

Sukkot 5786

Bavli Sukkah 11b

As it is taught in a baraita that the verse states: “I made the children of Israel to reside in sukkot”; these booths were clouds of glory, this is the statement of Rabbi Eliezer. Rabbi Akiva says: They established for themselves actual sukkot.

Rashbam on Leviticus 23:43

The plain meaning of the verse follows the opinion expressed in Tractate *Sukkah* that the word סוכה ("booth") here should be understood literally. This is the idea behind the text ([Deut. 16:13](#)): "You shall hold the Feast of Booths ... after the ingathering from your threshing floor and your vat." [In other words,] when you gather the produce of your land and your houses are full of all good things, grain, wine and oil, [that is the appropriate time for you to celebrate Sukkot,] so that you will remember THAT I MADE THE ISRAELITES LIVE IN BOOTHS for forty years in the wilderness, without any settlements and without owning any land. As a result of [contemplating] this, you will give thanks to the One who allows you to own your land and your houses which are filled with all good things. And do not "say to yourselves, ‘My own power and the might of my own hand have won this wealth for me’."

Rambam, Guide for the Perplexed 3:43

I believe that the four species are a symbolical expression of our rejoicing that the Israelites changed the wilderness, “no place of seed, or of figs, or of vines, or of pomegranates, or of water to drink” (Num. 20:5), with a country full of fruit-trees and rivers. In order to remember this we take the fruit which is the most pleasant of the fruit of the land, branches which smell best, most beautiful leaves, and also the best of herbs, i.e., the willows of the brook. These four kinds have also those three purposes: First, they were plentiful in those days in Israel, so that every one could easily get them. Secondly, they have a good appearance, they are green; some of them, viz., the citron and the myrtle, are also excellent as regards their smell, the branches of the palm-tree and the willow having neither good nor bad smell. Thirdly, they keep fresh and green for seven days, which is not the case with peaches, pomegranates, asparagus, nuts, and the like.

Mishnah Sukkah 4:5

Each day they would circle the altar one time and say: “Lord, please save us. Lord, please grant us success” (Psalms 118:25). Rabbi Yehuda says that they would say: *Ani vaho*, please save us. And on that day, the seventh day of *Sukkot*, they would circle the altar seven times.

Yerushalmi Sukkah 4:3

“On that day they surrounded the altar seven times.” Rabbi Aḥa said, a remembrance of Jericho.

Leviticus Rabbah 30

Rabbi Avin said: This is analogous to two [litigants] who came before a judge and we do not know who prevailed. But if one comes and takes palm branches in his hand we know that he is the one who prevailed. So, Israel and the nations of the world litigate before the Holy One blessed be He on Rosh HaShana, and we do not know who prevailed. But when Israel emerges from before the Holy One blessed be He with their palm branches and their citrons in their hands, we know that it is Israel that emerged victorious. Therefore, Moses exhorts Israel and says to them: “You shall take for you on the first day.”

Ohr LaYesharim on Yerushalmi Sukkah

כשצרו בני ישראל על יריחו, אנשי המלחמה הקיפו את העיר פעם אחת בכל יום בששת ימים, ושבעה כוהנים הלכו בראש התהלוכה המקיפה את העיר ותקעו בשופרות, ואחריהם הלך ארון ברית ה', וביום השביעי הקיפו את העיר שבע פעמים, והכוהנים תקעו בשופרות בכל הקפה מסביב לעיר, ובפעם השביעית נפלה חומת העיר תחתיה וכבשו את העיר (יהושע פרק ו). ההקפות סביב המזבח בשבעת ימי חג הסוכות הם זכר לכך, שכן בכל יום מקיפים את המזבח פעם אחת והכוהנים תוקעים בחצוצרות, וביום השביעי מקיפים אותו שבע פעמים. - על הדמיון של הקפות המזבח לכיבוש יריחו אפשר להוסיף עוד. המזבח שהיו ערבות זקופות סביבו דומה לעיר יריחו שהיתה חומה סביבה. המזבח והקורבנות שעליו שהם קודש לה' דומים לעיר יריחו וכל מה שבה שהיו חרם לה'. הכיבוש הניסי של יריחו שהיה לאחר הקפת העיר מסמל את הישועה שמבקשים עליה כשמקיפים את המזבח. ארון ה' שהלך גם הוא מסביב ליריחו מסמל שישועתם של ישראל היא גם ישועתו של ה' - 'אני והוא הושיעה נא'.