

Our text for this morning is a familiar verse from the Psalms which we recite every Rosh Chodesh and every holiday as part of the Hallel, and which we recite on this festival of Sukkot as well.

That verse is: Ana ha-shem hoshi'a na and Ana ha-shem hatzlichah na. That is generally translated as, "Save us ~~O~~ Lord, Make us prosper ~~O~~ Lord." Give us Yeshuah -- redemption, help, saving -- and Hatzlachah -- prosperity, success.*

~~But~~ The reason for my mentioning this verse on this particular festival is the interesting and arresting fact that on Sukkos we seem to practice discrimination and show favoritism to the Hoshi'a na over the Hatzlichah na. When, during the Hallel, we hold the Lulav and Etrog and perform the Na'anuim, we do so only when we recite Hoshi'a na, not when we recite Hatzlichah na. After the Musaf Service, we recite the prayers called Hoshana. Why do we not recite Hatzlichah na's? Why do we prefer the Hoshi'a over the Hatzlichah?

The answer to that seemingly simple question is in itself a major expression of Jewish Hashkafah, of Jewish philosophy. And the answer is that Hatzlachah indicates worldly or mundane success; financial and social prosperity. Whereas Yeshuah signifies spiritual eminence, religious redemption, the success of the soul. And what we learn therefrom is, therefore, that Judaism does not look askance at worldly success, at prosperity. It does not look with derision upon material attainments. It does not maintain, as do other religions, that the rich man can never enter the Gates of Heaven. Ana ha-shem hatzlichah na is a valid, legitimate prayer.

But at the same time, neither does Judaism teach us to center our lives about the desire for material attainments. Whether one is successful in life or not -- in a material, financial sense -- is simply irrelevant; it is not, in and by itself, either good or bad. What really counts is spiritual success -- Yeshuah, not Hatzlachah. Hatzlachah is merely ephemeral, merely temporary; Yeshuah is of the order of eternity.

The Midrash (Shochar Tov) gives us an interesting piece of history about our verse. It tells us that it was recited responsively in the Temple at Jerusalem in the days of old.

וְיֵשׁוּעַ הוּא הַיְשׁוּעָה הַבְּרִיָּא וְהַצְלָחָה הַבְּחַיִּיט
וְהַצְלָחָה הַבְּחַיִּיט הוּא הַיְשׁוּעָה הַבְּרִיָּא

The people who lived in Jerusalem, in the Holy City itself, would remain within the Temple and they would recite Ana ha-shem hoshi'a na; whereas, the citizens of Judea, who lived outside the Holy City, would remain without the temple and respond Ana ha-shem hatzlichah na. Perhaps what our rabbis meant to tell us with this is more than just a historical incident. They meant to tell us that Yeshuah is an inner concept, the experience of inwardness. Hatzlachah, however, is from without, superficial, externalized success. Yeshuah is for people of higher status of the spirit, people of loftier sanctity -- the citizens of Jerusalem. Whereas, Hatzlachah, while an acceptable ambition, is that entertained by people who come only from Judea, but who have not yet graduated to the status of "Anshei Yerushalayim." When you look at life and at Torah and at Judaism as does an outsider, from the outside in, Mi-be-chutz -- then all you can see in life is that which is describable as Hatzlachah: how many adherents does this temple have, not how deep the experience; how big is the building,

not how great is the affect it has upon the worshippers; how expensive are the furnishings of this temple, not how profound the religious devotion of its communicants. But when you look at Judaism Mi-bi-fenim, from within as of an insider of Torah, then Hatzlachah is not banned, but Yeshuah is regarded as of far greater and more transcendent significance.

That is why we, especially on this festival of Sukkos, show a decided preference for Ana ha-shem hoshi'a na over Ana ha-shem hatzlichah na. It is the expression of our preference to being an insider in the holy precincts of Judaism, in the temple of Torah, than merely being an outsider or alien to the sanctities of our faith. Without rejecting worldly prosperity, we state clearly our preference for eternal Yeshuah or saving.

We find an interesting reflection in the Talmud of this Jewish outlook which prefers spiritual eminence without deprecating worldly prosperity. The Talmud relates that after a man's death he appears before the Divine Court and is asked four questions. The first two are: Asakta be-firiah ve-riviah, "have you done your part for the perpetuation of the race and the people?", and Kavata itin le-torah, "have you set aside regular times for the study of Torah?". But it is the second two questions which are of immediate significance to us. The third question is Nasata ve-natata be-emunah, "were you honest, faithful in your business transactions?" The final question is Tzipita le-yeshuah, "did you constantly strive and hope for Yeshuah?" Notice the last question. We are not asked if ~~we strived for prosperity~~ ^{attained} Tzipita le-hatzlachah, if we ~~strived for~~ prosperity, because hatzlachah in Masa umatan, in business, is simply irrelevant to questions of ultimate

significance. All that counts after a man has finished his life and appears before the Divine Throne, is that in the process of his worldly pilgrimage, in the process of his business life, that he should have never abandoned the principle of Emunah, of honesty and integrity and faithfulness. But when it comes to the spiritual life, to Tzipita, to all that a man longs for and strives for and works for from the depths of his soul, there the desire for success in Yeshuah is of grave importance. This represents a different accent from the popular philosophy of the day; for the popular philosophy of the day calls for success in the material attainments of life, and mere "goodness" in religion. Judaism, as we have seen, calls for "goodness", Emunah, in business life, whereas it asks for the goal of success in spiritual happiness.

How this whole attitude toward life was expressed in the life of one great Jew, at a critical moment in the recent history of our people, is beautifully described in the biographical sketch of Rabbi Menahem Viemba in Rabbi Jung's recent volume, "Guardians of Our Heritage." It was the morning of December 8, 1942 in the ghetto of Warsaw, when the remaining few people in that ill-fated city were gripped by an overriding sense of fear and helplessness, realizing full well that they were on the brink of despair. A meeting was convened of the few remaining leaders, including statesmen, rabbis, educators, journalists and philosophers. The majority of all those gathered were completely hopeless. Historians and educators, philosophers and poets had lost all sense of hope and were divested of direction and guidance. At this critical, desperate moment, at the end of the history of the Warsaw ghetto, all those present turned to this gentle, slender man, the Gaon, Rabbi Menahem Viemba. He told them, "We have all

SAVE AND PROSPER

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and the wherewithal to develop our spiritual capacities to the end that

Hoshana le-mankha elokeinu hoshana, that we will attain Yeshuah for Thy

sake, ~~Oh~~ Lord, our G-d,