

Chag Hasukot

"Sitting in the sukah with it's filmsy walls and fragile roof, through which we see the stars twinkle, we appreciate better all we possess and You, Lord we thank. What we possess is what we are. It is gratitude, humility and sensibility. What our real being reveals."

Rabbi Marshall T. Meyer Z"L

The message of the doors

We haven't yet recovered from the vibrations of Iom Kippur or the excitement of the Nehilah, Ptach lanu Sha'ar, when we asked God to open the doors at the moment that the doors of His Tribunal were being closed.

Today I would like to see again the doors that accompanied us through these lamim Noraim, so that they can help us understand this week of Sukkot and Simchat Torah.

In Selichot we open the doors of the Aron Hakodesh for the first time. We took the Sifrei Torah one by one to change their garments for white ones. Then in Rosh Hashanah we opened the Aron again for the most moving Tefilot: Unetane Tokef, the prayer of Rabbi Amnon of Manguncia, in which we recognize that in this day it is decided who lives and who dies, who will be happy and who will be tormented. We open it for the Le El Orech Din, to ask God for mercy at the time of judgment. And then for Aleinu le Malchut, when we reverentially proclaim the reign of God.

In Iom Kippur we open the Aron and this time we take out the Sifrei Torah: Kol Nidrei, we prepared to live together the most sacred day of the year. And in Nehilah, the moment in which the doors of heaven were closing, we continued to beg for them to stay open, for our prayers and intentions to be received.

Regardless, Nehilah finished. And the doors were closed. Or not.

The answers to our prayers of the Nehilah are in the holiday of Sukkot.

The only way to stop them from closing up there is to open them down here. And tradition prepared

us, from Selichot – opening and closing the doors of the Aron Hakodesh- to learn to later open the doors of our homes with the same reverent fear. So that every time we open the doors and meet someone behind them, we feel the same sanctity of when our eyes looked at the Sifrei Torah.

Nothing happens up there if it doesn't take place down below, say the mystical Jews.

The Nehilah is settled in Sukkot. We have the right to ask for ourselves, when we are not indifferent to what others ask for.

We have the right to be heard by the heavens, when we do not ignore the clamoring of the ones who are here, behind our doors.

We have the right to ask God for support, when we take care of the bread of those who have less.

Ptach lanu Sha'ar. Open the gates, we ask God less than a week ago.

Ptach lahem Sha'ar. Open the gates for them, I hear God in my imagination plead with me from heaven.

If we do the work properly we'll get to Simchat Torah. The joy of opening the Aron Hakodesh again, once we have opened our own doors. And take out the Sifrei Torah again, without the tension of Iom Kippur anymore, but with the joy of the accomplished task and the excitement of having heard a call that came from heaven.

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