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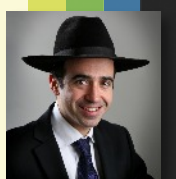
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COMMUNITY PARASHA SHEET

SUKKOT

15th Tishrei 5776

Sukkot Begins Sunday 27th - 18:33
2nd Day Candle Lighting - 19:32
Sukkot Ends Tuesday 29th - 19:30



RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL

Cleaning Out The Dust

Sukkot has finally arrived. Everyone's busy preparing for the Chag, getting the Arba Minim, building beautiful Succot.

Question: Where did *you* build your Succah? Many people have houses and tend to build in their back garden. Some have the pleasure of an inbuilt Succot. Others in apartments arrange for a Succah to be built on communal grounds. Have you ever heard of building a Succah on a roof top? Perhaps you have. But have you ever heard of *everyone* building a Succah on their roof tops?

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 Succah during Succot." So the people of the world will enthusiastically build Succot on their roof tops, and move into them during Succot. Then G-d will cause the sun to burn down strongly, until it becomes unbearably hot in the Succah, whereupon everyone will leave their Succot with disgust, kicking the wall in temper as they leave.

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 upon him 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.

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

carpenter and told him that he would like the chest to fit exactly 1,000 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 and 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 king's 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

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The Rabbi remained 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 and commented, "We 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 a great wealth. Upon receiving his one thousandth gold coin, he decided to build a special treasure case that would fit all of his gold coins. He employed the world's best



1 The sukkos we build come to remind us of how the Jews had them when leaving Mitzrayim. This means that really the festival of Sukkos should be celebrated in the month of Nissan, the time of the exodus. Why then do we celebrate it in the month of Tishrei?

2. What are the different names of Sukkos?

3. How many walls are needed for a sukka and what is a good way to remember this?

Answers on Back Page

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in and now they were told to take them all 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; something will be left outside. When we are not completely sincere,

when we have not perfected ourselves LeShem Shamayim, then something else takes up the space that is meant for serving Hashem. A pure person isn't looking around and trying to act good so that others will think he is pure, he is wholeheartedly believing it and acting so.

Our Sages teach us that in the future, the nations of the world will also want to build the Succah. They will understand the greatness of Hashem's commandments. Yet they will choose to build the Succah on the roof, because they will 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 Succah down 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 Tishrei.

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 Succah, show Hashem our intentions are sincere and celebrate with Simcha our awesome relationship with the King of Kings. Chag Sameach.



RABBI MENACHEM JUNIK

Hakhel & Sukkot - An All-Encompassing Mitzvah

The festival of Sukkot which follows Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, marks the beginning of Zman Simchateinu, the time of rejoicing in the month of Tishrei. In fact, the holiness and Kedusha that we experience on Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, through Hashem's Revelation, remains concealed within the heart and soul of the individual.

Through our Simcha, our joy and inspiration that we unleash on Sukkot, a time of happiness- Zman Simchateinu, the holiness is revealed.

The simcha, the joy of Sukkot was at its greatest level once every seven years, during the Hakhel celebrations following the Shmitta year.

In the times of the Beit Hamikdash, in the year of Hakhel- the eight year, the Jewish people united as one. Men, women, children and even babies all came together in the Beit Hamikdash where the king read from the Torah and inspired the Nation in their observance. This is the only event which required all the Jews to be present and it reflected the historic moment when all of us stood together at the foot of Mount Sinai to receive the Torah.

The Mitzvah of Hakhel was observed only in Israel, during the Temple times. However, the Lubavitcher Rebbe encouraged everyone to utilise this auspicious time as an opportunity to strengthen ones Yidishkeit and connection to Hashem, especially on the Yom Tov of Sukkot when the original Hakhel took place and generally throughout the year. The Rebbe encouraged regular gatherings during which we were to support each other to better our observance, our Torah learning and performance of Mitzvot.

THE RABBIS ASK:
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Mitzvot don't have as the obligation to sit in the Sukka begins when the sun sets on the very first night of Sukkot, whilst the Mitzvah of Lulav and Etrog are only done the next morning.

When it comes to building the Sukka the Halacha is that it must be built before the festival begins and one has to have Kavana - intent- that it is going to be used for the Mitzvah, but the Four Species can be prepared on the Yom Tov of Sukkot itself.

In addition to that, the Mitzvah of Sukka can be performed at any time and the blessing made by each meal, again and again. The Mitzvah continues constantly throughout the Festival. However, regarding the Lulav and Etrog, once you have made a blessing over them you cannot do the Mitzvah again that day.

The Talmud in Sukka 28:2, says, Dwell as you live, that the Sukka becomes your home. However, the Mitzvah of Sukka is not like any other since it is encompassing in nature, and whilst other Mitzvot are performed with a particular part of the body, like hands for Tefillin or Tzedaka etc. the Mitzvah of Sukka totally envelopes the person. One steps into the Sukka and one is submerged within the Mitzvah.

Therefore this Yom Tov is called Sukkot as the message is that it has to be all encompassing. Our service to Hashem has to be experienced not only during times of Davening and learning, but even whilst we are eating in the Sukka- it is all part of our service to Hashem.

This year marks the end of Shmitta which makes it a Hakhel year. A Year of Unity.

This unity is emphasised even more so on Sukkot by taking the four species which symbolises different types of Jews and bringing them all together to perform one Mitzvah.

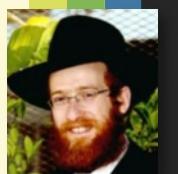
The Rabbis ask: Why does the Torah call the festival Sukkot and not Lulav or Etrog or any of the other Four Kinds? The Mitzvah of Sukka has a unique virtue that the other

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RABBI AVRAHAM CITRON

Hachnasat Orchim On Sukkot

My grandfather, Rabbi Eliyahu Chaim Carlebach was a rabbi in New Jersey at a time of changing demographics. An older bachelor, a chazzan of a shul some distance was a regular at their Shabbat table. One Rosh Hashanah he really delayed. He finally did arrive beaten and dishevelled. "The only thing that kept me going was the thought of the Chamin waiting for me at your house". Problem being that everything had been served and cleared from the table. Quick thinking Shiena (my aunt) was in the kitchen and immediately scraped all the leftovers together and served him. For years he could not get over how delicious the food tasted that Shabbat!

While for some people *hachnasat orchim* seems like second nature, for others it can be challenging. "How do I know if this guy is safe to have in the house, maybe he is a complete loony?"

Kabdei hu vechashdei hu, honour him while suspecting him, as the sages in the Gemora tell us.

The *Pele Yoetz* brings the story of a man who invited a stranger to stay in his attic. The host then removed the ladder to the attic. The guest got busy collecting valuables and then stepped out of his attic room in the dead of the night only to awaken the host by his cries of agony...

This story does not justify not inviting guests. If anything, it goes to show us that even when we have suspicions, we must still think of ways of doing *hachnasat orchim*.

Having a guest in your sukkah is a guaranteed method of *hachnasat orchim* where the guest will not overstay his welcome.

(The concept of "honour him and suspect" obviously cannot be applied to our enemies who we know wish to harm us. Remember Gedaliah's mistake? These two ideas need to be balanced when applying them to the issue of refugees and migrants. More of that for another time.)

To get a perspective of this: If "what is mine is mine and what is yours is yours," then the above advice of *kabdei hu v'chashdei hu* is

WHILE FOR SOME PEOPLE HACHNASAT ORCHIM SEEMS LIKE SECOND NATURE, FOR OTHERS IT CAN BE CHALLENGING. "HOW DO I KNOW IF THIS GUY IS SAFE TO HAVE IN THE HOUSE, MAYBE HE IS A COMPLETE LOONY?"

understood. This is the law, after all, since Pirkei Avot calls this "a median characteristic". But there is also *lifnim mishurat hadin*, beyond the letter of the law. "What is mine is yours, and what is yours is yours," says Pirkei Avot, "is the attitude of a pious person". It is about perspective. We can have a much deeper Sukkot and a much deeper relationship with our guests,

our fellow Jews, if we have the more pious attitude.

Rabbi Chaim of Sanz once ran after a guest who had just stolen something from his house calling out to him, "Don't worry, I declared it *hefker* (ownerless)". He took the "What's mine is yours" literally.

We understand that all that we have is really Hashem's. What seems stable and what seems to be permanently yours only appears as such. One moment we are sitting at the top of the world, and then, G-d forbid, everything changes...Sitting in the fragile sukkah, unprotected from the elements, we come to realise that we are (always) in Hashem's hands. (Indeed the *s'chach* covering the sukkah is meant to represent the divine shechina, and the walls, G-d's hug. Halachically, the minimum amount of wall needed are two walls plus a *tefach* (handbreadth) of a third wall. In an embrace, the upper arm and lower arm are like the two walls, and the hand hugging is like the third handbreadth.) So if all we have belongs to Hashem, then my wealth is only mine so that I could share it with others. Indeed, what I give to the poor is actually his which G-d gave me to watch over and give to him when he needs it.

So we both, host and guest, sit together in this sukkah, for it is both of ours.

Every time I host someone, I know that I am sharing with him what is truly his. It is therefore a privilege that he comes to me and I get to give him this in a way which I gain both his friendship and a mitzvah.

I experienced such *hachnasat orchim* when I was a student in Israel. I arrived at my Yeshivah shortly before Shabbat finding that the Yeshivah building was closed as Yeshivah was not starting until Monday. I was invited in by a family who did not know me from Adam, who were already hosting a dozen people and who convinced me that they actually wanted to sleep on the *marpeset* (porch). WOW! Now that is *kabdei hu* without *chashdei hu*!



RABBI SHMUEL KIMCHE

Holidays - Holy Days

The Jewish Yearly cycle includes 7 special "Yamim Tovim" - 'Good Days'. These 'Yamim Tovim' do more than simply 'commemorate' events in the Past. They serve to help us gain access to the Kedusha of The Jewish People, each Yom Tov, in a unique way.

I saw a connection - from a highly unlikely source - that astounded me. I would love to share.

"THERE ARE SEVEN LIQUIDS (which make items susceptible to purity/impurity) DEW, WATER, WINE, OIL, BLOOD, MILK AND BEES' HONEY." [Mishnah, Machshirin 6:4]

Essentially, dry items, back in the times of the Beit Hamikdash, would not be able to become impure. Only once food has come in contact with one of these liquids, does it become possible to become impure. (This is why we wash our hands before

Karpas on Seder Night. The raddish will be dipped in salt water, and could become impure... So we make sure that the hands are ritually pure, before the leader dips the karpas into the water.)

So, I hear you asking - "Rabbi, what does this have to do with Yom Tov?"

Actually, The Kabbalists (I saw this first in the writings of The Bnei Yisaschar, The Chasidic Leader of the Dinover Chassidut, 150 years ago) connect each one of the Seven Liquids, with a different Yom Tov. Each Liquid has a different quality - Each Chag has a different nature:

Wine - Purim (we drink, the secrets come out, we feel a powerful desire to connect to Hashem who works in hidden mysterious ways.)

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Blood – Pesach (We place blood on the doorpost. Blood represents our “Mesirut Nefesh/Self

Sacrifice” to do anything for our relationship with Hashem – even follow Him into a barren dessert.)

Oil – Chanukah (The miracle was with oil – but on another dimension, we know that the number 8 (shmonah – connected to ‘shemen’/oil) rises above the number 7 (which represents nature). We connect to Hashem, thanking Him for showing His love by showering us with miracles.)

Milk – Shavuot (We eat Milk foods/Cheesecake for various reasons, but on a more profound

level, a mother’s milk represents “kindness” – and we read the book of Ruth on Shavuot, which is about kindness. In the English dictionary, the term “Ruthless” means without kindness. We sense the kindness of Hashem for providing us with the Torah and Meaning. We recognise that Torah without Kindness is missing the point. “Torah on one foot” is Kindness.)

Dew – Yom Kippur (The Haftorah of Shabbat Shuva includes the promise that Hashem will be

“Like Dew to Israel”. Constantly found, always revitalising and re-energising. Yom Kippur is the yearly renewal.)

Honey – Rosh Hashanah (We dip the apple in the Honey. Honey sweetens the new year. Honey is red, and red is the colour of “Justice”. Rosh Hashanah is the day that Hashem Judges every creature. Honey also has the numerical value of 306, which is the same as “Av HaRachaman / Merciful Father”. We dip the Jewish People (who are compared to the apple) into Hashem (who is the Honey, the “Merciful Father”).)

Water – Sukkot (we start asking for Rain. The 4 species are natural items watered by rain.

During the times of the Beit HaMikdash we have a celebration at the ceremony of drawing water, which we draw from the valley near the Beit HaMikdash, and then pour it down next to the Mizbeach. Sukkot is the beginning of the rainy season, and it is on Sukkot that the world is judged for Rain Water.)

Astounding. A Mishnah and Halacha with such intense meaning!

Each Chag is a portal into the world of Spirituality. Our Neshamot need our annual dose of each “Liquid”. As Sukkot comes, we start focussing on ‘Water’. London has its abundance of Water, so we look unlovingly at ‘Water’ – but the water cycle, the importance of Water, teaches us so much about “Life” and about Connection with Hashem:

At the beginning of a meal, we wash our hands. At the end of the meal, we wash our hands (“Mayim Acharonim Chovah!”). Yet we find a major difference between the two washings. Netilat Yadayim at the beginning of the meal requires us to hold our hands upwards, so that the water doesn’t drip down over of fingers, rather, down our wrists. Mayim Acharonim, requires us to pour the water downwards over our fingers, holding our hands downwards. The world of Kabbalah again (this time, it is the Sfat Emet, of the Gur Chassidut) explains, that we are simply describing two aspects of rain. Evaporation and Precipitation. Water going up, and Water coming down. Our Prayers going Up. Hashem’s response coming back down.

Water is all about US ASKING, and about HASHEM ANSWERING. No wonder Sukkot is right after the High Holidays. We have spent the week in Prayer – we know only too well that Hashem is waiting for our Prayers, so that He can send down his answer ASAP. RSVP!!!



1. The Tur answers that we move the festival of Sukkos to the month of Tishrei that is the beginning of the rainy season to show how we are willing to do whatever Hashem commands us to even if it is not easy.
2. Besides for the name Sukkos, after the building of the booths, it is also called Chag HaOsim. This means the time of the gathering in of the produce into the houses at the end of the harvest and agricultural year.
3. It can have four, three and even two and a bit walls. The Vilna Gaon amazing points out that this is seen in the letters for the word Sukka – סוכה. The Samech has four sides, the chof has three sides and the Hei has two and a bit!

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