



שאלה

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## From the desk of the Editors

We are so excited to begin this year's **Moadim** with the *chag* of *Sukkos*.

In *Vayikra* 23:43, the *pasuk* states "למען ידעו דרתיכם כי בסכות הושבתו את בני ישראל" Rashi says on this *posuk* that *sukkah* represents the *ananei hakavod*, which protected *Bnei Yisrael* throughout the 40 years in the *midbar*. The *Nisivas Shalom* asks a compelling question: Why, on this *chag*, do we commemorate the *ananei hakavod* and not any of the other *nissim* done for us in the *midbar*, such as the *mon* or *be'er Miriam*?

The *Nesivos Shalom* explains that our *moadim* are not just relics of the past instituted to remember certain *nissim*, but they are *l'doros*, for generations. For example, *Pesach* is *Z'man Chairusainu* and *Shavuot* is *Z'man Matan Torasainu*, each of which are *l'doros* - for now and for future generations. So too, *Sukkos*, the *Nisivos Shalom* explains, is for generations, as the *posuk* specifically states "*dorosaychem*." Thus, it can't be that the *mon* or *be'er* would be the focus of the *Sukkos* holiday, because they were *nissim* just for the *dor hamidbar*. In contrast, the *ananei hakavod* represent the eternal *hashgachas Hashem*, which has always watched over us, and will continue to protect us *l'doros*. Therefore, *Sukkos* is set aside as a time to remember how Hashem showed his protection of *Klal Yisrael* during their forty year journey through the desert, and to celebrate that that protection extends to us today.

MHS's values are consistent with the purpose of the *ananei hakavod*. Not only are we infused here with *Torah* and *hashkafa* and taught both *limudei kodesh* and *limudei chol*, but it all happens within the protective environment created within our school's walls. Here, we are able to express our creativity, while strengthening our love of, and commitment to, the *Derech HaTorah*.

In this publication we tried to encapsulate the best qualities of our school. In its pages, *Torah* and creativity come together in the forms of art and beautiful *divrei Torah*, which, we hope, will enhance your *simchas Yom Tov*.

Thank you to everyone who submitted; this publication would not have been possible without you!

Chag Sameach,  
**Moadim Crew**

# Message from the Menahelis

*Simchas Torah*, the *chag* which builds on the intense joy of *Sukkos*, is a unique day of the year. The עבודת היום is to display an outpouring of love for the *Torah*. After seven days of reveling in the נעימות בימנך נצח... שבוע שמחות of *Chag HaSukkos*, we reach a hiatus of joy, as the *Torah* is clasped tightly in our embrace. It is said that the *Vilna Gaon* would rapturously dance before *sifrei Torah*, radiating enormous energy. He emulated *David Hamelech*, who danced with all of his vigor and strength before *Hashem* when the *aron* was conveyed to *Ir David*. This ecstasy is of course, most meaningful, when our love and longing is manifested in immersion in *Torah* study.

This year, Manhattan High School will be attending the 13th *Siyum Hashas* which will *IY"H* be held in Metlife Stadium, January 1, 2020, ד' טבת תש"פ.

100 tickets were reserved as a bloc for our students, to experience and savor the opportunity of a lifetime. I look forward to joining my beloved students who will elect to attend this momentous event להגדיל תורה ולהאדירה.

Truly it will be our greatest pleasure for Manhattan High School students to celebrate with *Klal Yisrael*, as we accord great honor and glory to the *Torah*.

In honor of *Sukkos*, our superb editorial staff, Tamar Dan, Tova Schwartz, Ilana Katzenstein, Daniella Zlotnick, and Musia Kirschenbaum, have compiled a spectacular edition replete with *divrei Torah*, artwork and articles, which are truly qualitative.

With great appreciation to Rebbetzin Peshi Neuburger, a brilliant and talented editor who is devoted לרב ונפש to our students and to Mrs. Sara Tandler, beloved *Moadim* faculty advisor.

חג שמח and happy reading!

**Mrs. Tsivia Yanofsky**

# Remembering Laidy



My great grandfather, Chaim Ingber *a"h*, was a role model for everyone that met him. He had a tremendous *simchas hachaim* and was extremely grateful for everything that he had and experienced. Even after surviving the horrors of the Holocaust and beating cancer he "wouldn't change anything" that had happened to him. He was continuously smiling and thanking Hashem and the people in his life. On *Shabbos* he would greet everyone he saw on his way to and from shul with a warm smile and a "good Shabbos," and he would even wait a few extra minutes before going into his house to see if anyone else was coming! What I admired most about him was his love of and appreciation for Torah and *mitzvos*. No matter what, even when it got too hard for him to go to *shul*, he would always *daven*. I can't remember a time when I walked into his house in the morning and there wasn't a *siddur* in front of him. He loved to get *nachas* from his family and even from other Jews whom he didn't know. When he saw Jewish boys and girls he would cry and say that this was "the best revenge on Hitler". I've learnt a lot from him from the stories I've heard and even just by watching him. I hope to have the same appreciation and love for Torah that he had and to make him proud.

🕊️ Leora Wisnicki

***This Moadim publication has been generously sponsored by  
Mr. and Mrs. Wisnicki, parents of our beloved student Leora  
I'iluy nishmas Chaim ben Moshe Ingber a"h***

**תהא נפשו צרורה בצרור החיים**

# Questions posed to our Teachers Mechanchot

In honor of Sukkos, Zman Simchaseinu, we posed questions to our teachers to gain insight on how we can achieve true happiness in our lives and be able to tap into the full meaning of *ושמחת בחגיך*.

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## **Looking back at your life, what was one of your happiest moments or what were some of your happiest moments?**

**Mrs. From** - The Bar Mitzvah of my first grandchild who lives in Israel - at the *Kosel*.

**Ms. Lakritz** - Celebrating the wedding of one of my closest friends, and then the birth of her child. She lost a family member when she was young, and watching her have her own gorgeous family is the happiest feeling.

**Mrs. Yanofsky** - Most of my happiest moments are family oriented- The day I got married, the day my children were born, the day they got married, and other tremendous *chasadim* that Hashem bestowed upon me.

In another vein, professionally, the happiest day of my life was when I became principal of MHS because I am involved in the education of so many unique girls. I consider it a great privilege. *חבלים נפלו לי בנעימים*

**Mrs. Rosensweig** - When I thought I was graduating college without a job, and then I got a job that day.

**Mrs. Ferber** - The day when my first child was born - I had never felt Hashem's presence so close-by.

**Mrs. Szenberg** - Spending time with my family.

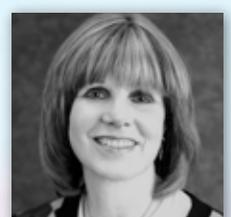
**Mrs. Nehorai** - I do think that life is getting better every day, but I would say that when I think of moments of ecstatic happiness, I think about the moment right after giving birth. I have, thank G-d, three children, and I savor the memory of the overpowering gratitude and amazement after giving birth to a healthy, precious little human. That incredible joy and relief that filled my being is probably unlike any sort of other ecstatic happiness I will encounter in my life.

**Reb. Fink** - I think one of my happiest moments was being present at the *bris* of my first grandson in *eretz yisrael*. When I was younger, I never imagined that I would have children in Israel, let alone grandchildren. It was a moment of extreme gratitude and wonder! I was humbled and proud at the very same time.

## **We all know that happiness is not the same as pleasure. Can you tell us about something that brought you happiness even though it might not have been initially pleasurable or pleasurable at the time?**

**Mrs. From** - Childbirth.

**Ms. Lakritz** - Completing my first year of graduate school. I worked so hard, and slept



so little that year. But, knowing that I accomplished, learned, and made connections with professors and friends created a sense of accomplishment, and I would say happiness, too.

**Mrs. Yanofsky** - Two years ago I injured my foot and was outfitted with a boot (Mrs. Friedman-Stefansky was so taken with my elegant attire, that she ordered similar footwear) I subsequently endured six weeks of physical therapy. Although annoying and time consuming, the therapy yielded a very happy outcome. I am grateful for my restored agility and daven empathetically for Mrs. Friedman-Stefansky's speedy recovery.

**Mrs. Rosensweig** - I strongly recall how fulfilling I found it to work with a special needs child when I was in twelfth grade. I was so happy to give and to gain from the experience, notwithstanding that not all of the moments of working with the child were pleasant.

**Mrs. Szenberg** - Working on a long term goal day after day can be difficult during the process, but seeing the progress brings you much happiness. For me it has been my davening. Day to day it might at times be difficult to focus on my davening, but knowing that I am building a better relationship with Hashem brings me such happiness.

**Mrs. Nehorai** - When I was in high school, I joined the track and cross country teams. I ran every single day for four years. We even ran in the summers- I would wake up at 5 a.m. to run with the team before going to work at 8:30 a.m. It was not easy, and I was always scared before each race, but the joy and pride of pushing myself farther than I thought possible stays with me to this day.

***What is one method that you use in order to achieve a happy state of mind when you are under stress or tension or general unhappiness?***

**Mrs. From** - My mantra "I am blessed to be stressed." גַּם זוֹ לְטוֹבָה , גַּם זֶה יַעֲבֵר . Hashem has a plan.

**Ms. Lakritz** - One line from *Tehillim* that a friend and mentor shared with me is "*Haboteach BaHashem Chesed Yisovivenu*". Essentially it means that the more you put your trust in Hashem, the more He surrounds you with chessed. I don't know if that's

a happy feeling, but it certainly is a comforting one. Another one I can think of is "*Ivdu es Hashem b'simcha*"-- and having that in my head, and remembering that Hashem wants us to be happy as we serve Him, that also brings me a sense of happiness.

**Mrs. Yanofsky** - I count my blessings and thank Hashem for all the *chasadim* that He has done for me, past and present. It works like a charm!

**Mrs. Rosensweig** - I try to put negative emotions into mental compartments; they get some air time and some actual time, but then it's time to put those feelings aside and focus on something positive, something productive. I try not to invalidate any unhappy feelings or circumstances, but to put them into a fuller, more positive context. There is an upside to everything, even when we don't want there to be one.

**Mrs. Szenberg** - When one is under stress it is hard to focus on all the good in your life. If one can take a few minutes to thank Hashem for all the good you have, it is hard to remain tense.

**Mrs. Nehorai** - This is probably not surprising coming from an art teacher, but I do art! Whenever I feel overwhelmed, it is so helpful to sit down, alone, in my quiet studio space, and just concentrate on colors and creating. I find a lot of clarity and acceptance by channeling my emotions into my work while listening to music that resonates with my mood. It's a great release.

**Reb. Fink** - I try to take a deep breath and remind myself that the stress is B"H temporary. I want to respond to whatever is causing the stress but not to lose sight of the 'bigger picture'.

***Can you tell us about a memory that you have of sitting in the sukkah under unusual circumstances, i.e. weather conditions?***

**Mrs. From** - We live in Manhattan and eat together with all our neighbors in a communal *sukkah*. It is very social. One *Sukkos* we decided to build our own *sukkah* at my upstate house in a small town. We sat down at the table and it was too lonely for me. We never made our own *sukkah* again.

**Ms. Lakritz** - I'm from Wisconsin. We've had snow on our *sukkah*. We also live right next to a wooded

area, so we found a racoon hanging out in there once.

**Mrs. Yanofsky** - No, but this year, while I sit in my sukkah, my daughter; Mrs. Sara Tendler is going to be in a *sukkah* in California. This is very unusual for our family, as we love to have her around for many reasons. However, we are glad that she will enjoy *Sukkos* with her wonderful in-laws in sunny California.

**Mrs. Rosensweig** - When I was in my junior year of high school, a classmate of mine passed away from brain cancer, and it was *Sukkos, z'man simchasaynu*. It felt unusual because I was supposed to feel happy, but here my classmate was just *nifteres*.

**Mrs. Nehorai** - When my husband and I first got married, our first *Sukkos* was at my in-laws in St. Louis. They had never had a *sukkah* before, and we didn't have much time to put one together. We came up with the brilliant plan of buying a pop-up tent and cutting out the top, and then laying branches over it. We were so proud of our strange creation. It lasted through the first night. The next

afternoon, as we were saying *kiddush*, the automatic sprinklers unexpectedly went on and started ricocheting off the *sukkah* (the *sukkah* was in the middle of the grass). We made a run for it, and the *sukkah* came tumbling down just as we exited.

**Reb. Fink** - A number of years ago there was a widespread outbreak of West Nile Virus in New York in the fall. To help prevent the spread of the virus, Westchester County (where I live) decided to spray everywhere to kill the mosquitoes carrying the virus. The date set happened to be the first night of *sukkos*. Many people were upset- they were afraid to be outside. The county executive called our *shul* and said: "my health commissioner assures me that spraying is not dangerous to humans. Just to prove it's true, I am calling to inform you that I will be joining your community for dinner in the *sukkah* tonight". The secretary explained to him that there was no community-wide dinner planned. "Okay, no problem", said the county executive. "In that case the health commissioner and my bodyguard will join the Rabbi!" And so it was that my family had three very unexpected guests that evening.

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## *Questions posed to our Students*

***We all know that happiness is not the same as pleasure. Can you tell us about something that brought you happiness even though it might not have been initially pleasurable or pleasurable at the time?***

**Chani Shulman** - As I walked into my SAT testing center, I felt prepared. I whipped out my pencils and erasers, sure that I would have no use for the latter. This cockiness continued through my test, bathroom breaks, post-test chat with my mom, and every day leading up to score release. Once that day arrived, I was shocked to discover that I scored much lower than I expected. *'How could this be?'* I thought. *'I've been scoring higher on all my practice tests.'*

I suddenly realized I was victim to the *נחמי ועוצם ידי* mentality. The next few weeks leading up to the forthcoming SAT, I had a new appreciation for *tefillah*. I davened with the knowledge that I cannot succeed without Hashem's help. I began to pay closer attention to *חונן הדעת* in *Shmona Esrei*. It was in this time of difficulty following my disappointing score that I really felt close to Hashem.

In retrospect, I realize how fortunate I was to have gotten that score. It woke me up to exactly how much Hashem plays a role in our daily lives. And even though it was difficult to swallow at the time, it is an experience that has molded who I am today. I'm glad I had this opportunity to humble myself and appreciate Hashem's constant assistance.

**Zahava Laufer** - Sometimes the things we would expect the least make us the most happy. This past summer I spent the last few weeks of vacation working with a special needs little boy. Those few weeks had an everlasting positive effect on me, even more than I would have expected. Helping this boy with his day to day activities, left me with a feeling of satisfaction and fulfillment. At the end of each day I was exhausted yet rejuvenated at the same time. It was an experience that taught me a lesson that sometimes challenges and difficulties bring a person the most happiness. I genuinely felt happy at the end of each day and it didn't come from doing something pleasurable but rather from doing something challenging.

**Zahava Giloni** - From working in Camp Kesher this past summer, I learned about a deeper level of giving. My greatest moments as a counselor were not when I physically gave the most, but rather when my giving enabled my camper to act on her own. With some encouragement, my camper was able to flourish independently. With time and effort, she grew from being shy and hesitant-to-participate to the star leading the group in dancing. I learned that after a little motivating, I had to step back and allow her to grow independently. There were definitely times when it seemed so much easier to get more actively involved, however, I tried to learn to step back as I knew it would be the best for her. Although this type of giving can be quite emotionally draining, it is also the most rewarding. It felt amazing to watch my camper take the skills that I was helping her work on and use them on her own. These are the moments when she saw how capable she really is. From the glowing smiles on her face, I began to realize that I was clearly making a difference.

**Noa Benhamo** - Happiness and pleasure can be mixed up sometimes, but the difference is that happiness is a state of being and pleasure is being satisfied with something physical. For example, there are some people in this world who wake up happy without any reason just because that is their nature. But pleasure is something that is derived, like once you score a high grade on an exam you studied hard for. An example of something that brings

happiness in my life is helping others. Imagine this: a friend asks for help with homework and you really would like to help but you already finished the homework and you don't really want to spend more time on it. But, regardless, you help your friend. At the moment it might not have been pleasurable or perhaps it was even annoying, but once it's over and you know you helped a friend in need, and that can bring happiness.

**Rivka Hakimi** - Something that brings me happiness, even though it is not initially pleasurable, is helping a sibling with homework. I don't necessarily enjoy it, and I would much rather be doing something else, yet it brings me happiness to do a *chesed* and make my sibling happy.

**Adee Black** - I only had three chapters left and I could not wait to finally find out why Maggie left all her family behind and moved across the country, when my sister yelled, "Adee, it's twenty to three, you need to leave so your friends don't go without you!". As much as I desperately knew that reading Maggie's story would bring me nothing but joy, I dragged myself out of bed and fixed my hair to go meet my friends to walk together to the local nursing home. My friends and I decided to make it a weekly practice to visit the local nursing home's Jewish patients every *Shabbos* once the school year began. As we exercised our muscles walking up the stairs, excitement rushed through me because I was about to find out the sacred stories and tales of the loving Jewish patients. We got to meet three amazing elders: Rabbi Pilansky, Barbara Clement, and Sue. Each with their own extroverted personalities, gave us the privilege of hearing stories about soccer teams, old *Shabbos* traditions, and even recent accidents that they experienced. I knew right then that the feeling which overcame me was pure happiness. If you had asked me - while I read my book that afternoon - what made me happier, reading or visiting elders, I would without a doubt have said reading. But after experiencing the thrill of being able to make someone more influential and greater than me happy, I would without hesitation say that visiting the elders with my friends brought me more happiness and joy than reading, even though the latter may be more pleasurable.

## The Timing of Sukkos

The Torah states that we sit in the *sukkah* in order to remember the *sukkos*, the huts, that Hashem made for us when we left Egypt. Why, then, are we commanded to do so now, in *Tishrei*, and not in *Nissan*, the month during which we left Egypt and were housed in *sukkos*? The first answer is that the *mitzvah* would go unnoticed if it were done in *Nissan*, as it is not uncommon for people to eat their meals outside in the springtime. Eating outside during the chilly winds of fall, though, makes a statement: for *Bnei Yisroel*, serving Hashem comes above all else. Another reason for this unusual timing is that the celebration of *Sukkos* in *Tishrei*, right after *Yom Kippur*, serves as a sign of Hashem's forgiveness, as evidenced by His command to sit in his shade and protection.

☞ Ariella Bennet



Tamar Dan

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## Clouds of Glory

The *Mishna Berurah* reminds us to mention, during our first meal in the *Sukkah*, that we perform this *mitzvah* because Hashem caused us to dwell in *Sukkos* in the wilderness. While we observe the *mitzvah* in a physical *sukkah*, it is a matter of dispute whether *sukkos* refer to actual physical structures or to the spiritual protection of the *Ananei HaKavod*, the Clouds of Glory.

The protective power of the *Ananei HaKavod* against the harsh physical elements of the wilderness, and against *Bnei Yisrael's* enemies, is well known. The *Torah* describes an incident where *Amalek* is seemingly able to penetrate the protection to attack the weak stragglers in the back of the camp. Some suggest that perhaps these stragglers were not worthy of protection, and that the cloud had spit them out of the camp.

In *Michtav M'Elياهو*, Rav Dessler explained this phenomenon differently. According to his approach, *Amalek* succeeded in penetrating the clouds. The so-called stragglers appeared to all as being enveloped by the clouds, as part of the community. Sometimes, however, outward appearances are deceiving. In reality, the clouds did not extend their protection to these people; they allowed *Amalek* to attack them. We are protected not for what we appear to be, but for what we truly are. The clouds "knew" who was merely masquerading and who was "*tocho k'voro*", the same on the inside as on the outside. As we sit under the protection of the *sukkah* we should be reminded to be as good on the inside as we are on the outside.

☞ Aviva Notkin

Adapted and translated from  
Tal Cheron of Rav Sholomo Aviner page 457.



## Divrei Hisorerus by Rav Aharon Kahn

When we heard that HaRav Aharon Kahn was coming to speak at our school, we eagerly awaited his words of inspiration. Here are some of the stirring ideas which the *rav* presented as food for thought during the *Yamim Noraim* season.

Rav Kahn shared some of his thoughts on *Elul* and *Teshuvah* with the student body. He began by comparing the Torah to a GPS. It is not enough to have a GPS, one needs to know where he or she is going. Our destination is the fulfillment of *אני לדודי ודודי לי*, and the realization of our love story with Hashem...

From the *pasuk* *תורה צוה לנו משה מורשה קהילת יעקב* we can learn the difference between a *ירשה* and a *מורשה*. A *ירשה* is an inheritance which is entirely in the hands of the heir, to do with it as he pleases. A *מורשה*, though, is the opposite. It is an inheritance which the heir is obligated to take and to deliver 100% in tact. As *Bnei Yisroel*, we are the beneficiaries of a precious *morashah*; we are obligated to transfer our *mesorah* to the next generation. Rav Kahn related a thought-provoking story about a man on the path to *teshuvah* who approached him with the following request: "I know that I may not turn on a TV on *Shabbos*, but there is a baseball game this weekend, and baseball is the love of my life. If I watch this game *that* will be my *oneg Shabbos*! Am I permitted to set a timer to switch the TV on just for the baseball game?" Rav Kahn told the man that this problem existed years ago. A *kohen* had free time and brought a TV into the *Bais Hamikdash*. The man responded passionately, "Rabbi, that is ridiculous! Not only were there no TVs at that time, but no one would dare bring a TV inside the *Bais Hamikdash*!" To which Rav Kahn replied, "The *Bais Hamikdash* is the *Bais Hamikdash* of space, and *Shabbos* is the *Bais Hamikdash* of time." The man understood that this was true and said, "Rabbi, you are so right!" In that moment, this man transformed a *yerushah* into a *morashah*. He made a decision to give over 100%.

We need to use our GPS (the Torah,) *know* our destination (*אני לדודי ודודי לי*), and be "all in" in order to achieve a loving relationship with Hashem.

Rav Kahn presented another captivating idea, based on a letter sent out by *Mordechai Hatzaddik* to the Jewish people after the miracle of the Purim story. In his first letter, Mordechai had instructed them to give *mishloach manos* "איש לרעהו", every man to his friend. In the second letter he added "מתנות לאביונים", the commandment that one must give to the poor as well. Why is there a difference between the letters? Why does Mordechai add that one must give to the poor? Rav Kahn explained that during the *שנה ראשונה*, the first year, the impact of a national life-threatening experience is so powerful, that everyone comes to realize the equality of all people. No man is better than the next. During the Holocaust, every Jew, no matter how religious or rich or intelligent, was tortured. In the aftermath of the *Purim* salvation, as in the post-Holocaust years, there was a feeling of equality because everyone had just lived through horrors which equalized them. Unfortunately, only a year after the *Purim* miracle, society was back to upper and lower classes. Mordechai needed to send the Jews a reminder that all Jews are equal. *Teshuvah* is often a very self-centered process. We need to focus on our own characters and personalities, and strive to improve. In truth, though, we should be concerned about everyone in *Klal Yisroel*, and promote the *teshuvah* of the community as a whole.

Rav Kahn invited us to consider yet another aspect of the *teshuvah* process. A *rotzeach b'shogeg*, someone who accidentally kills someone, must run to a city of refuge, an *ir miklat*. Why, though, must he be held responsible if the crime he committed was an accident? On Yom Kippur night, we ask for forgiveness for our sins, most of which are *shegagos*. There is a beautiful *mashal* which serves to explain this practice. A very wealthy man wanted to hang the nicest chandelier ever made in his foyer. He invested millions of dollars into a chandelier of crystal and gold. The fixture was so heavy that it had to be anchored into the ceiling. The man requested beams made of golden bars. A robber came and stole a few bars of gold from the pillar. Shortly afterward, the chandelier came crashing to the

ground. The thief was sentenced to years in prison for his crime, but he simply could not understand why - it was only a few bars of gold! Unfortunately, it resulted in much greater damage than just "a few bars of gold." He caused enormous destruction and the loss of millions of dollars. This story is a metaphor for what can happen to us. A little *lashon hara*, a small stub in *kibbud av v'em*, little sins like these have a similar effect; often there is a great deal of collateral damage. We think it is no big deal, but really it causes a ripple effect. You make an edgy comment to a classmate, intending for it to only sting a little. But you never know how far-reaching the effect of a word, or a small action, can be. If we had known at the time how much pain it would cause, we would never have initiated the interaction. That

would be evil, and our only intention was to cause a temporary sting.

In conclusion, *everything* we do, both good and bad, impacts the universe on a physical and spiritual level. The little things we do have huge ramifications. The robber would not have stolen if only he had known the chandelier would crash! But, love and desire cause people to be absent-minded. Our goal is to love Hashem like that! ואהבת את ה' אלוהיך בכל לבבך ובכל נפשך ובכל מאודך. *Yiddishkeit* is a journey, and we use our GPS to guide us. We follow its directions. And we will arrive at our destination, because we know what it is: לאני לדודי ודודי לי!

☺ Miriam Abittan and Miriam Weiss

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## On Sukkos

*Sukkos*, more than any other *Yom Tov*, is associated with *simcha*. We refer to this time as *Z'man Simcha-seinu*, and we are commanded no less than three times to rejoice on *Sukkos*. Why is *simcha* so integral a part of the festival of *Sukkos*?

*Sukkos* is celebrated at the time of harvest, a time when the farmers of old had finished gathering in their crops, and rejoiced in the bounty that Hashem had granted them. All their hard work had come to fruition, and they were filled with gratitude towards Hashem. This appreciation manifested itself in their joyousness on *Sukkos*. Although such an expression

*Sukkos* comes just shortly after the *Yamim Nora'im*, when we have achieved repentance and gained new spiritual heights. We emerge from *Yom Kippur*, free of sin, ripe to accomplish much good in the coming year. It is this spiritual bounty that is our primary source of happiness on *Sukkos*. It is a joyous time as we acknowledge and celebrate the tremendous harvest we have reaped, both physically and spiritually.

☺ Sara Nordlicht  
Adapted from the Overview  
to the Artscroll *Sukkos Machzor*

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## Yerushalayim in the Sukkah

At the end of *Parshas Re'eh*, the *Torah* describes the obligation to pilgrimage to the *Beis Hamikdash* on the *Shalosh Regalim*. Rabbi Yitzchak Hutner notes something surprising. While on *Pesach* and *Shavous* the *Torah* describes visiting אל המקום אשר יבחר ה' לשכן שמו שם - "The place ה' will choose 'for His name to dwell,'" on *Sukkos* the words לשכן שמו שם - "For His name to dwell" are conspicuously absent.

Rav Hutner explains that *Sukkos* is special. On other *Yomim Tovim*, one needs to visit *Yerushalayim* in order to experience Hashem's presence, but not on *Sukkos*. Even if one must remain at home he will experience Hashem's *Shechinah*, as it dwells in every *Sukkah*!

☺ Freida Bamberger

# The Kindness in the Four Kinds

The *Midrash* explains that the *mitzvah* of *netilas lulav* symbolizes the unity of the Jewish people. This idea is rooted in the way that the *mitzvah* is performed; it can only be completed by holding 4 different *minim*, namely, the *lulav*, *esrog*, *hadassim*, and *aravos*, in a bundle.

Each of the *minim* has its own physical qualities that distinguish it from the others. The *esrog* has both a pleasant taste and smell, the *lulav* a pleasing taste but no smell, the *hadassim* bear just a fragrant scent, and the *aravos* have no taste or smell at all.

The Lubavitcher Rebbe comments that the sense of taste represents *limud haTorah* while smell stands for the performance of *mitzvos*. Taste symbolizes *Torah* because *Torah* gives us great pleasure, similar to a good tasting food. Smell represents *mitzvos* since we are often unable to understand their reasons, causing the pleasure we derive from them to be less fulfilling, much as a good smell is less satisfying than a good taste.

The Rebbe continues by citing the well-known *midrash* that the four *minim* further represent the various ways in which different individuals serve Hashem. The *esrog* signifies a Jew who both studies *Torah* and performs *mitzvos*, the *lulav* represents a Jew who studies *Torah* but does not do *mitzvos*, the *hadassim* exemplifies a Jew who does *mitzvos* but does not study *Torah*, and the *aravos* illustrate a Jew who, sadly, neither studies *Torah* nor observes *mitzvos*.

The lesson of the *minim* is that no Jew can complete his *shlichus*, or mission, in the world unless he is willing to go beyond himself and unite with other Jews, regardless of their backgrounds. Even the *esrog*, the species which symbolizes both the virtues of *limud haTorah* and observance of the *mitzvos*, cannot be used for the *mitzvah* on *Sukkos* unless it is taken in hand and held together with the *aravos*. The concept of *achdus* is so central to this *mitzvah* that it is reflected not only in the requirement of taking all four species together, but also in the characteristics of the individual parts of the *mitzvah*. *Chazal* stipulate that a *lulav* may be used for the *mitzvah* only if its leaves are bound together. The only species of *hadassim* that is acceptable is the type that has three leaves in each row that are lev-



el with each other, and contain no leaf significantly higher or lower than another. The kind of *aravos* used also expresses the concept of *achdus*, since it grows in bunches.

The *esrog*, which stands alone, moves to unite with these three representations of *achdus*, thereby assuming its position in the unity motif. The *esrog* symbolizes a category of people whose potential for achievement is greater than that of others. These individuals have a greater responsibility to come close to those around them, and model for them a life of *avodas Hashem*.

The Rebbe concludes that we, as *frum yidden*, must take on the role of the *esrog*. We are privileged enough to have a strong sense of *Yiddishkeit*, thus it is our job to help those who stray, even if they come from an entirely secular background. By being open to all people, we show them the beauty of *Yiddishkeit*, and how it speaks to all Jews.

☺ Chaya Trapedo

# Awesome Song

Every Jewish year begins with the *aseres yemei teshuva*. They are initiated with the strict judgement of *Rosh Hashanah*, the *Yom Hadin*; and culminate on *Yom Kippur*, with the unique opportunity for forgiveness. The intensity of these days is reflected in our special *minhagim*, and in *halachah*, where certain stringencies are recommended only during these ten days. The importance of the "High Holy Days" is recognized even by those not closely affiliated to *yiddishkeit*. As *Ne'ilah* concludes with the blowing of the *shofar*, our mood changes from the reflective and serious one of the *Yamim Noraim*, the "Days of Awe," to the spirited and festive one of *Z'man Simchateinu*, "the time of our rejoicing," as we head into the jubilant *chag* of *Sukkos*. This is immediately followed by even more days of celebration: *Shemini Atzeret* and *Simchat Torah*.

Interestingly, the Rambam, in his codification of *halachah*, combines the section describing the *halachos* of *shofar* with the *halachos* of *Sukkah* and *Lulav*, while detailing the laws of *Yom Kippur* in a separate chapter. Due to the Rambam's precise system of codification, we know there must be meaning behind this decision. The *mitzvos* of *shofar* and *lulav* are unique in that they are performed as part of, and in the middle of, our davening; *shofar* during the *musaf amidah*, and shaking the *lulav* during *Hallel*. Rav Soloveitchik notes that the *shofar* is a form of prayer, a prayer without words, a cry to Hashem, when we are at a loss for words. Similarly, the shaking of the *lulav* is a non-verbal expression of praise to Hashem, as we thank Him for all of our *brachos*.

We can either speak to Hashem in fear and awe, or with song and praise. The *shofar* signifies Hashem in the role of judge, evoking a feeling of fear. Yet during *Sukkos*, after the days of judgement, we feel hopeful that Hashem has accepted our *teshuvah*

and we wave our *lulavim* in joy as we sing, "*Hodu laShem ki tov ki leolam chasdo*, Give thanks to G-d for He is good, His kindness endures forever".

While *Sukkos* is *Z'man Simchateinu*, a time of increased happiness, we need to ensure that we do not get so carried away with our joy, that we see the *Yom Hadin* as a distant memory. Therefore, it is at this specific time, as we are praising Hashem for all of our *brachos*, that we must leave our secure and warm homes and sit in a flimsy and cold *sukkah*, with barely a roof over our heads. We compare our time on this earth to our time in the *Sukkah*, temporary and fleeting, and acknowledge that we depend on *Hashem* to protect us during *Sukkos* as well as each and every day of our lives.

A sense of fear and uncertainty is carried throughout *Tishrei*, beginning on *Rosh Hashanah*, and echoed, as well, in the *Sukkah*. It is also repeated in the words of the second wave of the *lulav*, '*Anah Hashem hoshia na!*' - "Please, G-d, save us now." We acknowledge Hashem in many ways. Some merit *teshuva me'yir'ah*, *teshuvah* based on fear, and need the haunting sound of the *shofar* to wake them from their spiritual slumber, while others are able to attain the level of *teshuva me'ahavah*, *teshuvah* based on love, as they come closer to Hashem through praise and song.

May we be *zocheh* to hearing the sounding of the *shofar*, *be'ezras Hashem*, bringing *Mashiach*, when Hashem will spread "the *sukkah* of peace on us, on all the people of Israel, and upon Jerusalem."

✿ Mia Lubetski  
Inspired by a Dvar Torah  
by Rabbi Kelman

# The Essence of Sukkos

The *Yom Tov* of *Sukkos* is a time of sublime joy and jubilation, firmly rooted in the observances of the *chag*. There is a *pasuk* in *Tehillim* which proclaims *שובע שמחות את פניך*. *Chazal* expound on this by saying, *אל תקרי שובע אלא שבע*, do not read it as *sova*, but rather, as *sheva*. This *pasuk*, they maintain, refers to the seven *mitzvos* of *Sukkos*: *ד' מינים, סוכה, חגיגה, ושמחה*.

The *mitzvah* of *simcha* is a fundamental element of *Sukkos* and provides the foundation for the entire *Yom Tov*, much more so than any other *chag*. Reflecting the unique centrality of expressions of *simchah* to *Chag HaSukkos* are the depictions we have of the spectacular and glorious celebrations which centered on the *Beis Hamikdash*. As famously described in the *Mishna*: *מי שלא ראה שמחת בית"ה, השואבה לא ראה שמחה מימיו*. "Whoever did not see the joy of *Beis Hashoevah*, has not seen joy in his life". The *Mishna* goes on to describe the unimaginable scope of the wondrous festivities. For example, *"ולא היה חצר בירושלים שאינה מאירה מאור בית השואבה"*, "There was not a single courtyard in *Yerushalayim* that was not illuminated from the lights of *Beis Hashoevah*".

What, exactly, were *Bnei Yisrael* celebrating during the *Simchas Beis Hashoeva*? This is the subject of a difference of opinion between *Rashi* and *Rambam*. *Rambam* writes that *Bnei Yisrael* were celebrating that special *mitzvah* of *simchah* during *Sukkos*. He also explains that *Sukkos* alone enjoys the distinction of this unique *mitzvah* because of its timing, which represents the perfect confluence of the spiritual and physical worlds. Before *Rosh Hashana*, our sins cause us to be distanced from *Hakadosh Baruch Hu*, but during *Yom Kippur*, through the process of *Tefillah*, *Teshuvah*, and *Ma'asim Tovim*, we are once again brought close to Him. *Sukkos* also comes at the end of the harvest season, a time ripe with the prospects of *parnasah* and material blessing. It is timed to fall out at the conjoined peaks of our spiritual elevation and our material blessings, and the unique *mitzvah* of *simcha* which distinguishes the *chag* is the expression of the joy which stems from this fusion of *ruchnius* and *gashmius*.

*Rashi* takes a more restrained approach to the celebrations in the *Beis Hamikdash*. He writes *כל שמחה*

*"זו אינה אלא בשביל ניסוך המים כדמפרש ושאתם מים בששון"*. His opinion regarding *Simchas Beis Hashoevah* is that the *simchah* was specifically a celebration of the *Nisuch Hamayim*. This was the special water offering that was brought only on *Sukkos*, which was drawn from the *Shiloach* spring near *Yerushalayim*, and poured onto the *mizbe'ach*. The entire procession to draw water, bring it to the *Beis Hamikdash*, and pour it, was accompanied by huge crowds and with great joy. To understand the opinion of *Rashi*, we must determine the purpose behind the *mitzvah* of *Nisuch Hamayim* and its origins. The *Gemara* says *"אמר הקב"ה נסכו לפני מים כדי שיתברכו לכם גשמי"* - we were commanded to observe the *mitzvah* of *Nisuch Hamayim* so that we would be rewarded with bountiful rain, as it is written, *"בסוכות נידונים על"*, it is decreed on *Sukkos* how much rain will fall. The *Gemara* also states that *Nisuch Hamayim* is a *"מצוה חשובה נתנה בששת ימי בראשית"*, a significant *mitzvah* given to us during the six days of creation. The *Midrash* explains that the *mitzvah* is designed to make up for the distance placed between the *Mayim Hatachtonim* and the *Kiseh Hakavod* during creation. Through the *mitzvah* of *Nisuch Hamayim* we have an opportunity to ask *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* for rain that is bountiful, and a blessing for our crops that will last throughout the year. When a Jew serves *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* via *Torah u'mitzvos* which is the conductor between *shamayim v'aretz* a connection is forged between the spheres of *מים עליונים* and *מים תחתונים*. The *מים עליונים* connect to the *מים תחתונים*, and we are blessed with *גשמי ברכה*.

Importantly, the commandment for *Nisuch Hamayim* is *halacha l'Moshe miSinai*, meaning that it is part of *Torah She'Baal Peh*. The rationale for the commandment reaches all the way back to the earliest days of creation, and it is never actually mentioned as a commandment. Rather, it is subtly hinted at in a *passuk* in *Sefer Bereishis*. It is exactly for this reason that the *mitzvah* of *Nisuch Hamayim* was celebrated with extensive public spectacle. During the time of *Bayis Sheini*, there was a sect of people called *Tzidokim*. Fundamentally, the *Tzidokim* rejected the *Torah She'Baal Peh*, and only accepted the *Torah She'Bichtav*, which they interpreted very differently than the rest of the Jewish world. The *Tzidokim* denied many fundamental beliefs of our *Torah* such



**Leah Harris**

as the coming of *Moshiach*, *Techiyas Hameisim* and *Nisuch Hamayim*. Far from being a marginal group, they were powerful, and many of the elite Jews at the time, including kings and *kohanim*, associated themselves with the *Tzidokim*. This is precisely why our *chachamim* wanted to emphasize, celebrate, and highlight through the *Simchas Beis Hashoeva* the passing down of *Mesorah* from generation to generation. Of all our *Chagim*, the *Chachamim* specifically instituted the greatest, most joyous festivities for the *Nisuch Hamayim*, a *mitzvah* that is not actually set out anywhere in the written *Torah* but is a *halachah L'Moshe mi'Sinai*. The *Torah She'Baal Peh* is what differentiates us from the rest of the nations. The *Mishna* in *Pirkei Avos* instructs us to run like a deer in the pursuit of *mitzvos* - "הווי רץ כצב"י." We may ask: why is a deer chosen as the embodiment of *Bnei Yisroel* as they run to do Hashem's will? There are many swift animals. The deer was chosen for one specific characteristic; it looks back while run-

ning forward. Of course, we all seek to drive forward, create, build, progress and invent, but as Jews it is incumbent upon us to look back as we move ahead, and carry with us all our traditions and our heritage. We may note the ultimate fate of the *Tzidokim*; they no longer exist, and their ideology has no practical impact on the world stage today. Over the years, various denominations have, like the *Tzidokim*, broken from the normative Jewish tradition. While the consequences (e.g. assimilation) have been tragic for the Jewish People, rarely have the separatists had a lasting impact. We, the remaining faithful, during the overlap of physical and spiritual accomplishment that is the essence of *Sukkos*, must remember the *mitzvah* of *Nisuch Hamayim*, and rejoice in our connection to a pure and eternal truth that goes back nearly six millennia, and to our faithful transmission of that precious *Mesorah* to future generations.

Elky Schwartz

## The Yearning to Connect

The *Gemara* states that someone who is *mitztaer* is exempt from the *mitzvah* of *sukkah*. For example, if one's health would be compromised by sitting in the *sukkah*, he has no obligation whatsoever to do so. But what if he *wants* to partake in the *mitzvah*? If he is not *muchuyav*, obligated, in the *mitzvah*, will he be transgressing the *issur* of *bal tosif* by performing it?

*Chazal* instructed us that פטור מן המצוה ועשהו נקרא "הדייט"; someone who is exempt from a *mitzvah* yet performs it anyway is called a simpleton. Does this mean that one who is *patur* from the *mitzvah* should not sit in the *sukkah*?

Rav Moshe Feinstein *zt"l* cites an event that happened on *Pesach* in the *midbar*. When *Bnei Yisrael* were bringing the *korban Pesach*, there were individuals who were *tamei lameis*, ritually impure, and therefore could not offer the sacrifice. These Jews were so distraught by their inability to partake in the *mitzvah* that they went to Moshe to ask if there was any way that someone else could prepare the *korban* for them to bring. The answer was 'no,' and as a result, the system of *Pesach sheini* was instituted so that they would not lose the opportunity to perform the *mitzvah*.

The question which arises is, if they were exempt from the *mitzvah* why would they complain? Every Jew has the inherent desire to be close to Hashem. Doing *mitzvos* is the way in which our *neshamos* are uplifted and can connect with Hashem on a high spiritual level. We can learn from this example in the desert that even if one is *patur* from the *mitzvah* he can still take part in it for the love of the *mitzvah*.

How, then, are we to understand that one is regarded as a simpleton if he observes a *mitzvah* from which he is exempt?. In addition, if he is *patur* and chooses to perform the *mitzvah* anyway, is it considered as if he fulfilled a commandment?

As Jews, we all crave an intimate relationship with Hashem. If someone is *patur* but his heart yearns to perform the *mitzvah* of *sukkah*, he may fulfill a *chalek* of the *mitzvah* by sitting in the *sukkah*. However, he must be careful not to make the *bracha* of *leishev ba'sukkah*, which would render him a simple person. As a reward for his dedication to the *mitzvos* of Hashem, he will get *schar* for participating in the *mitzvah* but not for fulfilling the *chiyuv*.

Ilana Katzenstein

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## The Middos of the Ushpizin

Rav Elyahu Dessler understands the practice of inviting a different one of the *Ushpizin* to our *sukkah* every night, as a way for us to connect with each of their specific *middos*. We go in order one by one, starting with Avraham Avinu's *middos* of *chesed* and *ahava*, proceeding to Yitzchak Avinu's *middah* of *yirah*, and eventually leading up to the *middah* of David HaMelech, which is the acceptance of *ol malchus Shamayim*. It is through these *Ushpizin*, one each night, that we strengthen ourselves and work on our own *middos*. As Rav Dessler explains, we fo-

cus on one attribute per night because when working on our character development it is crucial that we do so "*darga achar darga*," one step at a time. How beautiful that during the *yomtov* of *Sukkos* we have one opportunity after another to attach ourselves to a specific *middah* and elevate our *yomtov* experience.

Zahava Giloni,  
Source: Michtav M'Eliyahu

## Striking with the Aravos

The *aravos*, seemingly the lowest of the four species, with neither taste nor smell, are akin to those Jews lacking in both *Torah* knowledge and good deeds. On *Hoshanna Rabba*, the *arava* stars in its own special ceremony. Some understand that we beat the *aravos* against the ground as a form of punishment for the ignorant and unlearned. Yet, we do not hit the *aravos*. Rather we use the *aravos* as a weapon to hit the ground.

Rav Avraham Yitzchak HaCohen Kook zt"l powerfully illustrated this distinction by citing a well known incident recorded in *Sukkah* 43b. The *Beisusim*, a Jewish sect at odds with the sages of the *Mishna*, did not believe that the *aravos* ceremony should be performed on *Shabbos*. They sabotaged the ceremony in the *Beis HaMikdash* by covering the *aravos* with

stones that were *muktzah* and could not be moved. Their plans were thwarted by the common people, who arrived early at the *Beis HaMikdash*. Unaware of the *muktzah* laws, they removed the *aravos* from underneath the stones and the *kohanim* performed the ceremony.

Had the commoners not acted, the Rabbis would have been forced to choose between abolishing *muktzah* and cancelling the *aravos* ceremony. This would have weakened Rabbinic authority and given support to the *Beisusim*. We see how even the ignorant Jew's mistaken acts can be a valuable contribution.

☺ Rivka Notkin

Adapted and translated from Rav Tzvi Neriah  
Moadei HaReiyah pages 111-113

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## The Connection Between Sukkah and Olam Hazeh

On each holiday and on *Shabbos*, we insert a special addition to *Birchas Hamazon* specific to that day. On *Shabbos* we ask Hashem to bless us with *menucha*, on *Rosh Chodesh* we ask for the coming month to be good, and so on. These all seem to make sense and be relevant to the holiday. On *Sukkos*, however, we include a strange addition: "הרחמן הוא יקים לנו את סוכת דוד הנפולת" "May Hashem restore for us the fallen *Sukkah* of Dovid." Of all things to ask for on this day, why do we ask for this? And what is "the *sukkah* of Dovid"?

When this question was posed to Rav Chaim Kanievsky, he noted that the *pasuk* contains the word "*sukkah*," so it is appropriate to recite it on the holiday called "*Sukkos*". This answer begs explanation- could that be the only reason the sages instituted this addition hundreds of years ago? The *Ma-*

*haral* offers a beautiful insight in response to this question. He explains that our temporary residence in the *sukkah* parallels our sojourn in a temporary world. Dovid HaMelech understood that this world is fleeting, as we are taught in *Pirkei Avos*, "this world is but an antechamber of the world to come." For that reason, he did not allow himself to be limited by the physicality of this world, and he connected to Hashem in a manner far beyond it, one which was reflective of the World to Come. The request we recite in *Birchas Hamazon* is meant to remind us that the semi-permanence of the *sukkah* is just like the temporary nature of this world. This is a truth we should strive to remember so that we are moved to prepare for the next world, just as Dovid did.

☺ Noa Klein

# The Emes of Sefer Yonah

Why are you sleeping? These are the captain's first words to Yonah during the huge storm which surrounded their ship. *Ma l'cha nirdam* - How could you be sleeping soundly while we are in danger? קום קרא אל אלקיך אולי יתעשת האלוקים לנו ולא נאבד - Get up and call out to Hashem; maybe He will save us!

We may not be facing an apparent life-threatening situation,

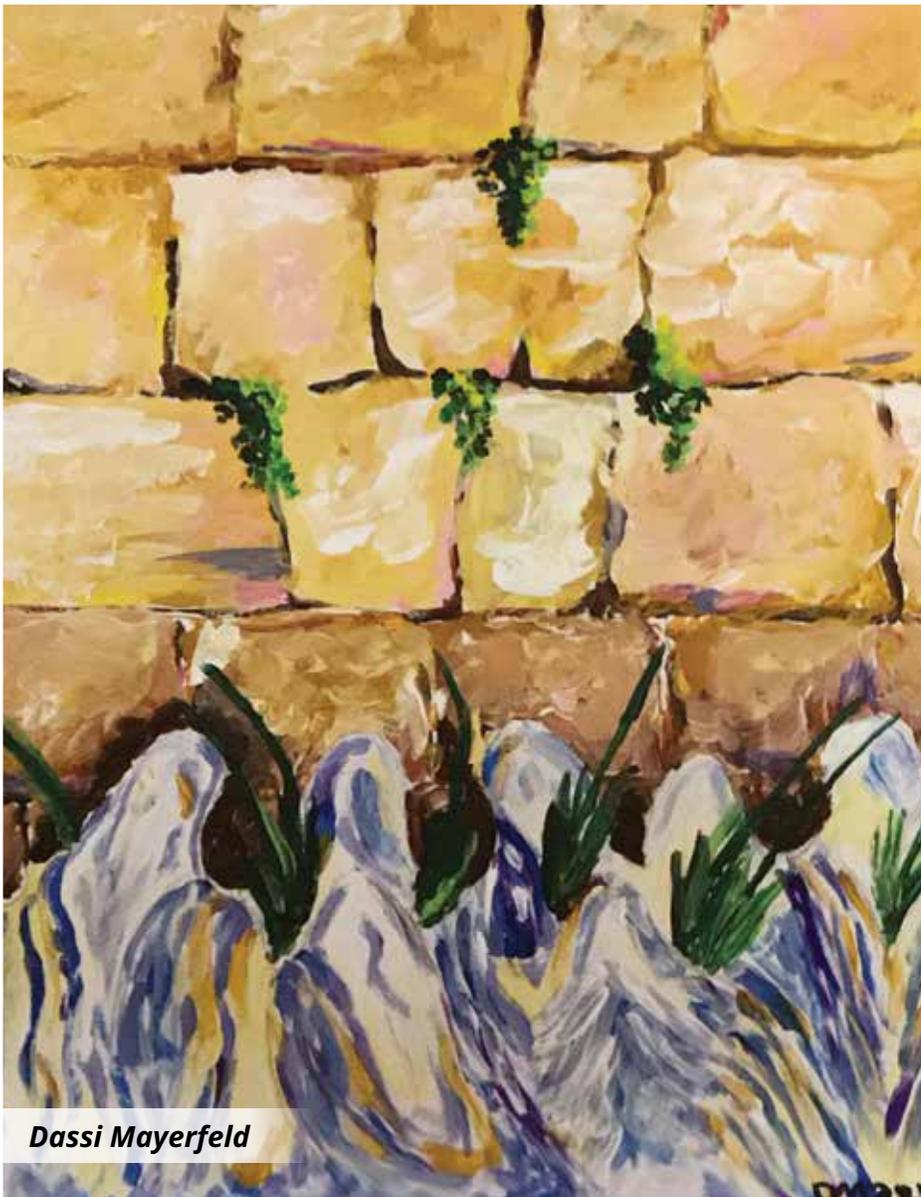
but at this time we need to ask ourselves the same question. *Shemini Atzeres* is understood to be the culmination of the *teshuva* process that we started on *Rosh Chodesh Elul*. Embedded in *Sefer Yonah* are three questions we should be asking ourselves to ensure we are on the right path to *teshuva*. The first is, how could I be sleeping through life? Am I the same old me that I was 5 years ago? Next, *ma milachtecha*

- what is your work? What do you aspire to accomplish? And lastly, *u'mei'ayin tavoh* - where do you come from? What have you accomplished thus far?

What is the message contained in the name of Yonah ben Amitai, and how does it strengthen us for the *teshuva* process? Literally, *yonah* means a dove, and *Amitai* is derived from the *shoresh* of *emes*, truth. Each of our *neshamos* come from the world of *emes*. When it is time for the *neshama* to enter the physical world, it is reluctant to leave the clarity of the *Olam Ha'emes*. It moans, which is a characteristic of the dove. Yet, if the *neshama* were to stay in the world of *emes*, where there is a clear distinction between *ratzon Hashem* and evil, nothing would be achieved, since the only road to greatness is one that presents challenge amidst ambiguity. The soul must enter an entity which is prone to mistakes, namely, a human being, which may choose to inch closer to or farther away from Hashem. The person has to be tested, pushed, and dared in order to grow. The *yonah* is the only bird that is loyal to its mate. Similarly, the *neshama* is forever connected to Hashem. Even if a person may feel distanced from Torah values, he should never give up on his *neshama* because it will always return. Hashem is waiting for it to return.

🕊️ Becky Bral

Adapted from Mrs. Wolf's lesson



Dassi Mayerfeld

# Shemini Atzeres

During *Sukkos*, 70 bulls were sacrificed in the Temple, representing the 70 nations of the world. On *Shemini Atzeres*, a lone bull was offered, representing the Jewish people. The *Midrash* explains this distinction with a parable: there was once a king who made a banquet for seven days, and invited all the people of the province to attend. When the week was over, he said to his friend: 'We have already done our duty to all the people of the province; let us now rejoice together, you and I, with whatever you can find – a pound of meat, fish, or vegetables.' In a similar manner the Holy One, blessed be He, said to Israel: 'On the eighth day you shall have a solemn assembly; let's rejoice together with whatever you can find; with one bullock, one ram' (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 21:24).

However, this parable does not explain the need for rejoicing alone with Israel. Perhaps the reason can be derived from the answer to a halachic question posed by Rav Yosef Epstein in his work *Mitzvat HaShalom*. Rav Epstein attempts to define the requirements of the commandment to restore friendship between fellows. When two people fight, we are obligated to make peace between them. But is it enough to insure that they cease to antagonize each other, and that their relationship is neutralized? Or does the *mitzvah* require that we restore their friendship to its prior peak level of love and harmony? Rav Epstein writes that it is the latter. It is not enough to end the hatred; one must encourage



Abby Harris

the parties to heal their relationship and become warm friends once again.

On *Yom Kippur*, we beg Hashem for forgiveness. On *Sukkos*, the raising of the *lulav* is a symbol of victory over the prosecuting angel (*VaYikra Rabba* 30:2). Forgiveness, however, does not imply closeness. An offended party may forgive her friend, but have no desire to continue their friendship. Hashem, though, adds one more day to the various holidays within *Tishrei*. It is meant to be an intimate day between Him and the Jewish people, signaling that not only has forgiveness been granted, but that the opportunity to draw close to Him is being offered as well.

☺ Meira Notkin

# The Way a Tzaddik Lives his Life

The Tur writes, in the name of his brother the R"l, that each of the *regalim* has a particular relationship with one of the *Avos*. Avraham is connected to *Pesach* since the Torah alludes to his request that Sarah bake *matzos* for the *malachim*, לֹשֵׁי וְעָשִׂי עֲנֹת. Yitzchak is associated with *Shavuos* because, according to the *midrash*, the *Shofar* that was used for *Matan Torah* was the horn of the ram sacrificed at *Akeidas Yitzchak*. And finally, Yaakov is linked to *Sukkos* through the *pasuk* in *Parshas Vayishlach* which relates that Yaakov built huts for his animals, וְלִמְקָנָהּ עָשָׂה סֹכוֹת.

Rav Mattisyahu Salomon, in his *Sefer Matnas Chaim* for the *Moadim*, points out that the connections of Avraham and Yitzchak to *Pesach* and *Shavuos* are direct and related specifically to each *chag*. When it comes to Yaakov, however, the relationship cited by the Tur is more of a play on the word *sukkos* which is used in the associated *pasuk*. What connection exists between Yaakov making *sukkos*, or huts, for his animals, and the *Yom Tov* of *Sukkos*?

Rav Salomon explains that we must analyze the events that happened prior to this one. In the beginning of *Parshas Vayishlach*, Yaakov risked his life and re-crossed *Nachal Yabok* to retrieve the small jugs he had forgotten. The Torah records what happened at that time, "וַיִּוָּתֵר יַעֲקֹב לְבָדוֹ וַיֵּאבֶק אִישׁ עִמּוֹ" - "and Yaakov was left alone and a man wrestled with him". In the *Gemara Chulin*, R' Eliezer explains that Yaakov returned for these פְּנִימֵי קִטְנִיּוֹת because to *tzadikim*, their money is more valuable than their bodies. This is very difficult to understand. Why is caring for money more than for one's own physical well being a positive attribute? One would expect the opposite to be true. What great *midah* did *Chazal* see in those who are so connected to the material objects of this world?

The *Alter* of Kelm explains that the concern of *tzadikim* for their money stems from the fact that they are content with minimal belongings in *Olam Hazeih* in order to limit their distraction from a focus on *Olam Haba*. They therefore guard what little they have so as not to lose that focus. Rav Chaim Vital provides another reason that *tzadikim* protect their belongings: they realize that everything comes from Hashem. If Yaakov would have disregarded

the *pachim k'tanim*, it would have shown a lack of appreciation for everything that Hashem had given him. Both of these explanations point to the same truth. Everything that Hashem provides for individuals is meant to serve an important purpose in helping them to fulfill their roles in this world, and in bringing them closer to *Olam Haba*.

Rav Salomon uses this concept to delineate a major distinction between Yaakov and Eisav in their approaches to life. There is a *midrash* that describes a deal that Yaakov and Eisav made when they were in Rivka's womb. Yaakov said to Eisav, "There is *Olam Haba* and *Olam Hazeih*. This world has eating, drinking, etc ..., but *Olam Habah* doesn't offer these pleasures. If you desire, take *Olam Hazeih* and I will take *Olam Haba*." Eisav agreed. Many years later, when Yaakov left Lavan and encountered his brother (as related in *Parshas Vayishlach*), Eisav saw that Yaakov had a very large family with servants and flocks of sheep. Taken by surprise, he asked Yaakov, "נַחֲמֵנוּ אֱלֹהִים" "לָךְ", "Who are these to you?" In other words, Eisav was asking, "Didn't you say that you would take *Olam Haba* and leave me with *Olam Hazeih*? How is it that you have all of the mundane elements of *Olam Hazeih*?" Yaakov answered "הַיְלִידִים אֲשֶׁר חָנַן אֱלֹהִים אֵת" "עַבְדְּךָ" - "these are the children that Hashem has graciously given your servant." In other words, Yaakov answered his twin by explaining that whatever earthly possessions he had were gifts from Hashem meant to further his true purpose of focusing on, and reaching, *Olam Haba*. As such, possessions were not an end in and of themselves, but rather a means to an end. Eisav, on the other hand, believed that materiality was meant solely for enjoyment in this world.

Rav Salomon offers a further insight by connecting this narrative to the encounter between Yaakov and the *שׂר* of Eisav, which took place only once Yaakov had returned for the *pachim k'tanim*. When the *שׂר* saw how dearly Yaakov cherished his possessions, he made use of the opportunity to attack him for being so connected to matters of This World. However, once the *Malach* saw that all of this *tzadik's* concern for his belongings stemmed from a positive place, he was no longer able to fight Yaakov. As a last resort he hit him in his thigh. The thigh

represents the future generations of *Bnei Yisroel*. The שר was letting Yaakov go. At the same time, though, he was giving him a warning. Any future generations that are influenced by the ideologies of Eisav and indulge themselves in the pleasures of this world for their own sake, will be providing an opening for Eisav to overpower *Bnei Yisroel*. However, if *Bnei Yaakov* follow in the path of their fathers and use this world only as a means to a beautiful end - the acquisition of *Olam Habah*- then the hand of Eisav will be powerless against them.

Yaakov took this message to heart and was concerned that future generations might fall victim to the outlook of Eisav. He worried that *Bnei Yisroel* might forget that the accumulation of wealth must serve a higher purpose. He therefore wanted to send a message to all generations. And so, immediately after he meets up with Eisav we are told, "ויעקב נסע סכותה ויבן לו בית ולמקנהו עשה סכות על כן קרא", "שם המקום סכות". Yaakov journeyed into *Sukkos*, and built a house for himself and made huts for his cattle; that is why the place was called *Sukkos*."

The *Targum Yonoson* explains that the word בית alludes to a *Bais Medrash*. Yaakov's message to all future descendants is that when it comes to establishing a *Beis Medrash*, one builds a full house which is a permanent structure. In contrast, for his earthly possessions and flocks of sheep, Yaakov built huts, which are only temporary. In this way, he communicated to us that the pursuit of material goods is not its own goal, but must be in support of reaching *Olam Haba*.

Thus, Rav Salomon explains that when the Tur associates *Chag HaSukkos* with Yaakov Avinu, it is more than a simple play on words. The lesson we derive from Yaakov building huts for his animals is identical to the message of this *Yom Tov*. We leave our permanent dwellings and live in *sukkos* for 7 days, to show ourselves and others that this world is temporary, and to consider that while material wealth isn't necessarily a problem, it must contribute to our attainment of *Olam Haba*.

Adielle Rosenblum



Chanie Malek

# The Privilege and Simcha of Sukkos

In *Parshas Emor*, the *Torah* separates its description of the observances of the *yom tov* of *Sukkos* from those of the rest of the *yamim tovim*. After describing only a few *mitzvos* of *Sukkos*, the *Torah* concludes all the *Moadim* by saying אלה מועדי ה' אשר תקראו אותם מקראי קודש לקריב אשה לה' זבח ונסכים דבר יום ביומו. Only afterwards does the *Torah* tell us about למען ידעו דורותיכם כי and ארבעה מינים, מצוות ישיבה בסוכה בסוכות הושבתי את בני ישראל. Why does the *Torah* separate these from its description of the other *yamim tovim*?

Rabbi Yosef Bechor Shor describes the *simchah* that

*Klal Yisrael* experienced during the *yom tov* of *Sukkos*. In addition to having just harvested their crops, they felt a sense of renewal in their *ruchnius* with *Yom Kippur* having just ended. Hashem tells *Klal Yisrael*: אין לכם מחשבה כי אם . לשמח. That is, *Bnei Yisrael* have no more burdens, and can now be completely happy, as stated in the *pasuk* in *Devarim*, והיית אר, ששמח.

In light of this, we can see why the *Torah* divides *Sukkos* the way that it does. In some ways, *Sukkos* is like all the other *yamim tovim*. We can't do *melachah*, we bring specific *korbanos*, and we have the *mitzvah*



**This summer, Jenny Rapp interned for Rabbi Hillel Goldberg, editor of Intermountain Jewish News, a weekly newspaper covering the Jewish community of Denver, Colorado. Below is one of her published articles.**

## Boulder's Milk & Honey Farm Our local source of sweetness

**by: Jenny Rapp**

Milk and Honey Farm at the Boulder JCC may look like a normal farm, but it is actually full of agricultural connections to Judaism.

There is a greenhouse in which they grow the biblical seven species and there is early childhood programming to learn about biblical laws of agriculture.

There are the fields known as the *tzedakah* farm where they put some of those laws to practice by donating food to Boulder Food Rescue; they generally donate about a ton of produce every growing season.

Then there are the six garden beds in which they grow plants each corresponding to a Jewish holiday. For Chanukah they have potatoes and onions for latkes. The Rosh Hashanah bed is

full of flowers for pollinators, bees in particular.

At Milk and Honey Farm you don't have to look far to find pollinators. Becca Gan Levy, director of farming and sustainability, keeps bees with her father at the outer edge of the farm.

"My boss had bees and he was telling me...how cool it was," she says, describing her initial inspiration. "So my dad and I decided to go to a class, bought a beehive and started keeping bees."

The process is quite simple. The bees collect nectar from flowers and bring it to their comb. The bees then distill the honey by fanning the nectar with their wings until the honey is the proper density, before capping it with wax.

When it comes time to harvest the honey, Gan Levy and her father remove the honeycombs, leaving about eight

for the bees' nourishment throughout the winter. They remove the wax caps and let the honey flow through a filter into a bucket where it is ready to enjoy.

Though beekeeping may have once been an easier, profitable hobby, with colony collapse disorder on the rise it becomes more difficult by the year. "Now it doesn't necessarily financially pan out because you have to buy bees every other year," she explains. "We lose at least half our hives every winter."

A major cause of this is the use of pesticides. Gan Levy, who has a master's in agricultural policy, says that since this is a systemic problem there isn't much she can do to help outside of her farm.

"We manage this land without pesticides," she says, "but I can't help anyone else."

of מִקְרָא קוּדֵשׁ יהיה לכם. On the other hand, *Sukkos* involves *mitzvos* that aren't presented as responsibilities; rather, they are privileges, ways of expressing our natural *simchah* at that time of year. The only requirement is that we recognize Hashem as being the real source of our joy, and that we celebrate with Him as we observe the "*chag Hashem shivas yamim.*" The *Pasuk* does not say *chag l'Hashem*, for Hashem, but rather a *simchah* that is *because* of Hashem, for He is the reason for our happiness.

After all of this, the *Torah* adds one more *mitzvah*: "*B'sukkos teishvu shivas yamim.*" Sitting in the *Sukkah*, we realize that we are completely under ה'’s protection. This ensures that we will indeed celebrate a *chag Hashem*. By simply sitting in the *Sukkah*, we

come to understand that Hashem protected us in the *midbar* and continues to protect us now. In contrast, on *Pesach*, we must tell the story of *yetzias mitzrayim* in order to communicate what happened. The word the *pasuk* uses is והודעתם - and you should *tell* your children and grandchildren so they will know the story. On *Sukkos*, however, this is not necessary. The *pasuk* says: למען ידעו דורותיכם כי בסוכות הושבתי את בני ישראל. So that they will know. When we sit in the *Sukkah*, we communicate to our children, without having to say anything, that Hashem protected us and continues to do so. This is why the essence of *Sukkos*, the *pasuk* with which the *Torah* concludes, is בסוכות תשבו שבעת ימים.

🕊️ Tova Berger

As a nonprofit, Milk and Honey doesn't have to worry about the yield as much as a commercial farm, so the Levys can afford to replace bees, but they recognize that it may be difficult for others.

Despite these challenges, Gan Levy and her father manage to harvest at least a gallon of honey per hive every year and are able to distribute it throughout the Boulder JCC.

"I give to volunteers...to different partners of the farm...we get to use it in our

preschool...we have a Rosh Hashanah family program that we use the honey for," she says.

A main focus of the farm is education, on both Jewish and agricultural themes. The farm's staff use the bees as a starting point to teach kids the importance of sustainability and protecting pollinators. "Just being able to open up the window and see the inside of the hive creates wonder," she says. "We use it as a jumping off point."

When it comes to the apples in "apples and honey," things can be a little more complicated. "The frost and the Front Range are so hit-or-miss in terms of apple growing," she explains, so if apples don't grow in Boulder one year they'll use watermelon instead.

She says that just like the honey flowing in Israel was really date honey, Boulder also has its own unique way of greeting the new year. "This is our local source of sweetness," she says.

## HONEY-SWEETENED NO-BAKE OATMEAL BITES

"This is a favorite recipe that we use with the kids after learning all about bees. Below is the actual recipe. "We often just put out the ingredients in individual bowls, buffet-style, and let the kids scoop from each bowl (with a bit of guidance on quantity) into their own small bowl and mix it up so they can make their personal no-bake cookies.

### Ingredients (Servings: 26 balls)

- 1 cup all-natural peanut butter just peanuts and salt in the ingredients, or use plain sunflower butter if you're worried about allergies
- 1/4 cup raw honey
- 2 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1 1/2 cups rolled oats you can use gluten free oats
- 1/2 cup unsweetened shredded coconut

- tiny pinch of sea salt
- 1/3 cup mini chocolate chips or raisins or m&m's or other exciting addition
- 2-4 teaspoons water coconut milk or almond milk if necessary

### Instructions

In a large glass mixing bowl, stir together the peanut butter or sunflower butter, raw honey and vanilla extract.

Then stir in your oats, coconut and sea salt until well incorporated and then mix

in the chocolate chips.

If the mixture doesn't hold together well when pressed into balls, add a tiny bit of water/coconut/almond milk, just a teaspoon at a time until it all holds together well when squeezed into a ball.

Form one inch balls by pressing about 1 tablespoon of the mixture together in your hands.

Store in an airtight container, refrigerated for 1 week, or in the freezer for a month.

**Have a sweet new year!**

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