



## Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies

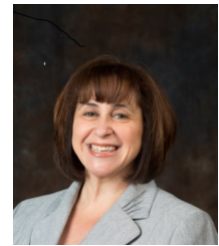
OF AMERICAN JEWISH UNIVERSITY

# Today's Torah

*Jews have always been a community drawn together by virtue of Torah. No matter where you may be, we welcome you to the Ziegler community through Today's Torah e-mail.*

### Sukkot

September 29, 2018 - 20 Tishrei 5779



By: Rabbi Cheryl Peretz  
Associate Dean  
Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies  
American Jewish University

## Hidden and Not So Hidden Treasures

Torah Reading: [Exodus 33:12-34:26](#)

Haftarah Reading: [Ezekiel 38:18-39:16](#)

I spent this summer a bit differently than most of my summers have been. Most years, I plan some big trip - across the country, across the world, by a beach, on the sea. But, for the first time in as long as I can remember, this summer, I decided to stay at home and committed to exploring places in Los Angeles I had never been. Not more than 4 miles from my home is a remarkable park. I cannot tell you the number of times I drove past the entrance where a big sign stands inviting drivers to exit right. So, for the first time in 21 years of living in the city, this time, I exited right.

As I drove into the park, on the right was a majestic man-made lake with a beautifully cascading waterfall. Driving further into the park, there is a steep 500 meter incline that leads to the top of the park to what I have heard been called 'the bowl', a round paved and unpaved walking/running path around a patch of total greenery. And, every corner offers a different angle of the panoramic view of the city - the downtown skyline, the famous Hollywood sign, and the valley, oil rigs in front of the park, the airport, Century City, and even the coast line. And because of its placement atop the hill, it also includes the coastal breeze that even on the hottest days makes for spectacular walking conditions.

21 years I have been here and it was right in front of me, I never knew it. Isn't that so often the case? Something is right there before our eyes but we don't take the time to appreciate it?

I am reminded of a story by the eighteenth century Hasidic master Rebbe Nachman. A man once dreamed that there was a great treasure under a bridge in faraway Vienna. He traveled to Vienna and stood near the bridge, trying to figure out what to do. He dared not search for the treasure by day, because of the many people who were there.

An officer passed by and asked, "What are you doing, standing here?" Deciding it would be best to tell the whole story and ask for help, the man told the officer the entire story of his dream and how he was looking for a treasure under the bridge.

The officer replied, "I also had a dream and I also saw a treasure. It was in a small run down house, under the cellar. The house was down a narrow dirt lane, under a large bent tree."

The man realized the house in the officer's dream sounded a lot like his own house. He thanked the officer and rushed home. Once there, he dug deep under his cellar, and – sure enough – he found the treasure. He said, "Now I know that I had the treasure all along. But in order to find it, I had to travel to Vienna."

We, too, have had the treasure all along. We just don't always realize it. To find it, we may need to take an actual journey, across the world or just down the road. It really is a shame, that we waste so much time and energy in oblivion to the great treasures with which we are blessed.

During this week of Sukkot, we journey no further than our own patio or yard to sit in the Sukkah. While temporary and fragile, the Sukkah calls to us to sit in the protection of God's shade, to take notice of the sun amidst the clouds and stars at night, to celebrate in joy and happiness, and to invite into our midst guests with whom we share connection. In other words, Sukkot beckons us to take notice of our real treasures: relationships with family; faith, tradition, and community; the relative safety in which we live and the security of permanent homes; and the beauty of nature that surrounds us and fills us with joy and wonder.

In the hustle and bustle of daily life, it is too easy to take for granted life's treasures. As busy as we are, we don't always find the opportunities to breathe, to connect, to see and/or to fill ourselves with sustaining joy. Sukkot calls us home to rediscover the treasures hidden right in front of our eyes and to embrace them more fully. In being fully present, we unlock the treasure of wholeness and meaning.

One thing is certain. We have had the treasure all along.

*As it is written in the book of Proverbs 15:6: "In the house of the righteous there is much treasure."*

Shabbat Shalom and Hag Sukkot Sameach!

---

**Rabbi Cheryl Peretz**, is the Associate Dean of the Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies, where she also received her ordination. She also holds her MBA in Marketing Management from Baruch College, and helps bring those skills and expertise into the operational practices of rabbis and congregations throughout North America.

---



# Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies

OF AMERICAN JEWISH UNIVERSITY

Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies  
American Jewish University  
15600 Mulholland Drive  
Bel Air, CA 90077  
310-440-1218  
[www.aju.edu/ziegler](http://www.aju.edu/ziegler)

Share this email:



[Manage](#) your preferences | [Opt out](#) using TrueRemove®

Got this as a forward? [Sign up](#) to receive our future emails.

View this email [online](#).

15600 Mulholland Dr.  
Bel Air, CA | 90077 US

This email was sent to michelle.starkman@aju.edu.  
*To continue receiving our emails, add us to your address book.*

*emma*