

"And he (Yaakov) built himself a house and for his livestock he made shelter; he therefore called the name of the place Succos." (33:17)

One would think that when Yaakov assigned a name to a place, he would use a reason more meaningful than the fact that it had served as a shelter for livestock. The *Ohr Ha'Chaim* suggests that this was probably the first time anyone had cared for animals to the point that shelter was provided for them. This public display of compassion for animals was viewed as sufficient reason for naming the place Succos. Hence, people would take note and themselves show concern for animals.

Horav Simcha Zissel Broide, Shlita, takes a novel approach towards understanding Yaakov's reasoning. The *pasuk* states that Yaakov first built a house. *Targum Yonasan* claims that this house served as a *Bais Ha'Midrash*, House of *Torah* Study. *Horav Broide* posits that Yaakov remained in his *ohel*, tent, as usual. The *succos* were temporary dwellings erected to provide shelter for the livestock. The house was the only edifice that had some sort of permanence to it. Why? What purpose did this house serve that made it so unique? It was the place for *Torah* study. It was Yaakov's fortress - the only place that Eisav could not touch. It was the one place that accorded Yaakov security against his eternal foe.

Our question now becomes more compelling. If Yaakov built a *Bais Ha'Midrash* for *Torah* study, should he not name the city after this bastion of *Torah*? It would seem more appropriate than a livestock pen! From this anomaly, *Horav Broide* infers a remarkable lesson. Yaakov teaches us that while he was traveling to *Eretz Yisrael*, to his permanent home, nothing along the way had any stability. His home was a tent; the pens for his livestock were flimsy *succos*. Everything along the way was temporary. There is one edifice, however, which maintained its permanence wherever it was, the *Bais Ha'Midrash*. Regardless of the terrain, in spite of the duration of time spent there, the House of Study, the fortress of Judaism, must be built with stability and firmness.

The concept of impermanence, the thought of transience, is the antithesis of *Torah*. Provisional structures are for an individual's material belongings, while his spiritual needs must be satisfied in a solid and secure structure. Yaakov named this place Succos in order to proclaim that this was not his permanent home. He was just stopping along the way to his country and future home. Nevertheless, even here amidst his temporary dwelling, he erected a House of *Torah* Study that was firmly rooted to serve the spiritual needs of his small community. After all, this was Yaakov's *yeshivah*!