

# Parsha Ponders

Sukkos | October 12, 2022 | 17 Tishrei 5783

## *Adorned Sukkah; beautified Temple*<sup>1</sup>

זה קלי ואנוהו התנאה לפניו במצות עשה לפניו סוכה נאה ולולב נאה ושופר נאה צצית נאה ספר תורה נאה

This is my G-d *ve'anvehu*: Become beautified before Him in *mitzvos*: Make before Him a nice *Sukkah*, nice *Lulav*, a nice *Shofar*, nice *tzitzis*, a nice *sefer Torah*<sup>2</sup>

An interesting question is brought<sup>3</sup> in the name of the Avnei Nezer. We find special emphasis given to decorating our *Sukkas*<sup>4</sup>. There's a category in *halacha* known as *noi sukkah*, which discusses the status of the decorations of the *Sukkah*. Stores try their utmost to stock up on all the greatest posters and streamers and sparkly glitter, and the like. Presumably, this is in order to beautify the *mitzvah*. We do find such a concept, of beautifying our *mitzvos*. However, as the principle sounds, this applies to *all mitzvos*<sup>5</sup>, not just decorating our *Sukkah*. Why then is there this extra emphasis, specifically with regards to the *mitzvah* of *Sukkah*?

The source for beautifying our *mitzvos* is a verse<sup>6</sup> in the Song at Sea. The Torah says *זה קלי ואנוהו*, this is my G-d, and I will *נוה* Him. Onkelos translates<sup>7</sup> it as the verb to build an abode, and understands it to be a reference to building a Temple for Hashem. However, the *gemarra* understands<sup>8</sup> the word to be related to the verb to beautify. We learn from here the concept that we should “beautify Hashem”, meaning, beautify His *mitzvos*. These two interpretations seem to be worlds apart. However, both can be true at the same time.

There are many references to the Temple as being a *Sukkah*. A verse in Psalms<sup>9</sup> says that in Shalem is His *Sukkah*, and the Aramaic translation explains this to mean in Jerusalem is the Temple<sup>10</sup>. We refer to the fallen *Sukkah* of David<sup>11</sup> during Sukkos, a seeming reference to the Temple<sup>12</sup>. In fact, verses referring to the pilgrimage to the Temple during Pesach<sup>13</sup> and Shavuot<sup>14</sup> mention it being a place where the Divine Presence rests. However, a similar verse for Sukkos<sup>15</sup> makes no mention of the Temple being a place of the Divine Presence<sup>16</sup>. This is because during the Festival of *Sukkos*, the Divine Presence rests in our *Sukkas*. Every *Sukkah* becomes like a miniature Temple<sup>17</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Based on a *shiur* given by Rav Daniel Glatstein, found at <https://www.torahanytime.com/#/lectures?v=208160>

<sup>2</sup> Shabbos 133b

<sup>3</sup> Rav Glatstein cited this question from the third volume of Naos Desheh, but I think he meant Naos HaDesheh | *Sukkos* § 3

<sup>4</sup> See Shabbos 22a

<sup>5</sup> Ibid 133b

<sup>6</sup> Exodus 15:2

<sup>7</sup> *Ad. loc.*

<sup>8</sup> Shabbos loc. cit.

<sup>9</sup> Psalms 76:2

<sup>10</sup> See also Zohar I p. 172b and Midrash Tehillim 2:17

<sup>11</sup> Amos 9:11

<sup>12</sup> Be'er Mayim Chayim to Genesis 33:17. See also Pesikta Rabbasi § 29. Cf. Maharal, elucidated in <https://parshaponders.com/sukkos-2-5781/>

<sup>13</sup> Deuteronomy 16:2

<sup>14</sup> Ibid v. 11

<sup>15</sup> Ibid v. 15

<sup>16</sup> This point is picked up by the Meschech Chochmah to ibid v. 2

<sup>17</sup> Rav Glatstein cited this from Rav Yerucham Ulshin, presumably from Yerach LaMoadim

The two interpretations of ואנוהו now come together beautifully. On the one hand, it's a reference to building the Temple. Well, when we build a *Sukkah*, we are in a way building a Temple for Hashem on our very own property. At the same time, it's a reference to beautifying Hashem's *mitzvos*. Since the *mitzvah* of *Sukkah* brings both interpretations to fruition, it's no wonder then why it's the most decorated of all *mitzvos*.

Chag Sameach and Gut Moed!