



MEMORY LANE # 87 (EDITED)
FROM THE BULLETIN OF THE YOUNG ISRAEL OF CHOMEDEY
SEPTEMBER 1998 EDITION

“TISHREI, WHAT A MONTH” BY RABBI CHANANYA MOISHE BERZON

Imagine, three major Jewish holidays appearing in the same month, or to be more precise, within twenty-five days, and each of the holidays commemorates a distinct event.

We begin the month of Tishrei with Rosh Hashanna. It's precise appellation is Yom Ha'din, the Day of Judgment.

A few days later we have the somber fast of Yom Kippur, literally translated as the Day of Atonement. Five days later we celebrate Sukkot, also known as Z'man Simchate'nu - the season of our joyousness. The tail end of this holiday is Simchat Torah, where we dance joyously with the Torah, kissing it and hugging it ecstatically. So, in brief, we go from being judged by the Heavenly Court as to what our future reward will be, and then to being forgiven. Finally we are overwhelmed with happiness.

We obviously must pose the question to ourselves, are these days just thrown together haphazardly? Is there a system, a message, a moral lesson to be learnt from the sequence? Upon perusal, I am unequivocally convinced that the directive of the month of Tishrei is the following.

On Rosh Hashana one must take stock of our performance, heed the sound of the shofar, and realize that there is a G-d in heaven who is actively aware of every thought and deed. If you act according and utilize the Ten Days of Repentance that links Rosh Hashana with Yom Kippur, to endeavor a return to the Almighty and His commandments, then the fast day of Yom Kippur will bring exoneration.

THE CLIMAX OF THAT EXPERIENCE WILL BE ACCOMPANIED WITH THE JOY AND ECSTASY

OF SUKKOT. TO WHAT DO WE OWE THIS UNIQUE COMPOSITE OF ATTACHMENT TO HASHEM? THE ANSWER IS THE TORAH, THE TREE OF LIFE, NOT ONLY IS THE TORAH A DIRECTIVE IN HOW TO CONDUCT ONE'S LIFE, IT UNQUESTIONABLY GIVES AND SUSTAINS THE ESSENCE OF LIFE ITSELF.

UPON ENTERING THE THRESHOLD OF THE NEW YEAR, LET US BE COGNIZANT OF WHAT DIRECTION WE MUST TAKE, THEN THE LORD IN HEAVEN WILL BLESS US WITH A GOOD YEAR. ONE THAT WILL BRING US TRUE SIMCHA.

(Yashor Koach to Fred Rudy for providing us all with these memorable historical moments, which some of us may still remember!)