

1 (שם) וְהָיָה כְּכֹלֵת הַשְּׁטָרִים לְדַבֵּר אֶל הָעָם וּפְקֻדוֹ שְׂרֵי צְבָאוֹת בְּרֹאשׁ הָעָם, וּבַעֲקֵבוֹ שֶׁל עָם. מֵעֲמִידִין זְקִיפִין לְפָנֵיהֶם, וְאַחֲרֵיהֶם מְאַחֲזֵיהֶם, וְכַשִּׁילִין שֶׁל בְּרֹזֶל בְּיַדְיהֶן, וְכֹל הַמְּבַקֵּשׁ לְחֹזֵר, הָרְשׁוּת בְּיָדוֹ לְקַפֵּחַ אֶת שׁוֹקְיוֹ, שֶׁתְּחַלֵּת נִיסָה נִפְלְאָה, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר (שְׁמוּאֵל א ד) נָס יִשְׂרָאֵל לְפָנָי פְּלִשְׁתִּים וְגַם מִגִּפָּה גְדוֹלָה הִיָּתָה בָּעָם, וּלְהֵלֵן הוּא אוֹמֵר (שם לֹא) וַיִּנָּסוּ אַנְשֵׁי יִשְׂרָאֵל מִפְּנֵי פְּלִשְׁתִּים וַיִּפְּלוּ חֲלָלִים וְגו':

The mishna continues its discussion. The verse states: **“And it shall be, when the officers conclude speaking to the people, that captains of legions shall be appointed at the head of the people”** (Deuteronomy 20:9). The mishna adds: **As well as at the rear of the people.** The officers station guards [*zekifin*] in front of them, and other guards behind them, and they have iron rods [*kashilin*] in their hands. And with regard to anyone who attempts to turn back and flee from the war, the guard has license to beat [*lekape'ah*] his legs because the beginning of fleeing is a downfall on the battlefield, as it is stated: **“Israel has fled before the Philistines, and there has been also a great slaughter among the people”** (I Samuel 4:17), and likewise it says further on: **“And the men of Israel fled from before the Philistines, and fell down slain in Mount Gilboa”** (I Samuel 31:1).

been stated (*Mishlei* 1:5): "The learned [person] will listen and increase his knowledge, and the contemplative [one] will acquire profundities." "And one who seeks to be purified is assisted" (*Shabbos* 104a). "For the Eternal will impart wisdom, from His mouth [will come] knowledge and understanding" (*Mishlei* 2:6), to direct each person's path before his Creator.

The nature of piety is the same for everyone, yet it can be acquired in all walks of life

We can easily understand that every person needs direction and guidance in accordance with his skills and his occupation, since the path of piety appropriate for one whose "Torah is his vocation" is unsuitable for one who must place himself in the employ of another; and neither of these ways is suitable for one who is engaged in his own business. And this is the case regarding all the other particulars of human affairs in the world: there is a path to piety that is suitable to each and every individual, whatever his [vocation]. This is not to say that the nature of piety varies, for it is the same for everyone, since its goal is to bring pleasure to the Creator. But in view of the fact that circumstances are always changing, the means leading toward the implementation of the goal must also vary, according to the circumstances that prevail. It is possible that someone who out of necessity is a simple artisan may become a completely pious person, like an individual who never stops learning. And it states (*ibid.* 16:4): "The Eternal created everything for His own sake." And it says (*ibid.* 3:6): "In all of your ways know Him, and He will direct your paths."

וזה פשוט, כי כל אדם לפי האמנות אשר בידו והעסק אשר הוא עוסק, כך צריך לו הישרה והדרך. כי דרך החסידות הראוי למי שתורתו אמנותו - אינו דרך החסידות הראוי למי שצריך להשכיר עצמו למלאכת חברו; ולא זה וזה דרך החסידות הראוי למי שעוסק בסחורתו. וכן כל שאר הפרטים אשר בעסקי האדם בעולם, כל אחד ואחד לפי מה שהוא, ראויים לו דרכי החסידות. לא לפי שהחסידות משתנה - כי הנה הוא שיה לכל נפש ודאי, הואיל ואיננו אלא לעשות מה שיש נחתרוח ליוצרו בו. אבל הואיל והנושאים משתנים, אי אפשר שלא ישתנו גם האמצעים המגיעים אותם אל התכלית - כל אחד לפי ענינו. וכבר יכול להיות חסיד גמור איש שמפני צרכו הוא בעל מלאכה פחותה, כמו מי אשר לא יפסק מפיו הלמוד. וכתוב (שם טו, ד): "כל פעל ה' למענהו". ואומר (שם ג, ו): "בכל דרכיך דעהו, והוא יישר אבותיך".

Jewish Resilience: What Kind of Sukkah are You?

Discussion Questions:

Gemara in Sukkah 23a:

1 - What kind of Sukkah are you? Are you Aray or Keva? What does Hashem require of you? [Remember: The hashkafa accords with the halacha, and the halacha accords with the hashkafa – and the halacha is like Rebbe Akiva (see Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 628:2)]

Mishna in Sotah 8:6:

2 - Are you making use of your “guards” on the front lines to help you get back up when the winds of life uproot your Sukkah? Who/What are your “guards” – both in front and behind? They might differ! [Remember: Our rabbis tell us that battles in the Torah teach us how to handle our personal battles against the yetzer harah.]

Chapter 26 of Mesilit Yesharim:

3 - Are you following a path to chasidut/piety? Are you on the correct path for YOUR individual circumstances? Is that path helping you when your Sukkah falls down? [Take chizuk: There IS a unique path that is perfect for you! You just need to make the time to find it!]

Reflection Points:

A - The chidush of our Gemara is NOT that we need to create a Sukkah that can hold up to any common wind, irrespective of location. The chidush of the Gemara is that your Sukkah WILL fall (i.e. you will make mistakes, etc. in your personal life) – but now that your Sukkah has fallen, what are you going to do about it? “Akiva, where is your Sukkah?!” How are you going to handle the fact that you fell? How do you bounce back? THAT’S the test Hashem is sending you! You didn’t fail by falling. You only fail, if you don’t get back up and rebuild. That’s the chidush.

B - Finding your personal derech/path in Torah and your unique talents/strengths:

- 1) Help you rebuild your Sukkah when it falls
- 2) Motivate you to get back up when you fall in battle against your yetzer harah
- 3) Are the tools that Hashem gave you to assist in rebuilding the “fallen Sukkah of David” (the Bet HaMikdash) [may it be rebuilt, speedily, in our days]