

סוכות, זמן שמחתנו. The יום טוב which we celebrate by completely removing ourselves from our homes and comfort and placing our complete trust into the hands of Hashem, going out into a little סוכה. What is this שמחה representing, what is it related to? This שמחה is related to הכרת הטוב. We're thanking Hashem for the ענני הכבוד and for the סוכות that they had in מצרים. We're thanking Hashem for יציאת מצרים, of course. And through all the דורות, we're thanking Hashem for all of the ניסים ונפלאות which he has done for us, represented by our otherworldly existence in the סוכה. What's going happen when משיח comes? When משיח comes, the גוים are going be jealous of us. Everybody knows the מדרש. The גמרא in זרה mentions that Hashem will tell all the nations of the world, "I'm bringing משיח" and the גוים will say, "Hey, if we would have had a מצוה, we would have done it." Hashem will say, "Okay, I'll give you a מצוה," and He'll give them the מצוה of סוכה, which they proceed to demolish. They're not interested in the מצוה of סוכה. The question is, how does סוכה have to do with the גוים? Why specifically this "easy מצוה"?

R' Kormornick, in his second sefer of A Short Vort, brings a very beautiful connection between סוכה and גוים. What is the יום טוב of סוכות? What are all the קרבנות? There are 70 קרבנות. We, little Yidden, are bringing ברכה to the world through our המקדש בית and קרבנות. We're giving the גוים a ברכה. This סוכה represents the ברכה that we're giving the גוים. They should show a little gratitude and a little respect, but they don't. They don't know what it means to have gratitude. That is a Yiddish trait; it's not a גויישיש trait. When we have הכרת הטוב, it deepens our love to הקדוש ברוך הוא. If you want to love somebody, you give them. We give Hashem our עבודה. Why? Because Hashem gives us everything. סוכות will be a test of the גוים and they will fail miserably, and since we celebrate סוכות, we are passing magnificently.

This מדה of הכרת הטוב is exemplified in a story with R' Moshe Schwab. R' Moshe Schwab once decided to walk to זכר שלום of a distant acquaintance; he really did not know them. It was a long walk, he was an old man. When asked by his family why he was making this difficult walk to someone he really did not know that well, he answered that he did not remember but he was told that his own זכר שלום which welcomed him into the world when he was born, fell on the first night of פסח. On the first night of פסח, everyone was busy with their seder only one person came to R' Moshe Schwab's זכר שלום. That person was this new baby's great-grandfather. And because הכרת הטוב is such an important מדה, he did not want to miss the opportunity to demonstrate his appreciation to that family for them doing that beautiful thing.

That is גדלות. That is sensitivity. That is something we can learn from and something we can hope to emulate.

