

THE COMMUNITY Parasha Sheet



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This special edition has been sponsored L'ilui Nishmat Rachel bat Abraham (Pamela Steel) on her 11th yahrzeit (Erev Succot)

RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL

DIRECTOR
TAL



WHERE DID YOU BUILD YOUR SUKKAH?

Many people have houses and tend to build in their back garden. Some have the pleasure of inbuilt Succot. Others in apartments arrange for a Sukkah to be built on communal grounds.

Have you ever heard of building a Sukkah on a roof top?

Perhaps you have. But have you ever heard of everyone building their Sukkah on roof top?

The Gemara (Avoda Zara 3) tells about an event that will occur in the future.

When it becomes clear how beneficial the Mitzvot are for our welfare in this world, the nations of the world will go and complain to G-d: "You never gave us the same chance you gave the Jews! You never gave us all the Mitzvot!"

"All right," G-d will say, "I'll give you an easy mitzva: to dwell in a Sukkah during Sukkot."

So the people of the world will enthusiastically build Sukkot on top of their roofs, and move into them at Sukkot. Then G-d will cause the sun to burn down strongly, until it becomes unbearably hot in the Sukkot, whereupon everyone will leave their Sukkah with disgust, kicking the wall in temper as he leaves.

Many questions have been raised on this Gemara. We will focus on one – why do the people of the world build their Succot on their roofs?

The story is told of a Lithuanian Count that was friendly with the local Rabbi - Rabbi Chaim Zlotes Zts'l.

One day the Count had a visitor and wished to impress on his visitor the saintliness of the Rabbi.

They went to the Rabbi's house and knocked on the door. There was no answer. They knocked harder and again no answer. They peeped through the window and saw Rabbi Chaim standing, his body still, his eyes closed with intensity. ►

> TIMES

WEDNESDAY 4 OCT - 18.17	WEDNESDAY 11 OCT : 18.02
THURSDAY 5 OCT - 19.16	THURSDAY 12 OCT : 19.01
SHABBAT 6 OCT - 18.13	SHABBAT 13 OCT : 17.57
SHABBAT ENDS 19.12	SHABBAT ENDS 18.57



THE WEEKLY QUOTE

"Sometimes it is better to be kind than to be right. We do not need an intelligent mind that speaks, but a patient heart that listens."



DVAR TORAH

Where did you build your Sukkah?
RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL

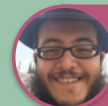
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An entire year of סוכות
RABBI DANNY KADA

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DVAR TORAH

Are we in control...?
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OUR CHACHAMIM

Rabbi Moshe Rivkes
The Author of Be'er HaGolah

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Q&A AND CARTOON

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Perhaps he didn't hear, the Count knocked even harder yelling "it's the Count, please open the door."

The Rabbi stood still. They decided to wait patiently until he was ready.

After 5 minutes, the Rabbi answered the door apologising for not coming earlier.

The other dignitary was not impressed.

We also have many Jews in our vicinity and I know how Jews pray. They move backwards and forwards, not still like this man.

The Rabbi humbly defended himself.

"Allow me to share with you a story." He said.

"There was once a king who had amassed great wealth. Upon receiving his one thousandth gold coin, he decided to build a special treasure case that would fit all his gold coins. He employed the world's best carpenter and told him that he would like the chest to fit exactly 1000 coins and no more.

The carpenter worked day and night for months, eventually delivering a solid and safe treasure chest to the king.

The king invited many people to attend to see this wonder, and they started to place all the gold coins in the chest.

They approached the last four coins. One, two, three went in but the final coin – didn't fit!

There was a sigh around the room. The carpenter had failed.

The kings' face turned red with anger, but the carpenter quickly intervened.

"I assure you that they all fit!"

Let me show you. He said as he commanded the guards to take out all the coins.

Everyone was stunned. They had taken an hour to put the coins in, and now they were told to take them out?!"

The King signalled for the guards to go ahead.

Once all the coins were out, the carpenter went to the chest and removed from within it some dust that had accumulated.

"Please, now proceed to put the coins in." He said.

And so it was that all the coins managed to fit.

Rabbi Chaim lifted his eyes to the other dignitary and said G-d commands us to serve Him with all our heart. Our sages have said this refers to prayer. When there is a bit of dust in the heart, then something needs to be left outside.

When we are not completely sincere, when we have not perfected LeShem Shamayim, then something is left on the outside.

A pure person, isn't looking around and trying to act so that others will think he is pure.

Our Sages teach us that in the future the nations of the world will also want to build the Sukkah. They will understand the greatness of Hashem's commandments. Yet they chose to build the Sukkah at the roof top, because they want all to see what righteous individuals they are.

In truth, it's all a parade. There is no true intrinsic sincerity to their actions, it's all a show.

When Hashem brings out the sun and things get too hot, they end up kicking the Sukkah and showing their true colours.

We left Egypt in Nissan Pesach time, and stayed in booths, surrounded by the clouds of glory in the wilderness. Yet we celebrate Succot six months later in Tishri.

Hashem in His kindness blessed us with the wonderful festival of Succot and placed it shortly after we have cleansed ourselves from all the dust in our hearts on Yom Kippur.

Let's go out into the Sukkah, show Hashem our intentions are sincere and celebrate with Simcha our awesome relationship with the King of Kings.

Chag Sameach. ■



Praying for a סוכה During the Year:



RABBI AMOS AZIZOFF - CHABAD OF BOREHAMWOOD AND ELSTREE

ARE WE IN CONTROL OR ARE WE CONTROLLED BY OTHERS?

When the Torah gives us the *mitzvah* of the four species on *Sukkot* it says “*ulekachtem lachem bayom harishon*” – “you shall take for yourselves on the first day the fruits of a beautiful tree” – which the Sages define as the *etrog* – “the branches of date palms” – the *lulav*, “twigs of myrtles” – the *hadassim* and “brook willows” – the *aravah* (*Vayikra* 23:40).

Since it says “*ulekachtem*” – “and you shall take” – the *halachah* is that one must take them into his hand. If one has before him the four species but does not take them in his hand, he has not fulfilled the *mitzvah*. For this reason the *berachah* recited is *al netilat lulav* – the *taking* of the *lulav* – and not *al mitzvat lulav* to emphasize that the *mitzvah* is fulfilled only when they are taken in the hand. (See *Orach Chaim* 651)

Why does the Torah insist that they be taken in one’s hand? Why is looking at the four species insufficient?

According to the *Midrash Rabbah* (30:14), the four species represent different parts of the human body. The *etrog* resembles a heart, the *lulav* (palm branch) represents the spine, the *hadas* (myrtle) has small leaves which are like eyes, and the *aravah* (willow) resembles the lips.

With the *mitzvah* of “*ulekachtem*” – “you shall take” – the Torah is conveying a message of great importance: these four major body parts must be taken in hand, that is, be under man’s control.

The heart sometimes lusts for dangerous things. Man must learn to control the desires of his heart. At all times there must also be *mo’ach shalit al haleiv* – the brain ruling over the desires of the heart (*Zohar*, *Vayikra* 224a).

According to *halachah*, the *lulav* must be firm and upright. It should not be loose, curved, or bending to all sides. The spine provides major support for body and the spinal cord controls it. A weak spine can, Gd forbid, cause a person to be paralyzed or of bent stature. Taking

the *lulav* in hand means that a Jew must be firm in his convictions, walk upright, and be proud of the fact that he is a Torah observant member of the Jewish people. He must never “bend” – compromise or yield – in his Torah observance.

The *hadas* leaves, resembling eyes, must grow upright on their stems. This teaches us that a Jew must always look up to Gd in Heaven with optimism and not look down upon other people.

The message implied by the *halachah* requiring that the *hadas* be taken in the hand is that one must learn to control his eyes and also to be happy with one’s lot and not look enviously on other people’s good fortune.

The leaves of the *aravah* must be smooth and not have sharp serrated edges. The *mitzvah* of taking it into the hands emphasizes the importance of controlling one’s lips. In particular, one should be careful not to make biting remarks; rather one should speak words of Torah and speak well of a fellow Jew.

The *halachah* that the four species must be held in one’s hand teaches us that it is imperative that man be in control of himself, his ideals and ideas.

From the *halachah* pertaining to the need to grasp the four species in one’s hand we learn the importance of being in the driver’s seat. We should not be content to merely “be in the back seat” and be controlled by others. When one is in control of himself and not controlled by the dictates of secular society, his entire year is *zeman simchateinu* – a life of joy and happiness. May we merit to reach this true level of Simcha.

Chag Sameach. ■

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AHARON GABBAY - KOLLEL ZICHRON CHANA VERACHEL - JERUSALEM

THE LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL

In the recent months, there have been epic moments of bonding with Hashem. A variety of emotions have filled our hearts. We have toiled through a powerful month of Elul consisting of cries to our Creator, building up to Rosh Hashanah, where we declared the kingship of Hashem. And then Yom Kippur, where our slate was wiped clean because of our yearning to be one with Hashem. Chag Sukkot is merely a conclusion of an outstanding journey of building ourselves.

A parable is told of a man who has a shop full of antiques. One day, his young child negligently runs into the room and knocks over numerous of the priceless possessions causing great damage, making most of the stock worthless. The father is distraught and approaches his son, but before any rebuke leaves his mouth, the son raises his head and engages eye contact with his beloved father displaying realisation of his mistake and regret of his actions. At that moment, the father cannot help but embrace his son with love. The father explains that he forgives the son full heartedly but requests that he help him clear up the mess. Once the store is spotless, the father takes his son by the hand, leads him out of the shop and they spend the rest of the day in unison.

The father is Hashem and we are the son. We are unfortunately responsible for many sins and damage in this world. We then approach Elul and fill our hearts with regret and remorse. After realising where we should be standing, we identify our father in heaven that we love dearly and show Him that all we yearn for is to do His

will; this is Rosh Hashana. On Yom Kippur and Hashem tells us all we have to do is clean up the mess, and so we spend a whole day fasting and crying our hearts out for forgiveness.

Chag sukkot is where Hashem takes us by the hand and walks us outside so we are exclusively with Him!

There is an opinion in the Gemara that the schach (roof) of the succah resembles the 'ananei ha'kavod', the clouds of glory which would protect the Jewish people from snakes, scorpions, arrows and would even lower mountains and fill valleys to enable them to walk on straight ground. When we enter our succahs we are reminded of the security and warmth that is generated for us and we should feel that our Creator would never abandon His precious child. Succot is also the only festival referred to as 'zman simchatenu', time of happiness - there is no greater happiness than the reassurance that a father is there for his son.

During the days of succot we are commanded to leave the house and enter a realm where we are united with Hashem, so He can show us that no matter what happens, he will be watching over us like father to son. Succot gives an underlining message of the unconditional love that is shared with us and to help us realise that we are never alone. ■



OUR CHACHAMIM

RABBI MOSHE RIVKES
THE AUTHOR OF BE'ER HAGOLAH

Rabbi Moshe Rivkes was the son of Rabbi Naphtali Hirsch Sofer of Vilna, a great Torah scholar, and was known as a gaon and a tzaddik. In 5415, when Cossack hordes descended upon Vilna and committed widespread massacres, Rabbi Moshe fled the city along with Rabbi Shabtai Hachohen (the author of the Shach), Rabbi Ephraim Hachohen (the author of Sha'ar Ephraim), and Rabbi Aaron Shemuel Kaidanover (the author of Birkat HaZevach). They eventually found refuge in Amsterdam, where Rabbi Moshe was shown great respect. In Amsterdam he published his great work on the Shulchan Aruch, entitled Be'er HaGolah. It indicated the various sources for Halachic decisions, along with brief explanations to resolve contradictions among Poskim with differing viewpoints. At the beginning of Be'er HaGolah, Rabbi Moshe describes how he was hounded during all those months, though he still forced himself to maintain his regular hours of Torah study.

Rabbi Moshe yearned to return to Vilna, his hometown, and he was finally able to do so. Though he became very wealthy at one point, he devoted all his money to tzedakah, leaving absolutely nothing for himself. He wrote a great number of books during his lifetime, which we can see from his will. In it he states how his books were to be shared among his sons, in order that they should continue to spread the light of Torah.

Rabbi Moshe Rivkes passed away in Vilna on Sivan 9, 5432, and his soul ascended to the celestial academy. May the memory of the tzaddik be blessed. ■



HALACHOT

RABBI ELI MANSOUR

ASKING A GENTILE TO WRITE ON ONE'S BEHALF ON SHABBAT

One of the thirty-nine categories of forbidden activity on Shabbat is writing. Rabbi Yishak of Vienna (late 12th-early 13th century), in his work Or Zarua, claimed that the Torah prohibition of writing on Shabbat applies only to writing “Ketab Ashurit,” the Hebrew letters as they are formed in a Torah scroll. In his view, writing in other languages, or in Hebrew but in standard form, as opposed to the form used in the Torah scroll, is forbidden on Shabbat only by force of Rabbinic enactment. A number of other authorities held this view, as well.

This ruling is of great importance with regard to the question of asking a non-Jew to write on one's behalf on Shabbat. A famous Halachic principle permits asking a gentile to perform forbidden activity on one's behalf on Shabbat in situations of “Shebut De'shbut Be'makom Hefsed.” This means that the forbidden act in question is prohibited only by force of Rabbinic enactment, as opposed to Torah law, and that the individual will incur a financial loss if that act is not performed. In light of the Or Zarua's position, Hacham Ovadia Yosef ruled, in his work Yabia Omer, that one may ask a gentile to write something on Shabbat if this is necessary to prevent a financial loss. Hacham Ovadia maintained that we may rely on the Or Zarua's classification of standard writing as a Rabbinic prohibition to permit asking a gentile to write something to avoid incurring a loss. One possible example of such a case is where a person must urgently receive a certain delivery and has to fill in a form. If he will incur a financial loss by not filling in the form, he may ask a gentile to fill in the form on his behalf on Shabbat.

Summary: Although generally one may not ask a gentile to write or perform other forbidden activity on Shabbat, one may ask a gentile to write something if this is necessary to avoid a financial loss.

See *Menuhat Ahava, Helek 3, Perek 22, Halacha 8*. ■

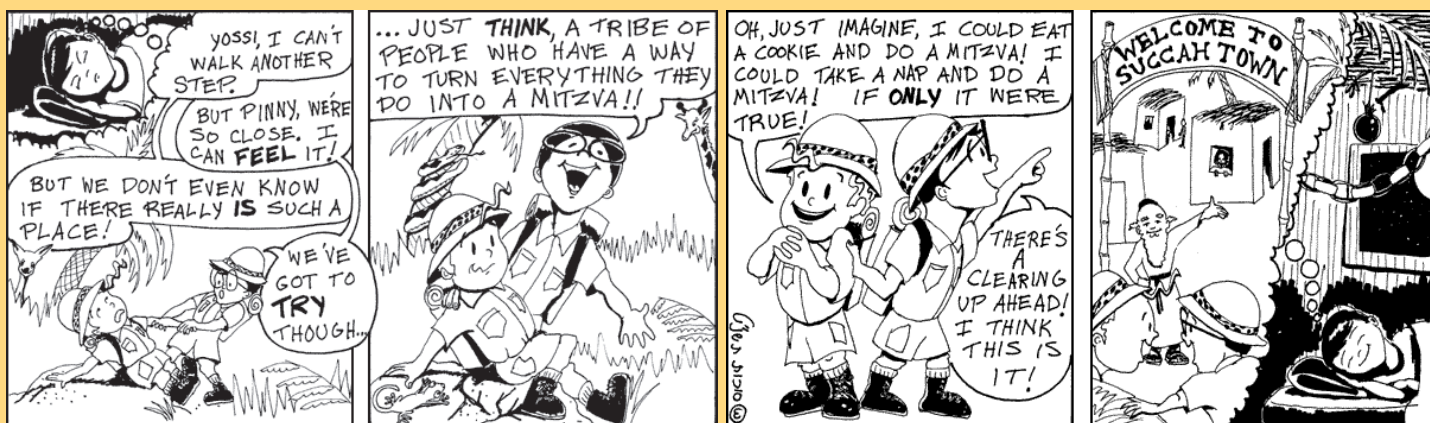


- ❶ Before giving the Torah, Hashem went to Seir and Mount Paran. Why?
- ❷ The source of the Jordan River was in the territory of which tribe?
- ❸ Who wrote the last eight verses in the Torah, starting with the verse “and Moshe died”?
- ❹ Who buried Moshe?
- ❺ Which tribe possessed the Kinneret?

Answer

❶ 33:2 - In order to offer the Torah to the people of Seir (Esau's descendants) and the people of Paran (Yishmael's descendants). ❷ 33:22 - Dan. ❸ 34:5 - According to one opinion, Yehoshua wrote it. Rabbi Meir says Moshe himself wrote it with tears. ❹ 34:6 - According to one opinion, Hashem buried Moshe. According to Rabbi Yishmael, Moshe buried himself. ❺ 33:23 - Naftali.

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Kids Story

REMEMBER THE CLOUDS

Isn't this a great tour, Reuven?

I am enjoying it very much, Eli. The desert is absolutely beautiful. But, it sure is hot. The sun is so strong. Let's ask the tour guide if it is dangerous to be out here.

Excuse me Mr. Tour Guide, the desert seems like a really dangerous place. Are we safe out here?

You are correct young man; the desert is very dangerous. The sun is very strong and there is no shade. Without proper protection, a person can get sunstroke. There is no water to drink. A person can dehydrate in a matter of a few hours. There is also no food here. Snakes and scorpions, live in the desert. Their sting can kill a person. The desert is no place for people unless they have plenty of supplies and protection.

I am amazed. I am totally amazed.

What's so amazing, Eli?

The Jewish people lived in this inhospitable desert for forty years.

That is pretty amazing.

Egypt was a very fertile and settled land. The last of Hashem's ten plagues was “death of the first-born”. That resulted in Pharaoh freeing the Jewish slaves. Over two million men, women, and children were now free to settle in the land of Egypt. However, Hashem had a different plan. “Follow Me into the wilderness, into an unsown land” (Jeremiah 2:2). Where? The wilderness? Two million men women and children (including old, sick people, and pregnant women)? What will they eat? What will they drink? Do you know how much food two million people eat? Where will they find shelter? What about snakes and scorpions? Go into the wilderness? It sounds suicidal. Yet our ancestors did it out of love for Hashem and appreciation for all that He had done for them. Do you know what? He surrounded them with Ananei Kovod (Clouds of Glory) protecting them from the hostile elements

of the desert. He performed miracle after miracle sustaining and protecting those two million people in this unlivable desert.

Sitting in the Sukkah is a beautiful mitzvah. The Torah explains why we live in the Sukkah during the seven days of Sukkos. “So that your generations will know that I caused the Children of Israel to live in Sukkos when I took them out of Egypt” (Vayikra 23:43). The Gemora explains that the Sukkah reminds us of the Ananei Kovod (Clouds of Glory) that surrounded and protected us in the desert for forty years. Hashem performed so many miracles and did so many acts of kindness for us then. Guess what? He is still protecting us and showering us with kindness. When we sit in the Sukkah, let us all try a little harder to appreciate all of the good that Hashem has done and continues to do for us.



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A SOURCE FOR SIMCHAT TORAH

Shlomo awoke and behold it was a dream. (Melachim I 3:15)

How can one be awake and still dreaming?

The solution offered by the Midrash to this mystery is that when King Shlomo awoke in the morning something happened which demonstrated to him that the dream he had experienced the night before had come true.

In his dream G-d appeared to the king and asked him what he wished to be granted from Heaven. Shlomo did not ask for long life, wealth or power,

rather for the wisdom of *an understanding heart* which would enable him to properly rule such a challenging nation from the throne he had inherited from his father David at such a young age.

This found favor in the eyes of G-d who promised him wisdom surpassing that of anyone before or after him.

Upon arising Shlomo heard birds chirping and donkeys braying. When he sensed that he was able to comprehend the language of these creatures he realized that his dream had come true.

He then came to Jerusalem and made a great feast for all of his servants.

This is the source, concludes the Midrash, for celebrating the completion of Torah study. Just as Shlomo realized that a feast was in order upon gaining such great wisdom, so too do Jews who complete an entire year of publicly reading the entire Sefer Torah, portion by portion, celebrate their acquisition of wisdom with singing, dancing and feasting on Simchat Torah.

This is also the source for the festive meal which celebrates the siyum completion of an entire tractate of the Talmud.

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