

MANHATTAN HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS
SUKKOS 5784 - 2023



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Sukkos

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From the Desk of the Editors

Achdus and Sukkos

The two primary *mitzvos* of *Sukkos* are shaking the *daled minim* and sitting in a *Sukkah*. Famously, both of them represent *achdus*. The *Midrash* explains that each of the *daled minim* represents a different kind of Jew. The *esrog*, which is both fragrant and tasty, is compared to a Jew who is enriched with Torah and *mitzvos*. The *lulav*, which tastes good but has no aroma, is likened to a Jew who embodies only Torah. *Hadassim*, which have a pleasant smell but no taste, are representative of Jews who embrace *mitzvos* but do not study Torah. *Aravos*, which possess neither of these attributes, represent Jews who are devoid of both Torah and *mitzvos*. On *Sukkos*, we are commanded to take these four different species and bring them together. Similarly, the *Gemara* (*Sukkah* 27b), based on the *pasuk* וְיָשְׁבוּ בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל יְכֹל הָאֶזְרָח בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל יִשְׁבּוּ בְּסֻכּוֹתַי” understands that in theory, all of *B’nei Yisrael* could sit unified in one *sukkah*.

There are two types of *achdus*. One results from people joining together because they share a goal or need to accomplish something. The other sort of unity occurs when people come together to enjoy each other's company. The *daled minim* are a metaphor for the first type of *achdus*. They come together only to perform the *mitzvah* of shaking the *lulav* and *esrog*; in fact, you even keep the *esrog* separate until you actually do the shaking. The *mitzvah* of *sukkah*, on the other hand, symbolizes the second kind of *achdus*, because when two people decide to share a *sukkah* it is generally because they enjoy each other's company.

If the *mitzvah* of *daled minim* represents *achdus*, a sense of togetherness, then why do the details seem to contradict that very concept? Each of the *minim* has its own personal details of either how tall it has to be or where it needs to be placed when holding it with the others, which suggests an element of separation. Rav Yitzchak Menachem Weinberg explains that *achdus* doesn't necessitate losing your own uniqueness to blend together with the crowd. *Achdus* comes from embracing the singular talents with which Hashem has blessed you, as you unite with the people around you even if they are different.

Moadim offers a unique opportunity for girls from different families, who are gifted with many unique talents, to come together to publish words of Torah and beautiful artwork that will enhance everyone's *yom tov* table. They may have joined forces to create a meaningful *Moadim* volume, but in the process, many have found that they enjoy each other's company. We thank them all for taking the time to contribute to this edition of our *Yom Tov* publication.

Chag Sameach!
The Moadim Crew

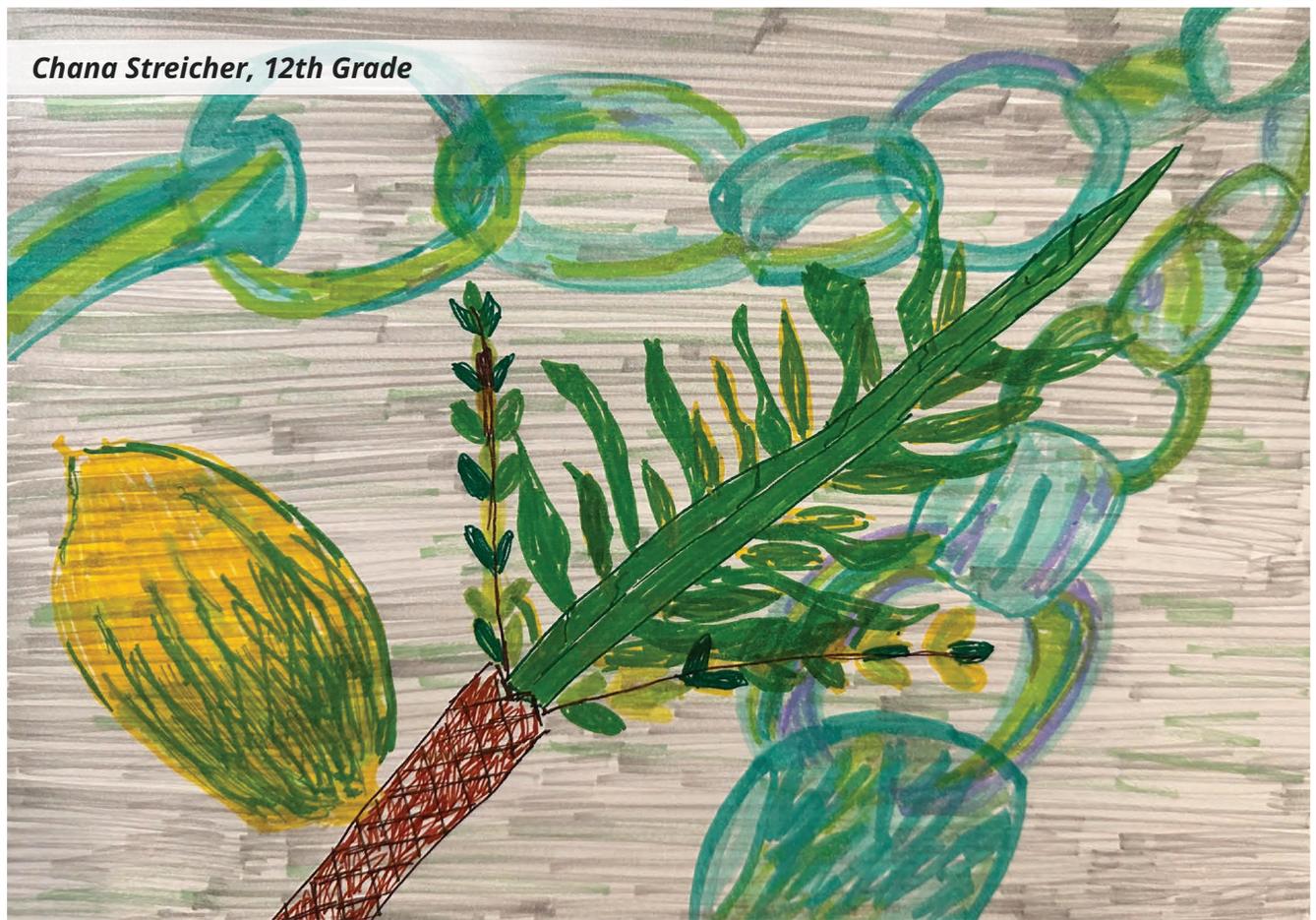
Why is Simchas Torah After Sukkos?

Why don't we celebrate *Simchas Torah* right after *Rosh Hashanah*? Wouldn't it make more sense to follow *Rosh Hashanah*, when we declare Hashem to be our King, with *Simchas Torah*, when we show our love for His gift of Torah? Why wait until after *Succos* to express that love?

The *mefarshim* suggest a beautiful answer. If someone is burdened with his sins, he cannot experience true joy. Therefore, we first need to experience *Yom Kippur*, which, when properly observed through a full *teshuvah* process, yields forgiveness and adds a layer of happiness. This is similar to a *chosson* and *kallah* who, on their wedding day, are forgiven for all their sins so that they can enter into their marriage fully *b'simchah*. Only then does the new couple begin to live together. We, too, 'live together' with Hashem in the *sukkah* only after we have achieved *kapparah*.

Although it would be nice to have *Simchas Torah* right after *Rosh Hashanah*, we wouldn't be fully joyous. Just as marriage requires preparatory steps in order to be happy, we, too, need them in order to be fully happy with the *Torah* and celebrate correctly.

☞ Ruki Schwartz



Dwelling in Emunah

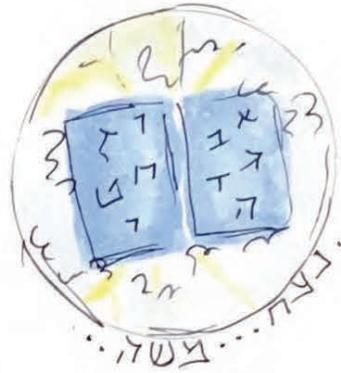
In his commentary on *Vayikra* 23:43, the Ramban suggests that the underlying objective of dwelling in the *sukkah* during *Sukkos* is to remind us שהיו במדבר לא באו בבית ועיר מושב לא מצאו ארבעים שנה והשם היה עמהם לא חסרו דבר. For the entirety of their 40-year sojourn in the *midbar*, *B'nei Yisrael* had no permanent abode, yet because Hashem was with them they lacked nothing. The impermanent nature of the *sukkah* indeed signifies a scarcity of material possessions, comfort, and stability, and yet, *B'nei Yisrael* were wholly content and fulfilled despite this transitory existence!

After the solemn introspection and gravitas of the *Yamim Noraim*, the transition into *Sukkos* can evoke a palpable sense of relief. Our focus shifts from *gezeiros* and *teshuvah* as we usher in the unique commandment of "ושמחת בחגך". This apparent contrast seems confusing, and prompts the question: What is the connection between *Sukkos* and the holidays that precede it?

As the atmosphere of complete *kedushah* that accompanies the *Yamim Noraim* dissipates, we are once again confronted with daily conflicts and concerns. Perhaps a profound lesson of *Sukkos* is embedded in the very essence of the *sukkah's* transient and impermanent nature. As the resolutions of *Rosh Hashana* and the promises of *Yom Kippur* may begin to feel distant, it serves as a poignant reminder that our material possessions, which can sometimes be sources of anxiety, feelings of failure, and insatiable desires, are as fragile and ephemeral as the makeshift huts we temporarily inhabit. True security and fulfillment, the Ramban suggests, come from unwavering *emunah* in Hashem. Rather than allowing the cacophony of our worldly worries to overpower our efforts to connect and improve, we should seize the unique opportunity presented by this *chag* to cultivate our renewed relationship with Hashem.

☞ Matea Frieber

גג סוכות
אושפיזין



אושפיזין

Ellie Trapedo, 12th Grade
Ellie



Sarah Wassner, 11th Grade

The Process and The Product

ובמעשה ברבן גמליאל וכו' ולא היה לולב אלא לרבן גמליאל בלבד שלקחו באלף זוז וכו' למה ליה למימר שלקחו באלף זוז, להודיעך כמה מצוות חביבות עליהן (סוכה מא:)

Regarding the incident where only Rabban Gamliel had a *lulav* the *Gemara* asks: Why do I need to say that Rabban Gamliel bought this *lulav* for one thousand *zuz*? It is to inform you how beloved *mitzvot* were to them to the extent that he was willing to pay an exorbitant sum to purchase a *lulav*.

Why does the *Gemara* say עליהן - to *them*, and not עליו - to *him*? The story is about Rabban Gamliel and his *arba minim*, so who are these other people?

Rabbi Yaakov Ettlinger, author of the *sefer Aruch Laner*, answers this by raising another issue: Why did Rabban Gamliel buy the *arba minim* for 1,000 *zuz*? Why wasn't he able to find a cheaper one?

Rabbi Ettlinger answers his question using the following economic observation. There must have been other people in the market who were willing to buy the *arba minim* for up to 999 *zuz*. Because of that, Rabban Gamliel had to offer 1,000 *zuz*, more than everyone else, so that he could acquire the precious *minim*. Accordingly, we see from here how much the *mitzvot* meant to *them*, to everyone else who were also prepared to buy the *lulav* and *esrog* for the high sum of up to 999 *zuz*, forcing Rabban Gamliel to pay the full 1,000.

There is a powerful lesson that we can draw from this explanation. Rabban Gamliel was the one who actually paid for the *arba minim*, yet the *Gemara* praises everyone else as well. This teaches us that while the final results are important, when it comes to the service of HaShem they are not necessarily more significant than the efforts involved in obtaining them. We all have to focus on our goals, but not let the product overshadow the process! Remember that the effort is just as important as the achievement in the eyes of HaShem.

☺ Chaya Steinman

The Depth of Simchas Beis Hashoevah

One of the most unique and festive celebrations during *Sukkos* is that of the *Simchas Beis Hashoevah*. Nowadays, though festive, it is little more than singing and dancing with musical accompaniment, but at the time of *Beis Hamikdash*, it was so much more. Then, it was a singular event filled with true and incomparable *simchah*.

The celebration centered around a *mitzvah, nisuch hamayim*, which was observed by pouring water on the *mizbeyach*. From the moment this water was drawn from its source, the *Beis Hamikdash* courtyard erupted in such euphoria that the *Talmud* insists that one who hasn't witnessed the joy of *Simchas Beis Hashoeva* has never experienced true happiness in his lifetime.

The obvious question is, why did *nisuch hamayim* generate such joy?

The answer lies in a *midrash* that takes us back to the second day of creation. Hashem divided the waters into two portions. One was placed above in *Shamayim* and the other remained on earth. Our *Chachamim* record that the lower waters wept bitter tears and asked Hashem "Why should we be placed so far away from the *Kisei Hakavod* while our counterparts are so near?" In response Hashem offered the *mitzvah* of *nisuch hamayim*, which would be drawn from the lower waters and grant them special distinction. (Rashi on *Vayikra* 2:13).

But how was this *mitzvah* compensation? The waters above have been constantly close to Hashem since creation, while the appeasement of *nisuch hamayim* came only two and half thousand years later, and lasts for only one week a year. Furthermore, the lower waters below still remain physically distant from Hashem, so how did this single occasional *mitzvah* pacify them?

The waters craved to be close to their Creator, and there is nothing in the world that brings one closer to Hashem than the fulfillment of His *mitzvos* which spans all distances. So even after thousands of years and over a short period of time, *nisuch hamayim* generated greater intimacy with Hashem than the physical proximity of their heavenly counterpart. This idea is reflected in the word *mitzvah*, which in Aramaic means "joined." That is exactly what a *mitzvah* achieves — it bonds us with Hashem.

This is the secret of the *Simchas Beis Hashoevah*. It all centers around this *mitzvah* of *nisuch hamayim*, which symbolizes the ability of one *mitzvah* to bind us to Hashem.

If that is the power of one *mitzvah*, how can we not rejoice knowing that we have been blessed with hundreds of priceless gifts, which can be performed at any time, bringing us closer to Hashem every moment of our lives?

🌸 Lily Notkin
Source: "Timeless Seasons"



Noa Abehassera, 10th Grade

Gneshy Itkin, 9th Grade



Our Temporary Home

Sukkos is marked by the unique command to “live” in the *sukkah*. It is meant to be our home for seven days; we eat all our meals, and the men even sleep, in the *sukkah*. *Sukkos* also marks a change in the mood of the holidays we celebrate during *Tishrei*. Immediately after the *Yamim Nora'im*, days of awe and serious introspection, comes *Sukkos*, a *chag* which is defined by the command to be happy - *Z'man Simchaseinu*. The Chida sees significance in the close proximity of these two distinctly different types of holiday. On *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur* we were *mamlach* HaShem; we crowned Him as our King and proclaimed that *ruchniyus*, spirituality, would be primary in our lives. We asked forgiveness for chasing after material desires and inclinations. The *sukkah* highlights in a tangible form the feelings we have just experienced and the commitments we have made. It reminds us that, much like dwelling in the *sukkah*, our life in this world is temporary. After the serious resolve of the *Yamim Nora'im* slips away, G-d gives us a booster shot; a *sukkah* that helps us recall our decision to make *ruchniyus* a priority, and to thereby attain the ultimate life in *Olam Haba*. Which is cause for *simchah*.

☺ Miri Brody

Generating True Simchah on Sukkos

On *Sukkos* there's a *chiyuv*, an obligation, to be happy, *ושמחת בחגך*. How can we generate that happiness? We know that the word *שמחה*, happiness, is very similar to the word *צמחה*, growth. Happiness is the natural result of growth. The *פחד יצחק*, R' Yitzchak Hutner *zt"l*, writes that *Sukkos* is the conclusion of two cycles; the *Yamim Nora'im* and the *Shalosh Regalim*. If we experience *Sukkos* in a mindful and growth-oriented way, we will be able to look back at these two cycles and recognize the growth we've accomplished. That realization will naturally make us joyous and will fulfill the *chiyuv* of *ושמחת בחגך*.

☺ Batsheva Rogosnitzky

Feeling Happy On Sukkos

”וְשִׂמְחַת בְּחַגְגֵינוּ... וְהָיִיתָ אִךְ שְׂמֵחַ”

(דברים טז:יז-יט)

How can you actually experience genuine joy when you don't feel happy?

The *Mishnah* says: “אִזְוֶהוּ עֲשִׂיר, הַשְּׂמֵחַ בְּחֵלְקוֹ”

Happiness is not the reaction to an exciting experience. Happiness is the act of appreciating what good we already have. It's a state of mind where we can be thankful without external motivation. *Sukkos* is a happy holiday because specific traditions that we do lead us to this state of happiness.

The Sukkah

A house, a car, and a bed indoors are all very nice things but sometimes they bring us to believe that the world is our “permanent home”. Leaving the comfort of our house to live outdoors exposed to bugs, heat, and cold reminds us that true inner joy is a spiritual matter coming from the acknowledgment that the world is only a temporary dwelling place.

The Arm

By the time *Sukkos* rolls around, we have just climbed a spiritual ladder of *Elul*, *Rosh Hashanah*, and *Yom Kippur*. We are on a “spiritual high” and very close to Hashem. When building a *Sukkah* the minimal number of walls permitted is 2 ½. The first is the upper arm, the second is the forearm, and the half represents the hand of Hashem. When we are in the *Sukkah* we are devoid of the pleasures and conveniences of our homes, under the stars in the sky, pure from our sins from the previous year, cradled in Hashem's loving arm.

The Harvest

Sukkos is the holiday of harvest symbolized by the *mitzvah* of *arbah minim*. How does this mitzvah have anything to do with happiness? According to Rabbi Elyahu E. Dessler, the “material joy” can lead to “spiritual joy”. When we have things that bring us joy we can think about how to elevate them to spiritual joy. All food can be elevated by reciting the proper *bracha* before and after eating. On Friday night, the cup of wine is elevated by being used for *kiddush*.

The harvest on *Sukkos* reminds us that we can use ordinary things from everyday life and elevate them for a higher purpose.

Have a happy *Sukkos* with inner joy, the love of Hashem, and elevated material joy!

✿ Avigail Kundin
Source: Rabbi Shraga Simmons

Sukkah

Once upon a time
In a land far away
people lived In Hashem's hug
Safe, holy, and pure
No need for cloud nine
when you're living in the *ananei hakavod*
Just imagine

Once upon a time
In a land pretty near
people built Hashem's hug
With *s'chach* and love
No need for cloud nine
when you have a *sukkah* like mine

🌿 Basya Saperstein



Rachel Sash, 10th Grade

The Sukkah Still Stands

It is rare that the Torah provides reasons for performing *mitzvos*. Yet, when it comes to the *mitzvah* of sitting in a *sukkah*, the Torah does just that. It explains that we are to dwell in the *sukkah* to commemorate the huts in which Hashem sheltered us when we left Egypt. Those huts, as the *Gemara* discusses, are either literal ones, or the Clouds of Glory that protected us from the harsh elements in the desert.

But there is also a more symbolic meaning to bear in mind as we sit in our beloved *sukkos*. You see, the *sukkah* is a far cry from a strong, permanent structure. It is often rickety, and rattles in the wind. Sometimes, when the gusts are strong, one might even fear that it is in danger of collapse. But that is exactly the point. We must be placed in a situation where we feel insecure, so that we can train ourselves to trust in Hashem, just as our ancestors did when they left the *Mitzrayim*, following Hashem into the blazing desert with few provisions other than their deep, abiding faith in Him.

By sitting in the *sukkah*, we span the generations, and understand that even if it feels as if the *sukkah* is on the verge of collapse, it will endure, as have the Jewish people despite the harshest of conditions experienced throughout our two-millennia *galus*.

An old Yiddish song, entitled *Ah Sukkale, Ah Kleine (A Sukkah, a Small One)*, poignantly captures this metaphorical appreciation of the *sukkah*. The following is an English translation of its lyrics (adapted by Rabbi Avi Shafran.) How meaningful it would be to read its powerful words together with our families while sitting in the *sukkah*, so that this profound objective of the *mitzvah* can be "brought home."

*A sukkaleh, quite small,
Wooden planks for each wall;
Lovingly I stood them upright.
I laid thatch as a ceiling
And now, filled with deep feeling,
I sit in my sukkaleh at night.*

*A chill wind attacks,
Blowing through the cracks;
The candles, they flicker and yearn.
It's so strange a thing
That as the Kiddush I sing,
The flames, calmed, now quietly burn.*

*In comes my daughter,
Bearing hot food and water;
Worry on her face like a pall.
She just stands there shaking
And, her voice nearly breaking,
Says "Tattenyu, the sukkah's going to fall!"*

*Dear daughter, don't fret;
It hasn't fallen yet.
The sukkah will be fine, understand.
There have been many such fears,
For nigh two thousand years;
Yet the sukkahleh continues to stand.*

☞ Golda Bamberger



Shira Nordlicht, 10th Grade

ושמחת בחגך



Suri Weiner, 10th Grade

'Dwelling' on Others

צא מדירת קבע ושב בדירת עראי (סוכה ב.)

Leave the permanent dwelling and settle in a temporary dwelling. (*Sukkah* 2a)

The literal meaning of these Talmudic words is that one must leave his house (permanent dwelling) and settle in a *sukkah* (temporary dwelling.) There is another, deeper way to understand this instruction. For most people, their "permanent dwelling" is the 'place' in their own mind where they think about their personal needs and desires. At some point, a person may give up his attention to some of his own needs to focus on the needs of another person; it is then that his mind moves to a "temporary dwelling."

Chag HaSukkos is also called "*z'man simchaseinu*" (the time of our rejoicing.) If one truly wants to be happy in life he must think about other people and their needs, and not be entirely self-centered. Through helping others and making them happy, he, himself, will truly be "*b'simchah*".

There is a story about a woman who was depressed and went to seek advice from Rav Pam *zt"l*. Rav Pam advised her to become involved with *tzorchei tzibbur*, the needs of the community. By turning her attention to the necessities of other people, Rav Pam believed that she would shift her focus from her own difficult situation throughout the day. The woman heeded Rav Pam's advice. A few months later her husband wrote Rav Pam a letter, reporting that his wife's mood had changed. She had gone from being depressed to feeling good about herself, all through thinking of others.

In his *sefer* "Rav Pam and The Festivals," Rav Shlomo Smith states that "helping others is the formula for a life of *simchah*." *Sukkos* is about leaving our "permanent dwelling" and moving to the "temporary dwelling" - the place where we think of others. In doing so, we will live happier lives and *simchah* will permeate the year.

☞ Yael Schwartz

The Old Woman's Aravos

Tradition said to take the willows of the brook
And the myrtle, and the palm branch in my hands,
And the jewel of all fruits I also took;
The other clutched my prayer book,
To honor the most ancient of commands.

Devotion, awe, that sweet refrain
Suffused the room and filled the hall,
Our voices sang, and then they waned.
But her lips still moved, her voice remained -
The elderly woman beside the wall

Winter-white hair, timeworn eyes
Old hands stiff from iron will,
She shook her willows, waved them high;
And as the emerald leaves did rise
She swayed in supplication still

I shook my small stems much that day, lest
They find themselves lost from sight.
Yet brighter far than all the rest
An ode to the Creator, and the woman whom He blessed
Her willows rose to the highest of all heights.

☪ *Serach Soloveichik*



Zeldy Itkin, 11th Grade

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