

סוכות

It is likely that when you recite *Birkas HaMazon* during the 7 days of Sukkos that you added a special request at its end, like you do on other special occasions.

The conclusion of the four B'rachos of Birkas HaMazon is reached with the recitation of the words:

לעולם על יחסרנו

May Hashem never lessen his blessings to us.

The minhag is to recite many short prayers, each beginning with the word הרחמן, The Merciful One, with particular requests following the conclusion of those four B'rachos. Those requests are standard and are recited consistently.

Farther on, there are individual requests of הרחמן that are added on special days. On Shabbos we say:

הרחמן הוא ינחילנו יום שכולו שבת ומנוחה לחיי עולמים:

The Merciful One should give us an inheritance of a day that is totally Shabbos and restful for eternal life.

On Yom Tov we say:

הרחמן הוא ינחילנו יום שכולו טוב:

The Merciful One should give us an inheritance of a day that is totally good.

On Rosh Hashanah we say:

הרחמן הוא יחדש עלינו את השנה הזאת לטובה ולברכה:

The Merciful One should give us this year for good and for blessing.

On Rosh Chodesh we say:

הרחמן הוא יחדש עלינו את החודש הזה לטובה ולברכה:

The Merciful One should give us this new month for good and for blessing.

On Sukkos, whether it is Yom Tov (and then in addition to the Shabbos and/or Yom Tov additions) or Chol HaMoed, we say:

הרחמן הוא יקים לנו את סוכת דוד הנופלת:

The Merciful One should erect and establish for us the falling Sukkah of Dovid HaMelech.

What is the meaning of the 'falling Sukkah of Dovid HaMelech' and what does that phrase inform us regarding our understanding of the Yom Tov that we are now observing and celebrating?

We read in Sefer Amos (Perek 9/Posuk 11):

בְּיוֹם הַהוּא אֶקֶם אֶת סֹכֶת דָּוִד הַנִּפְלֶת וְגִדְרֹתֶיהָ אֶת פְּרִצֵיהֶן וְהִרְסֹתֶיהָ אֶקֶם וּבְנִיתֶיהָ
כִּימִי עוֹלָם:

On that day I Hashem will establish the falling Sukkah of Dovid and I will fence its breaches and its destroyed parts and I will establish it as it was forever.

It is evident that our prayer that is added during Sukkos is a paraphrase of the prophetic promise of thousands of years ago and the prayer seeks its fulfillment.

What is the context of that Posuk from Sefer Amos and what is its meaning?

That verse follows a number of harsh P'sukim regarding the punishment of Israel. We read earlier verses (P'sukim 9-10) there:

כִּי הִנֵּה אֲנֹכִי מְצִוֶה וְהִנְעוֹתִי בְּכָל הַגּוֹיִם אֶת בַּיִת יִשְׂרָאֵל כְּאֲשֶׁר יִנּוּעַ בְּכַבְרָה וְלֹא יִפּוֹל
צָרוֹר אֶרֶץ: בְּחֶרֶב יָמוּתוּ כָּל חַטָּאֵי עַמִּי הַאֲמֹרִים לֹא תִגִּישׁ וְתִקְדִים בְּעֵדֵינוּ הָרָעָה:

Because behold I Hashem command and I will move the House of Israel around in all of the nations as that which is moved around and shaken in a strainer without one piece falling to the ground. All the sinners of My People will die by the sword - those who say, "He will not bring to us and not advance upon for us the evil".

Rashi writes to the verse above:

בְּיוֹם הַהוּא - אַחֲרַי בֵּא עֲלֵיהֶם כָּל אֱלֹהִים יִבֹּא יוֹם הַהוּא הַמוֹכֵן לְגֵאוּלָּה וְבוֹ אֶקֶם סוֹכֶת
דָּוִד הַנִּפְלֶת...

On that day – After all that will come upon then the day will come, the one that is prepared for Redemption and on it I will establish the falling *Sukkas Dovid*.

To what is the *Sukkas Dovid* of the verse referring? What is 'falling'?

I would think that the answer that comes to mind is that the Posuk is referring to the Beis HaMikdosh. It had not yet been destroyed at the time of the *Novi Amos*, but the predictions of its destruction were not unknown and then, despite the difficult P'sukim that precede this verse, our Posuk provides promise and hope.

And, it should not be surprising that the Beis HaMikdosh is called *Sukkas Dovid*, even though Dovid HaMelech did not build it.

We read in Sefer Sh'muel II (Perek 2/P'sukim 1-7):

וַיְהִי כִּי יָשַׁב הַמֶּלֶךְ בְּבֵיתוֹ וְה' הִנִּיחַ לוֹ מִסָּבִיב מִכָּל אִיְבָיו: וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶל נָתָן הַנָּבִיא רְאֵה נָא אֲנֹכִי יוֹשֵׁב בְּבֵית אֲרָזִים וְאָרוֹן הָאֱלֹהִים יֹשֵׁב בְּתוֹךְ הַיְרִיעָה: וַיֹּאמֶר נָתָן אֶל הַמֶּלֶךְ כֹּל אֲשֶׁר בָּלְבָבְךָ לַעֲשֹׂה כִּי ה' עִמָּךְ: וַיְהִי בַלַּיְלָה הַהוּא וַיְהִי דְבַר ה' אֶל נָתָן לֵאמֹר: לֶךְ וְאָמַרְתָּ אֶל עַבְדִּי אֶל דָּוִד כֹּה אָמַר ה' הֲאֵתָה תִּבְנֶה לִּי בַיִת לְשֹׁבְתִי: כִּי לֹא יִשְׁבְּתִי בְּבֵית לְמִיּוֹם הָעֹלָתִי אֶת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמִּצְרַיִם וְעַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה וְאֶהְיֶה מִתְהַלֵּךְ בָּאֶהָל וּבַמִּשְׁכָּן:

When Dovid HaMelech dwelled in his house and Hashem gave him rest from his enemies from all around him¹, he said to the Prophet Noston, 'See, please, I am dwelling in a house of cedar and the Ark of G-d is dwelling within a curtain.' Noston said to the king, 'All that is in your heart, go and do because Hashem is with you.' That night, the Word of G-d came to the Prophet Noston saying, 'Go and say to My servant to Dovid, "So says Hashem, Will you build a house for Me for My dwelling? Because I have not dwelled in a house from

¹ The connection between the rest that Dovid had from his enemies and the need to build the Beis HaMikdosh is already intimated in Parshas R'eh. We read there (D'vorim Perek 12/P'sukim 10-11):

וְעָבַרְתֶּם אֶת הַיַּרְדֵּן וַיִּשְׁבְּתֶם בְּאֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם מִנְחִיל אֶתְכֶם וְהִנִּיחַ לְכֶם מִכָּל אִיְבֵיכֶם מִסָּבִיב וַיִּשְׁבְּתֶם בְּטוֹחַ: וְהָיָה הַמְּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִבְחַר ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם בּוֹ לְשֹׁכֵן שְׁמוֹ שֵׁם שְׁמָה תָּבִיאוּ אֶת כָּל אֲשֶׁר אֲנֹכִי מְצַוֶּה אֶתְכֶם עוֹלֹתֵיכֶם וְזִבְחֵיכֶם מַעֲשֵׂרְתֵיכֶם וְתִרְמַת יְדְכֶם וְכֹל מִבְּחַר נְדָרֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר תִּדְרוּ לַה':

You will cross the Jordan River and you will dwell in the land that Hashem your G-d gives to you as an inheritance and he will give you rest from all of your enemies around you and you shall dwell in peace. The place that Hashem your G-d will choose to have His Name dwell there, to there you shall bring all that I command you: your burnt-offerings and your offerings, and the gifts of your hand and the choicest of your vows that you will vow to Hashem.

Rashi there and here point out this connection.

the day that I brought B'nei Yisroel up from Egypt and until this day and I have been going in the Tent and in the Mishkan.

Why does the Novi inform us that the prophecy that Noson HaNovi received came that very night? Rashi explains:

ויהי בלילה ההוא - אמר רבי חנינא בר פפא אמר לו הקדוש ברוך הוא לנתן האדם הזה שאני משלחך אצלו מהיר הוא שמא ישכור פועלים ונמצאתי מפסידו מהר ואמור לו לא אתה תבנה הבית, רבי סימון אומר האדם הזה שאני משלחך אצלו נדרן הוא כענין שנאמר אשר נשבע לה' נדר לאביר יעקב אם אבא באהל ביתי (תהלים קלב/ב) שמא יאמר איני אוכל ואיני שותה עד שאעשה כך ונמצאתי מפסידו:

It was on that night – Rabi Chanina bar Papa said, ‘Hashem said to Noson: this man [Dovid HaMelech] to whom I am sending you acts with alacrity. Perhaps he will already have hired workers and then I will be causing him a loss [if I only inform him tomorrow that he is not to build the Beis HaMikdosh].

Rabi Si'mon said, [Hashem said to Noson:] “This man to whom I am sending you is one who takes vows [to strengthen his resolve] as it says, ‘Dovid swore to Hashem, he vowed to the Mighty One of Yaakov’. Perhaps he will vow and say, ‘I will not eat and I will not drink until I do this task’ and then I will be causing him a loss.”

This dedication that Dovid HaMelech had to build the Beis HaMikdosh is underscored by the promise that Hashem gives him in the verses that follow. Those verses make it clear that although he was not to build the Beis HaMikdosh personally, he was not rejected from that task whatsoever. We read (P'sukim 12-13, 16-17):

כִּי יִמְלְאוּ יָמֶיךָ וְשָׁכַבְתָּ אֶת אֲבֹתֶיךָ וְהִקִּימְתִי אֶת זֶרְעֶךָ אַחֲרֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר יֵצֵא מִמְעִיךָ וְהִכִּינְתִּי אֶת מַמְלַכְתּוֹ: הוּא יִבְנֶה בַּיִת לְשִׁמִּי וְכִנְנְתִּי אֶת כֶּסֶף מַמְלַכְתּוֹ עַד עוֹלָם:

וְנִאֲמַן בְּיַתְדְךָ וּמַמְלַכְתְּךָ עַד עוֹלָם לְפָנֶיךָ כֶּסֶף אֶהְיֶה נֶכֶן עַד עוֹלָם: כָּל הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה וְכָל הַחֲזִיוֹן הַזֶּה כֵּן דִּבֶּר נָתַן אֶל דָּוִד:

When your days will be filled and you will sleep with your fathers, I Hashem will establish your seed after you, he who will come out from your loins, and I will prepare his rule forever.

Your house and your rule are loyal forever before you; your throne will be ready forever.

According to all of these words and according to all of this vision so did Noson speak to Dovid.

The dedication that Dovid HaMelech had to build the Beis HaMikdosh is also expressed by him in Sefer Tehillim. We read (Perek 122/Posuk 1):

שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת לְדָוִד שְׂמַחְתִּי בְּאֹמְרִים לִי בֵּית ה' נִלְבָּה:

A Song of Ascent of Dovid: I was happy when they said to me, 'Let us go to the House of G-d'.

Who said those words to Dovid HaMelech and how could they say them since the Beis HaMikdosh was not yet built? Rashi explains:

שמחתי באומרים לי - שמעתי בני אדם שאומרים מתי ימות אותו זקן וימלוך שלמה בנו ויבנה בית המקדש ונעלה לרגל ואני שמח:

I was happy when they said to me – I heard people saying, 'When will that old man [Dovid] die and his son Shlomo will rule and he will build the Beis HaMikdosh and we will go up for there for the Shlosh Regolim'. And I was happy.

And the following segment from Masseches Shabbos that teaches us what occurred when Shlomo HaMelech dedicated the Beis HaMikdosh will leave us without a doubt that *Sukkas Dovid* can certainly be the Beis HaMikdosh even though Dovid HaMelech didn't build it.

The Gemara there is interpreting a verse that Shlomo HaMelech said in Sefer Koheles (Perek 4/Posuk 2). It reads:

וְשִׁבַח אֲנִי אֶת הַמֵּתִים שְׂכָרָם מֵתוֹ מִן הַחַיִּים אֲשֶׁר הֵמָּה חַיִּים עַדְנָה:

I praise the dead that have already died more than the living who are still living.

The Gemara (Masseches Shabbos 30 a) writes:

אמר רב יהודה אמר רב: מאי דכתיב (תהילים פו/יז²) עשה עמי אות לטובה ויראו שנאי ויבושו - אמר דוד לפני הקדוש ברוך הוא: רבונו של עולם, מחול לי על אותו עון! אמר לו: מחול לך. אמר לו: עשה עמי אות בחיי! אמר לו: בחייך איני מודיע, בחיי שלמה בנך אני מודיע.

Rav Yehuda said in the name of Rav: What is the meaning of the verse, 'Hashem, make me a sign of my good and my enemies will see and be shamed'? Dovid said before HaKodosh Boruch Hu, 'Master of the Universe- forgive me for that sin.'³ Hashem said, 'you are forgiven'. Dovid said, 'Make a sign of such in my lifetime.' Hashem said to him, 'In your lifetime I will not make it be known. In the life of your son Shlomo, I will make it be known'.

כשבנה שלמה את בית המקדש ביקש להכניס ארון לבית קדשי הקדשים, דבקו שערים זה בזה. אמר שלמה עשרים וארבעה רננות ולא נענה. פתח ואמר: (שם כד/ז) שאו שערים ראשיכם והנשאו פתחי עולם ויבא מלך הכבוד, רהטו בתריה למיבלעיה, אמרו: (שם ח) מי הוא זה מלך הכבוד? אמר להו: ה' עזוז וגבור(שם⁴). חזר ואמר: (שם י⁵) שאו שערים ראשיכם ושאו פתחי עולם ויבא מלך הכבוד. מי הוא זה מלך הכבוד ה' צבאות הוא מלך הכבוד סלה ולא נענה. כיון שאמר (דברי הימים ב ו/מב) ה' א...ל"קים אל תשב פני משיחך זכרה לחסדי דוד עבדך - מיד נענה. באותה שעה נהפכו פני כל שונאי דוד

² The entire verse reads:

עֲשֵׂה עִמִּי אוֹת לְטוֹבָה וְיֵרְאוּ שְׁנְאֵי וַיְבֹשׂוּ כִּי אֶתָּה ה' עֲזָרְתָּנִי וְנִחַמְתָּנִי:

Make for me a sign of my good so that my enemies will see and be shamed because You Hashem help me and comfort me.

³ Rashi writes:

על אותו עון - דבת שבע.

For that sin – of Batsheva.

⁴ The entire verse reads:

מִי זֶה מֶלֶךְ הַכְּבוֹד ה' עֲזוּז וְגִבּוֹר ה' גִּבּוֹר מְלַחְמָה:

Who is the Glorious G-d? Hashem Who is powerful and mighty; Hashem the Mighty One in war.

⁵ The entire verse reads:

מִי הוּא זֶה מֶלֶךְ הַכְּבוֹד ה' צָבָא...אוֹת הוּא מֶלֶךְ הַכְּבוֹד סָלָה:

Who is the Glorious G-d? Hashem of the Hosts, He is the Glorious G-d forever.

כשולי קדירה, וידעו כל העם וכל ישראל שמחל לו הקדוש ברוך הוא על אותו עון. ולא יפה אמר שלמה ושבח אני את המתים שכבר מתו?

When Shlomo built the Beis HaMikdosh he wished to bring the Ark into the *Kodesh HaKedoshim*. The gates⁶ stuck one to the other. Shlomo recited twenty-four songs of praise⁷ and he wasn't answered. He opened with and said, 'Gates, raise your heads and be lifted up, gates of the world and let the glorious king enter.' The gates ran after Shlomo and wanted to swallow him up. They said, 'Who is the Glorious King?' He said to them, 'Hashem Who is powerful and mighty.' He returned and said, 'Gates, raise your heads, gates of the world, raise and let the Glorious King enter. Who is the Glorious King? Hashem of Hosts is the Glorious King forever.' There was no response.

Once Shlomo said, 'Hashem, G-d, do not turn back [unanswered] the face of Your anointed one, remember the kindnesses of Dovid Your servant' – Shlomo was immediately answered.

At that moment, the faces of all of those who hated Dovid⁸ turned the color of the bottom of cooking pots and the entire people and all of Israel knew that HaKodosh Boruch Hu forgave Dovid for that sin.

Is it not appropriate that Shlomo said, 'I praise the dead who have already died'?

⁶ Rashi writes:

דבקו שערים - של בית קדשי הקדשים.

The gates stuck – those of the Holy of Holies.

⁷ Rashi writes:

עשרים וארבע רננות - רנה תפילה תחינה כתובים בתפילת שלמה:

Twenty-four songs of praise – *Rina* is a prayer, a supplication. They are written in Shlomo's prayer.

See Melachim I/Perek 8 for the prayers that Shlomo HaMelech offered at the inauguration of the Beis HaMikdosh.

⁸ Rashi explains:

שוני דוד - משפחת שאול, שמעי, וכיוצא בו.

The haters of Dovid – the family of Shaul HaMelech, Shim'i and those like him.

Hopefully, this slew of sources teach us that סוכת דוד can certainly be understood to be the Beis HaMikdosh and that when we offer a prayer at the time of Birkas HaMazon that:

הרחמן הוא יקים לנו את סוכת דוד הנופלת:

The Merciful One should erect and establish for us the falling Sukkah of Dovid HaMelech

that we are praying for the establishment of the *Bayis Shlishi* – the third and permanent Beis HaMikdosh.

However, despite this apparently impressive array of proofs from the Novi and from Chazal regarding the proprietary interest of Dovid HaMelech regarding the Beis HaMikdosh, when it comes to the verse in Sefer Amos, which is the source for that prayer in Birkas HaMazon, the commentaries and Chazal understood it differently.

Let us revisit that Posuk:

בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא אֶקִּים אֶת סֹכֶת דָּוִד הַנּוֹפֶלֶת וְגִדְרֹתַי אֶת פְּרֻצֵיהֶן וְהִרְסֹתִיו אֶקִּים וּבְנִיתִיהָ
כִּימֵי עוֹלָם:

On that day I Hashem will establish the falling Sukkah of Dovid and I will fence its breaches and its destroyed parts and I will establish it as it was forever.

The Targum renders סוכת דוד as:

מלכותא דבית דוד

The dynasty of the House Dovid:

Rashi does not disagree. We saw the first part of Rashi earlier where he writes that after all the destruction that was foretold in the earlier verses there in Sefer Amos. Rashi has there has an additional segment that reads:

אקים סוכת דוד הנופלת, יונתן תרגם מלכותא דבית דוד:

I Hashem will establish the falling Sukka of Dovid. Targum Yonatan rendered it 'the dynasty of the House of Dovid'.

In Masseches Sanhedrin (96 a) Chazal also understood this phrase in the same way – a reference to the Davidic Dynasty and not to the Beis HaMikdosh. We read there:

אמר ליה רב נחמן לרבי יצחק: מי שמיע לך אימת אתי בר נפלי? - אמר ליה: מאן בר נפלי? - אמר ליה: משיח. - משיח בר נפלי קרית ליה? - אמר ליה: אין, דכתיב ביום ההוא אקים את סכת דויד הנפלת.

Rav Nachman said to Rabi Yitzchak, “Did you hear when the ‘son of the one who falls’ is coming?” He said to him, “Who is ‘the son of the one who falls’?” He said, ‘The Moshiach.’ [He said], ‘Do you call Moshiach the son of one who falls?’ He said, ‘Yes, as it is written, “on that day I will establish the falling Sukkah of Dovid.”’

There are certainly many questions to raise, with the hope that we will know how to make headway into gaining some clarity about the Posuk in Sefer Amos, about this Gemara in Masseches Sanhedrin and about the Yom Tov of Sukkos.

Thus, the true *p’shat* of the verse in *Amos* and the meaning of our prayers in *Bircas HaMazon* are referring to the restoration of *Beis Dovid*.

Nonetheless, clarification is necessary.

Certainly the term ‘Sukkah’ could be understood to refer to the Beis HaMikdosh, as we saw conclusively earlier and there are examples that demonstrate that assumption.

On Shabbos and Yom Tov, the bracha of *Hashkiveinu* concludes:

הפורש סוכת שלום עלינו ועל כל ישראל ועל ירושלים.

Hashem spreads out a *Sukkah* of peace upon us, upon all of Israel and upon Yerushalayim.

How do we know that this *Bracha* specifically refers to the Beis HaMikdosh and not to a general concept of Hashem’s benevolent protection?

The Mishnayos in the fourth Perek of Masseches B’rachos (4-5) teach us regarding the appropriate posture to have and direction to face when reciting the *Amida*:

היה רוכב על החמור ירד ואם אינו יכול לירד יחזיר את פניו ואם אינו יכול להחזיר את פניו יכוין את לבו כנגד בית קדש הקדשים: היה יושב בספינה או בקרון או באסדא יכוין את לבו כנגד בית קדש הקדשים:

If one is riding on a donkey, he should go down from it [and then recite the *Amida*]. If he cannot go down, he should turn his face [towards the Beis HaMikdosh]. If he cannot turn his face, he should direct his heart to the place of the Kodesh Kodoshim. If he was sitting on a boat or in a wagon or on a raft, he should direct his heart towards the Kodesh Kodoshim.

The Gemara Yerushalmi there (Halachah 5) expands upon those Mishnayos:

ומתפללין בחוצה לארץ הופכין את פניהן כלפי ארץ ישראל ומה טעם [מלכים א ח/מח⁹] והתפללו אליך דרך ארצם אשר נתת לאבותם העומדין ומתפללין בארץ ישראל הופכין את פניהן כלפי ירושלים ומה טעם [שם שם מד¹⁰] והתפללו אליך דרך העיר אשר בחרת בה העומדים ומתפללין בירושלים הופכין פניהן כלפי הר הבית שנאמר [שם] והבית אשר בניתי לשמך העומדים ומתפללין בהר הבית הופכין פניהן כלפי בית קדשי הקדשים ומה טעם [שם שם ל¹¹] והתפללו אל המקום הזה ואתה תשמע אל מכון שבתך אל השמים ושמעת וסלחת נמצאו העומדין בצפון פניהן לדרום

⁹ The entire verse reads:

וְשָׁבוּ אֵלַי בְּכָל לִבְבָם וּבְכָל נַפְשָׁם בְּאֶרֶץ אֲבוֹתֵיהֶם אֲשֶׁר שָׁבוּ אִתָּם וְהִתְפַּלְלוּ אֵלַי דֶּרֶךְ אֶרְצָם אֲשֶׁר נָתַתָּה לְאֲבוֹתָם הָעִיר אֲשֶׁר בָּחַרְתָּ וְהַבַּיִת אֲשֶׁר בְּנִיתִי לְשִׁמְךָ:

They will return to You with all of their heart and with all of their soul in the land of their enemies that captured them and they will pray to You by way of their Land that You gave to their forefathers; the city that You chose and the House that I built for Your Name.

¹⁰ The entire verse reads:

כִּי יֵצֵא עַמְּךָ לְמִלְחָמָה עַל אֹיְבוֹ בְּדֶרֶךְ אֲשֶׁר תִּשְׁלַחֵם וְהִתְפַּלְלוּ אֶל ה' דֶּרֶךְ הָעִיר אֲשֶׁר בָּחַרְתָּ בָּהּ וְהַבַּיִת אֲשֶׁר בְּנִיתִי לְשִׁמְךָ:

When Your People will go out to war against its enemy, in the way that You will send them, they will pray to You by way of the city that You chose and the House that I built for Your Name.

¹¹ The entire verse reads:

וְשִׁמְעַתָּה אֶל תְּחִנַּת עַבְדְּךָ וְעַמְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר יִתְפַּלְלוּ אֶל הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה וְאַתָּה תִּשְׁמַע אֶל מְקוֹם שְׁבִיתְךָ אֶל הַשָּׁמַיִם וְשִׁמְעַתָּה וְסָלַחְתָּ:

You will hear the supplication of Your servant and of Your People Israel who will pray towards this Place and You will hear; to the Place of Your dwelling, to the Heavens; and You will hear and You forgive.

העומדין לדרום פניהם לצפון העומדים במזרח פניהן למערב למערב פניהן למזרח נמצאו כל ישראל מתפללין אל מקום אחד ההוא הא דתימא [ישעיה נו/12] כי ביתי בית תפלה יקרא לכל העמים אמר רבי יהושע בן לוי [מלכים א ו/13] הוא ההיכל לפני לפנים היכל שכל הפנים פונין לו עד כדון בבינינו בחורבנו מניין אמר רבי אבון [שיר השירים ד/ד¹⁴] בנוי לתלפיות תל שכל הפיות מתפללין עליו.

בברכה בקרית שמע ובתפלה בברכה בונה ירושלם בתפילה...בונה ירושלם בקרית שמע פורש סוכת שלום עלינו ועל עמו ישראל ועל ירושלם:

Those who are in *Chutz LaAretz* turn their faces towards Eretz Yisroel. Why? Shlomo HaMelech said in his Tefila¹⁵: 'They shall pray to You by way of their land that You gave to their forefathers'. Those who are standing in prayer in Eretz Yisroel turn their face towards Yerushalayim. Why? Shlomo HaMelech said in his prayer, 'They should pray to you by way of the city that You chose'. Those who are standing in prayer in Yerushalayim turn their faces towards *Har HaBayis* as it says, 'The House that I Shlomo built for Your Name'. Those who are standing in prayer on *Har HaBayis* turn their faces towards the *Kodesh Kodoshim*. Why? Shlomo HaMelech said in his prayer, 'They shall pray towards this place and You will hear; towards the base of Your dwelling, towards the heavens and You will hear and You will forgive.'

¹² The entire verse reads:

וְהִבִּיאֹתִים אֶל הַר קְדוֹשִׁי וְשִׂמְחֹתִים בְּבֵית תְּפִלָּתִי עוֹלֹתֵיהֶם וְזִבְחֵיהֶם לְרָצוֹן עַל מִזְבְּחֵי כִּי בֵּיתִי בֵּית תְּפִלָּה יִקְרָא לְכָל הָעַמִּים:

I will bring them to My Holy Mountain and I will make them happy in My House of Prayer; their burnt-offerings and their offerings will be pleasing upon My altar because My House will be a House of Prayer for all the nations.

¹³ The entire verse reads:

וְאַרְבָּעִים בָּאֲמָה הָיָה הַבַּיִת הוּא הַהֵיכָל לְפָנָי:
The House was forty *amos*; the sanctuary before Me.

¹⁴ The entire verse reads:

כְּמִגְדַל דָּוִד צֹאֲרָה בְּנוֹי לְתַלְפִּיּוֹת אֶלְף הַמָּגֵן תְּלוּי עָלָיו כָּל שְׁלֹטֵי הַגְּבוּרִים:
Like the Tower of Dovid, your neck is built very high; the *elef ha'mogen* shield is hanging upon it; all of the rulers of the mighty.

¹⁵ All of the verses from the eighth Perek of Melachim I are from the Tefila that Shlomo HaMelech recited at the inauguration and dedication of the Beis HaMikdosh.

The result is that all of Israel prays to one place. That is what the verse means: 'Because My House will be called a House of Prayer for all of the Peoples¹⁶.

Rabi Yehoshua ben Levi says, [that is what the verse means:] 'That is the *Heichal*-Sanctuary לפני ולפנים, inward and inward פונים פונים'. It is the sanctuary toward which all faces turn to it.

These verses are relevant while the Beis HaMikdosh was standing. What is the status when it is destroyed? Rabi Avun said, 'It is built to high places' – [even when it is] a תל, a remnant¹⁷, all mouths pray for it.

¹⁶ The 'peoples' in this verse, according to this Yerushalmi, refers to the *shevatim* of Israel, not to non-Jewish nations.

We find that such a terminology is appropriate for the Shevatim based on the Posuk in Parshas Vayechi. We read there the words of Yaakov Ovinu to Yosef (B'reishis Perek 48/Posuk 4):

וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי הַנְּבִי מִפָּרֶךְ וְהִרְבִּיתִךְ וַנְּתַתִּיךְ לְקֹהֵל עַמִּים וַנְּתַתִּי אֶת הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת לְרֶגְלְךָ אֶחָרֶיךָ אֶחְזֶזְתָּ עוֹלָם:

Hashem said to me, 'Behold I will cause you to be fruitful and multiply and I will place you as a congregation of nations and I will this land to your seed after you as an everlasting possession.

Rashi writes:

ונתתיך לקהל עמים - בשרני שעתידיים לצאת ממני עוד קהל ועמים ואף על פי שאמר לי (בראשית לה/יא) גוי וקהל גוים, גוי אמר לי על בנימין, קהל גוים הרי שנים לבד בנימין, ושוב לא נולד לי בן, למדני שעתידי אחד משבטי ליחלק, א ועתה אותה מתנה אני נותן לך:

I will place you as a congregation of nations – Hashem announced to me that in the future there will come out from me another congregation and nations. And even though Hashem told me earlier that there will be a 'nation and a congregation of nations', there the term *goi*, nation, referred to Binyamin and 'congregation of nations' means an additional two, besides Binyamin. And I had [only] one more son [Binyamin]. That taught me that in the future, one of my sons will be divided into two *shevatim* and now I am giving that gift to you.

Thus we see that 'nations' can refer to B'nei Yisroel exclusively.

¹⁷ Regarding the Ir HaNidachas – the city destroyed because of idolatry, we read (D'vorim Perek 13/Posuk 17):

וְאֶת כָּל שְׁלָלָהּ תִּקְבֹּץ אֶל תּוֹךְ רְחֹבָהּ וְשָׂרַפְתָּ בָּאֵשׁ אֶת הָעִיר וְאֶת כָּל שְׁלָלָהּ כְּלִיל לְהָאֵל...לְקִיָּה וְהִיְתָה תֵּל עוֹלָם לֹא תִבְנֶה עוֹד:

We find this Halachah also stated in the B'rachos of Birkas HaMazon, of Krias Shema, and the Amida. In Birkas HaMazon we say: 'He builds Yerushalayim'. In the Amida we say-'He builds Yerushalayim'.

In the Brachos of Krias Shema we say: 'He spreads His Sukkah of peace over us and over His People Israel and over Yerushalayim.'

The Yerushalmi makes it most clear – the *Sukkah of Peace*, at least, refers to the Beis HaMikdosh.

A similar proof can be adduced from a number of verses in Sefer Tehillim. We read there (Perek 76/P'sukim 1-3):

לְמַנְצַח בְּנִגְיִינֵת מְזֻמֹּר לְאַסָּף שִׁיר: נוֹדַע בִּיהוּדָה אֲ...לִיקִים בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל גְּדוֹל שְׁמוֹ: וַיְהִי
בְּשָׁלֵם סֹכּוֹ וּמְעוֹנָתוֹ בְּצִיּוֹן:

For the conductor on the *Neginos*-instrument, a psalm of Asaf, a song. G-d is known in Yehuda, in Israel His Name is great. His *Sukkah* was in *Shalem*, His dwelling in Zion.

Radak explains:

למנצח נודע ביהודה. זה המזמור נאמר על מלחמת גוג ומגוג. ואמר: אז נודע ביהודה ויהיה בישראל גדול שמו, קְשִׁירָא נקמתו בגוים הנאספים על ירושלים. וזכר יהודה בפרט, לפי שירושלם לשבט יהודה ושם תהיה המלוכה:

ויהי בשלם סכו, ואז תהיה בשלם סכו שיבנה בה בית המקדש. וזכר ציון בפרט, לפי שהוא מקום המלך. ושלם הוא ירושלם, כמו שנאמר (בראשית יד, יח): ומלכי צדק מלך שלם, זהו שם בן נח שקראו שְׁלָם, ואברהם קרא לבית המקדש יראה, כמו שנאמר (שם כב, יד) ויקרא אברהם שם המקום ההוא ה' יראה. אמר הקדוש ברוך הוא: אם אקרא אותו כמו שקראו שְׁלָם אבטל דברי אברהם, ואם אקרא אותו יראה כמו שקראו אברהם אבטל דברי שְׁלָם. קרא אותו ירושלם (שומר טוב):

For the conductor...G-d is known in Yehuda – this psalm is said regarding Milchemes Gog U'Mogog [at the end of days].

You shall gather all of its spoils into the middle of the city's main street and you shall burn it in fire, the city and all of its spoils, completely, for Hashem your G-d; it shall be an everlasting pile; it shall never be built again.

Thus, תל תלפיות can be understood as meaning 'a destroyed place that people [still] face.

The verse states that then He will be known in Yehuda, the place where the king resides.

Shalem refers to Yerushalayim as it is written, 'Malkitzedek, King of Shalem. This refers to *Shem*, son of Noach, who called that city *Shalem*. Avraham called the Beis HaMikdosh *Yirah* –He will see – as it says, 'Avraham called the name of that place, *Hashem Yireh*'

Hashem said, 'If I call that places *Shalem*, like Shem named it, I will void the words of Avraham. If I call it *Yireh* like Avraham called it, I will nullify the words of Shem. Hashem [therefore] called it *Yerushalayim* as it says in Midrash Shocheh Tov.

Here, too, 'Sukkah' in the context of *Shalem*, similar to *Shalom*, refers to the Beis HaMikdosh.

We have learned that the term *Sukkah*, by itself, can be used in reference to the Beis HaMikdosh and in reference to *Beis Dovid* – the Davidic dynasty.

At the same time we have learned when the term *Sukkah* is coupled together with the term *Shalom*, or one of its variations, it refers exclusively to the Beis HaMikdosh.

When the term *Sukkah* is coupled with the words *Dovid* and *no'fe'les* –falling, it refers to the Davidic dynasty exclusively.

And, thus, we are confronted with two basic questions.

First, why is the term *Sukkah* a symbolization for both the Beis HaMikdosh and for *Beis Dovid*?

Secondly, why does the phrase *Sukkas shalem* refer uniquely to the Beis HaMikdosh and the phrase *Sukkas Dovid ha'no'fe'les* refer uniquely to the David dynasty?

Certainly the term *Sukkah* is an expression of frailty and weakness. The Halachic definition of a Sukkah is a דירת ארעי, a temporary or makeshift dwelling¹⁸.

¹⁸ For a concise explanation of this concept of דירת ארעי, see Mishnah Brurah to Siman 633 (s'if koton 3) who writes:

דסוכה דירת עראי בעינן

For the fulfilment of the Mitzvah of Sukkah, a temporary dwelling is required.

And, in fact, frailty is the objective nature of all of Creation. Rambam writes at the beginning of Mishneh Torah (Hilchos Yesodei HaTorah Perek 1/Halachos 1, 3):

יסוד היסודות ועמוד החכמות לידע שיש שם מצוי ראשון, והוא ממציא כל נמצא, וכל הנמצאים משמים וארץ ומה שביניהם לא נמצאו אלא מאמתת המצאו.

The fundamental and foundational principle and the pillar that supports all types of wisdom is to know that there is an Original Being and He gives existence to all that exists and all that exists from the Heavens to the earth, and that which is between them, only exist because of the inherent veracity of His existence.

ואם יעלה על הדעת שאין כל הנמצאים מלבדו מצויים הוא לבדו יהיה מצוי, ולא יבטל הוא לבטולם, שכל הנמצאים צריכין לו והוא ברוך הוא אינו צריך להם ולא לאחד מהם, לפיכך אין אמתתו כאמתת אחד מהם.

If one would raise the thought that nothing exists besides Him, He alone exists. His existence is not nullified by the nullification of all other forms of existence. This is because all that exists is dependent upon Him and He, *Boruch Hu*, does not need them, or any of them. Therefore the veracity of His existence is not like the veracity of any of them.

All is frail; all could cease to exist and therefore the term *Sukkah* is appropriate to be used in a context in which there is a desire to express frailty.

The Beis HaMikdosh is a gift from G-d. The gift is that His Shechinah, His Presence, is in our presence. That is the promise of the Mishkan and Beis HaMikdosh as we read in Parshas Terumah (Sh'mos Perek 25/Posuk 8):

וְעָשׂוּ לִי מִקְדָּשׁ וְשָׁכַנְתִּי בְּתוֹכָם:

They shall make for Me a Sanctuary and I will dwell in their midst.

Mishnah Brurah explains the source for this concept there in Sha'ar HaTziyun (s'if koton 4):

דכתיב בסכות תשבו שבעת ימים, אמרה תורה צא מדירת קבע ושב בדירת עראי, והיינו, מדכתיב תשבו ולא כתיב תדורו:

Since the Torah writes, 'You shall sit (*teish'vu*) in Sukkos for seven days' which implies 'leave the permanent dwelling and sit in a temporary dwelling.' And this is based on the use of the word *teish'vu* instead of *to'du'ru*.

But, as Rambam has just written, since Hashem is completely independent of us, there is no guarantee that His dwelling in our midst will be permanent. And the Torah makes it very clear that the Beis HaMikdosh has no independent existence.

We read in the *Tochecha* of Sefer Vayikro (Perek 26/Posuk 31):

וְנַתַּתִּי אֶת עָרֵיכֶם חֲרָבָה וְהַשְׁמוֹתִי אֶת מְקוֹדְשֵׁיכֶם וְלֹא אֶרְיֵחַ בְּרֵיחַ נִיחֻחְכֶם:

I will make your cities into destruction and I will make your Sanctuaries desolate; I will not favor your Korbonos.

Beis Dovid, the Davidic dynasty, as well has no independent existence. In the very prayer that Shlomo HaMelech offered at the dedication of his Beis HaMikdosh, he beseeches HaKodosh Boruch in this very regard.

We read there (Melachim I Perek 8/Posuk 25):

וְעַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל שְׁמֹר לְעַבְדְּךָ דָּוִד אֲבִי אֶת אֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתָּ לּוֹ לֵאמֹר לֹא יִכָּרֵת לְךָ אִישׁ מִלְּפָנָי יֹשֵׁב עַל כִּסֵּא יִשְׂרָאֵל רַק אִם יִשְׁמְרוּ בְּנֵיךָ אֶת דְרָכְךָ לִלְכֹת לְפָנָי כַּאֲשֶׁר הִלַּכְתָּ לְפָנָי:

Now, Hashem G-d of Israel, guard for your servant my father, Dovid, to whom You spoke saying: No man who sits on the throne of Israel will be cut off from you from before Me as long as your sons guard their path to go before Me like you Dovid have gone before Me.

There is no unconditional guarantee for the rule of Dovid and his family. That dynasty has no independent existence; it is frail. It is a Sukkah.

Now that we understand how the term 'Sukkah' alone is equally appropriate for the Beis HaMikdosh and for *Beis Dovid*, let us try and understand why *Sukkas Shalem* refers to the Beis HaMikdosh and why *Sukkas Dovid haNofeles* refers to Beis Dovid.

Unquestionably, *Sukkas Shalem* is a far more positive term than is *Sukkas Dovid haNofeles*. The former speaks about wholeness and completion; the latter indicates weakness and instability.

However, on the surface it would certainly seem to be more appropriate to have the term נופלת, falling, refer to the Beis HaMikdosh more than the term שלם, full or complete. Our Beis HaMikdosh has fallen; it is far from complete.

But a below-the surface inspection may reveal that our perceptions are shallow and not sufficiently penetrating.

We learn in Masseches Rosh Hashanah (31 a):

אמר רב יהודה בר אידי אמר רבי יוחנן: עשר מסעות נסעה שכינה, מקראי...מכפרת לכרוב, ומכרוב לכרוב ומכרוב למפתן, ומפתן לחצר, ומחצר למזבח, וממזבח לגג, ומגג לחומה, ומחומה לעיר, ומעיר להר, ומהר למדבר, וממדבר עלתה וישבה במקומה - שנאמר (הושע ה/טו¹⁹) אלך אשובה אל מקומי....

Rav Yehuda bar E'di said in the name of Rabi Yochanan: The Shechinah traveled ten times [Rashi – to remove itself from Israel, a little each time, when they sinned]. We learn this from various P'sukim²⁰. The Shechinah traveled from the *Kapores* [on top of the *Aron HaKodesh*] to one of the *Keruvim* and from there to the other one of the *Keruvim*. From there it traveled to the entrance of the *Heichal*. From there it traveled to the *Chatzer* and from the *Chatzer* to the Altar. It traveled from the Altar to the roof of the Beis HaMikdosh and from the roof to the walls and from the walls to the city of Yerushalayim. It left the city and went to the mountain and from the mountain to the wilderness and from the wilderness it went up and dwelled in its place [in Heaven] as it says: I Hashem will go and will return to My Place.

Undoubtedly, Chazal tell us here that besides the falling of the physical Beis HaMikdosh, its spiritual basis fell as well.

But, in the Midrash Sh'mos Rabba (Parshata 2/2) we find that what we learned in Masseches Rosh Hashanah is not the opinion of all of our Chachamim.

We read:

¹⁹ The entire verse reads:

אלך אשובה אל מקומי עד אשר יאשמו ובקשו פני בצר להם ישחרגני:
I Hashem will go and will return to My Place until they will recognize] that they are guilty; they will seek My Face when it is difficult for them and will free Me.

²⁰ The Gemara in its continuation brings the sources for each of the 'travels'.

....הדא הוא דתימא (חבקוק ב/כ²¹) וה' בהיכל קדשו, אמר רבי שמואל בר נחמן עד שלא חרב בית המקדש היתה שכינה שורה בתוכו, שנאמר ה' בהיכל קדשו, ומשחרב בית המקדש נסתלקה השכינה לשמים שנאמר (תהלים קג/יט²²) ה' בשמים הכין כסאו, רבי אליעזר אומר לא זזה השכינה מתוך ההיכל שנאמר (דברי הימים ב ז/טז²³)

²¹ The entire verse reads:

וְה' בְּהִיכַל קְדֻשׁוֹ הִס מִפְּנֵי כָּל הָאָרֶץ:

Hashem is in the Sanctuary of His Holiness; all the earth, be silent before Him!

In fact there is another verse, in Sefer Tehillim (Perek 11/Posuk 4) that has the same words. It reads:

ה' בְּהִיכַל קְדֻשׁוֹ ה' בְּשָׁמַיִם כָּסֵא עֵינָיו יִחַזוּ עַפְעָפָיו יִבְחֲנוּ בְּנֵי אָדָם:

Hashem is in the Sanctuary of His Holiness; Hashem's throne is in the heavens [but] His eyes see; His eyelids will test people.

It seems that the Midrash is most likely referring to the verse in Chavakuk and not the one in Tehillim. First, the notes there write that that is its source. [However, such is not necessarily conclusive. In fact, when the Midrash brings this quote again, a few words later, the note there says Tehillim!]

Secondly, based on Rashi's commentary in Chavakuk, that makes that verse a better fit than the one in Tehillim. He writes there:

וְה' בְּהִיכַל קְדֻשׁוֹ - מוֹכֵן לִיפְרַע:

הִס מִפְּנֵי כָּל הָאָרֶץ - הִס לְשׁוֹן שִׁיתוּק וּדְמִימַת חוֹרְבָן:

Hashem is in the Sanctuary of His Holiness – Prepared to deliver punishment.
All the earth, be silent before Him – the word *הס* implies quiet, the silence of destruction.

²² The entire verse reads:

ה' בְּשָׁמַיִם הִכִּין כָּסֵאוֹ וּמְלֻכוֹתָו בְּכָל מְשָׁלָה:

Hashem prepared His throne in the Heavens and His reign rules over all.

²³ The note to the Midrash cites this verse from Divrei HaYamim that reads in its entirety:

וַעֲתָה בְּחַרְתִּי וְהִקְדַּשְׁתִּי אֶת הַבַּיִת הַזֶּה לְהִיּוֹת שְׁמִי שָׁם עַד עוֹלָם וְהָיוּ עֵינָי וְלִבִּי שָׁם כָּל הַיָּמִים:

[Hashem spoke to Shlomo following the inauguration of the Beis HaMikdosh and the prayer that Shlomo HaMelech recited:] Now I have chosen and sanctified this House to be for My Name there forever and My Eyes and My Heart will be there all of the days.

The very same words that this Midrash quotes are also found in Hashem's response to the prayer of Shlomo HaMelech in Sefer Melachim and that verse reads (Melachim I Perek 9/Posuk 3):

והיו עיני ולבי שם וגו', וכן הוא אומר (תהלים ג/ה) קולי אל ה' אקרא ויענני מהר קדשו סלה, אף על פי שהוא חרב הרי הוא בקדושתו, בא וראה מה כורש אומר (עזרא א/ג²⁴) אל הא...ל"קים אשר בירושלים אמר להן אף על פי שהוא חרב הא...ל"קים אינו זז משם, אמר רבי אחא לעולם אין השכינה זזה מכותל מערבי שנאמר (שיר השירים ב/ט²⁵) הנה זה עומד אחר כתלנו:

This is what it says, 'Hashem is in the Sanctuary of His Holiness. Rabi Shmuel bar Nachman said, 'Until the Beis HaMikdosh was destroyed, the Shechinah was dwelling in it, as it says, 'Hashem is in the Sanctuary of His Holiness'. When the Beis HaMikdosh was destroyed, the Shechinah departed from it and went up to the heavens as it says, 'Hashem prepared His throne in the heavens.'

Rabi Eliezer says, the Shechinah did not move away from the Sanctuary as it says, 'My Eyes and My Heart will be there.' And so it says, 'My voice I will call to Hashem; He will answer me from His holy mountain forever' – even though the Beis HaMikdosh has been destroyed, it retains its sanctity. Come and see what Koresh said. "to G-d Who is in Yerushalayim". He said to Israel,

וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֱלֹהֵי שְׁמַעְתִּי אֶת תְּפִלָּתְךָ וְאֶת תַּחֲנוּנְךָ אֲשֶׁר הִתְחַנַּנְתָּ לְפָנַי הַקְדַּשְׁתִּי אֶת הַבַּיִת הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר בָּנִיתָ לְשׁוּם שְׁמִי שָׁם עַד עוֹלָם וְהָיוּ עֵינַי וְלִבִּי שָׁם כָּל הַיָּמִים:

Hashem said to Shlomo, 'I heard your prayer and your supplication that you supplicated before Me; I sanctified this House that you built to place My Name there forever; My eyes and My heart will be there all of the days.

I do not know why the note referred the quotation from the Midrash to *Sefer Divrei HaYamim* instead of to *Sefer Melachim*.

²⁴ The entire verse reads:

מִי בְּכֶם מִכָּל עַמּוֹ יְהִי אֲנִי...לְקִי עִמּוֹ וַיַּעַל לְיְרוּשָׁלַם אֲשֶׁר בִּיהוּדָה וַיִּבֶן אֶת בַּיִת ה' אֲנִי...לְקִי יִשְׂרָאֵל הוּא הָאֵל...לְקִים אֲשֶׁר בִּירוּשָׁלַם:

[Koresh proclaimed:] Who within you from all of His People, may His G-d be with him and he will ascend to Yerushalayim that is in Judea and he will build the House of Hashem, the G-d of Israel; He is the G-d Who is in Yerushalayim.

²⁵ The entire verse reads:

דוֹמָה דוֹדֵי לְצִבִּי אוֹ לְעֶפְרַיִם הַיְהוּדִים הִנֵּה זֶה עוֹמֵד אַחֲרַי כְּתִלְנוּ מִשְׁגִּיחַ מִן הַחַלְנוֹת מְצִיץ מִן הַחֲרָכִים: My beloved [Hashem] is like the deer or like the young of the deer; behold He is standing in back of our wall; watching from the windows, peeking for the crevices.

‘Even though the Beis HaMikdosh has been destroyed, He has not moved from there.’

Rabi Acha said, ‘The Shechinah has never departed from the western wall of the Beis HaMikdosh as it says, ‘Behold He is standing in back of our wall’.

The Midrash expresses the same opinion that we learned in Masseches Rosh Hashanah and also brings two opposing opinions that state that the Shechinah never departed at all from the area of the Beis HaMikdosh or that it departed only partially and is still there to a large degree.

Of course, when we view this dispute among Chazal and the various P’sukim that seem to be paradoxical, we are in no position to express an opinion about that which is correct or incorrect.

Furthermore, while the question is tantalizing, at first it appears that it is one of historical interest and related to ‘current affairs’. Does this dispute have any practical bearing upon our behavior? It might seem that it has no bearing whatsoever. Our Beis HaMikdosh has been destroyed; where Hashem places His Presence is His decision.

If the above does indicate our sense, we may be very wrong.

Rambam writes in Hilchos Beis HaBechira (Perek 6/Halachos 14-15):

...ובמה נתקדשה בקדושה ראשונה שקדשה שלמה שהוא קידש העזרה וירושלים
לשעתן וקידשן לעתיד לבא.

לפיכך מקריבין הקרבנות כולן אף על פי שאין שם בית בנוי, ואוכלין קדשי קדשים
בכל העזרה אף על פי שהיא חריבה ואינה מוקפת במחיצה ואוכלין קדשים קלים
ומעשר שני בכל ירושלים אף על פי שאין שם חומות שהקדושה ראשונה קדשה
לשעתה וקדשה לעתיד לבא.

How did the place of the Beis HaMikdosh and *Har HaBayis* and Yerushalayim [in its borders then] become sanctified? They were sanctified with the original sanctification of Shlomo HaMelech when he sanctified the *Azara* and Yerushalayim at that time and forever.

Therefore we can nowadays offer all of the Korbonos, even though the Beis HaMikdosh isn’t built and we can eat the Korbonos that have the highest sanctity in all of the area of the *Azara*, even though it is destroyed and is not

encompassed by its walls. We can eat *Kodshim Kalim*, the Korbonos with lesser sanctity, in all of Yerushalayim [of that time] and *Maaser Sheini* in all of Yerushalayim [of that time] even though there are no walls surrounding and demarcating Yerushalayim [of that time] because the original sanctity was for its time and sanctified forever²⁶.

Maharsham in his Teshuvos (Chelek 4/66) explains that the Rambam here is supporting the opinion that the Shechinah never departed the Beis HaMikdosh. Although the physical edifice was destroyed, its spiritual nature was no diminished.

The dispute among our sages has very practical applications and Rambam has clearly decided which opinion we follow²⁷.

Thus, Rambam teaches us that the spiritual nature of the Beis HaMikdosh, of the Yerushalayim of yesteryear, remains *Shalem*, complete.

And thus *Sukkas Shalom* most definitely refers to the Beis HaMikdosh that has retained its sanctity completely; it is not *nofe'les* in its spirituality.

On the other hand, *Beis Dovid* did not retain its rule. With the destruction of the first Beis HaMikdosh, the dynasty of the descendants of Dovid HaMelech ceased to function as monarchs. Its activities concluded.

One might ask then, why does the Posuk refer to that dynasty as נופלת, 'falling', wouldn't it have been more accurate to call it 'The Sukkah that fell'? Why is it termed 'falling' as if the process has not yet been completed?

The answer to that question is found in Parshas Vayechi when we read the B'rachos that Yaakov Ovinu gave to Yehuda, the progenitor of Dovid HaMelech.

We read there (B'reishis Perek 49/Posuk 10):

²⁶ In his continuation (Halachah 16) Rambam explains why the rest of Eretz Yisroel did not retain its sanctity from the time of Shlomo HaMelech.

²⁷ Ra'avad there argues with Rambam and the Maharsham says that Ra'avad decided the Halachah based on the opinion that the Shechinah departed from the entire Beis HaMikdosh and its environs and ascended to the Heavens.

Thus, these great Poskim saw the opinions of Chazal in this matter as having great Halachic impact.

לֹא יִסּוּר שֵׁבֶט מִיְהוּדָה וּמַחְקֵק מִבֵּין רַגְלָיו עַד כִּי יָבֹא שִׁילָה וְלוֹ יִקְהֶת עַמִּים:

The ruling scepter shall not turn away from Yehuda, the rule of law from between his legs; until Shiloh, *Moshiach*, will come and he will gather the nations to him.

Rashi writes there:

לֹא יִסּוּר שֵׁבֶט מִיְהוּדָה - מְדוּד וְאֵילָךְ, אֱלוֹ רֹאשֵׁי גְלוּיֹת שְׁבַבְבֵל שְׂרוּדִים אֶת הָעָם
בְּשֵׁבֶט שְׂמֻמוֹנִים עַל פִּי הַמְּלָכוֹת:

The ruling scepter shall not turn away from Yehuda – beginning with Dovid and continuing. This refers to the Exilarchs in Bavel who ruled the people harshly. They were appointed by the [non-Jewish] kings there.

וּמַחְקֵק מִבֵּין רַגְלָיו - תַּלְמִידִים, אֱלוֹ נְשִׂאֵי אֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל:

The rule of law from between his legs – this are the students referring to the *Nesi'im*, heads of Israel, in Eretz Yisroel.

עַד כִּי יָבֹא שִׁילָה - מֶלֶךְ הַמְּשִׁיחַ שֶׁהַמְּלוּכָה שְׁלוֹ

Until Shilo comes – *Melech HaMoshiach* to whom the reign will be his.

Unlike the status of the site of the Beis HaMikdosh, Har HaBayis and the ancient borders of Yerushalayim that retained their sanctity, the Davidic Dynasty has not retained its status. No longer are here are kings, *nesi'im* or exilarchs.

However, that status of *Beis Dovid* is not permanent. The House of Dovid has not fallen and terminated. Rather, it is *Nofeles*, in a state of descent, but not one of dissolution. It will be restored. That is the promise of Yaakov Ovinu and such is part of our *Amida* when we say:

אֶת צִמַח דָּוִד עֲבַדְךָ מֵהֵרָה תְּצַמִּיחַ, וְקִרְנוֹ תִּרְוַם בִּישׁוּעֶתְךָ כִּי לִישׁוּעֶתְךָ קִוִּינוּ כָּל הַיּוֹם.
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' מְצַמִּיחַ קֶרֶן יִשׁוּעָה.

The shoot of Dovid Your servant, cause it to grow quickly and his horn of anointing should be raised at Your salvation because we are hoping for Your salvation all of the day. We bless You, Hashem, Who cause the horn of salvation to grow.

The Yom Tov of Sukkos is a time when we remember that the only true protection that we have comes from the Ribbono Shel Olom.

The Yom Tov of Sukkos is a time when our focus is on our frailty and that, despite our requisite *hishtadlus*,:

אין לנו להשען אלא על אבינו שבשמים

We can only depend on G-d in Heaven.

It is not only that we cannot depend upon others. Dovid HaMelech has warned us of that in his Sefer Tehilim (Perek 146/P'sukim 3-4):

אֵל תִּבְטְחוּ בְּנֹדִיבִים בְּבֶן אָדָם שֶׁאֵין לוֹ תְּשׁוּעָה: תֵּצֵא רוּחוֹ יָשׁב לְאֲדָמָתוֹ בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא
אָבְדוּ עֲשֵׂתֵנִתִּיו:

Do not believe in those who are generous, in man who has no salvation. His spirit will depart him; he will return to his ground; on that day his thoughts are lost.

We cannot even depend upon ourselves! That fact is something that we have all learned about ourselves as time goes by.

But, Hashem has promised us two structures, one physical and one of man, that are to assist us in this world, to guide us, to give us strength and hope: the Beis HaMikdosh and *Beis Dovid*.

We must acknowledge the everlasting sanctity that is in our midst in Yerushalayim and pray for its physical rebuilding. We must sense that we are lacking *Beis Dovid* and pray for its free-fall to stop and for its reestablishment.

If we find ourselves removed in our thinking and our sincere aspirations from the prayers for rebuilding the Beis HaMikdosh and the coming of Moshiach and the return of Davidic rule over us, then we can allow our time in the Sukkah to reinvigorate our spirit and engender the recognition of the Divine plan that will bring us, our families, Klal Yisroel and the entire world to a state of happiness, peace and tranquillity that we have not yet known.

And then we be privileged to fulfil the verse that is recited daily this week, at the end of the *Hoshanos*. It is the verse that Shlomo HaMelech, he who was the initial

representation of the Davidic dynasty and the builder of the Beis HaMikdosh, recited (Melachim I Perek 8/Posuk 60):

לְמַעַן יֵדְעַת כָּל עַמֵּי הָאָרֶץ כִּי ה' הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים... לִיקִים אֵין עוֹד:

In order that all the peoples of the land will know that Hashem is G-d; there is none other.

May Hashem grant us that knowledge in our minds and in our hearts.

Chag Sameach

Shabbat Shalom

Rabbi Pollock