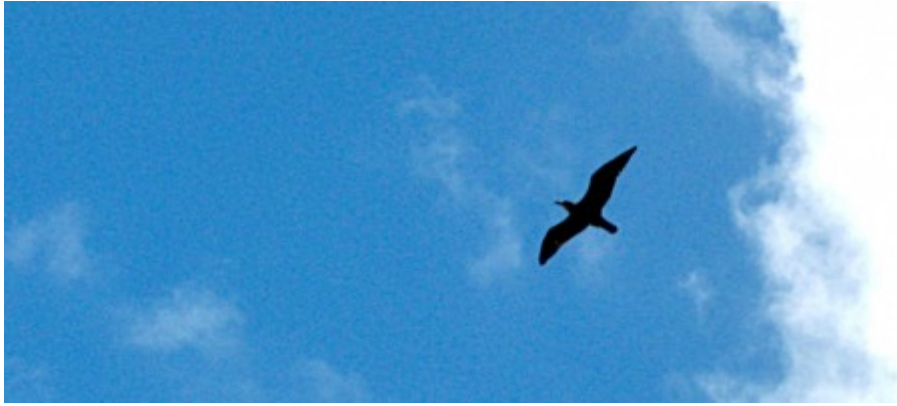


Midrash for Monday; All Things Must Pass

written by Ozer Bergman
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Midrash for Monday

All Things Must Pass

On Shabbat *chol hamoed* (the intermediary days) of Sukkot, we read *Kohelet* (Ecclesiastes), one of the three books written by King Shlomo (Solomon). Since one of the defining characteristics of the sukkah (hut, from which the Sukkot holiday gets its name) is that it provide shade, here is a Midrash that speaks of shadows.

King Shlomo said (Ecclesiastes 6:12), “Who can know what is best for a person to do in life ... in his few days that are like a shadow?” What sort of shadow? If the shadow of a wall, that has some permanence. [A solid wall lets no light through and its shadow moves with the sun.] Even a palm tree provides a shadow with some feel of permanence. [Over a smaller area than a wall, its leaves and branches provide pleasant shade, but the wind easily blows them aside.]

Along came King David, King Shlomo’s father, and explained (Psalms 144:4), “His days are like a passing shadow.” Rebbe Huna quoted Rav Acha, “Like a bird flying by, taking his shadow with him.” Shmuel said, “Like the shadow of bees, no

substance whatsoever.”

The Midrash goes on to say that everything—*everything*—in Creation, regardless of which day it was created, is transient. Any thing you can think of, the day will come when it will be taken off the table.

By bringing our transient desires, eating and drinking, into a transient hut because God said so, i.e., because it’s a mitzvah, we turn impermanency into eternity. Amen.

Based on *Kohelet Rabbah* 1:1

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