat on Yom Kippur" — meaning from all the sins, as it is written, "and the goat shall bear all their sins," and it is expounded (Bereishit Rabbah 65), "the goat — this is Esav — their sins" — sins of tam (simplicity/innocence).

After this one requires a sukkah to protect the soul. For a person's yetzer overpowers him every day and renews itself daily (as stated in Sukkah 52b), and were it not that the Holy One, blessed be He, helps him, he could not overcome it.

And it is stated (Ta'anit 15a): "The righteous [walk] toward light," as it is written, "light is sown for the tzaddik (righteous one)," and "for the upright of heart, gladness," as it is written, "and for the upright

of heart, gladness." For the tzaddik is called a gibor (mighty one) who conquers his yetzer, and needs light to illumine for him assistance to overcome. But still he may be said to have toil and battle, and this is not [full] gladness. But "for the upright of heart" — one who merits to straighten the heart, to empty the evil from the heart of a fool — this too is gladness.

Yaakov merited uprightness of heart forever, and Yisrael merit this, in any case, in the days of the festival of Sukkot. This is the attribute of da'at, the attribute of Yaakov, as it is written (Zohar, Shemot 44b), "Yaakov was made through the mystery of da'at." And this is what Yisrael merit on Sukkot: "in order that they may know..." — that they merit the attribute of da'at, that it should enter the heart, that "in sukkot I made them dwell" means protection from the yetzer hara. And therefore the festival is called z'man simchateinu.

And in the Ra'aya Mehemna (Emor 104a): "Just as the Holy One, blessed be He, bears Yisrael in these days and rejoices in them, so too Yisrael bear the Holy One, blessed be He, as their portion and rejoice in Him" — for the Blessed One rejoices with Yisrael through the attribute of yirah (fear/awe), for this was the purpose of creation, as it is stated (Shabbat 31b): "The Holy One, blessed be He, created His world only so that they should fear before Him, as it is said, 'and God has made it so that they should fear before Him.'" And at the end of Avot: "everything that the Holy One, blessed be He, created in His world, He created only for His glory" — meaning that the attribute of His kingship should be revealed, "a king whose dread should be upon you" (as stated in Kiddushin 32b). And the Blessed One has gladness when His will is done.

And Yisrael, when they merit uprightness of heart — "all the native-born of Yisrael shall dwell in sukkot" — whoever is from the holy root and stock of Yisrael shall dwell in sukkot beneath the shadow of faith, for Yisrael have rest from the war of the yetzer hara, and they rejoice with the Blessed One through uprightness of heart with gladness. And thus the festival is called z'man simchateinu.

Beit Aharon

KARLIN · SUKKOT, BEIT AHARON

The sukkah represents God's protective shelter over Israel, teaching that even though hostile forces—symbolized by the ancient nations and the sitra achra (forces of evil)—constantly dwell alongside Israel seeking to draw from and overpower its holiness, God's chesed (kindness) ensures they can never succeed. "L'ma'an yedu doroteichem" thus means that these very forces that dwell beside Israel must know that Israel remains eternally sheltered and unconquerable under Divine protection. AI SUMMARY

So that your generations may know that I made the Children of Israel dwell in sukkot (booths) when I took them out of the land of Egypt.

At first glance this is difficult: what is the meaning of "doroteichem" (your generations)? It should have written "l'ma'an teda'un" (so that you may know), as it is written above, "and you shall know that I am the Lord who brought you up," etc. We can say, according to the simple sense, that in truth the five nations called Anakim, Rephaim, Nefilim, etc., are always present in the world, constantly seeking to overpower holiness — were it not for the chesed (kindness) of God every day, who continually saves us from their hand by having settled us in the sukkah when He took us out of Egypt. For the generation that left Egypt represented the whole of Yisrael (Israel), and these five nations mentioned above were also present at that time, and they sought to overpower holiness, God forbid — and this was also the war of Amalek.

And so it says, "And Balaam saw Yisrael dwelling according to its tribes" — meaning he saw them sitting in the sukkah, with it covering over them so

that no nation or tongue would ever have dominion over them. For this reason it is called "sukkah" — a mother (imma) who shelters over her children.

And this is what the verse means by "l'ma'an yedu doroteichem" — that is, the nations and the sitra achra (the "other side," i.e., the forces of evil) will come to know that in sukkot, etc. And "doroteichem" is from the root meaning "dwelling" (dirah) — those who dwell alongside you. For in truth, the sitra achra always dwells alongside Yisrael in order to draw sustenance from holiness and receive influence from within it, and not to allow Yisrael any influence, God forbid. Therefore the verse says, "l'ma'an yedu doroteichem" — meaning, the five nations mentioned above and all the wicked of the world who dwell alongside you should know that they will surely not be able to overpower Yisrael, nor will they be able to harm them in any way, "for in sukkot I made the Children of Yisrael dwell" — He who shelters over them and saves them from their hand.

And this is what is written, "for their vine is from the vine of Sodom" — for they constantly seek to draw sustenance from the vine of Yisrael. But always, the mercy of the Lord is upon us. Amen.

Translation: translated by AI (anthropic/claude-sonnet-5)

Sefat Emet

GER · SUKKOT, SEFAT EMET

The sukkah embodies gerut (spiritual wandering/exile), recalling how the beginning of the Exodus—leaving nature entirely to follow God into the wilderness—created a lasting tikkun (rectification) for all generations; so too, immediately after the days of teshuvah (repentance), Sukkot renews this power, drawing us to bind ourselves to the root of the Avot (Patriarchs) and elevating our desires from worldly "dunghills" into ahavah (love) of God, seating us among the nedivim (noble ones) together with the ushpizin (supernal guests). AI SUMMARY

The mitzvah of the sukkah is an aspect of exile/wandering (gerut), as the Sages, may their memory be blessed, said regarding this: "Leave your permanent dwelling and sit in a temporary dwelling." And just as it was after the Exodus from Egypt, when they walked forty years in the desert, and this became a preparation for all the generations, so too these seven days are a preparation for the entire year.

For the essential thing depends on the beginning, as my grandfather, may his memory be blessed, said concerning the matter of "while they were still in the Jordan, they accepted upon themselves not to leave [any] of the seven nations." And the explanation is that because the acceptance at the beginning of their entry was good, therefore even though they did not complete it in deed, nevertheless a lasting rectification (tikkun) remained from this — see there.

So too, even though in this world we cannot abandon all of nature, nevertheless at the beginning of the Exodus from Egypt the conduct was truly beyond the way of nature, as stated in the midrash: "and He did not lead them by way of the land," etc., and the reason is "lest they repent" (yinachem). Likewise now, after the days of teshuvah (repentance) and atonement, we must be inflamed to leave nature, in the manner of a penitent who acts "with great strength," like one fleeing from a fire.

And in truth, the essence of teshuvah is to be bound to the root above, as it is written in the name of Pirkei d'Rabbi Eliezer: "and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children." And so too, "I am a stranger (ger)... like all my fathers" — for the Patriarchs were strangers (gerim) in the world, and

the essential nature of their walk was above, to the point that it was said "the Patriarchs, they are the Chariot (Merkavah)."

Likewise, in the sukkah, something of this exile/wandering (gerut) is found in every person of Israel. Therefore it is stated in the Zohar HaKadosh: "In sukkot you shall dwell — [dwell] upon the guests (ushpizin)." For since now the Children of Israel do as their fathers did, the power of the Patriarchs comes to assist them — "the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers" — for the Holy One, blessed be He, helps the penitent (ba'al teshuvah).

And it is written: "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely (nedavah)" — Rashi [comments]: "I will offer Myself willingly out of love for them." And this includes both explanations: that He loves us with the free offering of His will, blessed be He, and also that He plants within us the love toward Him, as it is written, "and I loved (ohev) Yaakov" — "ohev" being a transitive verb, meaning that He plants within us the love. Now, on Yom Kippur it is "I will heal their backsliding," and on Sukkot it is "I will love them freely."

And I heard from the mouth of my grandfather, may his memory be blessed, regarding the verse "He raises the poor from the dunghills (ashpot)" — that the Holy One, blessed be He, helps the Children of Israel and raises up the desires of the Children of Israel that had been lying in the dunghills and vanities of the world; and through teshuvah, the Holy One, blessed be He, raises them up so that they are transformed into love for Him, blessed be He, "to seat him among nobles (nedivim)," etc. — and "the words of the wise are gracious" (u'divrei pi chacham chen). So too, this is fulfilled now, after the days of

teshuvah, that the Children of Israel become nedivim (noble/generous ones), and He seats us with the supernal guests (ushpizin ila'in), the nedivim of His people, as it is written: "every native-born (ha'ezech), etc., "shall dwell in sukkot."

Translation: translated by AI (anthropic/claude-sonnet-5)

ברסלב
Breslov

Likutei Moharan 30

ON LEVITICUS 23:4

The lesson in brief. This lesson opens with a cryptic Aramaic riddle-dialogue from the Talmud about a knife's "furrow," an ass's horn, eggs, and cheeses, which Rebbe Nachman uses as a coded map for the entire teaching. The core idea: Divine knowledge (Elokut) cannot be grasped except through many tzimtzumim (contractions), as higher intellect is clothed in lower intellect—like a teacher who must introduce preliminary concepts (the "roundabout" sichliyot) before the true intended lesson (the mechuvan). This lower intellect corresponds to chochmah tata'ah (lower wisdom)—the malchut (kingship/sovereignty) that governs each world, symbolized by black hair (she'arot) framing and focusing the eye, enabling vision of grand things, as in "black am I, but comely." Access to this lower wisdom requires being a soneh betza (hater of money), for love of money corrupts it into sitra achra (the other side), causing malchut dekedushah (holy sovereignty) to fall into exile under the four kingdoms. Abraham, embodiment of chesed (kindness) and hatred of money, models how to "cut" and elevate this fallen malchut—achieved through tochachah (rebuke), which reveals chochmah, which in turn reveals chesed. Receiving rebuke, even when delivered with apparent bizayon (contempt), is essential, since tzaddikim absorb the confusion (bilbulim) hidden within our very tefillot (prayers). The tzaddik discerns each person's inner state through their ozut (boldness)—holy or its sitra achra counterfeit—enabling him to know whom and how to rebuke, thereby elevating malchut to Or HaPanim (the Divine Countenance), most fully revealed on the Three Festivals. The lesson closes by explaining the riddle's details as ciphers for these very concepts, ending with how one's voice reveals one's inner malchut, illustrated by Shaul recognizing David's regal voice. AI ABRIDGMENT

This is because the essence of the Light of the Face is joy, as is written (Proverbs 15:13), "A joyous heart makes a good countenance"; and the essence of joy is from the mitzvot, as in (Psalms 19:9), "The instructions of God are upright, they make the heart rejoice." And the main joy is in the heart, as is written (ibid. 4:8), "You placed joy in my heart,"

with the heart of the entire year being the Three Festivals. This is as in (Leviticus 23:4), "Eileh Moadei YHVH —These are the festivals of God." The first letters spell EMY (my mother), which is "EM to binah (understanding)" (Proverbs 2:3). And understanding <is the> heart (Tikkuney Zohar, Introduction).

Translation: Likutei Moharan Volumes 1-11, trans. by Moshe Mykoff. Breslov Research Inst., 1986-2012

Likutei Moharan 179

ON LEVITICUS 23:27

The lesson in brief. Here is a 150–250 word abridgment of Likutei Moharan 179: Rebbe Nachman opens by noting that all forms of machloket (conflict/dispute) — physical or spiritual — obstruct a person's prayer and avodat Hashem (service of God), since opposition seeks to nullify one's will. The remedy is taanit (fasting), understood as a form of tzedakah (charity), per the rabbinic teaching that "one who increases tzedakah increases shalom (peace)." Taanit subdues the heart, binding its will to that of the Kadosh Baruch Hu (Holy One, Blessed be He), thereby dissolving the "other wills" that generate machloket. He then explains, via Rosh Hashanah 18b, why fast days are destined to become days of sasson v'simchah (joy and gladness): fasting builds the "structure" of simchah by reviving days that were spiritually "dead" — days on which no mitzvot were done, and whose Divine shefa (flow of sustenance) was diminished or even drained through sin, like an infant who, lacking milk, drains its mother's very blood. Through sustained fasting, one draws on and thereby revives the accumulated spiritual "strength" of prior days, restoring their vitality. This is the meaning of "sammecheinu kimot initanu" (Psalms 90:15) — joy corresponds to the days of affliction/fasting. Finally, Rebbe Nachman links this to Yom Kippur, "the one day" containing and revivifying all days, whose inuy nefesh (afflicting the soul) means subduing the will itself. AI ABRIDGMENT

For the concept of strife involves a conflicting will; they stand up against him to negate his will. And the propitiousness of fasting is found in the Zohar (III, 68b): "On that very day you shall afflict your souls" (cf. Leviticus 16:29, 23:27)—the benefit of fasting is the humbling of the heart, to attach the will of the

heart to the Holy One. Through fasting, the heart is subdued and weakened. All his other wills are negated in the face of the will of the Holy One—"to attach the will of the heart...."

Translation: Likutei Moharan Volumes 1-11, trans. by Moshe Mykoff. Breslov Research Inst., 1986-2012

Likutei Moharan 6

ON ZECHARIAH 14:6

The lesson in brief. This lesson opens with Hashem's command to Moshe, "Call Yehoshua," and builds toward a teaching on kavod (honor), teshuvah (repentance), and the transmission from Moshe to Yehoshua. Rebbe Nachman begins: one who pursues kavod attains only the contested "honor of kings," subject to endless scrutiny, while one who flees honor and diminishes himself attains divine kavod, of which it is said "the honor of God is to conceal a matter." This higher kavod comes only through teshuvah, whose essence is silence when insulted—turning dam (blood, the fire of the yetzer hara, evil inclination) into dom (silence), fulfilling "be silent before Hashem." This is the "slaughtering of the yetzer hara," bringing zevichat todah, the sacrifice of thanksgiving. Since no one can claim a fully pure teshuvah, one must continually do teshuvah upon one's teshuvah, as deeper Divine daat (knowledge) always reveals the former level as still "physical." This double teshuvah—first zevichat hayetzer, then confession upon it—corresponds to kavod of Olam Haze and kavod of Olam Haba, mirrored in the two nekudos (points) of the letter Aleph and its middle vav (representing bushah, shame, and rakia, sky). This structure maps onto Moshe (upper point, keter/crown) and Yehoshua (lower point), sun and moon, and the three mitzvos before entering Eretz Yisrael. One must be "expert in going and returning" (baki beratzon, baki beshov)—never satisfied in ascent, never despairing in descent—paralleling the Names kesa and sag, whose union forms "derech," the path of teshuvah, and judging every person favorably, thereby becoming a keter for Hashem. AI ABRIDGMENT

This is the meaning of (Zechariah 14:6): "[On that day,] there will be neither bright light nor thick darkness"—concerning which the Sages said: The light which is substantial in this world will be insignificant and slight in the World to Come (Pesachim 50a). We see, therefore, that in the World

to Come, when people will merit a greater perception of His Godliness, they will surely be contrite and repent for their perception in this world. For perception in this world is <materialistic> in comparison with perception in the World to Come.

Translation: Likutei Moharan Volumes 1-11, trans. by Moshe Mykoff. Breslov Research Inst., 1986-2012

רמב"ן · אור החיים

Ramban & Or HaChayim

ראשון FIRST ALIYAH

22:28 And whether it be cow or ewe, you shall not kill it and its young both in one day.

RAMBAN

AND WHETHER IT BE OF THE HERD OR FLOCK, 'OTHO V'ETH B'NO' (IT AND ITS YOUNG) YE SHALL NOT SLAUGHTER IN ONE DAY. "[The law] applies only in the case of the female parent, it being forbidden to slaughter the dam and its male young, or the dam and its female young, but it does not apply to the male parent, and it is therefore permissible to slaughter the male parent and his young." This is Rashi's language. The Rabbi [Rashi] thus decided that the conclusive decision of the law is in accordance with the opinion of the Sage who says that we do not take into consideration the male parentage [of animals]. And such also is the opinion of Onkelos [who translated: "and whether it be the dam or the ewe, her and her young ye shall not slaughter in one day"]. This is the correct decision [reached] in the Gemara [of Tractate Chullin] concerning the law of "It and its young." But the way of Scripture when mentioning specifically the female [of the herd], is to call it parah (cow), and if so it would have been proper that Scripture say, "and whether it be parah (cow) or ewe, her and her young." But since He had mentioned [at the beginning of this section], When any of the herd, or a sheep or a goat is brought forth, and He mentioned the dam and its young by saying, then it shall be seven days under its dam, He therefore states [in the verse before us] that concerning these kinds of animals mentioned, namely, the herd and the flock, there is yet another commandment that it and its young mentioned above, must not be slaughtered in one day [and thus it is self-evident that the law applies only to the female parent].

22:31 And you shall keep my commandments, and do them: I am the Lord.

RAMBAN

AND YE SHALL KEEP MY COMMANDMENTS. The meaning of this is that here He admonished Israel to keep the commandments, that they should be careful with the offerings [that they should not have] blemishes, or be wanting in time, such as before completion of the seven days [after birth of the animal], and [that they may not be slaughtered] on the day that the dam had been slaughtered [or conversely], and that they bring the peace-offerings and the thanks-offering [properly as ordained], and that they slaughter them with the intention that they be accepted for them; thus He included therein all commandments together. Now He has already mentioned above with reference to the statutes and ordinances, And ye shall observe all My statutes, and all Mine ordinances. He states [here], And ye shall not profane My holy Name, which means to say that there should not be among you one who dealeth craftily, [whereas he hath in

his flock a male, and voweth,] and sacrificeth unto the Eternal a blemished thing, just as He said with reference to the sons of Aaron, and they profane not My holy Name, warning them in connection with the offerings against impurity or blemishes.

22:32 Neither shall you profane my holy name; but I will be hallowed among the children of Yisra'el: I am the Lord who make you holy,

RAMBAN

AND I WILL BE HALLOWED AMONG THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL. The meaning thereof according to the opinion of our Rabbis is that it constitutes a positive commandment, that we sanctify His Name by observing the commandments, and that [under certain circumstances] we submit to death rather than transgress them. This is the explanation of the following verse, That brought you out of the land of Egypt to be your G-d, which is a reason including all the commandments, meaning that it is fitting for them to sanctify His Name because we are His servants whom He has redeemed from Egypt.

שני SECOND ALIYAH

23:2 Speak to the children of Yisra'el, and say to them, The feasts of the Lord, which you shall proclaim to be holy gatherings, these are my feasts.

RAMBAN

SPEAK UNTO THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL. The priests have no greater duties with regard to the festivals than the Israelites, therefore He did not admonish Aaron and his sons in this section, but the children of Israel, a term which includes all of them together, since He did not explain the Additional Offerings [for the festivals] in this section. However, He mentioned the festivals here in Torath Kohanim (i.e. Book of Leviticus) because they are days of offerings, and He alludes to them, just as He said, And ye shall bring an offering made by fire unto the Eternal, and at the end of this section He states, These are the appointed seasons of the Eternal, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, to bring an offering made by fire unto the Eternal, a burnt-offering, and a meal-offering, a peace-offering, and drink-offerings. He did not, however, prolong the subject by explaining the Additional Offerings, since He did not want them to be binding upon the children of Israel when in the desert, and after He had counted [at the end of the desert period] those who were to come into the Land, as narrated in the Book of Numbers, and He commanded, Unto these the Land shall be divided, He then explained all the Additional Offerings in the section of Pinchas, which they were to offer in the Land immediately and throughout the generations. Therefore He said [here in this Book of Leviticus] with reference to [the Service on] the Day of Atonement, And he [i.e., Aaron] did as the Eternal commanded Moses, meaning that he did so in the desert [but the Additional Offerings for the other festivals were not binding

in the desert]. Now He mentioned in this section the “he-lamb of the sheaf” and the two lambs of the Festival of Shevuoth, because it is well-known that they were binding only in the Land, since they are brought on account of the bread [of the first-fruits] concerning which He said, When ye are come into the Land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, but the observance of the days themselves [as festivals] was binding immediately. He mentioned the Sabbath among the appointed seasons which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, [although the Sabbath is not proclaimed by the children of Israel, since its sanctity has been affirmed by G-d and is fixed throughout the generations], because it is also “an appointed day” [invariably fixed by G-d as the holy day] and we may thus refer to it as “a holy convocation.” Afterwards, He separated the rest of the festivals from the Sabbath, saying of them which ye shall proclaim in their appointed season, meaning on whatever day of the week they happen to fall, but the Sabbath is fixed and occurs [always] on the same day, hence it is not necessary that we proclaim it in its season. And in the opinion of our Rabbis, which ye shall proclaim in their appointed season alludes to the intercalations [of an extra month in a leap year] so that you proclaim them as festivals. The correct interpretation appears to me to be that the meaning of the verse The appointed seasons of the Eternal, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, even these are My appointed seasons, is that it refers [only] to the festivals mentioned further on in the sections: In the first month etc. [but it does not refer to the Sabbath]. It is for this reason that He states there once again, These are the appointed seasons of the Eternal, because He had interrupted with the subject of the Sabbath. Thus He states, The appointed seasons of the Eternal, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, even these are My appointed seasons, meaning that no manner of servile work [be done on them], but the Sabbath you are to keep, making it a Sabbath of solemn rest from all manner of work whatsoever, for He admonishes concerning the Sabbath many times. He further alludes here [to the law that even] when the Sabbath falls on one of [the days of] the festivals, we must not suspend [the law of the Sabbath] so that the preparation of food be permitted on it [as it is on a festival day when it falls on a weekday, but instead it is prohibited]. A similar case [where the phrase these are refers to the continuation of a subject which had previously been mentioned, because in the middle Scripture interrupts with another subject], is the verse, These are the words which the Eternal hath commanded, that ye should do them, which refers to the Tabernacle and its vessels which he [Moses] will mention in the second section, and [in the next verses] he interrupts with the Sabbath: Six days shall work be done, and on the seventh day there shall be to you a holy day etc.; and then he again says, This is the thing which the Eternal commanded ... Take ye from among you an offering, this being the [same] command that Scripture had mentioned at the beginning, but because it was interrupted with another subject, Scripture had to start from the beginning again. Proof for this interpretation is that He does not mention [here] in the case of the Sabbath, and ye shall bring an offering made by fire unto the Eternal as He mentions at each and every festival, and at the end of the section He states, These are the appointed seasons of the Eternal, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, to bring an offering made by fire unto the Eternal ... beside the Sabbaths of the Eternal. [This shows] that the Sabbaths are not included within the terms of the appointed seasons of the Eternal. A further proof is that in the second section [i.e., in

Verse 4 where He reverts to the festivals after having mentioned the Sabbath], He does not say, And the Eternal spoke unto Moses, saying, as He says in the case of each and every festival; for the first communication [to Moses] was indeed concerning the commandments of the festivals, but He mentioned the Sabbath in order to exclude from it the law of the festivals [i.e., that when the Sabbath coincides with a festival, the preparation of food which is permitted on a festival day, is forbidden since it is also a Sabbath, as explained above], but not in order to explain its commandments and laws [and therefore there was no need to repeat the verse, And the Eternal spoke unto Moses, saying]. This is the reason why He does not state [here] about the Sabbath And ye shall bring an offering made by fire unto the Eternal, as He states concerning the festivals, and He mentions it at the end together with the vow-offerings and the freewill-offerings which are not mentioned here, as I have explained [above]. And this is the intention of the interpretation of the Sages, who said: “What has the matter of the Sabbath to do with the festivals? etc.,” since the Sabbath is not included at all in the terms of the appointed seasons of the Eternal, but Scripture only put them in juxtaposition [for the reason mentioned above]. The meaning of ‘mikra’ei kodesh’ (holy convocations), is that all people should come together on that day and be assembled to sanctify it, for it is a commandment upon Israel to be gathered together in G-d’s House on the festival day to hallow it publicly with prayer and praise to G-d, and with clean garments, and to make it a day of feasting, as it is said in the tradition, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto him for whom nothing is prepared, for this day is holy unto our Lord; neither be ye grieved, for the joy of the Eternal is your strength. Thus the expression mikra kodesh (a holy convocation) is similar to: ‘kru’ei’ (those called) of the congregation; afterwards they eat ‘ha’kru’im’ (they that are called). Similarly, over the whole habitation of Mount Zion, and over ‘mikra’eha’, meaning the places where they are called to, and where those called of the congregation assemble. Onkelos, however, [in rendering the Hebrew mikra’ei kodesh as m’arei kadish — “holy events”], understood [the word mikra’ei] as similar to the expression that which ‘yikra’ (shall befall) you in the end of days, an expression of “event,” meaning that whenever the festivals occur, you should make them holy. And our Rabbis of blessed memory have said: “Proclaim them with [special] food and drink and clean garments;” that is to say, the nature of these [festival] days should not be to you like that of other days, but instead you should make them occasions of holiness, changing them by food and dress from the common to the holy. This is also the opinion of Onkelos [who translated mikra’ei kodesh as “holy events”].

OR HACHAIM

appointed seasons (festivals) of G’d which you shall proclaim, etc. G’d decreed that these festivals will come into force as a result of the court declaring them to be in force (Torat Kohanim). We need to understand why the Torah repeated the words אלה מועדי, “these are My festivals.” We must also try and understand how the Sabbath (verse 3) fits into this chapter seeing it is most certainly not subject to the manipulations of the Jewish High Court! Moreover, why did the Torah have to write the words: “these are the festivals of the Lord” a third time in verse 4?

FURTHER COMMENTARY • SUKKOT I

I believe we must understand this verse in the following manner. In the first instance G'd informed the Jewish people that in principle the exact time (though not the calendar date) of these "appointed seasons" are subject to input by the Sanhedrin, the Jewish Supreme Court. In view of this principle, the Torah feared that we might err and believe that even the Sabbath itself was subject to such input by the Sanhedrin, i.e. to postponement if it suited the court. The Torah therefore wrote: "these are My appointed seasons, you are to have work performed for six consecutive days and only the seventh day is the Sabbath on which you may not perform all manner of work." The Torah had to write once more: "these are the appointed seasons of the Lord which you are to proclaim," to inform us that we are entitled to adjust the part of the calendar dealing with those days to suit our needs. This is followed by the respective dates in the first month, the third month and the seventh month which are liable to be affected by adjustments made by the Sanhedrin.

There may be yet another reason why the Torah repeated the formula אשר תקראו אותם, "which you are to proclaim (or may) proclaim." Maimonides writes as follows in chapter 4 of his treatise on the sanctification of the new month: "There are three considerations which justify lengthening the year by means of the insertion of an extra month. 1) Bringing it in line with the solar seasons of the year. 2) Ensuring that Passover occurs in the spring as demanded by the Torah. 3) Enabling the period when the fruit of the trees ripen to occur in summer. Maimonides mentions some other reasons which may prompt the Sanhedrin to adjust the calendar, such as to enable travellers to make their pilgrimage to Jerusalem at a time when the roads are passable, etc., or at a time when the bridges are safe from flooding, etc. The secondary reasons are mostly connected to the fact that many Israelites lived in the diaspora. In other words, the two principal considerations for adjusting the calendar are A) climate-related reasons. B) people-related reasons. Seeing that the Torah described the Passover festival as occurring in the season of the spring, the religious authorities made the necessary adjustments to conform with this requirement. The Torah repeats the right of the Sanhedrin to proclaim when these dates should occur in order for us to know that both climate-related considerations and people-related considerations are valid reasons for the Sanhedrin to make use of its authority in this regard.

שלישי THIRD ALIYAH

23:5 On the fourteenth day of the first month towards evening is the Lord's passover.

OR HACHAIM

at dusk it is the Lord's passover. This means that the part of the passover offering which belongs to G'd, i.e. the sprinkling of the blood and the burning of the fat parts of the lamb must occur on the eve of the 14th of Nissan. However, the part of that sacrifice which is to be consumed by every Jew has to occur after nightfall in conjunction with the eating of unleavened bread and bitter herbs. Furthermore, the expression "a passover to G'd" is a reminder of the very first passover sacrifice, the one the Jews slaughtered in Egypt. That Passover was of immediate benefit to the Jewish people so that the sacrifice could hardly be called "a passover for G'd." It included elements which were never repeated. In Shemot Rabbah 19 we are told concerning the Passov-

er of Moses (not he personally but the one he commanded at the time) that it contained the fragrance carried by the winds from Paradise. Compare what I have written in my commentary on Exodus 12:43 in this connection. In addition to that, the first Passover was responsible for G'd killing the firstborn of the Egyptians. Now that the Passover was merely a commemoration of what had occurred as part of the first Passover the people offering it could truly claim that they did so for G'd i.e. that it is a "passover for G'd."

23:7 On the first day you shall have a holy gathering: you shall do no servile work.

RAMBAN

YE SHALL DO NO MANNER OF 'M'LECHETH AVODAH' (SERVILE WORK). "[Not] even such work as is considered by you important and necessary work, because the neglect of it would involve a monetary loss, as for example a matter that will not permit delay. So I understood from the Torath Kohanim which teaches as follows: 'I might think that on intermediate days of the festival it is also forbidden to do m'lecheth avodah (servile work) etc.'" This is Rashi's language. But this is not correct at all. For what reason is there that Scripture should say, "Do not do [on the festival days even] such work that will not permit delay," and [the prohibition for] all other labors be deduced by a kal vachomer and if so it would have been proper to say it in the same way in the case of the Sabbath too! [However, with reference to the Sabbath it says Ye shall do 'no manner' of 'm'lachah' (work), and it does not say m'lecheth avodah (servile work) as in the case of the festivals!] Moreover, if it be [as Rashi explained it], then there is an allusion in the Torah to the effect that on the intermediate days of the festival it is permissible to do work that will not permit delay, but the Rabbis have said, "Scripture has handed over this matter [of determining which activities are forbidden and which are permitted on the intermediate days of the festival] only to the Sages," which means that there is no allusion in the Torah as to which work is permitted and which is forbidden! Again, the term avodah (work) includes all kinds of labors and purposes, [as the following verses indicate]: 'oveid' (he that tilleth) his ground shall have plenty of bread; 'va'avadcha' (he shall serve thee) six years; 'v'avad'ta' (thou shalt serve) thine enemy — and nowhere does the term avodah mean only work that permits no delay, which, if not done today, can no longer be done on the following day [as Rashi had written]! Rather, the meaning of m'lecheth avodah (servile work) is all work that is not necessary in the preparation of food, similar to that which it is said, Six days 'ta'avod (shalt thou labor), and do all thy work; and in all 'avodah' (manner of work) in the field; 'v'ne'evadtem' (and ye shall be tilled) and sown; but Cain was an 'oved' (tiller) of the ground. But work which is done in preparation of food is work of direct benefit, and is not [called] m'lecheth avodah (servile work). This [distinction] is clearly explained in the Torah. For with reference to the Festival of Unleavened Bread where He said at first, no manner of work shall be done in them, it was necessary to explain [in the same verse], Save that which every man must eat, that only may be done by you; therefore with respect to the other festivals He shortened [the command] and said [as in the verse before us], ye shall do no manner of servile work, thus prohibiting all work which is not done in preparation of food, and informing us that the preparation of food is permissible on the festival days. And in no place does Scripture say concerning

any of the festival days, that “no manner of work” [shall be done on it] without explaining [immediately] that the preparation of food is permissible on it, because the form *m’lecheth avodah* (servile work) establishes that principle. However, in the section of All the firstling males [where all the festivals are mentioned], He states with reference to the Festival of Unleavened Bread, and on the seventh day shall be a solemn assembly to the Eternal thy G-d; thou shalt do no work therein [and yet Scripture does not follow it up with a permission for preparing food]! The reason for this is that He had already clearly permitted the preparation of food on it [Passover], and it was therefore no longer necessary [there in the section of All the firstling males] to say in connection with it: “all manner of servile work.” He mentioned there merely “work” (thou shalt do no ‘work’ therein), and did not say *kol m’lachah* (“all work” or “any manner of work”) as He said with reference to the Sabbath and the Day of Atonement, because the intention is, “Do not do that work about which I have admonished you [elsewhere, i.e., ‘servile work’].” Now Rabbi Chananel wrote: “Do no manner of ‘m’lecheth avodah’ (servile work). This teaches that He only permitted [on a festival day] the preparation of food, as it is written in connection with this matter in another place: And in the first day [of Passover] there shall be to you a holy convocation, and in the seventh day a holy convocation; no manner of work shall be done in them. And because He mentioned there any manner of work [which indicates a prohibition covering even preparation of food], it was essential that He should explain [in the same verse]: save that which every man must eat, that only may be done by you. The meaning of *m’lecheth avodah* is work for the purpose of material possessions, such as sowing, harvesting, digging and the like, but the preparation of food is not *m’lecheth avodah*.” This is Rabbeinu Chananel’s language. And the Beraitha in the Torath Kohanim [which Rashi quoted at the beginning of the section] is taught as follows in the correct texts thereof: “Do no manner of ‘m’lecheth avodah.’ This is intended to elucidate [the law] about the intermediate days of the festival, that it is prohibited to do work on them. I might think that any manner of *m’lecheth avodah* (servile work) is forbidden on them. Scripture therefore states it [i.e., the eighth day of Tabernacles, is a day of solemn assembly], meaning: it is a day on which all manner of servile work is forbidden, but on the intermediate days [of the festival] such work is not forbidden. These are the words of Rabbi Yosei the Galilean. Rabbi Akiba says: What need is there for Scripture to say: These are the appointed seasons of the Eternal which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations? If it refers to the festivals, they are each stated [separately]! If so, why is it said, These are the appointed seasons of the Eternal, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations? This refers to the intermediate days of the festival, on which the doing of work is forbidden. I might think that all manner of servile work is forbidden to be done on them. Scripture therefore states, it etc.” [as quoted above]. The explanation of this Beraitha is [as follows]: Rabbi Yosei the Galilean interprets the verses, Ye shall do [no manner of servile work], and These are the appointed seasons of the Eternal, as meaning that Scripture prohibits the doing of work on all [the days] which are termed “the appointed festivals of the Eternal.” Thus I might think that they are all alike with respect to this prohibition, and that any manner of servile work is prohibited to be done on [the intermediate days of the festival] just as on the first and eighth days [of Tabernacles], and [then] we would interpret the verses thus: Ye shall do no manner of servile work.

These are the appointed seasons of the Eternal, since a verse may be interpreted together with an antecedent phrase or even together with a penultimate phrase. It is for this reason that Scripture excludes it by saying, ‘it’ is a day of solemn assembly; ye shall do no manner of servile work, meaning: “the eighth day [of Tabernacles] is restricted as regards all servile work, but on the intermediate days of the festival the prohibition is not like that of [the eighth day], affecting all manner of ‘servile work,’ but it is only ‘work’ which He said they must not do,” and [the precise nature of the work forbidden on the intermediate days of the festival] Scripture did not mention, nor did it allude to it at all, but entrusted it to the Sages [to establish which work is permitted and which is prohibited]. The text which Rashi brings [further on in Verse 36] is also to be explained in this way. This Beraitha [of the Torath Kohanim] is taught in the Gemara of Tractate Chagigah in the following way: “Ye shall do no manner of servile work. This teaches us about the intermediate days of the festival, that it is forbidden to do work [on them]. These are the words of Rabbi Yosei the Galilean. Rabbi Akiba says etc.” [as quoted above]. And there [in Tractate Chagigah] it is further taught: “Just as [servile work] is forbidden on the seventh day [of Passover], so also it is forbidden on the sixth day; if so [I might think], just as the seventh day is restricted with respect to all work, so also the sixth day [as well as the other intermediate days of the festival] are restricted with respect to all work. Scripture therefore states ‘ha’shvi’i’, (‘the’ seventh day), meaning: “the seventh day is restricted with regard to all work, but the sixth day is not restricted with respect to all work, for Scripture entrusted [the determining of which work is permitted and which is forbidden] only to the Sages, etc.” Now the Gemara states that [on the seventh day of the festival we are] restricted against doing “all work,” but the Torath Kohanim [mentioned above] states “all servile work.” This is because in the interpretation [of the Gemara] the Sages chose the wording of the Scriptural text [and since in Deuteronomy 16:8 it says with reference to the seventh day of Passover, thou shalt do no ‘work’ therein, the Gemara followed that expression, but the intention is really only to “servile work”], for with respect to a festival it cannot be said that “all work” is forbidden therein, but only “all servile work.” Thus both [the Torath Kohanim and the Gemara] meant the same thing, namely, that on the festival days all manner of servile work is forbidden, but on the intermediate days of the festival all manner of servile work is not forbidden; however, forbidden are those kinds of labor which [although] have not been set forth in the Torah, but which Scripture entrusted to the Sages [to be specified as forbidden]. And in the Sifre [we have been taught]: “Rabbi Yishmael says: Since we have not been instructed that on the intermediate days of a festival it is forbidden to do work, therefore Scripture states, Six days thou shalt eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day shall be a solemn assembly, [thus teaching that] just as the seventh day is restricted [as regarding work], so also is the sixth day [and all intermediate days of the festival] restricted. Now I might think that just as the seventh day is restricted with regard to all work, so also is the sixth day restricted with regard to all work. Scripture therefore states ‘the’ seventh day, thus teaching that the seventh day is restricted with regard to all work, but the sixth day is not restricted with respect to all work.” This Beraitha too [speaking of “all work” being prohibited on the seventh day of Passover] is to be explained in accordance with the principle we have laid down [i.e., that the intention is “all servile work,” the Beraitha merely following the lan-

guage of the verse, as explained above]. Thus we have discussed at length the matter of the Beraithoth dealing with this subject, in order that the words of our Rabbis, of blessed memory, should conform with the clear and correct interpretation which we have said of these verses. Yet despite all this, I have found a contradiction to our words from a Beraitha taught in the Sifre: "Ye shall do no manner of 'm'lechet avodah' (servile work). This teaches that the doing of work [on the first day of Passover] is forbidden. How do we know that the preparation of food is permitted thereon? Here it is stated a holy convocation [In the first day shall be 'a holy convocation'; ye shall do no manner of servile work], and there it is said [with respect to the same day] a holy convocation. Now just as there [the verse explicitly] permits preparing food, so here too the intention is to permit the preparation of food [on the same day]." It appears to me that the term avodah was understood by our Rabbis, of blessed memory, in the sense of labor and toil which one does for another, [the usage being] similar to these expressions: 'avodathaved' (the work of a bondservant); 'eved avadim' (a servant of servants) shall he be unto his brethren; 'avdu' (they served) Chedorlaomer. Similarly: 'avodath avodah va'avodath masa' (the work of service, and the work of bearing burdens), which means the work of any task in the Tent [of Meeting], and the work of [bearing] burdens upon the shoulder. If so, it would be possible [to think] that light works which one does for one's own enjoyment are permissible, even though they are not for the preparation of food, while those difficult labors done in the course of preparation of food, which a servant performs for his master, are forbidden to be done. Therefore this [Beraitha just quoted from the Sifre] asked: "Whence do we know that this permission [for certain works] refers to preparation of food, so that all work done in the preparation of food is permissible, even if it involves difficult labor, and that we should prohibit all other kinds of work, for even the easiest of them are called m'lechet avodah? From the similarity of phrases, a holy convocation, for there it is indicated that all works [even easy ones] are prohibited, and all works done for the preparation of food [even those difficult tasks that a servant does for his master, such as cooking, baking, etc.] are permitted to be done." Now I have seen the following text taught in the Mechilta: "Save that which every man must eat, that only may be done by you. All works necessary for the preparation of food overrule the festival, but not all Services [in the Sanctuary, as will be explained] overrule the festival. Now [the argument may be advanced]: Let some works done for the preparation of food overrule the Sabbath! And the following reasoning would favor it: If in a situation when all Services do not overrule the festival, nonetheless all works necessary for the preparation of food do overrule the festival, then in the situation where some Services [in the Sanctuary] do overrule the Sabbath, is it not logical that some works done for the preparation of food overrule the Sabbath! Scripture therefore states, Save that which every man must eat, [that only may be done by you. — on the festival, but not on the Sabbath. It is thus established that although] some Services [in the Sanctuary] overrule the Sabbath, no work for the preparation of food may overrule the Sabbath." Now the meaning of the phrase [in the Beraitha] "some Services [in the Sanctuary which overrule the Sabbath]," is such things as offerings which are obligatory for the day, these being the Daily Whole-offering and the Additional Offerings; "but the festival is not overruled by all Services [in the Sanctuary]," these are vow-offerings and freewill-offerings [of individuals], or a freewill burnt-offering

[which, although wholly for the altar, may yet not be offered on a festival]. But the meaning of the phrase ["is it not logical that] some works for the preparation of food [overrule the Sabbath]" has not been clarified to me. However, it alludes to what we have said, that work which is accomplished by means of great toil, akin to work [which a servant does for his master], is included in the prohibition, but that which is accomplished easily, and is customary for a man to do for himself, is permitted; or "some works" may mean [those necessary] for maintenance of life, and "all works" may mean abundance of dishes for pleasure. The principle then of 'm'lechet avodah' [servile work — stated in the case of the festivals], is thus to permit the preparation of food [since that is not within the terms of "servile work" which is forbidden on the festival].

23:8 But you shall offer an offering made by fire to the Lord for seven days: on the seventh day is a holy gathering: you shall do no servile work.

RAMBAN

AND YE SHALL BRING AN OFFERING MADE BY FIRE UNTO THE ETERNAL SEVEN DAYS. Scripture is stating that all seven days [of Passover] should be a festival to bring an offering made by fire unto the Eternal, but not that they are all equally forbidden as far as doing work, like on the first and seventh days. He did not explain [here the precise nature of] the offering, since He is going to mention it in a special section dealing with all the offerings of the festivals, when it is His wish that they should be binding on the children of Israel, and as I have explained. And the interpretation of our Rabbis is that [the intention of the verse here] is to state that we are to bring an offering under all circumstances, even if we do not have all the [required] Additional Offerings. This is a correct [explanation].

רביעי · FOURTH ALIYAH

23:10 Speak to the children of Yisra'el, and say to them, When you are come to the land which I give to you, and shall reap its harvest, then you shall bring an 'omer of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest:

RAMBAN

SPEAK UNTO THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL, AND SAY UNTO THEM: WHEN YE ARE COME INTO THE LAND. Since He establishes a new commandment here in connection with each of the festivals, in addition to their being days of rest and holy convocation, therefore He singled out for each festival a special section, which begins with the charge, Speak unto the children of Israel. And since the time of the Festival of Weeks is dependent upon the omer, therefore He stated it all in one section. And because the Day of Remembrance [i.e., the New Year] and the Day of Atonement are in one month [Tishri], and both relate to one subject — the [Divine] Judgment concerning man's sins and the atonement [achieved] by those who do repentance — therefore He did not say concerning the Day of Atonement "speak unto the children of Israel," since the first statement [about the New Year] was sufficient in this case. He made, however, two separate sections [of the omer and the Festival of Weeks, as also the New Year and the Day of Atonement], because they are different matters.

AND YE SHALL REAP THE HARVEST THEREOF. This means that you are not to reap any harvest in the Land until you have reaped the omer and have brought it as the first-fruits of your harvest unto the priest. Similarly, from the time the sickle is first put to the standing grain shalt thou begin to number seven weeks, means “from the time you begin to put the sickle to any standing grain, for it is forbidden to raise the sickle over standing grain until the day that you begin to count [seven weeks].”

23:11 and he shall wave the ‘omer before the Lord, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it.

RAMBAN

ON THE MORROW AFTER ‘HA’SABBATH’ THE PRIEST SHALL WAVE IT. “That is, the morrow after the first day of the Festival of Passover. For if you are to say it means [on the morrow of] the Sabbath of Creation [i.e., the weekly Sabbath], you have no indication which Sabbath is meant.” This is Rashi’s language. And indeed, this is the greatest of the proofs mentioned in the Gemara [to show that ha’shabbath here is not to be interpreted literally as meaning the weekly Sabbath, but refers to the first day of Passover]; for what sense is there for Scripture to state that “when ye are to come into the Land ... and shall reap the harvest thereof ye shall bring the sheaf on the morrow of the weekly Sabbath,” which would mean that at any time of the year when we come into the Land and reap its harvest, the priest shall wave the sheaf on the morrow of the first Sabbath after we have come into the Land! In that case the Festival of Weeks would have no [definite] starting point from which we are to count [the forty-nine days, so that on the fiftieth day we should celebrate that festival!]. Moreover, according to this way we would not know even in the years following [our entrance into the Land] when we are to begin counting [the forty-nine days], but only from the day that we first put the sickle to the standing grain at our will. But these are meaningless words! If, however, the expression on the morrow after ‘ha’shabbath’ means “on the morrow after [the first day of] the festival,” in accordance with the tradition of our Rabbis, then the matter appears correctly. For at first Scripture commanded that we should observe in the first month the Festival of Unleavened Bread for seven days, and that on the first day there should be a solemn rest and on the seventh day a solemn rest, and we are not to do thereon any manner of servile work. Afterwards He stated that when we come into the Land we are to bring on the morrow of this rest-day [previously] mentioned, the sheaf of the waving, this being the first rest-day here mentioned. And He also taught that the [bringing of the] sheaf was not obligatory in the desert, nor outside the Land [since the section begins, When ye are come into the Land ...]. However, the expressions, even unto the morrow after ‘ha’shabbath’ the seventh and seven ‘shabbathoth’ cannot possibly be interpreted as referring to a festival [as does the expression on the morrow after ‘ha’shabbath’ here in Verse 11 and also further in Verse 15.] Onkelos, however, rendered them as meaning “week”, but if so, there are two different usages of the same word in one verse! And the commentators have written that this is a literary expression [Scripture using one term in the same instance with two different meanings], such as: they rode on thirty ‘a’yarim’ (ass colts) and they had thirty ‘a’yarim’ (cities). And in another place Scripture clearly states, Seven weeks shalt thou number. Similarly, those that were to come in on ‘ha’shabbath,’ with those

that were to go out on ‘ha’shabbath,’ [where both ha’shabbath mean] “week.” Likewise, Saying: ‘When will the New Moon be gone, that we may sell grain, ‘v’ha’shabbath,’ that we may set forth corn?’ [also means “and the week”], for since every seven days contain one Sabbath, and the enumeration of the days is with reference to it [the Sabbath], therefore one week is called “one shabbath”, this usage being well-known and common in the words of our Rabbis, such as: “for twice b’shabbath (in the week) the court sits in towns [on Mondays and on Thursdays].” It is possible that every shabbath mentioned [here] in the section means “week.” And the meaning of the expression on the morrow after ‘ha’shabbath’ is that on the day of the waving of the sheaf they should begin counting the week, and if so, that day will be “on the morrow after the week” which has passed, it being as if He had said: “The day of the waving of the sheaf shall be on the morrow after the week with relation to the days that have passed by, and the first with reference to the weeks which he is to count until he finishes seven weeks.” And since He mentioned the expression, and on the fifteenth day, He thus states that [the priest] should wave the sheaf on the morrow after the week mentioned, and count therefrom seven weeks. One cannot mistake the expression [ha’shabbath] as referring to the fourteenth day [of Nisan, thus making the offering of the omer, brought on the morrow, to be on the fifteenth day of Nisan, the first day of Passover], for of that fourteenth day He has said that only at dusk [is the Eternal’s Passover]. And the meaning of they shall be complete is that a Sabbath together with its six days is called “a whole” Sabbath. And the meaning of the expression mimachorath ha’shabbath [literally: “from the morrow of the shabbath”] is like b’machorath ha’shabbath (“on the morrow of the shabbath”). Similarly, Even unto ‘mimachorath ha’shabbath’ the seventh, shall ye number [fifty days] [is like b’machorath ha’shabbath (“on the morrow of the shabbath”)] So also: It shall be eaten the same day ye offer it u’mimachorath [literally: “and from the morrow,” means u’b’machorath — “and on the morrow]. Scholars have said that the letter beth cannot occur as a prefix in the word machar (tomorrow) or machorath (the morrow). [Therefore it states], And it came to pass ‘mimachorath’ [literally: “from the morrow”] that Moses sat to judge the people [which means “on the morrow”]. And the Eternal did that thing ‘mimachorath’ [literally: “from the morrow,” which means “on the morrow”], and similarly all such expressions.

חמישי FIFTH ALIYAH

23:15 And you shall count for yourselves from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that you brought the ‘omer of the wave offering; seven complete sabbaths shall there be:

RAMBAN

AND YE SHALL COUNT ‘LACHEM’ (UNTO YOU). The meaning thereof is similar to the expression And ye shall take ‘lachim,’ thus establishing that the counting [of the forty-nine days of the omer] and the taking [of the lulav, ethrog etc. on the Festival of Tabernacles] be done by each and every person. Thus the counting must be done by word of mouth, and he should mention the number, just as our Rabbis have received it by tradition. This is unlike the expressions and he shall count ‘lo’ (to himself) seven days for his cleansing; then she shall number ‘lah’ (to herself) seven days [referring to a man or woman who suffered a flux, in

which case the counting of the clean days does not have to be uttered by word of mouth], because if they so wish, they may remain in their impurity; they must only beware not to forget their impurity [and enter the Sanctuary or eat holy food in a state of defilement, which Scripture strongly forbids]. Similarly, And thou shall number 'lecha' (unto thee) seven Sabbaths of years etc. of the Jubilee, means [only] that you shall be heedful of the number so that you should not forget [when the Jubilee year falls, but the actual counting of the years does not have to be by word of mouth]. But in the Torah Kohanim I have found it said: "And thou shalt number unto thee — in the court." Now I do not know if the intention is to state that the Great Court [of seventy-one judges] is obliged [actually] to count the years and the Sabbatical cycles at the beginning of every year, and to recite a benediction before the counting as we do at the counting [of the forty-nine days] of the omer; or it may be that the intention [of the Torah Kohanim] is to state that the court should be careful in the counting of the years, and sanctify the fiftieth year. Thus the number of days from the day of the waving of the omer until the day of the holy convocation [i.e., the Festival of Weeks], is identical to the number of years of the [seven] Sabbatical cycles until the Jubilee, and the reason for them is the same. Therefore ye shall number fifty days which means that one is to count seven weeks [comprising] forty-nine days, and sanctify the fiftieth day which he has counted [and make it a holy convocation], just as He said with respect to the Jubilee. This is the meaning of the word t'mimoth (complete) — [seven weeks shall there be 'complete'], meaning that they be exactly that number, no less and no more, just as is the meaning of the expression: they shall be perfect, for anything additional or missing makes a thing imperfect. Thus the explanation of this section is that we are to begin counting the days in the beginning of the barley harvest, and bring of the first fruits of the harvest, of the fresh ears, a meal-offering unto the Eternal, and also to offer up with it an offering, and to finish the counting of the days in the beginning of the corn harvest, as a shock of grain cometh up in its season, and bring of it a meal-offering of fine corn flour unto the Eternal, and to offer with it also an offering. This is the reason why He mentioned these offerings in this section, because they are brought on account of the meal-offerings which are the main [commandment] of these festivals, but He did not mention the Additional Offerings brought on these festivals [which are enumerated in the Book of Numbers], even as He did not mention those of the rest of the festivals.

OR HACHAIM

and you shall count for yourselves, etc. The reason the Torah adds the word "for yourselves" is that G'd commanded to count for seven weeks consecutively. We are told in the Zohar volume 3 page 97 that seeing the Jewish people were in a state of impurity and G'd wanted to betroth them to Himself He applied the legislation pertaining to a menstruant woman who is required to purify herself for seven days. He therefore commanded them to "purify" themselves for seven weeks by counting those days much as a menstruant counts the seven days. The count then was for the benefit of the Israelites in order that they would become G'd's "bride" as it were and would be able to step under the wedding canopy at Mount Sinai. The reason that the period of counting was seven weeks instead of seven days was the extraordinary amount of impurity the Jewish people had accumulated during their extended stay in Egypt. Another reason is that in this instance we speak about an entire people having to shed their accumulated impurities. I have explained on Exodus

19,1 that the word בצאתם was to be understood as a cause for G'd having delayed the giving of the Torah, i.e. the presence of the Israelites in Egypt for a long time necessitated the period of seven weeks during which the Jews prepared themselves for this event. The sentiment that the reason the Torah was not given immediately after the Exodus is supported by the words ממחרת השבת, that the Torah would not be given immediately after the Sabbath, i.e. Passover, but after a period described as the morrow of that day. The nature of this count is that the days have to be whole days, as opposed to parts of days. Seeing the 15th of Nissan at that time was a Sabbath and that on part of that day the Israelites were still in Egypt, the count of the seven weeks could not commence until the following day, i.e. ממחרת. While it is true that this consideration applied only to the generation of Israelites who left Egypt at that time, the Torah legislated that the same procedure be followed year after year starting with the year of the Exodus. Kabbalists understand why we have to re-enact history in this fashion. According to the plain meaning of the text the reason the Torah refers to "the day following the Sabbath" is a reminder of the fact that while in Egypt the Jews had to perform slave labour also on the Sabbath. You may do well to read what I have written on Genesis 2,2 in connection with the words ויכל אלוקים ביום השביעי.

A moral-ethical approach to our verse may be derived if we see in the word וספרתם the root ספיר, sapphire, the material the second tablets were made of (compare Vayikra Rabbah 32,2). The souls of the Jewish people are compared to the nature of sapphires which lose their lustre when they become dirty. As a result of sins committed by their owners (bodies inhabited by these souls) something similar happens to their souls. The message of the word וספרתם is that by means of the count the Jewish people would "polish up" their souls so that they would be unblemished by the time they would experience the revelation at Mount Sinai.

on the morrow of the Sabbath from the day you offer the Omer, etc. The meaning is that the count commences now before you come to the Holy Land. As far as what is to happen after the people will come to the land of Canaan the Torah writes: "from the day you offer the Omer sacrifice." The reason the Torah first mentioned the words ממחרת השבת, is that the commandment of counting commenced already at the time of the Exodus.

23:16 to the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall you number fifty days and you shall offer a new meal offering to the Lord.

RAMBAN

AND YE SHALL OFFER A NEW MEAL-OFFERING UNTO THE ETERNAL. The meaning of the expression a new meal-offering is that no meal-offering [of the new crop] is to be brought into G-d's House until they bring this one, as our Rabbis have explained. It was necessary for Scripture to state, it is a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings with reference to the prohibition of [eating of] the new crop and the command to rest [from work] on the Festival of Weeks, because [the prohibition of eating of the new crop] depends on the waving of the sheaf, [and the Festival of Weeks is connected] with the new meal-offering [mentioned in the verse before us]. Thus this verse is intended to state that even after our exile to countries outside the Land, when the omer and the [new] meal-offering are no longer offered, He nonetheless commanded concern-

ing the observance [of the law of the new crop and resting on the festival], for the [prohibition against eating of the] new crop applies by law of the Torah in all places. It was not necessary to mention this in connection with the Day of Remembrance [i.e., the New Year], and similarly in connection with the Festival of Tabernacles He did not mention [that it is to be observed] “in all your dwellings” [because these two festivals are clearly not dependent upon the offerings in the Sanctuary]. He did, however, mention it with reference to the Day of Atonement, because since He had made our atonement dependent upon the offerings, as he mentioned in the section of Acharei Moth, therefore He said here that the prohibition [of eating and working on that day] applies in all places [and at all times], as He stated it is a day of atonement, to make atonement for you by fasting and resting from work, and [the absence of] the offerings does not prevent His [granting of] atonement. Similarly He did not mention here with reference to the Festival of Unleavened Bread: “it is a statute forever in all your dwellings throughout your generations,” but in the section of This month shall be unto you the beginning of months He did mention it, because since He had made there the matter dependent upon the Passover-offering, as it is said, and unleavened bread with bitter herbs they shall eat it, therefore He had to state that [the Festival of Unleavened Bread] is an ordinance forever, in all your habitations. He mentioned [here] with reference to the Sabbath that it is to be observed in all your dwellings, because since He had permitted work in the Sanctuary in the bringing of the Daily Whole-offering and the Additional Offerings, therefore He said that the prohibition [of work on the Sabbath] applies in all our dwelling places; for the intention of that expression is only to state: “in all your dwelling places, but not in the House of the Eternal.” And so the Rabbis have said in the Mechilta: “Ye shall kindle no fire in your dwelling places. In your dwelling places you may not kindle a fire, but you may kindle it in the Sanctuary.” Similarly it says with reference to the prohibition of [eating] fat or blood, It shall be a perpetual statute throughout your generations in all your dwellings, because it was prohibited on account of the offerings, [therefore He stated that this prohibition is nonetheless independent of the offerings, and applies always and everywhere]. And so the Rabbis have said in Tractate Kiddushin: “Why did the Merciful One write the expression in all your dwellings in connection with [the prohibition against eating] fat or blood? It is because I might have thought that since this prohibition is written in connection with the offerings, therefore when there are offerings [i.e., when the Sanctuary is in existence] the prohibition is applicable, and when there are no offerings it is not applicable, thus the Torah wanted to teach us [that it is always applicable].” There [in Tractate Kiddushin] the Rabbis also said: “Why did the Merciful One write [here in this section — in Verse 3] the expression in all your dwellings with reference to the Sabbath? It is because I might have thought that since it is written in connection with the festivals, the Sabbath should require sanctification by the court just as the festivals do, therefore the Torah wanted to teach us [that the Sabbath is independent of sanctification by the court]. The principle then is that the Torah does not mention this expression [in all your dwellings] with reference to any commandment which is a personal obligation, unless there is a necessity for some reason. Now the expression: ‘out of your dwellings’ ye shall bring two wave-loaves [on the Festival of Weeks], is not similar to “out of all your dwellings.” Rather, its meaning is: “out of the Land of your dwellings,” excluding [the obligation to bring two loaves

from the produce of] outside the Land of Israel, just as it is said, When ye come into the Land of your habitations which I give unto you. And so the Rabbis have taught [in a Mishnah]: “All the [meal]-offerings of the public or of an individual may come from the produce of the Land or outside the Land, save only the omer and the two loaves.” And even according to the Sage who says that the omer may be brought from the produce of outside the Land, he admits in the case of the two loaves [brought on the Festival of Weeks] that they may be offered only from what is grown within the Land [of Israel].

23:17 You shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two tenth measures: they shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven; they are the firstfruits to the Lord.

RAMBAN

THEY SHALL BE BAKED WITH LEAVEN. Scripture commanded that these two loaves be leavened, because they are a thanks-offering to G-d for having kept for us the appointed time of the harvest, and a thanks-offering comes with cakes of leavened bread. Perhaps the [usual] prohibition of bringing leavened things as an offering is because leaven alludes to the attribute of justice, for it is called chametz (leaven), just as wine which sours is called ‘chometz yayin v’chometz sheichar’ (vinegar of wine or vinegar of strong drink), the word [chametz] being derived from the expression: the unrighteous ‘v’chomeitz’ (and ruthless man), for [vinegar of wine and vinegar of strong drink] are drinks whose original taste has been “robbed” from them, and they are therefore not suitable for [normal] drinking. Similarly, for my heart yithchameitz’ means that it was “in a ferment, and it lost its composure.” Now since the offerings are brought to be acceptable before the Glorious Name, they are therefore not to be brought from objects which possess a strong power to change natural properties of other things [such as leaven], and similarly they are not to be brought from things which are completely sweet such as honey. [Instead, they are to come] only from things which are blended of different qualities, just as the Rabbis have said with reference to the creation of the world “He combined the attribute of mercy with the attribute of justice, and created the world.” Now on the Festival of Weeks which is the day of the Giving of the Torah [on Mount Sinai], the offering [i.e., the two leavened loaves and the various burnt-offerings, together with their meal-offering which is of unleavened bread, as stated in Verse 18] comes in accordance with the law of the thanks-offering [which was brought with ten leavened cakes and thirty unleavened cakes], for it is the day of the solemn assembly. The student learned in the mysteries of the Cabala will understand. And this is the secret of which our Rabbis have said: “All offerings are destined to cease [in the World to Come], but the thanks-offering will never cease etc.,” for in it are both unleavened and leavened [cakes], comparable to the World to Come [in which the Divine attributes of justice and mercy will forever be in perfect harmony].

23:22 And when you reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not altogether remove the corners of thy field when thou reapest, nor shalt thou gather any gleanings of thy harvest: thou shalt leave them to the poor, and to the stranger: I am the Lord your God.

RAMBAN

AND WHEN YE REAP THE HARVEST OF YOUR LAND, THOU SHALT NOT WHOLLY REAP THE CORNER OF THY FIELD, NEITHER SHALT THOU GATHER THY GLEANING OF THY HARVEST: THOU SHALT LEAVE THEM FOR THE POOR. Rashi comments: "He repeats once more these prohibitions [although they have been mentioned above, 19:9] in order to make one liable for transgressing two negative commandments [in each case]." And Rabbi Abraham ibn Ezra said that the reason [for the repetition] is because the Festival of Weeks is the day on which the first-fruits of wheat harvest [are brought as a meal-offering, in the form of the two leavened loaves], therefore He warned that "you should not forget what I have commanded you to do in those days." The correct interpretation appears to me to be that the expression, And when ye reap the harvest of your Land alludes to "the harvest" mentioned at the beginning of this section, thus stating that when you will come into the Land and you reap the sheaf, the first-fruits of your harvest, thou shalt not wholly reap the corner of that field for the sake of the sheaf, neither shall you gather the gleanings, meaning to say that this commandment [of bringing the omer] does not override these negative commandments.

OR HACHAIM

And when you reap the harvest of your land, etc. Why does the Torah introduce this kind of legislation at this juncture when it is totally out of context with the subject matter being legislated in this chapter? Perhaps the Torah wanted to inform us that the owner of a field from which the barley for the Omer sacrifice has already been taken is still subject to the variety of tithes the farmer is commanded to leave for the poor when he harvests his field. Had the Torah not written this I might have thought that inasmuch as this field had already become a sacrifice to G'd in that the Omer of barley had been offered from it on the altar it would no longer be subject to the legislation of the various donations which have to be separated from the harvest. Perhaps this is why only two of those gifts to the poor are mentioned here, i.e. פאה ולקט, the corner and the gleanings, both of which are duties which devolve on the actual field itself. This is different from the legislation of שכחה, already harvested sheaves, which the owner has forgotten to pick up. Our sages in Torat Kohanim say that the Torah alludes to the moral-ethical message that anyone who gives פאה, לקט, and שכחה is considered as if he had assured the continued existence of the Holy Temple and had offered sacrifices therein; thus far Torat Kohanim. The reason they mention the word שכחה although it does not even appear in our verse is because it is also a commandment similar to לקט ופאה. In this way they have hinted at what we have written above.

שישי SIXTH ALIYAH

23:24 Speak to the children of Yisra'el, saying, In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, shall you have a sabbath, a memorial of blowing of horns, a holy gathering.

RAMBAN

IT SHALL BE UNTO YOU 'SHABBATHON' (A SOLEMN REST). This means that it is to be a day of rest, to repose thereon [from work]. And our Rabbis have said: "The word shabbathon (a solemn rest) amounts to a positive commandment." Thus one who does work on a festival day transgresses both a negative commandment and a positive commandment, and one who rests thereon fulfills a positive commandment. And in their opinion [that of the Rabbis], all the festivals have been likened one to another, for the word shabbathon is not mentioned in connection with the Festival of Unleavened Bread, nor in connection with the Festival of Weeks. Now in the Mechilta on the section of Hachodesh I have seen the following text: "And ye shall observe this day. Why is this said? Has it not already been stated, no manner of work shall be done in them? From this I would know only about matters which are considered m'lachah ['work' on the Sabbath, and thus forbidden by the Torah]. How do I know about activities which are termed sh'vuth [as explained later on]? From the verse which states, and ye shall observe this day, which includes those activities which are termed sh'vuth. I might then think that on the intermediate days of the festival those activities known as sh'vuth are likewise forbidden, and the following reasoning would favor it etc; Scripture therefore states [with reference to the Festival of Tabernacles], On the first day shall be a solemn rest" [but not on the following intermediate days of the festival]. Thus the Sages interpreted the word shabbathon as indicating a complete rest on that day, desisting even from those activities which are not of the chief labors or their derivatives. But this interpretation is not clear to me. For if you say that this Mechilta is a mere Scriptural support for a Rabbinic ordinance, what reason is there for the Rabbis to use this language [i.e., "How do I know about activities which are termed sh'vuth?" when instead they should have said, "How do I know about activities which are not regarded as m'lachah?"] for the term sh'vuth in the language of the Sages is always used with reference to activities forbidden by the Rabbis; and so how is it possible to say, "How do I know that activities which are forbidden on account of sh'vuth instituted by the Rabbis, are forbidden on the basis of a verse [in Scripture]!" The way in which such [Beraithoth make use of] Scriptural texts as a support for Rabbinical enactments, is by teaching [an interpretation in a verse] showing that they [such Rabbinical enactments] are based on the Torah, but they never say, "That activity which is forbidden by the Sages, from what verse in the Torah do we derive it?" Instead, this [Beraitha of the Mechilta] should have stated, "Activities which are not in the category of m'lachah ('work'), whence do we know that they are forbidden? From the word shabbathon!" It appears to me that this interpretation intends to state that we are commanded by law of the Torah to have rest on a festival day even from activities which are not in the category of m'lachah ("work"). Thus we are not to be engaged the whole day in wearisome tasks: measuring out crops of the field, weighing fruits and gifts, filling the barrels with wine and clearing away the vessels, and moving stones

from house to house and from place to place [although none of these activities is “work” in the strict sense of the term]. Similarly, if it be a city encompassed by a wall and its gates are locked at night, [and it is therefore according to law of the Torah treated as one domain, and the prohibition against taking out aught from one domain to another is inapplicable there], they would be loading heaps on asses, as also wine, grapes, and figs and all manner of burdens they would bring on a festival; and the market place would be full for all business transactions, the shops standing open and the shopkeepers giving credit, the money-changers sitting before their tables with the golden coins before them, and the workers would rise early to go to their work and hire themselves out for such works [as described above] just as on weekdays, and so on! And since all these matters do not entail m’lachah, they would be permissible on a festival day and even on the Sabbath itself! Therefore the Torah said that [the festival should be a day of] shabbathon (solemn rest), meaning that it should be a day of rest and ease, not a day of labor [and weariness]. This is a good and beautiful interpretation. Afterwards I saw the other Mechilta of Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai where it is taught in another form: “I know only that it is forbidden [on a festival day to do] the kind of work for which, [if transgressed on the Sabbath through error], one must bring a sin-offering. How do I know that [it is forbidden to do] such works [on a festival day] for which one does not have to bring a sin-offering [if transgressed through error on the Sabbath], such as climbing a tree or riding on animals or swimming in the water, or slapping one’s thighs or clapping one’s hands? From the verse, no manner of work shall be done in them. I know only concerning acts of [one’s own] choice. How do I know concerning acts commanded [in the Torah], that we may not dedicate anything [to the Temple treasury], or make a vow of valuation, or devote anything [for Temple repairs, or for the priests], or set apart the heave-offering or the tithes? From the expression shabbathon, which means sh’vuth” (rest, abstention from ordinary occupation). In a similar way this [Beraitha] is taught in the Torath Kohanim with reference to the Day of Atonement. Now although these Beraithoth differ in their language and in their interpretations, perhaps they all intend one common thing, namely, to find some Scriptural support for activities forbidden by the Rabbis. But nonetheless, whether the interpretation of the first Beraitha [mentioned above] be as we have said [i.e., that it is forbidden by Scriptural law to do on a festival day activities which are not strictly speaking “work,” but are wearisome labors], or whether all [these Beraithoth] intend only to find a Scriptural support for matters forbidden by the Rabbis, the meaning of the term shabbathon is as we have explained, namely, that we should have a day of repose from labor and toil. This is indeed a very proper and excellent interpretation. Thus we have been prohibited from doing [any of the main classes of] “work” on the Sabbath by a negative commandment, and [for the intentional transgression thereof is prescribed] the punishment of excision [if the court has no knowledge of the transgression or there are no witnesses, but if there are witnesses who testify, the punishment] is death — but as for labors and toils [which are not strictly speaking “work”], we are commanded by means of this positive commandment; and on a festival day we are prohibited from doing “work” by a negative commandment, [the punishment for the intentional transgression thereof being whipping], and the doing of labors [which are not strictly speaking “work”] we are forbidden by means of a positive commandment. It is on this basis that the prophet

[Isaiah] said, If thou turn away thy foot because of the Sabbath, from pursuing thy business on My holy day ... not doing thy wonted ways, nor pursuing thy business, nor speaking thereof; [then shalt thou delight thyself in the Eternal]. Similarly, a Sabbath of ‘shabbathon’ (solemn rest) shall be for the Land means that [the seventh year] shall be a Sabbath of rest, that one is not to plow nor cultivate the Land at all. It is because of this that the Sages have interpreted [in the first Beraitha mentioned above] that on the intermediate days of the festival those activities known as sh’vuth are not forbidden. But this is only according to the law of the Torah, for by Rabbinic enactment whatever one may not do oneself one is not permitted to say to a non-Jew to do, since even with reference to the Rabbinic prohibition against telling [a non-Jew to do work], the Sages were strict [in not permitting it on an intermediate day of the festival].

A MEMORIAL OF T’RUAH’ (A BLAST OF THE RAM’S HORN)

— “[a memorial by means of recitation of] Biblical verses which tell of Divine Remembrance, and verses which have reference to the blowing of the Shofar [the ram’s horn], so that I shall recall in memory for your sake the Binding of Isaac, instead of whom a ram was offered.” This is Rashi’s language. Now the Rabbi [Rashi] should have mentioned also the Rabbinic interpretation for the recitation of verses in which the Sovereignty of G-d is described, for it is impossible that Scripture should mention the verses of Divine Remembrance and of the Shofar, and should not mention also the verses of Sovereignty. And the Sages have already derived [the duty of reciting] them from the verse, And they shall be to you for a memorial before your G-d: I am the Eternal your G-d: “There was no need for Scripture to state here, I am the Eternal your G-d. And why does it state I am the Eternal your G-d? It is stated only to establish a general law, that wherever you recite verses of Divine Remembrance you recite next to them those of Sovereignty,” as it is taught in Torath Kohanim and in Tractate Rosh Hashanah. However, all these interpretations are only Scriptural supports for Rabbinic enactments. For the Rabbis have explicitly said: “We are to go to the place where they blow the Shofar, and we are not to go to the place where they recite the Service” [without the blowing of the Shofar. On this statement of the Beraitha the Rabbis of the Gemara asked:] “Surely this is so! The blowing of the Shofar is commanded by law of the Torah, and the recitation of the verses is only by law of the Rabbis [and what need is there for the Beraitha to teach me that the law of the Torah takes precedence!” To this the Gemara answered: “The Beraitha is] necessary only to teach this in a case where one is certain and one is in doubt.” Rather, the expression a memorial of ‘t’ruah’ is like the verse, it shall be a day of ‘t’ruah’ unto you, Scripture stating that we are to blow [the Shofar] on that day, and this shall be to us for a memorial before G-d, as it is said further on, and ye shall blow with the trumpets [over your burnt-offerings, and over the offerings of your peace-offerings], and they shall be to you for a memorial before your G-d. And since He said there, And in the day of your gladness, and in your appointed seasons, and in your New Moons, ye shall blow with the trumpets over your burnt-offerings, and over the offerings of your peace-offerings, whereas here He commanded only a t’ruah [a blast of the horn] for this festival [the New Year], and following it He said, and ye shall bring an offering made by fire, we deduce that this t’ruah [mentioned here] is not the same blowing which was done with the [silver] trumpets over the offerings. We furthermore [deduce] that this t’ruah here was not done over the offerings, but it is obligatory upon all Israel [wherever they are], and

is to be done with the Shofar [the ram's horn], for he had not yet commanded him [Moses] to make the trumpets, and all unqualified expressions of t'ruah are done with the Shofar, as it is said, And thou shalt make proclamation with 'shofar t'ruah' (the blast of the horn). Now Scripture did not explain the reason for this commandment, why [we must do] the blowing [of the horn], and why we need a memorial before G-d on this day more than on all other days, and why He commanded altogether that this day should be a holy convocation. But because this day comes at the beginning of the month in which the Day of Atonement occurs, it would appear that on the New Year there is a judgment before Him, blessed be He, for by these He judgeth the peoples, on the New Year He sits upon the throne as the righteous Judge, and afterwards in the course of the next ten days He forgives the transgression of His servants. Scripture is thus alluding to this matter which is well-known in Israel by word of the prophets and our holy ancestors. And by way of the Truth, [the mystic teachings of the Cabala], t'ruah is that which has stood by our fathers and us, as it is said, Happy is the people that know the 't'ruah,' similar in meaning to that which it is written, 't'ruath' (the alarm of) war; for The Eternal is a man of war. If so, it shall be a day of 't'ruah' unto you means that the day which is set aside for t'ruah [i.e., when the world is judged according to the attribute of justice], will be to our succor [for we will be remembered in mercy]. Similarly, a memorial of 't'ruah,' a holy convocation means that there will be a remembrance [of mercy] in the t'ruah [the quavering sound which alludes to the attribute of justice], and therefore it is a holy convocation. It was not necessary for Scripture to mention the Shofar [i.e., that "it shall be a day of Shofar unto you"], for the Shofar is already alluded to in the word "day," and the t'ruah is on [that "day"], and thus it is a day of judgment in mercy, not a 't'ruath' (alarm of) war. It is for this reason that Scripture mentioned only the t'ruah [but did not mention the t'kioth, the accompanying plain sounds], because it is already a tradition received by our Rabbis which all Israel have seen [done] as far back as Moses our teacher, that each t'ruah (quavering sound) has one plain accompanying sound before it and one after it. And why should Scripture mention the t'ruah, and not mention the t'kioth at all, neither in connection with the New Year nor the Day of Atonement [of the Jubilee year]? But it is because the t'kiah [the plain accompanying sound] is the memorial, and it is the Shofar [all alluding to the attribute of mercy], and the t'ruah is as its name indicates [i.e., a reference to the attribute of judgment]. And because it [the t'ruah] is wholly surrounded by mercy — an accompanying plain sound before it and one after it — therefore He said of those who know the 't'ruah' that through righteousness they will be exalted, for Thou art the glory of their strength. Thus it is clear that everything depends upon repentance, but on the New Year He is concerned entirely with the attribute of justice and conducts His world [by that attribute], and on the Day of Atonement He is concerned entirely with the attribute of mercy. It is this which is expressed in the saying of the Rabbis [with reference to these solemn days]: "The King sitteth upon the throne of judgment etc." Thus the New Year is a day of judgment in mercy, and the Day of Atonement is a day of mercy in judgment. From that which we have explained about this subject you will understand the sense of the verse written in [the section of] the journeyings [in the wilderness]: They shall blow 't'ruah' (an alarm) for their journeys. But when the assembly is to be gathered together, ye shall blow, but ye shall not sound an alarm. For of their journeys it is written, and

the angel of G-d journeyed, and it is further written, And it came to pass, when the ark set forward, that Moses said: 'Rise up, O Eternal, and let Thine enemies be scattered; and let them that hate Thee flee before Thee,' which is similar in meaning to the verse, The face of the Eternal is against them that do evil. — But when the assembly is to be gathered it is said, Return, O Eternal, unto the ten thousands, similar in meaning to the verse, And there was a King in Jeshurun, when the heads of the people were gathered. And the ten days between the New Year and the Day of Atonement allude to the Ten Emanations, for on the Day of Atonement He is exalted by them, and the Eternal of hosts is exalted through justice as is known in tradition. Furthermore there is also a sign about this in the heavens, for this month of Tishri has as its constellation the zodiac sign of the Balance, thus signifying that in that month a just balance and scales are set by the Eternal.

23:27 Also on the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement: it shall be a holy gathering to you; and you shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire to the Lord.

RAMBAN

ACH' (BUT) ON THE TENTH DAY OF THIS SEVENTH MONTH IS THE DAY OF ATONEMENT. "All expressions in the Torah of ach (but) and rak (only) indicate limiting qualifications, [and here the word ach indicates that the Day of Atonement] effects atonement 'only' for those who repent, but it does not effect atonement for those who do not repent." This is Rashi's language on the basis of the words of our Rabbis. And if so, the explanation of the verse is that on the first day of this month [Tishri] there will be for all of you a day of memorial of 't'ruah [a blowing of the quavering sound which signifies judgment], for you will all be judged then before Him, but for some of you [i.e., those who repent] there will be on the tenth day of this month a day of atonement. Thus the meaning of the word ach is like that of bilvad ("only," "alone"). Similarly, Now therefore forgive, I pray thee, my son 'ach' (only) this once. So also, 'harak ach b'Moshe' means "has He indeed spoken 'only' with Moses?" Likewise, 'Ach' on the fifteenth day of the seventh month means "only on the fifteenth day [of Tishri] ye shall keep the feast of the Eternal seven days, not consecutively," for the Festival-offering [brought by the individual] does not override the Sabbath [and therefore it cannot mean seven days consecutively]. In the same way you are to explain [the word ach] in all the commandments, in accordance with the tradition of our Rabbis. Similarly, 'ach' he is torn in pieces means [that Jacob said] that nothing else [could have happened to Joseph] except that he was torn in pieces. So also, For the children of Israel and the children of Judah 'ach' have done that which was evil in My sight from their youth; for the children of Israel have 'ach' provoked Me, means that they have done nothing else. But by way of the plain meaning of Scripture the word ach means achein ("surely"), [a word which is used] to authenticate something, [as in the following expressions]: 'achein' (surely) the thing is known; 'achein' (surely) ye shall die like men. And here it means, "Surely on the tenth day of the seventh month is the day of atonement," the expression constituting a [Divine] assurance on the authenticity of the matter, Scripture stating: "On the first day of the month is the day of judgment, but indeed on the tenth of the month is the day of atonement, therefore you shall afflict your souls, and you shall do no manner of work." Simil-

arly, 'ach' (surely) thou art my bone and my flesh; 'ach' (surely) it is the king of Israel; 'ach' (surely) G-d is good to Israel, even to such as are pure in heart. So also is the meaning of the verse, 'ach' ye shall keep My Sabbaths which declares: "Now I have commanded you concerning the work of the Tabernacle, but surely My Sabbaths you shall keep forever." So also in all cases [where the word ach is mentioned] it may be explained to you in this way, if you will understand them.

OR HACHAIM

it is a Day of Atonement, a holy convocation. The reason the Torah writes the word הוּא is to tell us that this day is in a class by itself, the date alone making it a Day of Atonement independent of any pronouncement. As a result one qualifies for reward by observing the second half of the verse, i.e. proclaiming it holy and afflicting oneself through abstention from food and drink, etc. This is an additional bonus apart from the atonement we are granted simply by being alive on that day.

23:28 *And you shall do no work on that very same day: for it is a day of atonement, to make atonement for you before the Lord your God.*

RAMBAN

B'ETZEM' OF THIS DAY. The commentators have said that the meaning of this phrase is "in this selfsame day." Similarly, and ye shall eat neither bread, nor parched corn, nor fresh ears until 'etzem' this day means "until this selfsame day." So also, 'uch'etzem' the heaven for clearness means "the very" heaven. But we cannot interpret that the word b'etzem here alludes to the essence and power of this day [which is at daytime], just as our Rabbis have said with reference to the verses: 'b'etzem' of this day entered Noah ... into the ark [which the Rabbis interpreted to mean that because the neighbors threatened to kill him and destroy the ark should they see him entering it, therefore G-d told him to enter it 'b'etzem' of this day — in broad daylight]; 'b'etzem' of this day the Eternal did bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt [which the Rabbis similarly interpreted "in broad daylight," because of the previous threats of the Egyptians not to let them go — such an interpretation we cannot assume here], for it is written, and ye shall afflict your souls, in the ninth day of the month at even, from even unto even. Similarly, And ye shall make proclamation 'b'etzem' of this day a holy assembly [stated with reference to the Festival of Weeks] includes the night as well. Now He did not mention this phrase 'b'etzem' of this day with reference to the Sabbath nor the festivals, except for the Festival of Weeks and the Day of Atonement, and so also in the prohibition of chadash (the new produce) He said until 'etzem' of this day. The reason for this appears to be that since He had said of the Festival of Weeks, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the waving ... ye shall number fifty days, and then He stated, and ye shall present a new meal-offering ... Ye shall bring out of your dwellings, etc., and dealt at length with the commandments of the offerings [in Verses 17-20], therefore it was necessary to state, And ye shall make proclamation 'b'etzem' of this day a solemn assembly; meaning that the very day is holy and the doing of work is forbidden on it, and it is not dependent upon the sheaf [of the waving brought on the second day of Passover], nor on the offerings. Similarly in the case of the Day of Atonement, since He had said, and ye shall afflict your souls, and ye shall bring an offering made by fire unto the Eternal, and in the section of Acharei Moth He made the [complete] expiation dependent

upon the offerings and on the goat sent [to Azazel], therefore it was necessary to state here, And ye shall do no manner of work on that very day, for it is a day of atonement in itself to make atonement for you, besides the expiation effected by the offerings. Similarly, until 'etzem' of this day said in connection with the new produce [means that the prohibition of eating from the new produce continues] up to that very day, which is the day ye have brought the offering of your G-d, thus stating that even if the [meal-] offering [of the new barley] has not been brought, the commandment applies to that very day — so that the new produce is forbidden before that day and is permissible afterwards. This is the sense of His saying, it is a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings, as I have explained. We further find that Scripture mentions this phrase 'b'etzem' of this day in the case of events which have been decreed to come at certain set times. Thus it says of Noah, 'b'etzem' of this day entered Noah etc.; [and in case of the exodus it says,] And it came to pass 'b'etzem' of this day that all the hosts of the Eternal went out from the land of Egypt; [and when Moses was ordered to ascend Mount Nebo it says,] And the Eternal spoke unto Moses 'b'etzem' of that day, saying: 'Get thee up into this mountain of Abarim, unto Mount Nebo.' The reason for this expression in these [three] cases is that it is possible to think that Noah had brought into the ark beforehand many of the beasts and fowls [and on the selfsame day that he finished bringing them into the ark, he himself came in]; likewise it is possible [to think] that some Israelites had left Egypt before that time and on that day the exodus was completed, and so also that the command for Moses our teacher's ascension was given before that day, and on that day he actually went up. Therefore Scripture explained in all these [three] cases that [the particular events referred to in the verses] all took place on these selfsame days, not that they were started before and finished on those days, but they all happened [completely] on these very days. Similarly, 'b'etzem' of this day was Abraham circumcised, means that many people were circumcised in one day, the verse thus stating Abraham's zeal in observing the commandments. It further appears to me that the expression "the etzem" of any thing means "its power and strength," the term being derived from the verses: my power 'v'otzem' (and the might) of my hand; strength 'v'tha'atzumoth' (and power). So also, One dieth 'b'etzem tumo' means "in the fulness of his strength." And since the bones form the structure of the body and its strength, they are so called [atzumoth — from the word otzem, strength]. Thus 'k'etzem' the heaven for clearness means that the purity of that which they saw [at Mount Sinai] was clear and strong, even as is a pure clear heaven. It is for this reason that He mentions about those specific days [of festivals referred to above] the expression etzem hayom, in order to indicate that these matters specified are of the very essence of the days, not because of other things added to them, namely the offerings brought on those days. And so also did Onkelos translate [the word etzem as] "bikran of that day," which [literally] means "'in the horn' of that day," [i.e.,] in its essence and in its strength, the word bikran being related to these expressions: and all 'karnei' (the horns) of the wicked will I cut off; my shield 'v'keren' (and the horn of) my salvation; for since the strength [of the animal] is in its horns, therefore the substance of a thing is called karno ["its horn" — its strength or essence]. In the language of the Sages we find: "He pays the keren (the principal value) but he does not pay the [added] fifth." And some texts of Onkelos have bichran [with a chaph instead of bikran with a kuph], but it is all one, for in Scripture kova

and chova both mean hat, and the Sages always make use of the term akava written with a kaph [meaning “staying”], which is derived from the expression, ‘v’lo y’akveim’ [written with a kuph, and meaning: and He stayeth them not] when His voice is heard. The Rabbis also say mithkasheit [with a kuph] from the word tachshitin [with a chaph, meaning “ornaments”]. They further say: “If ants kors’muha” [with a kuph, meaning “nibbled” the crop], of the root: the boar out of the wood ‘y’chars’menah’ [with a chaph, meaning: doth ravage it]. And those other places where the expression ‘b’etzem’ of this day is mentioned also mean: “in the strength of that day,” for they were matters which in the normal course of events could not happen in one day. Therefore Scripture stated that all the beasts and all the cattle and all the fowl and all creeping things upon the earth were gathered by “the power” of that day, by the decree of G-d upon them, for it was His mouth that commanded and the breath thereof it hath gathered them. Similarly, six hundred thousand men on foot, beside children cannot be gathered together and go out as one man from the land of Egypt [all in one day], only by the strength of the day which was so decreed upon it by word of the Supreme One. And so also in the case of Moses our teacher, this expression [‘b’etzem’ of this day] is intended to teach that on the day he was commanded to write this song, and teach it the children of Israel, put it in their mouths, and he finished speaking all these words, it was decreed upon him that he go up by the power of that day in which the Divine decree was given, to Mount Abarim, and then he said the section of ‘V’zoth Habrachah’ (And this is the blessing) and afterwards he went up to the mountain — all these activities being matters which would usually take many days, but they were all done by the power and strength of the day. Similarly, that three hundred and twenty men should be circumcised in one day in the house of Abraham was a thing that proceeded from G-d. Now the prophet Ezekiel said, they and their fathers have transgressed against Me, to ‘etzem’ this day, in order to include that very day in this group. So also the expression until ‘etzem’ of this day of the prohibition of the new produce, means “until and inclusive of this day” [i.e., on the sixteenth of Nisan it is also forbidden to eat of the new produce, before the bringing of the meal-offering of the new barley], for the essence of a thing is its power and strength. And our Rabbis have interpreted the expression ‘b’etzem’ of this day used in connection with the festivals, to mean “on the day itself,” that is to say, from the time the stars appear until they come out on the following night, thus excluding the additional time which the Sages have deduced must be added from profane unto holy [i.e., before the actual beginning of the festival, and after its actual end]. And in the cases of Noah, and the exodus from Egypt, and Moses’ [death], they interpreted that phrase to mean “in the strength of the day,” [that is] mid-day, as is stated in the Sifre, and Rashi wrote it in the section of Ha’azinu.

OR HACHAIM

and you must not perform any work. The unusual way the Torah explains the reason for the work prohibition may be understood in light of something we have been taught in Sotah 40. The Talmud there states that the congregation is not to recite verses from scripture while the priests are pronouncing the blessing, as it would be equivalent to a slave receiving a blessing from his master while not even bothering to listen. We may understand the legislation here in a similar manner. Seeing that the Day of Atonement itself confers a blessing, i.e. forgiveness, it would be most inappropriate to observe “business as usual” on

such a day. It is more appropriate to spend one’s time contemplating the grandeur of the Lord of the universe who has set aside a day on which His creatures are rehabilitated.

שביעי SEVENTH ALIYAH

23:34 *Speak to the children of Yisra’el, saying, The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the feast of booths for seven days to the Lord.*

OR HACHAIM

this one is the festival of huts. The extraneous words are explained in Torat Kohanim. Please refer to my comment on this in connection with Leviticus 14,7.

23:36 *Seven days you shall offer an offering made by fire to the Lord: on the eighth day shall be a holy gathering to you; and you shall offer an offering made by fire to the Lord; it is a solemn assembly; and you shall do no servile work.*

RAMBAN

IT IS ‘ATZERETH.’ “I keep you back before Me. It is similar to the case of a prince who invited his children to a banquet for a certain number of days. When the time came for them to leave, he said, ‘I beg of you stay with me for yet one more day, for your departure is so hard for me!’” This is Rashi’s language. And these are words of Agadah (homily) in Vayikra Rabbah. By way of the Truth, [the mystic teachings of the Cabala], for in six days the Eternal made the heaven and the earth, and the seventh day is the Sabbath which has no partner, and the congregation of Israel is its partner, as it is said, and the earth, this being the eighth day. It is ‘Atzereth,’ for there everything is assembled. Now with respect to the Festival of Unleavened Bread He commanded that it be observed for seven days, with the first and seventh [days] being holy, though they are all holy and the Eternal is among them. From then on [i.e., beginning with the second day of Passover] we are to count forty-nine days [of the omer], which are seven weeks comparable to the [seven] “days” of the world, and then to sanctify the “eighth day” [i.e., the Festival of Weeks] just as the eighth day of Tabernacles [is holy]; and [the forty-nine days] counted between them are in the “intermediate days” of the festival, in the interval separating the first day and “eighth day” of the festival, this being the day of the Giving of the Torah when He made them to see His great fire and His words they heard out of the midst of the fire. Therefore our Rabbis, of blessed memory, always called the Festival of Weeks by the name of Atzereth [a name here used in the verse for the eighth day of the Festival of Tabernacles], for it is on “the eighth” day of the festival, which Scripture here so called by that name. And this is the [intention of the] saying of the Rabbis: “The eighth day is a festival for itself” with respect to ‘p’zar k’shab,’ but yet it complements the first [seven] days since it is an emanation of the first days but is not like their unity. Therefore in the section of All the firstlings He mentions in speaking of the three festivals — the Festival of Unleavened Bread, the Festival of Weeks, and the Festival of Tabernacles — [that the Festival of Tabernacles] is seven days and He did not mention the eighth day, for there He said, all thy males appear etc. This is thus clear.

23:37 *These are the feasts of the Lord, which you shall proclaim to be holy gatherings, to offer an offering made by fire to the Lord, a burnt offering, and a meal offering, a sacrifice, and drink offerings, every thing upon its day:*

OR HACHAIM

the appointed seasons of the Lord, etc. Torat Kohanim on verse 35 quotes Rabbi Akiva as saying that these are the days on which the performance of work is prohibited. I believe this may also be the reason why the Torah concludes by writing: ומלבד מתנותיכם, "and beside your gifts, etc., which you will present to the Lord." These "gifts" include burnt-offerings. We know from Beytzah 19 that burnt-offerings may not be offered on festivals. The Talmud derives this from the word לכם, "for you," and "not for G'd." When we take this into consideration it is clear that verse 38 speaks of the intermediate days of the festivals of Passover and Sukkot.

23:39 *Also on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the fruit of the land, you shall keep a feast to the Lord seven days: on the first day shall be a sabbath, and on the eighth day shall be a sabbath.*

RAMBAN

WHEN YE HAVE GATHERED IN THE INCREASE OF THE LAND. "[This is to state] that this seventh month [in which the Festival of Tabernacles occurs] must be at the time of the harvest. From here we learn that they were commanded to intercalate the years [with an extra month], because if there would be no such intercalation, the seventh month [i.e., Tishri] would sometimes fall in the middle of the summer, or in the winter." This is Rashi's language. And the words of the Torath Kohanim are as follows: "Intercalate the years so that you make the Festival of Tabernacles at the time of the ingathering of the fruits. I might think that this refers to the ingathering of all the fruits; Scripture therefore says, Thou shalt keep the feast of Tabernacles ... after thou hast gathered in from thy threshing-floor and from thy wine-press — 'from' thy threshing-floor but not all thy threshing-floor, and 'from' thy wine-press, but not all thy wine-press. Now if I am to follow the expression after thou hast gathered in 'from' thy threshing-floor, I might think that even if only a little [of it has been gathered in, the Festival of Tabernacles may already be observed in that part of the year, and there is no need then for intercalating an extra month at the end of the preceding winter]; Scripture therefore says [here], when ye have gathered in the produce of the land. How can these be reconciled? [In the following manner]: Try to intercalate the year so that the Festival of Tabernacles occurs when most of the fruits have already been gathered in." Now the Sages have already derived [the need for] intercalating the year from the verse Observe the month of 'aviv' (spring). But there Scripture taught about [the intercalation of the year because of] the spring [i.e., so that the celebration of the exodus occurs in the month when there are ripe ears already, so that the sheaf of waving can be brought on the sixteenth of Nisan from the new barley], and here it teaches concerning the fruits of the trees [that most of them must be ripened at the time of the Festival of Weeks, so that they are ready to be brought as first-fruits to the Sanctuary, and that most of them are to be gathered in before the Festival of Tabernacles]. For so did the Sages teach us: "The year is intercalated on account of three things: on account of ripe ears [that they be available at the time

of Passover], fruits of the trees [at the time of the Festival of Weeks], and on account of the solstice [that the summer solstice should not occur after the passing of Tabernacles]. Thus the need for intercalation is deduced automatically [from the statement] that this festival [of Tabernacles] is at the time of the ingathering [and if an extra month is not added at the end of the winter season, the festival might sometimes occur in the middle of the summer or winter]. The meaning, however, of the Scriptural verse here is as follows: It states, These are the appointed seasons of the Eternal all of which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, to bring on all of them an offering made by fire unto the Eternal. However, on the fifteenth day of this seventh month, because it is the time when you have gathered in the increase of the land, ye shall keep the feast of the Eternal seven days. He said here in addition, on the first day shall be 'shabbathon' and on the eighth day shall be 'shabbathon,' meaning that you are to desist from work, and to rest on them, as I have explained. And He further said that they should rejoice even more before G-d with the lulav and ethrog for seven days, for it is a time of rejoicing because G-d has blessed you in all thine increase, and in all the work of thy hands, and thou shalt be altogether joyful before Him. The meaning of the phrase [in the verse before us] ye shall keep the feast of the Eternal, is that you are to celebrate it before Him by giving thanks to His Name for your gathering of the harvest which came [in time]. Then He went back and stated again [further on in Verse 41], And ye shall keep it a feast unto the Eternal, in order to place next to it [the commandment], Ye shall dwell in booths, the meaning thereof being as follows: and ye shall keep it a feast seven days in the year by dwelling in booths, and all that are home-born shall dwell in them, thus stating that they shall make a festival of seven days by taking the lulav, and rejoicing before G-d, and dwelling in booths. And the interpretation thereof in the Torath Kohanim is as follows: "And ye shall keep it a feast unto the Eternal. Why is this stated? Since it is said, Seven days shalt thou keep a feast unto the Eternal thy G-d, I might think that the Festival-offering must be brought on all seven days; Scripture therefore says here 'it'" [And ye shall keep 'it' a feast, thus stating that this offering need only be brought once], etc.

23:40 *And you shall take for yourselves on the first day the fruit of the tree hadar, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick leaved trees, and willows of the brook; and you shall rejoice before the Lord your God seven days.*

RAMBAN

AND YE SHALL TAKE YOU ON THE FIRST DAY 'PRI EITZ HADAR' (THE FRUIT OF GOODLY TREES). "[That is, a tree] whose bark has the same taste as its fruit. Hadar [a fruit] that 'remains' on its tree from one year to another, and this is the ethrog." This is Rashi's language. But these interpretations are merely Scriptural supports which our Rabbis taught as a basis for their tradition [that the reference here is to the ethrog]. And Rabbi Abraham ibn Ezra wrote: "And they [i.e., the masters of tradition] have said the truth [that pri eitz hadar refers to the ethrog], for there is no fruit of the tree more beautiful (hadar) than the ethrog. The Rabbis' interpreted that hadar means [the fruit] that 'remains' on its tree [from one year to another], but this is merely a Scriptural support for a matter of tradition." The correct interpretation appears to me to be that the tree which is called in the Aramaic language ethrog, is called in the

Sacred Tongue hadar, for the meaning of the word ethrog is “desirable,” as [Onkelos] rendered: ‘nechmad’ (pleasant) to the sight — “dimrageig to see; ‘lo thachmod’ (Thou shalt not covet) — “thou shalt not theirot.” And we also say: “from all the best, arag (most desirable) properties.” And the terms hadar and chemdah are alike in meaning [“desirable”]. Thus the tree and the fruit [ethrog] are both called by one name [as hadar in Aramaic is ethrog], for such is the customary usage of names for most fruits: t’ainah [denotes both the fig tree and the fruit]; egoz (nut); rimon (pomegranate); zayith (olive) and other fruits [in all of which cases both the tree and its fruit have the same name], and similarly this tree and fruit are both called in Aramaic ethrog, and in the Sacred Tongue they are called hadar. In line with the plain meaning of Scripture the verse is stating that we should take for ourselves a pri eitz hadar [“the fruit of a tree called hadar” in Hebrew, which is called ethrog in Aramaic], and that we take branches of palm-trees, and one bough of thick trees [known as hadas, the myrtle], and one bough of the willows of the brook [known as aravah]. Thus [we are to take] one of each of the [four] species, for the [plural] expression branches of palm-trees is connected with And ye shall take you, which refers to many people [so that each person is to take only one of these branches], since the final decision of the law is like Rabbi Akiba who says: “Just as only one palm-branch is needed and only one ethrog, so also [we need only] one myrtle-branch and one willow-branch.” Therefore Onkelos translated all these four species in the plural [ethrogin, lulavin, etc.], since they are all connected with the [preceding] phrase And ye shall take you, which refers to many people. And in [explanation of] the reason for this commandment, by way of homiletic discourse, the Rabbis have said that these [four] species are used to obtain the favor of G-d that He may give water. And by way of the Truth, [the mystic teachings of the Cabala], ‘pri eitz hadar’ (the fruit of the goodly tree) is the fruit in which there is a great deal of desire, and the first man sinned with it, as it is said, And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat. Thus the sin consisted [of taking the ethrog] alone, and we obtain His favor [by means of the ethrog] together with the other species ... From here you will understand and know that the ethrog is not bound up with the other three species, and yet it invalidates [the performance of the commandment] if it is not taken together with them, for it is comparable to Atzereth (the eighth day of Tabernacles) which is a festival of its own, and yet is supplementary to the first days. Thus they are one in potentiality but not in actuality. I have already explained the reason for this. Thus the meaning of the whole section is as follows: “Ye shall keep the feast of the Great Name for the seven days of creation, and join on to them the eighth day, Atzereth, similar to what is said, For the leader with strong-music on the ‘sheminith’ [literally: ‘the eighth’]. And also on those seven days ye shall take the fruit of the tree called ‘hadar’ [i.e., the ethrog] together with the palm-branch in union [with the myrtle-branch and the willow]. That is why He mentioned first the ethrog [for it is not tied together with the palm-branch, which is in union with the other two species, since the ethrog alludes to the eighth day of the festival which is a feast of its own], but on the eighth day it is not necessary [to take these four species], for it is itself hadar.” And this is the explanation of the verse, ‘v’chagotthem’ (and ye shall keep it a feast) unto the Eternal seven days ‘in the year,’ meaning that you are to keep it seven days “with the year,” that is with the

surrounding and circular movement [around the altar in procession with the four species], related to the expressions: ‘v’chug (and the circuit) of heaven; and he marketh it out ‘bam’chugah’ (with the compass), and so also: a multitude ‘chogeig’ (keeping holyday). Our Rabbis have already alluded to this secret. Thus they have said in Vayikra Rabbah: “Pri eitz hadar, this alludes to the Holy One, blessed be He, as it is said, Honor ‘v’hadar’ (and majesty) are before Him. Branches of palm-trees, this refers to the Holy One, blessed be He, as it is said, The Righteous shall flourish like the palm-tree. And boughs of thick trees [i.e., the myrtle-branch], this applies to the Holy One, blessed be He, as it is said, and He stood among the myrtle-trees that were in the bottom. ‘V’arvei’ (and willows of) the brook, this refers to the Holy One, blessed be He, as it is said, Extol Him that rideth ‘ba’aravoth’ (in the skies).” And in the Midrash of Rabbi Nechunya ben Hakanah it is stated: “What is meant by pri eitz hadar? It is as we translate it in Onkelos’ Targum: ‘fruits of the tree, ethrogin and lulavin.’ And what is hadar? It is ‘the majesty’ of all, which is ‘the majesty’ referred to in the Song of Songs, as it is said, Who is she that looketh forth as the dawn, etc.? And why is it called hadar? Read not hadar (majesty), but hador (‘who resides therein’), this being the ethrog which is separate from the group of the lulav [and myrtle-branch and willow], and yet the commandment of taking the lulav is not fulfilled without it [the ethrog]; and it is tied to all, since it is with each one, and all together they are combined as one. And what is the lulav? It is symbolic of the spinal cord. And boughs of thick trees, meaning a tree the branches of which cover its larger portion. This may be likened to a person who with his arms protects his head. Thus the bough is to the left, and the thickness to the right, and the tree in the middle. And why is it called eitz (tree)? Because it is the root of the tree. And what are ‘arvei nachal’ (willows of the brook)? They are so called on account of the name of the place wherein they are affixed, which is nachal (brook, river), as it is written, All the rivers run into the sea etc. And what is ‘the sea’? I must say that it alludes to the ethrog. And how do we know that each midah of all these seven is called nachal? Because it is said, and from Mattanah to Nachal-iel. Read not Nachal-iel [the name of a place], but nachalei E-il (the brooks of G-d) etc.” Now this Midrash [referring to “these seven”] is in accordance with the opinion of the Sage who holds that we are to take three myrtle-branches, two willows, one lulav, and one ethrog, which is the final decision of the law according to the words of the Gaonim and all Rishonim.

23:42 You shall dwell in booths seven days; all that are home born in Yisra’el shall dwell in booths:

RAMBAN

ALL ‘HA’EZRACH’ (THAT ARE NATIVE) IN ISRAEL SHALL DWELL IN BOOTHS. “Ezrach means native-born. Ha’ezrach [literally: ‘the’ native-born], this is to exclude women [from the obligation of dwelling in the booth, since the definite article denotes an exclusion. It was necessary that this exclusion be stated] so that you should not deduce from a similarity of expressions of the fifteenth day stated with reference to the Festival of Unleavened Bread, that women are obliged to dwell in a booth just as they are obliged to eat unleavened bread [on the night of Passover]. In Israel, this includes proselytes” [that they are obliged to dwell in a booth]. This is Rashi’s language. And in the Torath Kohanim it is stated: “Ezrach, this is the native-born. Ha’ezrach, this is intended to exclude women. ‘All’ that

are home-born, this is to include the proselytes and liberated slaves." And in line with the plain meaning of Scripture, by way of tradition [there is no need for a special source in Scripture here to include proselytes]. For since Scripture has stated, ye shall have one law, both for the stranger, and for him that is born in the Land, and it is further said, as ye are, so shall the stranger be before the Eternal, there is no need to mention again in every place: "all that are native-born and the stranger." Therefore He says all that are native in Israel, meaning all who are of Israel, from the greatest of them even to the least of them, [to teach] that it is not sufficient that one of a household should dwell in a booth and the rest dwell in homes, but they should all dwell in booths. It is possible that the verse [uses the word *ezech*] to teach that all who are like a leafy tree in its native soil in their homes [are obliged to dwell in booths], except for those who are on a sea voyage, and those who travel on the road [who are exempt from dwelling in a booth].

23:43 *that your generations may know that I made the children of Yisra'el to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Mizrayim: I am the Lord your God.*

RAMBAN

THAT I MADE THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL TO ABIDE IN BOOTHS. "This means the clouds of Glory" [which surrounded the camp of the Israelites during their stay in the wilderness]. This is Rashi's language. And in my opinion this is the correct interpretation [even] according to the literal sense of Scripture, for He commanded that the generations should know all the great deeds of the Eternal which He did wondrously with them, that He made them dwell in the clouds of His Glory like in a booth, similar to what is said, And the Eternal will create over the whole habitation of Mount Zion, and over her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for over all the glory shall be a canopy. And there shall be a 'succah' (pavilion) for a shadow in the day-time from the heat etc. And since Scripture has already explained that the cloud of the Eternal was upon them by day and the pillar of fire by night, He just says here, that I made the children of Israel to abide in booths, [without explaining what kind of booths, but meaning] "I made them booths out of the clouds of My Glory to protect them." Thus He commanded that at the beginning of the summer season we are to remember the exodus from Egypt by [calling] its month [the first of the months], and by observing its festival [of Passover], and He further commanded the remembrance of the continuous miracle which was done for them throughout the days of their stay in the wilderness, at the beginning of the winter season. And according to the opinion of the Sage who says that they made themselves booths in the literal sense, [we must explain that the reason why this commandment is to be observed at the onset of the winter season], is because they began to make them at the beginning of the winter, on account of the cold, as is customary in camps, and therefore He commanded [that we also make] them at that time. The sense of the remembrance is that they should know and remember that they were in the wilderness, and did not live in homes, and they found no city of habitation for forty years, but G-d was with them and they lacked nothing.

23:44 *And Moshe declared to the children of Yisra'el the appointed seasons of the Lord.*

RAMBAN

AND MOSES DECLARED UNTO THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL THE APPOINTED SEASONS OF THE ETERNAL. The meaning thereof is as follows: The above sections contain admonitions directed to Aaron and his sons, and Moses therefore told them to Aaron and his sons, and sometimes He mentions after them also the children of Israel, as He said at the end of the section dealing with blemishes, So Moses spoke unto Aaron, and to his sons, and unto all the children of Israel, for although Moses was only commanded, Speak unto Aaron, saying, Whosoever be of thy seed, he wanted to exhort the court of Israel about this matter [and therefore he also spoke to all the children of Israel]. Perhaps the reason [why he exhorted the court] is because a person covers up his blemishes, and the priest does not want to be disqualified on account of them from performing the Divine Service, for it is a [source of] shame and disgrace, therefore He exhorted the court about this matter. But here Scripture states that he declared the appointed seasons of the Eternal to all the children of Israel as one man, and it did not single out the sons of Aaron in these commandments, the reason being that the admonition applies to all alike, since the main [commandments] of these sections are that we are to rest on the Sabbaths and festivals, and to proclaim them holy convocations. None of the offerings are mentioned in these sections, except for the offering of the sheaf [on the second day of Passover], and the two loaves [on the Festival of Weeks], as they [these festivals] are the causes for their being offered. And in the section where the main offerings of the Day of Atonement are set forth, it says, Speak unto Aaron thy brother [because it was Aaron's duty to perform the Service on that day]. And our Rabbis have interpreted [the verse before us] as follows: "And Moses declared unto the children of Israel the appointed seasons of the Eternal. This teaches that Moses told Israel the laws of Passover on the Passover, and the laws of Atzereth [the Festival of Weeks] on Atzereth, and the laws of the Festival of Tabernacles on Tabernacles. In the very language that he heard it, in that language he told them all the sections." Onkelos also intended to imply this point, for he rendered the verse as follows: "And Moses declared the order of the appointed seasons of the Eternal, and taught them to the children of Israel." It appears [from Onkelos' additional phrase "the order of "] that his opinion is to allude [to the fact] that Moses taught the children of Israel the order of the festivals by means of the intercalation [of the years with an extra month], which was handed over to him by word of mouth on Sinai, this being alluded to in the Scriptural text, which ye shall proclaim holy convocations, and Moses taught the children of Israel by word of mouth the whole traditional order of the secret of intercalation.

מפטיר MAFTIR

29:13 and you shall offer a burnt offering, a sacrifice made by fire, of a sweet savour to the Lord; thirteen young bullocks, two rams, and fourteen lambs of the first year: they shall be without blemish:

OR HACHAIM

...לה' פרים, **you will offer to G'd 13 bullocks, etc.** It would appear that the reason why a progressively smaller number of bullocks was offered on each of the seven days of the Sukkot festival is connected to two different mystical dimensions of the number seven. The Gentile nations comprise the number seven in the "plural," i.e. 70, and they are compared to bullocks. Israel too is compared to the number seven as we know from the Zohar volume 3 page 266, and all Israel's important deeds are somehow related to the number seven. The sacrifices on all the festivals appear in sevens, the total number of festival days are seven (2 days Passover, 1 day Shavuot, 1 day Rosh Hashanah, 1 day Yom Kippur, and 2 days Sukkot/Shemini Atzeret). The Sabbath is the mystical dimension of the seven branches of the tree which contains the root of the souls of the seven righteous

people mentioned in Tikkuney Hazohar. The basic message of the 70 bullocks which the Jews offered on Sukkot is that the Gentile nations will keep becoming fewer.

The fact that the number of sheep offered as part of these additional burnt-offerings on the seven days of Sukkot is constant, i.e. 14, is an allusion to Israel appearing on two different spiritual levels, the hidden level and the visible level. The "hidden" level of Israel's spirituality refers to the need for the Israelites to set free sparks of sanctity trapped amongst the Gentile nations, a concept which we have written about on several occasions. The visible element is that the Jewish people represent sanctity which is visible. The proof is that after the bullocks of the nations have all been "used up," the only ones left are the Israelites. This means that the Israelites have fulfilled their task, that all the sparks of sanctity that were capable of being set free from their Gentile jailers have been redeemed. This is alluded to by the Mussaph offering on Shemini Atzeret when G'd ordered the Israelites to offer up a single bullock and only seven sheep. These seven sheep symbolise Israel, the sacred flock. The single bullock symbolises the one remaining bullock of the Gentile nations, i.e. the one representing Ishmael. The ram of that sacrifice represents Esau. Between them, the animals in the Mussaph offering of Shemini Atzeret represent the nations descended from Abraham.

מקורות

Sources & Translations

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Beit Aharon	translated by AI (anthropic/claude-sonnet-5)
Likutei Moharan	Likutey Moharan Volumes 1-11, trans. by Moshe Mykoff. Breslov Research Inst., 1986-2012
Ohev Yisrael	translated by AI (anthropic/claude-sonnet-5)
Or HaChaim	Or Hachayim, trans. Eliyahu Munk
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Ramban	Commentary on the Torah by Ramban (Nachmanides). Translated and annotated by Charles B. Chavel. New York, Shilo Pub. House, 1971-1976
Rashi	Pentateuch with Rashi's commentary by M. Rosenbaum and A.M. Silbermann, 1929-1934
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Sifra	Sifra by Rabbi Shraga Silverstein
Torah and Haftarah	The Koren Jerusalem Bible
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